NOSTALGIA AND THE VICTORIAN VARSITY NOVEL

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Abstract

This dissertation begins by recognizing a certain tension between the Victorian knowledge industry and Victorian Oxbridge: a confrontation between the multidirectional industry of knowledge production, commodification, dissemination, and consumption that sought to expand knowledge and learning outward to the masses, and the nation's most revered universities, Oxford and Cambridge, which had, for centuries, held knowledge for the privileged few. This dissertation situates its argument and its focussed texts at this juncture of confrontation. It argues that, through the discourse of university nostalgia—to which Matthew Arnold contributed most famously with his "dreaming spires" and "whispering" towers of Middle Age enchantment—Oxbridge participates, with strategic self-defensive reserve, in the knowledge industry and its various engines of progress. From a textual standpoint, it argues that Victorian varsity novels, a genre of youth fiction following the struggles and adventures of Oxbridge undergraduates, are important contributors to this strategic cultural discourse of university nostalgia, and, by extension, university power. This project is a study of five Victorian varsity novels—the *Verdant Green* series (1857), *Tom Brown at Oxford* (1861), *Wilton of Cuthbert's: A Tale of Undergraduate Life Thirty Years Ago* (1878), *A Sweet Girl Graduate* (1891), and *The Master of St. Benedict's* (1893)—plus two unconventional varsity novels—*Jude the Obscure* (1895) and *Zuleika Dobson* (1911)—each of which evokes nostalgic longing for the idea of a (traditional) university, for the idea of Oxbridge, within its pages. Each chapter focusses on a particular engine of the knowledge industry—university tourism, the civic college movement, the women's college movement, and the extension movement—and identifies a particular variant of Oxbridge nostalgia strategically counter-positioned as both a force of resistance and participation. Each chapter demonstrates the ways in which Victorian varsity

novels, alongside other relevant university texts (such as tourist guidebooks, periodical fiction, exposés, and visitor testimonials), contribute to these nostalgic variants. In so doing, these novels play an important part in fortifying the role of an “ancient” university in a modern knowledge market by maintaining its currency as a space of longing in the Victorian cultural imagination.

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Introduction

The Fresher's Tour

> *And yet, steeped in sentiment as she lies, spreading her gardens to the moonlight, and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age, who will deny that Oxford, by her ineffable charm, keeps ever calling us nearer to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection,—to beauty, in a word, which is only truth seen from another side?*
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> —Matthew Arnold, "Preface," *Essays in Criticism* (1865)

The fresher's tour is a tour of the university for those new recruits to the halls of recognized study, those at the threshold of knowledge and belonging in the world of academia. It was in Victoria's time, and remains today, an opportunity for new undergraduates to explore their university before the business of learning begins: to learn its history and traditions, walk its walkways, locate its libraries and lecture rooms, to map its presence as a physical site and the imminent backdrop to their nascent intellectual pursuits. It was and is, above all, a way of making the unfamiliar familiar. In Victorian England (and to a great extent today) the fresher's tour through either one of England's oldest universities, through Oxford or Cambridge, is synonymous with a journey through the past, attending to the architectural and customary origins of its colleges, and to its identity as a site of histories both grand—of significant political and religious movements[1] —and humble—of youth passing through maturity and learning. Indeed, Matthew Arnold knew, when he wrote lovingly of his *alma mater* "steeped in sentiment" and "whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age," that Oxford was saturated with past association. But even more importantly, he knew, acknowledging its "ineffable charm" and sentimental hold over "us," that this association with the past was a key source of the university's power, a power beyond that of scholarships, curriculum, and degrees, and *for* a great many more than merely the initiated few who had worn its cap and gown.

Arnold's preface thus epitomizes a Victorian cultural discourse of university nostalgia: a shared love for academic tradition, a collective longing for a lost or disappearing academic ideal that permeates the Victorian cultural imagination. Arnold's insistence that Oxford prompts "truth seen from another side" suggests that there may be another dimension to the fresher's tour, one where the university is a charmed space of the familiar, favourable, and, dare we say, fictional. Accordingly, this introduction borrows the conceit of the fresher's tour in order to arrive at a discursive space of university nostalgia that this dissertation will afterwards explore, a space in which varsity fiction is firmly situated. Foregrounding site before situation and context before text, this introduction conceptualizes the university tour in order to provide a detailed walkthrough of the major ideas, critical arenas, and structural guideposts of this dissertation, which is dedicated to an analysis of the university in Victorian fiction and cultural imagination. The conceit is important because in many ways my argument aligns the Victorian university experience with a tour: a tour of scholastic duty and development for the young undergraduate; a tour of temporary passage and heterotopic admission (nonbelonging) for the campus visitor or tourist; a tour of memory and longing for the nostalgic graduate momentously returned. It is especially relevant for my literature of focus in that the Victorian varsity novel characteristically enacts an imaginative tour through the university for its readers, exhibiting the university routine and setting with the characters, plots, and stylistic embellishments of fiction. Yes, the tour is the act of taking note and passing through, but it must begin with attention to a starting point, a collective pause to acknowledge briefly the grounds of common purpose: the "we are here" and the "here is where we are going" before the tour commences.

And so, this is a study of five Victorian varsity novels published between 1850 and 1900—Cuthbert Bede's popular *Verdant Green* series (1857), Thomas Hughes's *Tom Brown at*

Oxford (1861), Henry Cadwallader Adams's *Wilton of Cuthbert's: A Tale of Undergraduate Life Thirty Years Ago* (1878), L. T. Meade's *A Sweet Girl Graduate* (1891), and Frances Bridges Marshall's *The Master of St. Benedict's* (1893)—narratives that follow the exploits of young scholar-protagonists as they navigate the academic and social terrains of university life. The other two novels to be discussed—Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* (1895) and Max Beerbohm's *Zuleika Dobson* (1911)—are later anti-varsity novels of a sort that play with the conventions of university narrative and belonging. Specifically, this study is motivated by the presence of nostalgia within and evoked by all of these novels, considering the many ways that these literary texts participate alongside other cultural texts in the discourse of university nostalgia and, by extension, institutional power. Indeed, in Victorian literature of all kinds, nostalgia is an integral part of the allure that envelops and ultimately empowers the university. It informs the tourist literature, periodical tales and exposés, foundational and critical material dedicated to the university, and even those writings more generally academic, like Arnold's, that make the most of their university connection by way of nostalgia.

Victorian varsity novels contribute wholeheartedly to the cultural discourse of university nostalgia, but it must be emphasized that it is not simply the idea of *a* university that these texts douse in the rose-coloured mist of nostalgic allure. It is, more precisely, the idea of the "ancient" university that these novels depict; because, inasmuch as Victorian varsity novelists plotted and peopled a fictional academic scene, they invariably set their fictions against the recognizable backdrop of "Oxbridge"[2] and its timeworn traditions in a time when new upstart colleges and centres were laying claim to delivering other "university experiences." Even when disguised by another name, as in *Jude*'s "Christminster" or *Sweet Girl*'s "Kingsdene," it is quite evidently the "dreaming spires"[3] of Oxford or the "dappled quads"[4] of Cambridge that are indicated and

coveted. Thus, in its examination of the various nostalgias aroused through these novels and their neighbouring literature, this study must necessarily consider specific traditions, practices, and associations of Oxbridge. And, in adopting the term "ancient" in reference to these two historical universities and their traditions throughout, it is with the critical understanding that this was an important component in the imaginative construct, or "idea," of Oxbridge. England's oldest universities are far from ancient in a historical sense, but the Victorians were nonetheless fond of aligning them with much older institutions like Plato's Academy and the Alexandrian Library, and thus of granting them a patina well beyond their years.

Victorian Oxbridge is indeed an historical identity important to my analysis, but there is a yet wider historical frame of greater significance and it is the interplay between the two that informs the argument of this work. Nostalgia, as it is typically understood, depends upon a tension or contrast between two states: between a lived present and a remembered or adopted past, between a perceived reality and a mistimed or misplaced desire. If England's oldest universities are sites of nostalgia, as is the premise of this study, what then is their supposedly contentious context, the environment that might inspire a psychological escape to the past? As I argue, the contextual history of Victorian England against which university nostalgia works, indeed the modern movement of most conceivable interest to the ancient halls of learning is, what I shall term henceforth, *the knowledge industry*. This is a term borrowed from both Martin Daunton's and Alan Rauch's texts on Victorian knowledge culture[5] (discussed more thoroughly in the next phase of the tour), chosen for its accurate depiction of what knowledge becomes in the nineteenth century. The Victorian era nurtured a culture of knowledge and learning, and spawned a competitive industry—of press and periodical publication, research societies, public libraries and museums, civic and women's colleges, local lectures—to support it. Along with this

industry came a whole new ideological frame for knowledge as a commodity for unrestricted, widespread, fast, fragmented, and visual consumption. And while the universities still held their own during this time, they were suddenly not the only means for the aspiring scholar to satisfy his or her inquiring mind. Indeed, in an age of competition, the university was inexorably drawn into the knowledge market. It was called upon, for example, to legitimate new knowledges (and safeguard the old) through a formal curriculum, to participate in the experiment and exhibition of new and foreign knowledges through the adoption of laboratories and museums, and, most significantly, to offer the exclusive Oxbridge brand of knowledge to a much wider and more diverse assembly of paying scholars. The relationship between these two entities, Victorian Oxbridge and the Victorian knowledge industry, would seem at the outset to provide the perfect grounds of tension for the birth of nostalgia in their diverging associations with old and new methods of learning, with the university as the literal epitome of *old-school* appeal. Indeed, distancing his beloved Oxford from an "epoch of dissolution and transformation" was the very spark for Arnold's nostalgic outburst in 1865. "Who would not gladly keep clear, from all these passing clouds, an august institution which was there before they arose, and which will be there when they have blown over?" asks the steadfast Oxonian for whom the experiments and blunders of progress take on the transience of cosmic vapours against the permanence of his "unravaged" university (Arnold, "Preface" xv, xvi, xviii). However, to see the university as entirely resistant to, or indeed impervious to, the Victorian knowledge industry would be a near-sighted estimation, as I shall point out in the course of our tour, and throughout this dissertation. Rather, the university needed to participate in the knowledge culture of which it was now a part, while at the same time seeming to preserve some aspect of its identity as a knowledge centre with an originary brand of knowledge steeped in tradition, liberality, masculinity, and exclusivity. And

so the question becomes: how did it participate? How did it define its role and, more precisely, what power did it have to distinguish it from other key players in the knowledge market and fortify its identity against competing ideologies of knowledge? My project argues that what set the venerable Oxbridge apart in Victorian culture and imagination, the very key to its modern identity and its competitive edge, was simultaneously its posture of conflict with the modern age: its association with the past, its initiation of nostalgia. Thus, examining the nostalgic varieties of the varsity novel and other texts, my primary argument suggests that university nostalgia is not only the sentimental impulse that arises from contemplating 'now and then.' More critically, it is cultivated as a countermeasure to the precepts of the Victorian knowledge industry, establishing the traditional university's identity against or imposingly alongside modern knowledge initiatives and education reform in a time of change. In other words, I shall argue that nostalgia is the university's provocative calling card within the knowledge market.

My approach, informed by new historicism, recognizes a discursive interplay between fiction, nonfiction, and socio-historic developments, evident in my project's examination of the ways in which various initiatives of the Victorian knowledge industry—namely the tourism industry, the civic college movement, the women's college movement, and the university extension movement—provide both illuminating contextual backdrop and textual output, against which the diverse nostalgias of the varsity novel are revealed with promising interpretive possibility. It also entails viewing literature as a "material artifact," and my project argues accordingly that the Victorian varsity novel participates in both the cultural force of university nostalgia and, by way of bringing the past to bear on the present, in the modernizing force of the university. Even more specifically, my new historicist approach is indebted to Foucauldian method, as elucidated and demonstrated in *History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. Foucault's

influence on the architecture of my work is the emphasis on power and discourse: the analysis prompted by considering how certain power relations enable certain discourses, and conversely how certain discourses are used to support power relations (97). For Foucault, power is a "multiplicity of force relations" and the process by which confrontation shifts and defines these relations (92). Discourse, operating strategically within this "field of force relations" (92), functions as either instrument or effect of power (101-02). Accordingly, in considering the confrontational interplay between traditional Oxbridge and the Victorian knowledge industry's various movements, I identify university nostalgia (comprising various discursive strands) as a key discourse emerging at this juncture of confrontation: as an important effect of these power relations and integrally linked to its points of resistance. Importantly, Foucault's insistence on the multi-strategic "polyvalence" of discourse within power structures directs multiple lines of thought throughout this dissertation (100): for one, the idea that university nostalgia encompasses both a productive and destructive strain, capable of both building up and destroying its scholars; also, my assertion that Oxbridge nostalgia is not in true opposition to the knowledge industry (despite its association with the past and tradition) but rather a vital participant in establishing the ancient university's role—as a model of authenticity, a space of boyhood and play, a shrine of memory for the feminized home, a preserver of exclusivity—in a new age. My project argues that university nostalgia is a key part of the knowledge industry as one more kind of consumed knowledge; it is a way of knowing the university, a method of its marketing and consumption, and the varsity novel plays into this modern project.

Our brief orientation complete, let us now walk through the three critical fields that surround and inform this project, marking the scholarly projects of particular relevance to our focus along the way. First is the well-trod field of Victorian cultural history within which many

scholars have surveyed knowledge in Victorian England, including the diverse and deliberate ways that it was organized, disseminated, and marketed. Both Alan Rauch's *Useful Knowledge: The Victorians, Morality, and the March of Intellect* and Martin Daunton's edited collection *The Organization of Knowledge in Victorian Britain* launch their arguments upon the concept of the "knowledge industry," recognizing a Victorian culture where knowledge is a pervasive commodity, and where authority is established in its delineation, marketing, and control. The term is effective in that it grants knowledge a material identity and permits it within the frames of industrial, commercial, and competitive discourses. Accordingly, one can see knowledge as one would a thing manufactured, traded, bought and sold, advertised and consumed. Having knowledge conceptually materialized in this way allows me to introduce the idea of nostalgia as a competing article of commercial potential and popular consumption, within a similar frame of discursive reference.

Rauch analyzes the early nineteenth-century novel and other "knowledge texts" as reflections of cultural attitudes on the tensions between scientific knowledge and morality, with an eye to both the reinforcement of knowledge and the various efforts to "sustain its moral force" (3). In the same way that Rauch sets up the contentious relationship between scientific knowledge and morality only to show how Victorian literature attempts to work out a mutual accommodation, I analyze nostalgia and the knowledge industry, arguing that nostalgia, and more precisely university nostalgia, carves out a place of power within a modern industry of which it seemingly has no part. Nostalgia is, like morality, a force in its own right, and, just as morality accommodates new knowledges in literature by tempering them with responsibility, human intellect, and a kind of ethical adaptation (Rauch 16, 20, 21), so too does nostalgia accommodate and subtly unhinge new ideas of knowledge with persistent memories of the past.

The difference is that where Rauch understands the novel as a harmonious emendation to a Victorian crisis of faith in the face of new knowledge, an exception to the cultural norm where morality is felt to be a threatened ideal, I analyze the varsity novel as part of a seamless fabric of cultural consciousness where the university is concerned: nostalgia is not merely a romantic ideal or the prerogative of fancy, but rather accepted by sober thought as very securely part of the university's modern identity.

Daunton's text, with chapters devoted to specific epistemological sites such as books, journals, exhibitions, libraries, academic societies, alternative colleges, and, of course, the old universities, is in many respects a map of the Victorian knowledge scene. Its relevance to my focus is not only its emphasis on the importance of *site*, but most aptly its consideration of the university's dominant role in the Victorian network of organized knowledge. As knowledge grew increasingly diversified from mid-century onwards, observes Daunton, spreading and fragmenting across different sites, disciplines, classes, and markets, the ancient university saw occasion to participate in the system of organization, to extend its reach in order to control what had previously always rested neatly within its walls. Thus, by founding campus museums and labs, devising systematic curricula, reforming testing systems and admission policies, extending liberal lectures to industrial centres, and eventually adopting the research ideal, in short through a myriad of ways, the university sought to maintain authority over knowledge dissemination and largely succeeded in doing so. My project begins with Daunton's premise that the ancient university, despite being one of the oldest, remained a powerful site of knowledge throughout the decades of knowledge expansion. But more importantly, I will move on to consider how this site of knowledge is translated into a site of nostalgia in the varsity novel and related university

literatures, and the ways in which nostalgia becomes an important product of the university, and another method of its disseminating influence.

The second contextual field we must pass through is the ever-growing field of nostalgia theory and criticism. It is here where we might consider not only what nostalgia means to the Victorians and their literature, but also, as the air from the knowledge field lingers fresh in our minds, what it has to do with knowing. Much has been written on the nineteenth-century shift of nostalgia from an erstwhile pathological homesickness to a decidedly more harmless and domesticated sentiment. As Linda Austin observes most succinctly in her recent study *Nostalgia in Transition*, nostalgia was not only depathologized over the course of the nineteenth century, but was transformed into a "cultural aesthetic": "a way of producing and consuming the past" (2). Indeed, in its transition from affliction to aesthetic, nostalgia becomes normalized for the Victorians as a particularly effective way of combining memory, emotion, and creative imagination. Any residual traces of melancholia or other psychological disturbance in the modern "nostalgiac," notes Austin, called for aesthetic rather than medical treatments, such as a turn to the pastoral (with its Romantic childhood associations), reading sentimental poetry, or engaging with some replica or performance of home. This latter point is striking and bears repeating: Austin observes that nostalgia was fully accepted by the Victorians as a kind of performed memory, what she calls a "simulation" or replica of familiarity (5-6, 9), such that what was before merely a cure for the disease of homesickness (physicians prescribing nature walks or the comfort of mementos and readings of home, for example) gradually becomes the very stuff of nostalgia itself. More to the point, Austin distinguishes modern nostalgia from its earlier incarnations by its "tolerance for inauthenticity" even as it remains preoccupied with the authentic (3). By linking nostalgia to creation, Austin suggests that it can be culturally

constructed and manipulated. She suggests that nostalgia can be a form of knowledge through the consumption of make-believe, which paves the way for thinking of literature, like the varsity novel, as projects of nostalgia within a larger cultural framework in which the university may be reformed and re-identified. My discussion shares keenly Austin's interest in a nostalgia created in part through "inauthentic" replications or suggestions, noting for instance the ways that the Victorian varsity novel's depiction of academic tableaux, campus spectacle and souvenir, or dorm-room domesticity evoke longings for various traditions embraced by the university and contribute to its wider cultural identity.

Inarguably the strongest indication of nostalgia's acceptance as a Victorian aesthetic norm is its ubiquity in fiction, and especially in the novel. Given the Victorians' notorious propensity for sentimental expression, nostalgia theory is commonly paired with the study of nineteenth-century fiction, fiction in which longing for the past is often a cue for reader sympathy and a mark of emotional or moral functionality. One sees, across a swath of Victorian fiction, nostalgia aimed at various pasts lived, imagined, or remembered. Pining for lost childhoods (*A Christmas Carol* or *David Copperfield*), rustic lifestyles (*The Mill on the Floss*), pagan pasts (*The Return of the Native* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*), utopian pre-industrial routine (*News from Nowhere*), and even the writer's craft itself (*New Grub Street*) are standard fare in the Victorian novel, where nostalgia facilitates both moral completion and moral complication for its modern protagonists. And of course, in keeping with its origins, nostalgia for the home as a place of childhood and beginnings, family, love and hardship, and developing identity, is present throughout Victorian literature and especially in those texts where the fictional domestic sphere reflects its importance as an institution in Victorian culture. Recognizing the diversity of nostalgia as it appears in Victorian fiction, my study subscribes to a

flexible definition of nostalgia, one that is neither delineated by individual history and association nor accessed solely through fixed sites of experience. Tamara Wagner emphasizes this same flexibility in *Longing: Narratives of Nostalgia in the British Novel, 1740-1890,* positing Victorian nostalgia as neither wholly spatial nor temporal, but an arresting combination of both. In this sense, longing for the home diffuses into longing for other places and others' histories. Victorian nostalgia as it appears in the novel is also not entirely about remembering, as Nicholas Dames points out in *Amnesiac Selves: Nostalgia, Forgetting, and British Fiction, 1810-1870*, but is instead a form of willful amnesia, the eradication from the memory of the unnecessary or unpleasurable. He deems the peculiarity of nostalgia in Victorian narrative to be its "equation of remembrance to a pleasurable sort of forgetting" (Dames 5). With respect to my project, the most enlightening of Dames's observations is his argument for nostalgia as the most progressive of memory modes, suited to its century in its unique orientation towards the present and the future (10). In this light, it is quite fitting to theorize nostalgia's industrial purposes, and how it might function in the modern market. Both Wagner's and Dames's works converge in their astute demonstrations of how nostalgia is complexly formulated in Victorian fiction, and how it has travelled far from simply the pain of wishing to return home. My study uses the tools of both nostalgia and the novel to explore the evolving identity of an institution—other than the home—in Victorian cultural imagination.

My dissertation isolates the university as a site of longing, and, through its study of university texts, establishes a critical and as yet unstudied link between nostalgia and the university. Like the home, the university is a site of belonging, residency, and development, and is thus prone to triggering human attachment, but unlike the home it is a unique site of fixity, of youth ever passing through and yet simultaneously frozen in time, such that it evokes nostalgia

for a past captured and unchanging. Such is the appeal of the generic varsity novel in effect, with its familiar settings, scenes, and intrigues. Finally, the university is a place like no other in its collapse of mind and body: of extraordinary learning and ordinary physical maturity; of work and play; where grand flights of the mind are set in motion alongside common developments of human maturity. It is a site that encourages the mind to reach beyond limits and the developing body to know them. Such a collapse is aligned with the collapse of present and past, where the body interacts with the university as a space of present experience—through growth, sport, love, human contact, routine, order, ritual, uniform, etc.—while the mind is called upon to do this *and* simultaneously interact with the knowledge of past human experience. Thus, if nostalgia is that one mode of memory catering to a kaleidoscopic understanding of time, the university is the ideal site to own it. And let us not forget, in our nomination of the university as an ideal site of nostalgia worthy of study, that the diagnostics of the sentiment first began in the university. Indeed, the idea of nostalgia may have started with a focus on the home, but it was born in the university in a 1688 dissertation by medical student Johannes Hofer at the University of Basel in Switzerland for which the human case-studies were not only Swiss mercenaries, but also students, pining for home. Thus the university is inextricably involved in the advent of nostalgia, as an *anti-home* in many ways, but also a place where home and school, individual and collective, longing and belonging, are intricately entwined.

In considering nostalgic constructs of Oxbridge, it shall be helpful, throughout this dissertation, to draw important connections to Foucault's heterotopia. There is an interesting connection between nostalgic space and the heterotopia in that both are spaces conceptualized critically in ways that align them with or juxtapose them against other spaces and/or times. The university, nostalgically rendered, functions as a heterotopic counter-site, simultaneously

representing, contesting, and inverting other sites (the home, the school, the workplace, the pilgrimage site) positioned alongside it in a network of relations (Foucault, "Other Spaces" 24). In addition to examining the heterotopic university's critical reframing of other spaces in each of the chapters to come, I shall consider how, in line with Foucault's theory, its rituals and strictures of admission emphasize its touristic and social exclusivity, and finally how it constructs its own unique measurements and rituals of time even as it valorizes the traditional passage of time in order to establish its nostalgic presence ("Other Spaces" 26).

With respect to my own specific reading of nostalgia in the varsity novel and other university texts, there are three important points that govern my analysis. First, I will focus on communal / collective nostalgias rather than personal ones; so that nostalgia for the authentic, for boyhood, for the home, and for an exclusive centre are evoked within and through these novels, but importantly as collective ideals that merely use their scholar-protagonists as means of conveying the sentiment. The varsity novel's neighbour texts will prove particularly helpful in emphasizing the collective nature of nostalgia in that periodical and marketing literature disseminated for a wider public may point directly to cultural longings without the pretence of novelistic intimacy. A focus on cultural or collective nostalgia leads to the possibility of viewing nostalgia as a literary project, a point emphasized by Dames in his noting that mnemonic strategies of Victorian life were a crucial part of the Victorian novel's "cultural labor" (18). Thus, my project demonstrates throughout how university nostalgia functions *in* the varsity novel but more importantly how it is produced *through* the varsity novel. Second, my argument positions nostalgia as a cultural response to social change. In her influential study *The Future of Nostalgia*, Svetlana Boym asserts that nostalgia is often a defence mechanism or a form of resistance in a time of change (xiv), which falls in line with the typical critical view of nostalgia

as a conservative impulse. This is an apt premise, but in applying it to the realm of varsity fiction, my study understands resistance as merely a prefatory posture to acceptance, where university nostalgia does not wholeheartedly embrace denial or regression or incompatibility with modern reform. In arguing for university nostalgia as a force of resistance, I do not register it as anti-modern; I will argue that where conservative nostalgia is present in the varsity novel, it is subversively positioned as part of a larger scheme of modernity, of re-forming the university with the past as its modern trademark. Indeed, the various nostalgias I identify in these texts display an intriguing involvement and cooperation with the ideals of modernity and its knowledge industry; the university in the Victorian varsity novel is not a place stuck in the past, but rather a place where the past is harnessed as a modern prerogative in the service of contributing to the modern university experience.

My third and final specification on nostalgia argues for it as both a productive and destructive cultural force, as evinced in the varsity novel, where the ancient university's power comes at the expense of the scholar's academic faith and willingness to surrender to the university's charm. Customarily, university nostalgia is a productive force, associated as it is with memories of youth, scholastic celebrity, familiar routine, and the value of learning. But, even while acknowledging this custom and noting the many ways that nostalgia is positively displayed in varsity literature, my work also considers seriously their suggestion of university nostalgia's destructive potential, evidenced most glaringly in Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*. Quite obviously, the idea of a destructive nostalgia in Victorian fiction defies the era's typical designation of nostalgia as harmless sentimentality. But in attending to the destructive, I do not harken back to a medicalized analysis of homesickness, to a nostalgia owned by an individual human psyche susceptible to derangement. I remain focussed on a cultural discourse of

university nostalgia, but also on the ways in which destruction is enfolded into this discourse and contributes to the university's power and influence. In its intimate ties to the ideas of tradition, prejudice, exclusivity, and waste, the university nostalgia I analyze throughout this dissertation either causes or celebrates the destruction of more than a few characters in varsity fiction. Indeed, although he figures in the only generic tragedy studied in this dissertation and is certainly the only tragic *protagonist*, Jude Fawley is not the only tragic scholar (or tragic nostalgiac) encountered throughout this dissertation's various varsity texts; flawed, melancholy, eccentric, and martyr scholars appear throughout varsity fiction's various genre, functioning strategically in the production of university nostalgia and in the reinforcement of the idea of the university in cultural consciousness. Thus, for the purposes of my study, attention to literary genre will not isolate novels from the textual fabric of university nostalgia, but simply facilitate discussion on the recasting of nostalgia in different lights (it functions quite differently in comedic or romantic varsity novels than it does in Hardy's tragedy or Beerbohm's satire *Zuleika Dobson* for instance) and provide a useful vocabulary for considering the effects of nostalgia on the scholars both at the centres and at the peripheries of these varsity plots.

Vast though it is, we have dallied long enough in the field of nostalgia and our tour takes us to our final field of interest, that of varsity novel criticism. The presence of the university is felt most prominently here, with projects dedicated specifically to that genre of fiction which sets the university at centre-stage alongside the scholars and dons who enact its heroic plots. The tradition of the varsity novel occupies such a relatively small critical space that we find ourselves rather appropriately in something more like an academic quadrangle than a wide field, where its major works rise quite visibly across its small and enclosed expanse. Stepping into this space, one is likely to stub one's toe on the earliest and most imposing work on the subject to date,

Mortimer Proctor's *The English University Novel* (1957), a helpful monument that expediently defines the university novel genre in terms of its conventions and plots, but is also vexingly dated in its tendency to obstruct any discussions of gender. Recognizing the "sameness of plot" and "formula" of university novels as Proctor does is crucial to understanding their literary identity and, as I have suggested, is important to my consideration of how they inspire nostalgia. Proctor highlights many of these formulaic elements including the freshman of humble or parochial origin and the uncongenial tutor, neglected studies and the distraction of social exploit, town and gown rows, wine parties, boat races, field excursions, and all manner of youthful tricks and pranks (1-3). Like most varsity novel critics, Proctor is concerned primarily with mapping the genre and its conventions across its entire existence, from its earliest Chaucerian suggestions to its mid-twentieth century development, but he indirectly validates a dedicated Victorian study in his assertion that the university novel is really a "nineteenth-century phenomenon" (12), a genre most prolifically produced when the universities, and especially Oxford, had established enough of a unique identity and enough unique traditions to warrant its own literary world with its own customs, slang, and peculiar stock characters. There has been no recent study of the Victorian university novel alone, where it is not treated as a mere precursor to a more established twentieth-century genre as in Elaine Showalter's *Faculty Towers: The Academic Novel and Its Discontents* (2005) or Zoe Hope Bulaitis's *Value and the Humanities: The Neoliberal University and Our Victorian Inheritance* (2020). Thus, my project distinguishes itself by shifting the spotlight from much-studied twentieth-century texts to their oft-neglected Victorian ancestors in order to make important connections to the history and culture out of which they emerge.

My attention to the Victorian character of this genre informs my preference for the title "varsity novel" over its other more common and sometimes interchangeable designations of

"university," "academic," "campus," or even "Oxford" novel. Typically, though not always, "academic" and "campus" novel are employed to specify the satiric mid-twentieth century Anglo-American university-set novel, focussed most frequently on university faculty and administrators, those permanent residents of the academic world. Novels focussing on students, the university's transitory residents, are more popular in the Victorian and early twentieth-century for the very good reason that the university in the nineteenth century was a far more transitory space, a space of temporary engagements and divided duties (often academic-clerical), and had yet to become the home of the professional academic. These student-centred novels are typically termed "university" novels in earlier criticism, as Proctor's text demonstrates. Rather than conform to the university novel designate, however, I adopt the less common "varsity novel" because it more properly points to the idea of the student-appropriated university within a Victorian context. Varsity, or more accurately '*varsity,* was originally a vulgar slang abbreviation for the university, but it was popularized throughout the nineteenth century and eventually adapted to common cultural usage, appearing in local publications such as the *Oxford Magazine* in casual reference to its school, and especially in reference to sporting matches and other youth-focussed events. Oxford and Cambridge's eventual adoption of the slang term (see the founding of the Varsity Match in 1872) suggests another intriguing way that the university's identity shifts to accommodate or rather crystallize around its cultural image.

One of the indisputable blindspots of Proctor's early work is its rather obtuse dismissal of women's contributions to the varsity novel tradition, what he terms a "quaint and preposterous bypath of university fiction" or, more damningly, their "monstrous pictures of undergraduate life" (140, 2). A much needed twenty-first century corrective to what she deems Proctor's misogynistic treatment of women's university novels are Anna Bogen's very recent studies of

these narratives and the gender and institutional politics that condition them.[6] Bogen's research rounds out this critical ground effectively by showing how Proctor's "formula" of the university novel is translated quite differently by authors focussing on the female scholar's inaugural entry into the traditionally masculine groves of fictional academe. Like Bogen's, my study recognizes women's varsity novels not only as important players in the varsity novel tradition but also, for my argument in particular, as vital threads in the discursive fabric of university nostalgia. Indeed, the nostalgic allure of Oxbridge permeates the fictions of pioneering female scholars in a very unique way, at once a force of enticement and veiled intimidation. Thus, my feminist approach prompts an investigation into the ways in which the varsity novel's nostalgic evocations are greatly mired in the gender politics of education, into how the university is divided and shared as both an historic and imagined space. Put more bluntly, I investigate how the idea of the university as an imagined male space comes to be at precisely the moment when it ceases to be only for men. Finally, the inclusion of women's varsity novels enriches my study by allowing for an interesting parallel argument to take shape on the connections between nostalgia as a gendered force and the increasing feminization of the scholar in university literature. From my third chapter onward, as my discussion turns to unconventional scholars and their more unconventional varsity tales, the feminized scholar applies to all, from Marshall's Lucy Rae to Hardy's Jude Fawley, for whom nostalgia facilitates a barrier to belonging and a closing off of the traditional (masculine) university interior.

We have reached our final destination, the intersection at which these three fields meet. A space for this project has been cleared, the site where a culture of knowledge frames and gives shape to a discursive edifice of university nostalgia, and for which varsity novels and other university texts are the very stones of its construction. Though the materials of new construction

are never so precious as the debris of age and ruin, let us endeavour to make sense rather than sentiment of them for now. The texts I have chosen to include in my study are all proper genre-specific varsity novels, with detailed accounts of university life and student experience. The only anomalies are Hardy's and Beerbohm's novels, university novels unquestionably, but ones that do not fit the varsity narrative conventions. Both novels are important to this work, however, as explorations of destructive university longing without belonging, and as tragic and satiric counterpoints to the varsity novel's comedic or romantic norms. Importantly, my work excludes those novels that use the university setting primarily as a stage for other concerns and focusses, a temporary stop-over in a multi-setting life story, or any works that prioritize personal nostalgia over collective or institutional nostalgia. With respect to temporal criteria, I have selected texts published after 1850, the year of the Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge,[7] when the ancient universities were compelled to reform and meet the changing demands of the modern age. The second half of the century was significant for knowledge expansion, marking the "museum age," the opening of the first civic colleges, and many important scientific developments. Austin argues furthermore that nostalgia took on its aesthetic association for the Victorians in the second half of the century following advancements in mental science, and so it makes sense to consider the discourse of university nostalgia in these later decades when nostalgia was free of the medical mind and became something to play with in cultural imagination. Finally, with the publication of John Henry Newman's *The Idea of a University* in 1852, conceptualizing new (and old) ideas of the university was very much in Victorian minds in the later decades of the century. And because Victorian "ideas" are so often worked out through fiction, varsity novels in these later decades are especially pertinent for a new study of a nostalgic university.

This dissertation's novels of focus are organized chronologically and according to the types of collective nostalgia they display, while each type of collective nostalgia is considered in counter-position to a particular ideological development of the knowledge industry. Chapter One, "Verdant's 'Varsity: Comedy and Commodity," examines the Verdant Green series by Cuthbert Bede (aka Edward Bradley), which includes *The Adventures of Mr. Verdant Green* (1853), *The Further Adventures of Verdant Green* (1854), and *Married and Done For* (1857). The focus of this chapter is commodified nostalgia, or rather the way that Oxford is humorously desired, marketed, toured, miniaturized, and remembered as an authentic site of history and learning. Elizabeth Outka presents the very useful idea of the "commodified authentic" to describe the various ways in which "authentic" pasts are marketed and consumed beginning in the late nineteenth century and continuing throughout the rising commercialism of the century following.[8] Although a mid-century text, *Verdant Green* displays the idea of the commodified authentic quite persistently, displaying a university that is alternately tourist site and museum exhibit, and scholars marked with touristic impulses and experiences. Thus, this varsity novel series engages with the tourism and museum movements of the knowledge industry, and an important discussion of my first chapter considers the way that, through the varsity novel, the ancient university becomes not only a site in which to study, but a site worthy to be studied itself. That is, I use the varsity novel to consider the ways in which the university is understood to market its own nostalgia. A key component of my research for this analysis is an investigation of Oxford and Cambridge tourist literature, an important portal for considering how university nostalgia was culturally exhibited.

Chapter Two, "Lost Boys and Varsity Play," explores the collective nostalgia of boyhood and play, and considers the university as a space where boyhood play is lost as students develop

into working men. The key texts examined in this chapter are Thomas Hughes's *Tom Brown at Oxford* (1861) and Henry Cadwallader Adams's *Wilton of Cuthbert's: A Tale of Undergraduate Life Thirty Years Ago* (1878), two prototypical varsity novels in their adherence to the comedic-romantic genre, masculine ideals, and the venerated university setting. These novels address the Victorian marriage of knowledge and industry, learning and labour, by celebrating a site of knowledge that distinguishes itself from all others as a place where youth and social development are valued. As Paul Deslandes argues, in *Oxbridge Men: British Masculinity and the Undergraduate Experience 1850-1920*, the universities of Oxford and Cambridge became increasingly associated with masculinity, sport and competition, and the transition from boyhood into manhood (2, 3, 49). Importantly, this suggests that the university is a place of boyhood inevitably lost, and that a key part of its cultural identity in the modern age, and more specifically its role in the "golden age of childhood," is a certain ownership of boyhood nostalgia. This second chapter analyzes the varsity novel within the larger arena of universities and male youth culture, considering them alongside shorter varsity periodical tales that condense the university experience to one of "rowdy" play. Hughes's and Adams's varsity novels participate in this culture of university youth by detailing the exploits of heroic English freshmen, and its loss through the inclusion of prematurely aged and overworked counterparts who act as heartbreaking, melancholic nodes embedded within these otherwise lighthearted campus romps. Thus, I argue that it is not only boyhood lost, but boyhood wasted that these novels highlight as part of their nostalgic projects. In addition to youth texts, this chapter also investigates the vocational ethos of the upstart labour or civic colleges against the liberal ethos of Oxbridge, with the intent of overlaying this liberal-vocational dichotomy with those of boyhood-manhood and play-work. I argue that the nostalgia of the varsity novel assumes a Victorian

emotional attachment to the liberality of Oxbridge over the vocational practicality of newer institutions, in the same way that short-lived boyhood and play were sure to be desired over the longer-lived and never-missed realities of adulthood and work.

Chapter Three, "Lost Women and Varsity Homemaking," looks at two women's varsity novels against the backdrop of the movement for women's higher education, a development of the knowledge industry that resulted in the opening of the first women's colleges at Oxford and Cambridge.[9] The key texts discussed and compared are L.T. Meade's *A Sweet Girl Graduate* (1891) and Frances Bridges Marshall's *The Master of St. Benedict's* (1893). As its title suggests, this chapter mirrors the lost boyhood nostalgia of the previous chapter by focussing on collective nostalgia for a lost womanhood, or more precisely a lost domestic feminine ideal. Pairing these two middle chapters, one sees how nostalgia in these Victorian texts prioritizes identities very differently for men and women: for the one a mere stage of development, endorsing certain freedoms; for the other a restrictive designation of social role, character, and environment. For both, the university becomes the site of nostalgic preservation, but it is only through the women's varsity novel that this impulse seems highly problematic. An important investigation for this chapter will be the way that the women's varsity novel trades on the more traditional definition of nostalgia as a longing for the home, but incorporating a distinctly Victorian gender-political agenda. The knot to be untangled is the unsettling irony of a culture and a literature that invites women to feel *at home* in the universities, rather than at school. In this chapter I examine the way that women's varsity fiction plays up the homemaker identity of the female student as a nostalgic homage to a more traditional feminine ideal, threatened by movements for equal education and the rise of new female identities like the New Woman and the Girton Girl. An important avenue of research for this section is an inquiry into the structure, ethos, and marketing

of women's colleges and the extent to which nostalgia for traditional womanhood and the traditional university are a part of the discursive bedrock of their foundation. Keeping in mind that the Oxbridge women's colleges were inarguably a part of the university establishment, whose tuitions supported the university's overall gain, my argument sees them not as any actual industrial or commercial opponent to the original men's colleges, but rather as representative of a challenging new ideology of the knowledge industry, that is, of equal-opportunity education, and of the university stripped of gender advantage. I argue that nostalgia in these novels works to separate the colleges ideologically, but problematically so, in terms of tradition, function, legitimacy, capability, and situation. Margaret Vickery has already launched an important study into the women's colleges of Oxbridge as they were conceived in Victorian England (in *Buildings for Bluestockings: The Architecture and Social History of the Women's Colleges in Late Victorian England*), noting how they were built as homes, according to domestic architectural design and steeped in the ideology of unthreatening feminine familiarity. In other words, the women's colleges were very much a kind of "playing house" vision of university scholarship. My analysis considers how and why the women's varsity novel plays into this domestic conservatism through nostalgia, and suggests that the idea of a co-ed university garners power by embracing the female scholar with a certain resistance and nostalgic regret.

Chapter Four, "Jude's Jerusalem: Tragedy and Tradition," considers the destructive and devastating potential of university nostalgia as depicted in a very unconventional and almost warped type of varsity novel. Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* (1896) is in many ways a tragic counterpoint to the comedic *Verdant Green* in that both project nostalgia for ancient hallowed Oxford / Christminster and both use the outsider scholar—the eternally naïve freshman and the obscure outcast—as the means of exploring this sentiment. The specific nostalgia I identify in

Hardy's novel addresses the impetus to open the universities to a wider spectrum of social classes and thereby reduce their exclusivity. Jude is the epitome of the modern scholar, self-taught and working class, the very person for whom the universities were beginning to open their doors via scholarships, changing admission policies, and, most significantly, the university extension movement. His tragedy, however, is that he buys into the old-world nostalgia of an exclusive knowledge community, a paradigm that ultimately excludes him. In this chapter I argue that nostalgia for university social exclusivity replaces its actual practices in admission policy, and that this nostalgia becomes a part of how the university is defined in the years of university reform. Specifically, it is a nostalgia for the university as an exclusive centre of pilgrimage that redefines and fortifies the university in an age of extension, expansion, and increasing inclusivity. For my research focus, much the same as Chapter One, I look at how Oxbridge is marketed to university visitors (in this case, extension students rather than tourists), but with an eye to texts that court nostalgia of the traditionally exclusive. In other words, I analyze the dark side of the "authentic" university, where tradition leads to unhealthy consumption and destructive conformity. My focus in this chapter is the way that Hardy, unlike the conventional varsity novelists, offers a harsh critique of university nostalgia by designating it a powerfully destructive influence, a seductive taint of the past that invariably infects the modern scholar.

My project concludes with a glance into a turn-of-the-century varsity novel, one that incorporates the nostalgias of the Victorian novels, and yet heralds the satiric bent of the genre in the twentieth century. Max Beerbohm's *Zuleika Dobson* (1911) was begun in 1898, two years after Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*, and there is an intriguing kinship between the two in the way that nostalgia envelops Oxford like a vapour, a ghostly atmosphere making the university setting

an almost incalculable dreamscape. Like Hardy, albeit far less harshly, Beerbohm forces university nostalgia to face certain critical examination. Through lighthearted satire, Beerbohm's novel juxtaposes earnest nostalgia with farcical tragedy, rendering the former a force that winks at death while the spirit of Oxford remains intact. Satire also allows the text to subtly dismantle and then revise the golden sentiment and its visual triggers, in time for a new era of varsity novels.

As our tour comes to an end, I point again to the material I have gathered here from other critical sites, on the Victorian knowledge industry, aesthetic nostalgia, and the varsity novel to begin a new conversation on university nostalgia and its presence and power in the Victorian cultural imagination. It is admittedly ambitious to propose a new addition to existing scholarship. Like the founding of a new college on an old campus, it has yet to grow the revered ivy and moss of distinguished age or awaken nostalgia in its scholars' hearts, but where sincere learning and a dedication to knowledge are housed within, such sentimental distinctions may happily come with time.

Notes

[1] These include, among others, the infamous "town and gown" political riots between students and townspeople as early as the 13th century; Royalist party campaigning during the English Civil War in the 17th century; the Oxford or Tractarian Movement of the 1840s, advocating for High Church doctrine; and the movement for women's higher education.

[2] This useful portmanteau originates in Thackeray's *Pendennis* (1848), an homage to the author's own Cambridge but with a nod to its older rival as well. Virginia Woolf would later solidify the term's imaginative power as a reference for both places and yet neither in claiming "Oxbridge is an invention" (5) in *A Room of One's Own* (1929). The term will prove ubiquitous in its usefulness throughout this project.

[3] Matthew Arnold, "Thyrsis," in *New Poems* (London: 1867)

[4] Merritt Moseley, *The Academic Novel: New and Classic Essays*, 11.

[5] *The Organization of Knowledge in Victorian Britain* (2005); *Useful Knowledge: The Victorians, Morality, and the March of Intellect* (2001).

[6] See *Women's University Fiction 1880-1945* (2013), *Women's University Narratives, 1890-1945* (2015).

[7] This Commission was followed swiftly by both the Oxford University Reform Act of 1854 and the Cambridge University Act of 1856, which released prospective students from obligatory subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles (at either matriculation or graduation) and opened the universities to members outside the Church of England.

[8] See *Consuming Traditions: Modernity, Modernism, and the Commodified Authentic* (Oxford UP, 2009).

[9] Despite the establishment of these colleges and access to lectures and examinations, women were not granted degrees or full membership at Oxford and Cambridge until 1920 and 1948 respectively.

Chapter One

Verdant's Varsity: Comedy and Commodity

Preface

There is a general bustle in the Assembly Room at the Oxford Town Hall as the Oxford Tourist Committee gathers for its second annual meeting to discuss the ongoing scheme of Oxford tourism.[1] It is March 14, 1899, and the meeting is called to order on a most congratulatory note by Mr. English, the honoured committee secretary, who proceeds to deliver a glowing report of their first year's endeavours to market the attractions of the old university town to visitors and boost its trade and tourist traffic during the "deadly dullness" of the Long Vacation. The successful dissemination of their own Oxford tourist pamphlet and many encouraging visitor testimonials are met with rounds of applause by the committee and the continued support of local tradesmen and lodging-house keepers with a cheerful "hear hear!" Yes, the committee unanimously agrees that, with respect to Oxford tourism, "the game was worth the candle." And yet, Mr. English, humorously dubbed "the Cook of Oxford" for his insight on all matters of tourism, [2] finds it necessary to disrupt the general elation for a moment of sober thought (this was Oxford, after all) on an important issue concerning those most undesirable of modern tourists, *the day-trippers*: those who "came for the day and left their sandwich papers in All Souls' Chapel," who stood "with hand-book in hand, open-mouthed, staring at some interesting building to the great scorn of every passer by," those sight-seeing automatons of the tourist trade who practised their craft here exactly as they did elsewhere with no sense of discrimination or deep appreciation, and this was Oxford after all! The committee must not support these crass individuals, argues Mr. English, and must instead rally behind select organized groups of a less hurried and more discerning character. But the committee members

are of two minds on this topic. Most agree on the disagreeable nature of the day-tripper to be sure; however, Mr. Hugh Hall (after many apologies for his previous truancy and many respects paid to the honourable Mr. English) stands to observe that these undesirable tourists are unavoidable products of the railway age and its cheap tourist ticket,[3] and notes, moreover, that their spending habits are indisputably beneficial to Oxford trade. Continuing, Mr. Hall dares to suggest, by way of emphasis (but still with due respect to Mr. English), that even one most inclined to balk at the day-tripper is bound to adopt that very same guise (guidebook in hand, etc.) at some point in his life as the most practical way of learning about other places. So, notwithstanding the general consensus to persevere in their tourism efforts, the committee recognizes a certain tension between nostalgic resistance to and commercial impetus for tourism against the backdrop of venerable sites. That the tourists would and should come to Oxford is a matter of course for these modern gentlemen, but what exactly was the proper way for them to appreciate the town and its university as they went about their touring? For this answer they turn to literature and find it in a piece of poetic prose. An extract from Charles Lamb's essay "Oxford in the Vacation"[4] is forthwith read aloud for the committee's pleasure; it is deemed an exemplary model of Oxford touristic expression ("hear hear!") and, moreover, one that ought to inspire the committee to market the same Oxford "charm" that Lamb saw and imbue tourists (desirable or otherwise) with the same "spirit" in which he wrote of its hallowed halls, its elusive antiquity, and the compulsion to imagine oneself in the shadow of its traditions.

As it was reported in the pages of *Jackson's Oxford Journal* a few days after the meeting was adjourned, this was a fairly routine committee gathering with nothing very much more pressing on the agenda than a report of progress and a general plan to carry on as they had been. So why begin this chapter with a peek into this meeting? Because, first of all, in the broadest

sense a Victorian committee dedicated to Oxford tourism, and concerned with the various confrontations possible between a modern industry for the masses and an old institution for the select few, indicates the extent to which the university was engaged with tourism and vice versa, a mutual engagement that is of particular interest to this chapter. Secondly, because in searching for the appropriate tourist approach to Oxford, the committee landed squarely in the realm of literature and nostalgia. With Lamb's reflective essay deemed an ideal model of touristic expression, they make an intriguing connection between commercial and non-commercial touristic literature and their displays of nostalgia for touristic purpose, a connection explored fully in this chapter's analytical pairing of the varsity novel with tourist guidebooks. But, above all, this meeting's importance lies in the aforementioned tension with respect to university tourism that these men were inadvertently grappling with, the vacillation between anti- and pro-tourism sentiment fueled by the seemingly opposing fires of nostalgia and commercial progress. This chapter is interested in what happens when the ancient university confronts the modern tourism industry in literature, and specifically in what discursive nostalgias erupt from the encounter. Oxford's Assembly Room witnessed one such eruption that afternoon: as the protective instinct and unequivocal pride for tradition came to strategic terms with commercial persuasion, the idea of a 'commodified nostalgia' was born. "Let them tour our university, but keep nostalgia the price and product of admission" was the satisfactory thought that closed the meeting, and the intriguing one that opens this chapter.

Preamble

In this chapter, I situate the Victorian university and the Victorian tourism industry on a Foucauldian grid of power relations, examining the confrontations between the two at various junctures, but with particular interest in the discourse of university nostalgia that emerges at

these junctures and serves to empower both tactically and strategically. The tourism industry is theoretically quite different from the university, especially as it pertains to accessing knowledge. As an important engine of the Victorian knowledge industry, tourism conceived of knowledge as moveable, exhibitable, and commodifiable, linking it to the visit, the tour, the crowd, and the consumable object. As something that one travelled to or through or with, knowledge was no longer confined to the book, the classroom, or the monastic cell where learning and enlightenment had for centuries held their most faithful devotees to isolation and fixity. In many ways the university still associated knowledge acquisition with these very ideas of book, class, and cell but, more broadly still, with the idea of one all-encompassing site of knowledge. The university was *the* site of advanced learning, and from there one gained access to the world. Interestingly, if one identifies a point of contention on the topic of moveable versus fixed knowledge acquisition, one can in fact locate the university-tourism power relationship centuries earlier in the Grand Tour, which tied the university to ideas of tourism and tourism to ideas of education. Up until the eighteenth century, and before the tourism industry really took off in the nineteenth, the Grand Tour was understood as the recommended culmination of a traditional classical university education for aristocratic sons. Called "the Moving Academy," it was essentially education formally structured as a tour, with the graduate travelling to great historical and social sites around the world as a kind of successive academic or university experience. Quite evidently then, up until the eighteenth century the Grand Tour represented one particular point of exchange between university and tourism on the topics of educational completion, privileged practice, spaces of learning, and methods of learning. It legitimated university education by acting as a practical complement to theoretical learning and a ritualistic culmination of studies that the university (literally) set in motion; but it also simultaneously legitimated the

tour as distinct from the university, as the scholar's escape from fixed learning and his first venture into the "real" world.

In the nineteenth century, however, the university-tourism exchange shifts focus from the Grand Tour to university tourism, while still maintaining its foundation of confrontation on questions of knowledge, movement, and fixity. Swept up in the domestic tourism boom of Victorian England,[5] Oxford and Cambridge are deemed, alongside the nation's most famous castles, abbeys, ruins, and monasteries, eminently tourable and commercial. University tourism sets the university up as a site worthy of attention and admiration, but, significantly, it also opens it up to ideas of touristic trespass. Indeed, if the Grand Tour understands tourism as the privileged gaining access to the world, then university tourism understands it as the world gaining access to privileged spaces. And this is where the dominant discourse of university nostalgia comes in to play. University nostalgia manages to do what none of the Grand Tour ideas ever did: it both situates and de-situates the university on the tourism map. On the one hand it venerates the university as a tourist site on par with those worldly ones of established historical significance (rather than merely the antithesis to them, as a site of secondary access), but then it also resists such parallels by venerating the site's exclusivity and closed nature, and denying its touristic identity. And even within these distinctions are various layers of the two, where touristic or non-touristic appeal is often mere pretence. University nostalgia then is the epitome of a polyvalent discourse,[6] with the ancient university firmly at the centre of desire, but with multiple ways of framing the heartache.

Given the literary focus of this dissertation, the power dynamic between university and tourism industry is purposely examined within the context of Victorian literature, and is valuable insofar as it also reveals something about the Victorian varsity novel and its contribution to

university nostalgia. The specific varsity novel series chosen for this chapter is Cuthbert Bede's (aka Rev. Edward Bradley's[7]) *Mr. Verdant Green: Adventures of an Oxford Freshman* (1857). Originally published as three separate books—*The Adventures of Mr. Verdant Green* (1853), *The Further Adventures of Verdant Green* (1854), *Married and Done For* (1857)—the comedic and enormously popular series[8] follows the various adventures and many embarrassing mishaps of a naïve undergraduate as he progresses through his university years. As mentioned earlier, varsity novels in general are tangentially touristic in their purpose to display the university to both reader and protagonist as a site worth knowing, and their tendency to feature freshmen for whom the university is a strange space to be explored. But the *Verdant Green* series is involved with the tourism industry in a more pronounced way, and especially with the farce and fiction that is part and parcel of the tourist experience. Published as railway library paperbacks, the series originated in the tourism market. As Victorian readers consumed the novels casually on board the train or while passing the time at a railway station bookstall, they would have discovered a young undergraduate borne along by the Victorian tourism movement as much as they: in the course of his "adventures," and especially in the final book when his Oxford studies are nearing completion, Verdant embarks on various travels via coach and railway to such domestic sites of historical and nostalgic interest as Blenheim Palace, Warkworth Hermitage, Alnwick Castle, Chillingham Castle, and Ros Hill fort, among others.[9] But, given the series' obvious varsity focus, most of the novels are dedicated to Verdant's travels to and touristic experiences of Oxford. For Verdant Green, Oxford is unquestionably more tourist destination than *alma mater*. First of all, he is conducted on numerous university tours and compelled to sample all university customs, both academic (matriculation, exams, lectures, reading-room attendance, debates) and social (wine parties, boat racing, steeple chases, pranks), all with the wide-eyed wonder that

aligns the freshman with the tourist throughout the novels. Verdant also enacts the touristic consumer quite avidly in Oxford, motivated by desires of authenticity and belonging: he purchases scholastic costumes, archery and cricket equipment, art and engravings, and souvenirs for his family, all on student credit, with the same carefree abandon that a tourist of today might charge items to his or her hotel room. Finally, by making Verdant the perennial freshman and outsider,[10] the novels depict a fictive Oxford that is only superficially tourable and resists the nurturing sense of belonging that *alma mater* implies. But there is no question that Oxford finds a home for nostalgia, for if Verdant never quite fits in as a true Oxonian, he certainly does as a tourist; throughout all his travels, university and otherwise, he is cast as the willful nostalgiac, prepared to bemuse and wonder, to be "excessively sentimental," and to "sufficiently lionize" all the domestic haunts he visits. Verdant allows nostalgia, but specifically that of the outsider, to bridge the student-tourist experience.

Bede's *Verdant Green* series is considered alongside certain university tourism guidebooks in this chapter because the two dialogue coherently within and therefore contribute to the discourse of university nostalgia. Tourist guidebooks were an important part of the tourism industry in Victorian England, and most of the well-known guidebook publishers of the day such as Baedeker, Bradshaw, Murray, Macmillan, Stanford, and Thomas Cook saw fit to promote travel to domestic sites as much as they did international ones. Thus, within the annals of tourist literature we get guides dedicated entirely or in large part to touring Oxford and Cambridge, England's celebrated universities, but more precisely to venerating them as sites of nostalgia. The specific guidebooks selected and examined here are Murray's *Handbook for Travellers in Berks, Bucks, and Oxfordshire* (1860),[11] *Alden's Guide to Oxford* (1874),[12] and Stanford's *Tourist's Guide to the County of Cambridge* (1882) by Arthur George Hill.[13] Generally, the

nostalgic project of these guidebooks is accomplished by virtue of their appropriation of humanity and their focus on the past. First, in assuming the role of tourist companion, (colloquially, guidebooks were simply called "guides" or "companions," taking on the human designation as "computer" has done today) guidebooks appropriate through expression and instruction the various emotions that accompany a tourist's encounter with places of cultural interest. Thus the companion guidebook taps into the sentiment of nostalgia as a way of bonding with the tourist and his or her environment more intimately. Second, these Oxbridge guidebooks focus intensely on the history of their sites, thus drawing on the typical correlation of nostalgia and the longing for lost ages. Furthermore, the historicizing of the ancient universities prompts a nostalgia infused with nationalistic sentiment, as tourists are encouraged to feel pride for their nation's past as it is uniquely written upon the sites they are visiting.[14] Most importantly, however, what defines the nostalgia of the Victorian guidebook is dictated by its commercial identity. Because these tourist texts are created to package and sell a site and all the objects, people, and experiences that pertain to it, it follows that the nostalgia contained within them is also a packaged product. Hence: commodified nostalgia.

Commodified nostalgia was enthusiastically endorsed by the Oxford Tourism Committee all those years ago for straddling the strategic line of compromise between anti- and pro-tourism sentiments. For the purposes of this chapter, it is what results when the idea of the university interacts with certain components of the tourism industry (and their ideological identities): namely, and in order of discussion, the railway, the tour and its guidebook, and the souvenir. It is what unites the *Verdant Green* series with its discursive neighbours, the Oxbridge guidebooks. Commodified nostalgia is university nostalgia made packageable, marketable, and consumable, and thus made an ideal product for the tourism industry. Elizabeth Outka comes very near this

idea with her term "commodified authentic," referring to the artificial recreations and simulated displays of historical authenticity that were marketed to middle-class consumers at the turn of the nineteenth century, consumers particularly eager for some way of experiencing the past but as a modern consumer exercise.[15] In line with the view of commodified university nostalgia as a multi-strategic discourse, Outka also recognizes the sense of paradoxical compromise that the "commodified authentic" offers as a consumer experience since it is not merely a search for authenticity but "a search for a sustained contradiction that might allow consumers to be at once connected to a range of values roughly aligned with authenticity and yet also to be fully modern" (4). If these two ideas of commodified nostalgia and "commodified authentic" are notably similar, then together they strengthen the argument that the industrious Victorians were all about selling and buying ideas of the past, and, more generally, bringing to market even the most intangible and seemingly unmarketable of products like authenticity, prestige, and nostalgia.[16] But there is an important difference: I employ commodified nostalgia in this chapter because, in the first place, unlike Outka's term, it underscores the idea of marketing a particular feeling. And with literature, unlike models and displays, it is only the *feeling* of authenticity and the emotional desire for it that can be discerned. Secondly, commodified nostalgia is preferable because, as much as authenticity is a key word for this chapter, it really is encompassed by the term nostalgia, because it is something that one is nostalgic *for*. As this discussion considers it, nostalgia is really an umbrella term of desire for many overlapping and shifting ideas including authenticity, the past, tradition (dead, resurrected, or living), personal encounters, deserted space, untourability, and representational object. A final word on this chapter's title and I shall leave off this introductory preamble and turn to the texts themselves. Comedy and commodity are tied together in this chapter because of what has already been said: because of the *Verdant Green*

series, one of the pivotal comedic developments of the varsity novel,[17] and because of commodified nostalgia. But also, comedy and commodity both define university nostalgia, as presented here, in that both suggest a certain disconnect from the pain and labour of experience. In both *Verdant Green* and the Oxbridge guidebooks, university nostalgia is disconnected from pain and is rather a lighthearted consideration: something toured through for enjoyment, and not dwelled upon.[18] And, in true Marxist fashion,[19] university nostalgia is disconnected from individual labours of love and longing that typically construct the sentiment over time, and from the scholastic labour that distinguishes a student's memory of the university from the tourist's or the reader's. Instead, with the varsity novel and the tourist guidebook, it is marketed *en masse* to all who would buy it.

The Railway and Nostalgic Approach

Without a doubt, one of the most significant developments of modern tourism, and by extension a great instigator of university tourism in the Victorian age, was the railway. Just as the train facilitated easy travel to major English cities like London, Liverpool, Manchester, etc., it also brought visitors to the university towns of Oxford and Cambridge.[20] Assuredly the 'age of the railway' created the much maligned "day tripper" by making 'there and back again' so easy and so affordable for tourists. But also, as we shall see with Verdant Green, it led to different ideas of the university commute for students. With respect to knowledge, the railway contributed greatly to a new ideology of knowledge on the move. It not only allowed people to learn and explore other places easily, but it also facilitated the industrious exportation and movement of books and other printed material around the country.[21] And, significantly, with the establishment of railway bookstalls and the conceptualization of the railway car as an ideal site for casual reading, a new type of literature was inaugurated: railway literature. As previously noted, Bede's

Verdant Green series is a product of the railway-literature industry, which was launched at mid-century and in full swing throughout the 1850s.[22] With knowledge and learning falling in line with the momentum of tourism, a tension emerged between the railway and the university. The university traditionally represents a very different idea of knowledge, one derived from monasticism and associated with solitude, social and physical immobility, exclusivity, and tradition. But apart from ideological differences, the university's resistance to the railway is most concretely demonstrated in Oxford's attempts to effectively derail the railway's plans for extension. Two consecutive bills were proposed and denied for the Great West Railway's entry into Oxford before the third finally succeeded in 1842. The university's objections were on the grounds of access: the student's access to more disreputable types of education in London and other urban centres; and the tourist's access to the proudly exclusive halls of academia. Even when the university eventually relaxed its objections and a bill was passed in 1843 for the construction of an Oxford station at Grandpont, there remained a sense of antagonistic compromise, whereby the university demanded certain control over the comings and goings of the station, dictating suitable sites of travel and ticket sales, and patrolling the platform for unruly students.[23] And part of this compromise was, necessarily, the inevitable acceptance of university tourism. If we detect here the same tug-of-war between progress and tradition that fueled the Oxford Tourism Committee's meeting at the century's end, we can also see in the university's earlier resistance to the railway a hint of nostalgia. But we must turn to literature to see it fully expressed.

Both the *Verdant Green* series and the Oxbridge tourist guidebooks recognize the contentious relationship between railway and university. Focussed strongly on university tourism as these texts are, the university is both identifiably and critically positioned as railway-adjacent.

In the guidebooks, for example, the railway is both the starting and ending point of the university tour. It is the engine that enables the tour and, significantly, its speed and efficiency are mapped onto the tourist such that the guidebooks assume a hurried tourist-reader and tailor their guided tours to his/her supposed desire for an expedient experience. On the truth of the railway colouring the university tourism experience, and specifically the tourists themselves, consider the fact that there are even university guidebooks deliberately marketed to the railway traveller (see *The Railway Traveller's Walk Through Oxford* (1848) and *The Railway Traveller's Walk Through Cambridge* (1867)). But while Oxbridge guidebooks demonstrate the extent to which university tourism is beholden to the railway, they also reveal the resistance that inheres in the university-tourism power dynamic. Consider again the titles of these same guides: if the tourist is identified with the high speed of the railway, the university is distinctly identified with the slower and simpler pace of *the walk*. Indeed, the traveller may be marked by the steam of his swift journey, but he must enter the university on its own terms, in step with its slower rhythms. Like the guidebooks, the *Verdant Green* series understands the fraught relationship between university and railway, but, as with most fiction, it demonstrates it through the experiences of its protagonist. Pro-railway sentiment is evident in the excursion that Verdant undertakes in the final book of the series, a journey to Northumberland with his sisters marked with all the excitement and wonder one would expect of a soon-to-be graduate's first foray into the countryside far outside the university walls. The novel depicts the train voyage in accordance with all of the typical ideas associated with it as a fascinating modern mode of travel: the speed, the heat and welcome refreshments, the many stops and bustling stations, the Bradshaw references, and the opportunity for reading or socializing with fellow travellers. Most appealing, however, are the various vantage points and landscape views made possible while passing over, under, and

through different towns and cities; see Verdant and company's delight in "crawling under the stately old walls of York; then, with a rush and a roar, sliding rapidly over the level landscape, from whence they can look back upon the glorious Minster towers standing out grey and cold from the sunlit plain" (Bede 264). But all that is good about Verdant's railway experience here at the end of the series is in contrast to the anti-railway sentiment expressed at the start of the series, when Verdant is just setting off for Oxford and it is decided that he will take the old coach there rather than the train for his momentous voyage. This decision is emphasized in the text in such a way that suggests the railway is purposely and necessarily denied in order to offset the more nostalgic mode of travel. This links the varsity series to the Oxbridge guidebooks, for just as they use the bustle and business of the railway station as a point of figurative departure from which the environment of urbanity and modernity is left behind, so too does *Verdant Green* need the train rumbling in the distance in order to render nostalgic the coach approach.

Nostalgia for the coach approach is the particular type of nostalgia that emerges in *Verdant Green* with the university and the railway existing side by side. And it is mirrored by a similar nostalgia of approach in the guidebooks even with the railway as the transport of choice. John Ruskin beautifully defines the sentiment in his own travel account of "The Approach to Venice":

> In the olden days of travelling, now to return no more, in which distance could not be vanquished without toil, but in which that toil was rewarded, partly by the power of deliberate survey of the countries through which the journey lay, and partly by the happiness of the evening hours, when, from the top of the last hill he had surmounted, the traveller beheld the quiet village where he was to rest, scattered among the meadows beside its valley stream; or, from the long hoped for turn in the dusty perspective of the

> causeway, saw, for the first time, the towers of some famed city, faint in the rays of sunset—hours of peaceful and thoughtful pleasure, for which the rush of the arrival in the railway station is perhaps not always, or to all men, an equivalent,—in those days, I say, when there was something more to be anticipated and remembered in the first aspect of each successive halting-place, than a new arrangement of glass roofing and iron girder, there were few moments of which the recollection was more fondly cherished by the traveller, than that which […] brought him within sight of Venice…[24]

These lines romanticize the traveller's measured pace, the anticipation of arrival, and the gradual visual consumption of the nearing destination, but also what Vernon Lee agrees is the greatest loss of modern travel, the "sense of wonder at distance overcome."[25] It is in essence nostalgia for the journey, at a time when distance collapse is the way of the future. But again, the railway must be granted certain power and presence in order for this nostalgia to exist; indeed, the multi-strategic identity of the old-fashioned approach is such that it validates the railway as the necessary reflection of modern travel before which the counter-vision of tradition recoils. By speeding up the university commute, the railway sparks desire for a university journey that harkens back to the pilgrimage, where Oxford's "dreaming spires" loom large and long in anticipation before finally taking shape on the horizon. But make no mistake, nostalgia for the coach approach in the varsity novel is as much an endorsement of old-school university experience as it is an expression of anti-railway sentiment, which we shall see very clearly in *Verdant Green*. But first, turning to the guidebooks, although coach travel is not a part of their touring experience, what these guides help us understand is a particular facet of the university deemed so worthy of veneration by approaching travellers and for which the coach approach

caters its particular brand of nostalgia: the mythical appeal of the university town from the outside and far removed from the iron thrust of modernity.

In Stanford's *Guide*, the tour of Cambridge begins at the railway station, with the guide commenting on the station's distance from the university town, and the necessity of taking coach, omnibus, or tram into the city centre. Far from lamenting the inconvenience, the guide offers the comforting thought that "there is an advantage in this, as it leaves the old university in peace and quiet, the charm of the ancient buildings not being broken by the hideous shriek of the steam whistle and the noise of a railway junction" (29). This perspective is common in guidebooks, and might almost be labelled a kind of ironic nostalgia. Clearly upheld is a longing for the peaceful and undisturbed university up against the unappealing noise of the railway station. And yet, as the guide sells it, the station is necessary to this nostalgic position by bringing the tourist to the perfect vantage point for appreciating the university's remote purity and for advertising it as authentically unbreached. The irony amplifies when one considers that tourists are encouraged to appreciate a site free of intrusion while on their way to intrude upon it themselves. With his theory of the "romantic tourist gaze" John Urry also detects a certain irony in tendencies of modern touristic appreciation. The railway-station view of the university, with admiration for the authentic untouched, is the epitome of the romantic tourist gaze in its resistance to the trappings of tourism even while it is itself a sign-posted construction of the tourism industry and its discourses.[26] Similarly, in Murray's *Handbook*, the Oxford section begins by situating the university next to an unappealing railway in order to charmingly offset the ancient university's anti-modern aura. It does this by dismissing the railway entrance into Oxford as "ugly" and "unworthy," but only to set up the remedial pleasure of an "air of antiquity" which promises to embrace the tourist once inside the crumbling walls (142). The

allure of contrast continues, aligning the railway with urban chaos—"To one just hurried by train from London, the impression produced by the first sight of Oxford is the more striking"—and Oxford with pastoral repose—"From noise, glare, and brilliancy, the traveller comes upon a very different scene—a mass of towers, pinnacles, and spires, rising in the bosom of a valley, from groves which hide all buildings but such as are consecrated to some wise and holy purpose" (142).[27] Finally, in rendering nostalgic the approach to Oxford in particular, these guidebooks make much of the eastern entrance to the city from the old London road via Magdalen Bridge, offering the iconic view of Magdalen's tower against the city's famous skyline of rising spires. This eastern entrance and its view are saturated with nostalgic sentiment because the railway, with stations positioned at first the southern and then western borders,[28] effectively rendered it obsolete as a main gateway and first point of acquaintance. In *Alden's Guide to Oxford*, the tourist is ushered onto the Magdalen Bridge, told to pause half-way across, and encouraged to admire the "unequalled view" that this particular approach from London to Oxford affords (28). This is accompanied in the text by an etching of "Magdalen College, from the Bridge" in order to encapsulate the iconic view. What is noteworthy here is the way that the guidebook makes the coach approach a part of its packaged and prescribed Oxford tour, a key part of Oxford tourism and not merely an unremarkable element of the pre-tour commute. Here is commodified nostalgia unquestionably: the approach inauthentically reproduced as a "nostalgic experience" and presented to the tourist out of context with actual experience, since of course the tourist will already have entered Oxford via the far less romantic railway route. And if, as C. S. Lewis would remark nearly a century later recalling his own approach to Oxford as a fresh-faced academic, "towns always show their worst face to the railway,"[29] then these guidebooks, in commodifying nostalgia for older approaches and more romantic views, are banking on the truth of this.

Contributing to the discourse of nostalgic approach alongside Oxbridge guidebooks are varsity novels, concerned as they are with the university as not just a tourable site, but as a venerated presence in the popular imagination. In fact, it would be difficult to argue that tourist guidebooks are not equally concerned with this. With respect to generic tropes, Bede's *Verdant Green* series continues a varsity novel tradition of lending a nostalgic glow to the coach approach and gradual tower consumption of the ancient university, begun in John Gibson Lockhart's *Reginald Dalton: A Story of English University Life* (1823), touted as the first English university novel (Proctor 62-63). In Lockhart's formative novel Reginald Dalton embarks upon his Oxford voyage happily ensconced in his coach seat, noting that "nothing in human life is more delightful […] than a journey in a stage coach" (102). Intriguingly, Reginald's delightful coach trip is pitted against the discomforts and indecencies of steamship travel, in the same way that Verdant's coach trip is pitted against comparatively charmless railway travel thirty years later. Nostalgia for the coach approach in *Verdant Green* begins with this casual explanation as the freshman prepares for his departure: "It had been decided that Mr. Verdant Green, instead of reaching Oxford by rail, should make his *entrée* behind the four horses that drew the Birmingham and Oxford coach; – one of the few four-horse coaches that still ran for any distance, and which, as the more pleasant means of conveyance, was generally patronized by Mr. Charles Larkyns in preference to the rail" (Bede 30). As with the guidebooks, Verdant's journey to Oxford becomes nostalgic only against the backdrop of railway travel; and, with the narrative's endnote informing its reader that this coach ceased to run in 1852 when the Birmingham-Oxford railway line opened (39), the voyage is granted the additional charm of obsolescence. Further contributing to its nostalgic associations, the narrative animates Verdant's coach with such comedic characterization that the trip to Oxford becomes a decidedly

memorable event. The guard's bugle heralds its arrival before it comes into view, and when it finally approaches, "rattling merrily along in its cloud of dust," engulfed in tobacco smoke and littered with young men and their dogs, amid a scattering of portmanteaus, canes, fishing rods, and gun-boxes, all bound for "Hoxfut," it is a "sight to be remembered" (31-32). Then, with the meeting of his fellow students *en route*, most of whom are seasoned university men who immediately detect Verdant's freshman air and goad him accordingly on his sensational Oxford-worthy topcoat and take their spirits and tobacco liberally the whole way, the coach ride becomes Verdant's first rite of passage (literally) as a university man. He must become acquainted with these Oxford men here first, and so must the reader, before they arrive at Oxford and continue their roles on the fictional academic stage. And so we see that the trials and tribulations of the coach journey, as the varsity novel constructs it, are indelibly a part of the university plot, a plot that packages university experience to include this important initiation, on the slow road to academic sociality.[30]

As Ruskin makes clear in his gilding of the approach to Venice, attention to the journey grants the destination greater presence and power, as it draws travellers and their thoughts ever closer to it in anticipation. The idea of the journey anticipating the site, heightening its power and identity, and conversely of the site adding heightened meaning to the journey, suggests a nod to another prototypical mode of travel: the pilgrimage. The traditional pilgrimage, like the coach trip, takes time; both are therefore quite favourable to nostalgia because nostalgia is really all about time. Indeed, the slower journey mirrors the psychological journey through time that the nostalgiac undertakes. Appropriately, as if to underscore that anti-speed and measured pace are most ideally suited to the passage *to* and *through* the university, Verdant's college tutor, who monitors his academic progress, is aptly named Slowcoach.[31] More precisely, however, the

coach sequence in *Verdant Green* is a nod to *pilgrimage literature*, where travel and literature formally meet. The sense of camaraderie and adventure, the communal sense of purpose, the focus on the journey's adventures, and finally the close emphasis on character that is made possible by the liminal no-space of the road are all typical of the literary tradition of the pilgrimage.[32] Indeed, the comedic eclecticism of the Oxford men Verdant finds himself jostled up against in the coach recalls Chaucer's own band of diverse pilgrims in one of the epitomic medieval texts of the genre.[33] As many other varsity novels do, Bede's varsity series borrows from this tradition in Verdant's journey to Oxford so as to foreground character, certainly, but also to highlight the powerful lure of the holy site, the sacred spot that the pilgrimage honours. There is no question that the pilgrim, religious or academic, is motivated by nostalgia, by the desire to visit a site marked in some way by the past. And while Oxford is legitimately a site of pilgrimage in the traditional religious sense—for the shrine of patron saint Frideswide, the three Anglican martyrs, and its strong monastic heritage for instance[34]—it is also so in a more secular sense as a space of famed academic study, and the Victorian varsity novel, with its emphasis on the student's momentous approach to the university, is very much attuned to the idea of secular pilgrimage and the university as a space of academic greatness and academic sacrifice.[35] Hardy's Jude Fawley, sacrificial scholar that he is, memorably subscribes to this ideal in his varsity approach decades later, lending a halo of sacredness to his own academic mecca, the "city of light and lore" that is Christminster (34), and opting to approach it on foot in true pilgrimage style "having always fancied himself arriving thus" (77).[36]

But, of course, the coach approach must end, as the pilgrimage must, with the site at first sight: the pivotal moment when the university materializes from the imagined "Sweet land of visions" (Bede 39) to the visible array of college towers on the horizon. This is the ultimate

trigger for nostalgic expression, and, as is made clear when Verdant's Birmingham coach finally rattles within view of Oxford, the nostalgia is distinctly governed by the method of approach:

> at last the towers, spires, and domes of Oxford appeared in sight. The first view of the City of Colleges is always one that will be long remembered. Even the railway traveller, who enters by the least imposing approach, and can scarcely see that he is in Oxford before he has reached Folly Bridge, must yet regard the city with mingled feelings of delight and surprise as he looks across the Christ Church Meadows and rolls past the Tom Tower. But he who approaches Oxford from the Henley Road, and looks upon that unsurpassed prospect from Magdalen Bridge,—or he who enters the city, as Mr. Green did, from the Woodstock Road, and rolls down the shady avenue of St. Giles', between St. John's College and the Taylor Buildings, and past the graceful Martyrs' Memorial, will receive impressions such as probably no other city in the world could convey. (Bede 37)

Here is the same touristic treatment of approach commodified in the Oxbridge guidebooks: the gradual recognition and awe over the city's beckoning features, the sense of distance and anticipation, the critical focus on methods of transport and their contrasting points of entry. But most similar of all is the nostalgia that envelops the experience, the nostalgia that erupts when the university must contend with the railway in the arena of travel and tourism and does so through the ironic wink of denial. Notably, Bede's widened focus here, his use of a more generally inclusive subject in the "traveller" and "he who enters" alongside the Greens, allows him to tap into the cultural collectivity of the nostalgic approach that great sites inspire. But even this is just as much a packaged product. For readers of formulaic varsity literature, the distance

of experience is as present as it is for readers and followers of guidebook tours; in both cases the old-fashioned university approach is a nostalgic imagining.

The Tour and Its Untourable Site

Once the experience of approach has passed and the tourist or student finds him/herself standing within the university's walls, the next order of business is the tour. The tour is essentially a method of knowledge acquisition that advocates close and immediate contact with the site of study at the very moment it is studied. To walk through a site (led by a knowledgeable guide) amidst its everyday movements, in corners public and private, in the company of native and tourist alike, is at once to know the site and to appreciate its cultural identity. The Victorian guidebook typifies the tourism industry's authorization of this interactive method of knowing, in that it is not merely a traditional text of description, but rather a text that requires the reader's physical presence on site in order to know. Indeed, its tour advocates infiltration, invasion, immersion, intrusion, and however else one might define such interaction with a site that goes beyond mere words on a page. And yet, the guidebook itself, bound as it is, and thus bound to its textual properties and certain inalienable textual associations, still brings the old book and in essence old learning along on the modern tour. Prior to the nineteenth century, and especially in the eighteenth century when travel accounts by Laurence Sterne, Tobias Smollett, and Daniel Defoe were all the rage,[37] the book had long been a popular method of vicarious travel. But in the Victorian era, vicarious travel or, in the case of the tourist guidebook, commercially mediated travel, had its fair share of criticism. Recall the derision of the Oxford Tourist Committee for the ridiculous Oxford day-tripper with guide-book at arm's length. Consider also Vernon Lee's romantic assertion that "[o]ne wants to visit unknown lands in company, not with other men's descriptions, but with one's own wishes and fancies."[38] Indeed, even if the Victorian guidebook

brings its reader directly to the destination of interest, it still falls back on the traditions of description and mediated experience, such that armchair travellers and mobile reading tourists are essentially one and the same, both touring at arm's length, not realizing the site fully at all. And then if one applies the same pitfalls of the guidebook to its flesh and blood counterpart, the human tour-guide, the critique of vicariousness still resounds. So, in simultaneously encapsulating old and new ideas of tourism, the Victorian guidebook aligns with a certain uncertainty inherent in modern touristic discourse, the touristic skepticism that asks whether a site can truly and accurately be known through a tour. And, more critically still, the voice of resistance would ask: should a place as sacred (presumably) and exclusive (decidedly) as a university be open to the indiscriminate individuals and careless crowds of tourism? In short, are not some sites *untourable*, in that you both cannot and dare not make the attempt?

The theme of untourability emerges quite noticeably in both the *Verdant Green* varsity series and the Oxbridge guidebooks as a result of the cultural encounter between the ancient and seemingly reticent university and the modern tour. More precisely, however, just as they did with the approach, these texts adhere to the nostalgia that surrounds the idea of untourability, participating in the nostalgic discourse of the inaccessible, heterotopic space that both resists and lures touristic trespass. In the broadest sense, Bede's *Verdant Green* establishes the university's untourability, as most varsity novels do, through its very genre of fiction, creating a half-factual, half-fictive portrait of Oxbridge that both character and reader eagerly and at times dubiously pass through. Thus, just as the era's later novels disguise Oxford as "Kingsdene" and "Christminster,"[39] Verdant's Oxford has, for instance, "Brazenface" standing in for Brasenose College with a questionable history involving brass noses as seats of punishment for unruly scholars. In many ways the university becomes a site somewhat mystified by varsity fiction and

its prankish attitude, and nowhere is this more evident than in the first *Verdant Green* novel, where the titular hero seeks to explore his new university and finds the site impossible to tour. The untourability of Verdant's Oxford is emphasized comically through two tours, both of which present the venerable university as impenetrable and unknowable. First is Verdant's impromptu fresher's tour upon arrival, where he and his father are led through the university by a local guide of decidedly rustic character, described as "one of those wonderful people to which show-places give birth, and of whom Oxford can boast a very goodly average" (Bede 49). The tour is an immediate failure because of this guide and his hasty, unintelligible speech and rapid pace, a guide "not particular whether his hearers understood him or not" and boasting that he "could do the alls, collidges, and principal hedifices in a nour and a naff" (Bede 49-50).[40] The "rapid survey" that is Verdant's first university tour, humorously criticized in this moment as an endemic failing of the tourism industry in general, falls in line with the valorization of speed that the guidebooks promote without a hint of apology. Both *Alden's Guide to Oxford* and Murray's Oxford *Handbook* cater to the "hurried traveller" seeking to "economise his time" as much as possible such that the various sights of their guided tours are invariably subject to "time permitting." Indeed, prioritizing the tourist's time above all else as they do, the guidebooks necessarily navigate a figuratively untourable space, one that leaves various sections of the site unexplored at the whim of the tourist's schedule. The confusion and incomprehensibility that might result from the modern tour's propensity for expediency and fast movement are stylistically rendered in Bede's text with the idea of architectural migration, where Verdant's confused father imagines the university buildings having resituated themselves at random for change of scenery and air:

> The theatre had walked up to St. Giles to see how the Taylor Buildings agreed with the University galleries; while the Martyrs' Memorial had stepped down to Magdalen Bridge, in time to see the college taking a walk in the Botanic Gardens […] The two towers of All Souls'—whose several stages seemed to be pulled out of each other like the parts of a telescope—had somehow removed themselves from the rest of the building, which had gone nevertheless, on a tour to Broad Street […] In short, if the maps of Oxford are to be trusted, there had been a general *pousset* movement among its public buildings. (Bede 50)

This sequence effectively conveys not only the mental chaos of the fast tour, but also, with the literal uprooting of Oxford's famed architecture, it conveys the figurative ideas of upset and disturbance often attached to tourism, especially in its targeting of established historical sites. Verdant's experience of a bewilderingly untourable Oxford continues with a second, far less official event, a prank tour led by a mischievous undergrad. Only a few days in to his first Oxford term, Verdant is invited by his newfound friend Larkyns to "take a prowl about the old place" that he might be introduced to some of the "freshman's sights" of Oxford (73). Once again, an unreliable guide causes the tour to fail spectacularly where knowledge and understanding are concerned, for the reader finds Verdant humorously at the mercy of a guide whose sole motivation is to get a laugh out of the freshman's credulity as he "sells"[41] him comical inventions of presumed accuracy. To name but a few: he misidentifies the Radcliffe as the Vice-Chancellor's house, making particular note of its balcony (from which that honoured academic stands watch each night and is tasked with the daily winding of the great Christ Church clock); nodding to Merton's celebrated postmasters as they pass the college, Verdant's guide situates them quite logically within the college's post office, sorting a remarkably large influx of

mail; and pointing to the gold tassels of the university noblemen as they march by, Larkyns translates them into "badges of intoxication" signalling their wearers' disgraceful fondness for champagne breakfasts throughout the term (Bede 73-77). Unlike his first tour, this is one of deliberate miseducation, but neither do justice to the site as a tour ought to do. Nostalgia is inspired by untourability in both cases because the university remains shrouded in mystery and unattainability. In fact, by depicting fictional tours of the university, by inventing a fictional Oxford while the "real" rests quietly unbothered in the background, Bede disassociates the "real" university from this varsity fiction, and keeps Oxford that unattainable ideal that both the reader and the confounded Verdant cannot ever seem to know.

With Verdant's failed tours, the untourable university is glossed as frustrating and counterproductive, as an obstruction to the tourist's desire and purpose to know. As I have suggested, nostalgia is inspired in spite of the site's untourability, motivated by unfulfilled desire on the part of both character and reader. But, intriguingly, *Verdant Green* and the Oxbridge guidebooks also present the idea of untourability in harmony with nostalgia, such that longing *for* certain types of untourable or inaccessible spaces actually propels the tour, legitimates the site, and initiates yet another commodifiable nostalgia. The types of untourable space that these texts strategically position at the heart of nostalgic tourism are, in order of discussion, deserted space, back space or closed space, and, finally, the past. To give an idea of the kind of language often used to present these types of spaces in touristic literature, consider the following extract suggestively included in Murray's Oxford *Handbook*, a passage taken from the travel letters of French ecclesiastic and famed orator Henri Lacordaire following his visit to Oxford at mid-century:

> How calm and beautiful is Oxford! Fancy in a plain surrounded by uplands, and bathed by two rivers, a mass of monuments Gothic and Greek: churches, colleges, quadrangles, porticoes, all distributed profusely, but most gracefully, in quiet streets terminating in trees and meadows. All these buildings, consecrated to letters and science, have their gates open. The stranger enters as he would enter his own house, because they are the asylums of the beautiful to all who are endowed with feeling. As you traverse these noiseless quadrangles, there is no crowding or din. There is nowhere such an appearance of ruin, with so much of preservation. In Italy the buildings breathe of youth. In Oxford it is time which shows itself, but time without decay, and with all its majesty. The town itself is small, but even this does not take from the grandeur of the place; the monuments serve for houses, and give it an air of vastness. (qtd. in Murray's *Handbook* 176)

All three elements of desirable untourability are clearly and harmoniously displayed: the "noiseless quadrangles" suggest desertion; the "consecrated" buildings with gates laid open point to off-limit spaces made temporarily passable; finally, the university as site of "time without decay" elicits beautifully the idea of the past preserved for present access. In short, Lacordaire's words epitomize the discourse of nostalgic untourability and its associative idea of touristic trespass that the Oxbridge guidebooks sell. It is a discourse that serves both touristic and anti-tourist impulses in its fascination with inaccessible spaces made accessible for the tourist. Let us now consider these untourable university spaces in more detail, and in the company of Verdant Green.

Nostalgic Untourability: The Deserted University

Deserted space would seem to be untourable because it resists the usual touristic atmosphere of commerce, industry, and gathering crowds, as well as the touristic pretense of

space on display. In non-commercial touristic literature of the era, often imbued with a spirit of anti-tourism, one sees a fascination with the exploration of deserted space as a casual exercise of personal or social reflection. It is, for example, a fascination with desertion that propels Dickens's "uncommercial traveller" to roam barren London streets after dark in his "Night Walks" or to seek out the "deserted nooks and corners" of that same "City of the Absent" on a quiet Sunday afternoon, musing "[w]here are all the people who on busy working-days pervade these scenes?" and half expecting to see the city clerks and merchants hovering about like "restless ghosts" trying to gain access to their respective dens of weekday work.[42] And the desire to tour alone, away from chattering companions or guides, is a key part of the appeal of desertion, as R. L. Stevenson argues in his essay "Walking Tours," noting that tours cannot but be enjoyed alone, when meditative silence and freedom of movement are desired.[43] But, despite the romantic idea of uncommercial tourism, this longing for solitude and deserted space is not divorced from commercial tourism at all in fact. Strategically, with the noted popularity of ancient ruins and unoccupied estates and manor homes for example,[44] deserted space was very much a part of the draw and sell of Victorian tourist sites, and especially of the university where quiet thought and monastic retirement are ingrained in its cultural identity. Consider again the Oxford Tourism Committee's nomination of Lamb's "Oxford in the Vacation" as a model for university consumption, a Romantic text avidly endorsed by the commercial interests of the Victorian age.[45] Lamb's text very evidently captures the university as deserted space, where the self-proclaimed "votary of the desk" takes ample pleasure in whiling away the "idle weeks" of Oxford's closed season, roaming the empty groves of Magdalen, the deserted halls, and then taking a peak at the old sculleries and "immense caves of kitchens" (11). That the students' absence is critical to this text's nostalgic atmosphere is proven by how the writer creates out of

their absence the opportunity for honourable impersonation. Lamb effectively "enacts" the absent student as follows:

> Here I can take my walks unmolested, and fancy myself of what degree or standing I please…I can rise at the chapel-bell, and dream that it rings for *me*. In moods of humility I can be a Sizar, or a Servitor. When the peacock vein rises, I strut a Gentleman Commoner. In graver moments, I proceed Master of Arts. (17)

Fittingly, if one considers that Oxford and Cambridge's tourism efforts were focussed heavily on the Long Vacation, when most of the students were absent, the deserted university was often all that university tourists would know. And over time, it would become what tourists, and curious readers, would want to know; in this way the quiet desertion of a university—betokening the silent solitary work of the mind—would become synonymous with academic authenticity.

Together, the Victorian Oxbridge guidebook and the Victorian varsity novel contribute greatly to this idea of authenticity through the discourse of nostalgic desertion, romanticizing the university as an empty site of absent or spectral students, where a tourist or new admittant may wander alone and appreciate the cerebral silence of the streets and quadrangles and the evidence of time settled upon the famous architecture. The varsity novel's inaugural text, *Reginald Dalton*, established this trope by introducing its protagonist to an Oxford of equal parts "monastic stillness" and "Gothic grandeur." As Reginald passes through Oxford, with the contrasting crowds of a recently toured Birmingham fresh in his mind, the student is struck by the comparative quiet of the university space: "Excepting now and then some solitary gowned man pacing slowly in the moonlight, there was not a soul in the High Street; nor, excepting here and there a lamp twinkling in 'some high lonely tower,' where someone might, or might not, be 'unsphering the spirit of Plato,' was there anything to shew that the venerable buildings which

lined it were actually inhabited" (Lockhart 114). Taking his cue from this early novel, Bede has Verdant Green become acquainted with an Oxford of similarly appealing desertion. His college's quadrangle is all the more picturesque with its "grey time-eaten walls" and dark mullioned windows hiding the college rooms behind them, and the freshman is particularly struck by the quadrangle's "quiet cloistered air that spoke of study and reflection" (Bede 44). Indeed, Verdant's first nostalgic impression of Oxford is the one that links mental labour with desertion; more precisely, the comfortable association that renders the university an alluring palimpsest of monastic tradition. Reading the guidebooks, one cannot help but notice the absence of students or scholars where one would expect to have them milling about, encountering the tourist and his/her virtual guide at various points during the tour. Quite clearly, the guidebooks background the human presence of the university in order to foreground the site's impressive spatial and architectural charms untarnished by a mass of bodies. Just as Verdant admires the empty college quad, the guidebook tourist is taught to recognize and appreciate the various spatial enclosures—rooms, halls, courts, cloisters, porticoes, porches, gardens, quadrangles, libraries, choirs, chapels, etc.—that a university has to offer, as well as the doors, gateways, passages, parapets, bridges, windows, walls, and walks, etc. that divide and define them. Most of all, the tourist is prompted to admire the vastness of these spaces, greeting them with the requisite awe and wonder for which the trained nostalgiac is well prepared. Entering Oxford's Merton College Chapel, for example, the Alden *Guide* instructs its follower to be "struck with the grand proportions of the tower arches" (54), and upon entering Cambridge's Great Court Stanford's *Guide* notes similarly that "its vast dimensions at once strike the visitor" (32).[46] Yes, the nostalgic impulse in Victorian university guidebooks has the tourist "struck" many times over by the vastness and age of the university as he passes through, but, importantly, with the attendant thrill of knowing the

students are hidden about the premises absorbed in their various academic tasks or else soon to be returning to the site to take up their posts again.

While the absent student establishes the deserted university as an authentic space of quiet reflection and architectural significance, it is the spectral student that allows the deserted site to remain connected to ideas of authentic academic life. Indeed, nostalgia for the deserted university trades on the appeal of the anonymous, unseen, or ghostly inhabitant of the place. The empty chapels, dining halls, and cloisters through which the guidebook ushers its tourist prefigure the anonymous every-student's presence there in a way that marks them with the authenticity of purpose and everyday use. In addition, the vision of the student who belongs—in contradistinction to the tourist who does not—further incites the thrill of touristic trespass which marks the university as theoretically untourable. The university library especially is haunted by this figure for the tourist, such that the collections of the Bodleian for example are toured alongside the spectre of the studying student, itself a titillating artefact of authenticity. As Murray's *Handbook* does with Lacordaire's writings, Alden's *Guide* borrows an extract from Frederick Arnold's sentimental study of Oxford and Cambridge[47] to articulate more feelingly the poetic silence and spectral atmosphere of the library where students are a hushed but necessary presence: "Directly we enter, we are struck by the stillness and solemnity that reign around, helped by the dim light, the windows with painted glass, the ponderous shelves, the illuminated missals, the graduates or attendants conversing in low whispers, or moving quietly about" (10). By creating an anonymous, vague student presence in an otherwise deserted university space, the guidebooks allow their followers to do exactly what Charles Lamb does during his Oxford vacation tour: enact the student and, importantly, establish some personal albeit performative link to nostalgia. The deserted university thus becomes an empty stage upon which the tourist or

reader is allowed to play the authentic. Here is commodified nostalgia once again. The student's presence in the Bodleian as a part of the toured landscape points to another way of understanding the spectral student, where he is immaterially grafted upon the site, blending in to and a part of the university itself. This is accomplished to perfection in Lamb's essay when, in his tour of the Bodleian, he encounters old friend and eccentric academic "G.D." poring over its dusty archives and observes that, standing passively beside the old shelves, he had "grown almost into a book" (20).[48] We see a similar melding of student and university in Murray's *Handbook* when the passing residents of Oxford are brought to the tourist's attention as "academical costume" only, imparting "an additional interest and picturesqueness for the passing stranger" alongside the crumbling buildings and lush gardens (142).

But, if the Oxbridge guidebooks and other tourist literature meld the student to his university in order to emphasize more "proper," picturesque, and institutionally sanctioned ideas of academic authenticity—the studying student, the student in the dining hall, the student hidden away at work in his college apartment, the robed scholar meandering along the college walks, etc.—*Verdant Green*, as with other varsity novels, grafts the students upon the university in order to mark their (non)presence in the less "proper," but no less authentic posture of academic delinquency. And so, as Verdant is shown to his rooms for the first time, he becomes acquainted with a college residence momentarily deserted but marked in sundry ways by the mischiefs of students past:

> The once white-washed walls were coated with the uncleansed dust of the three past terms; and where the plaster had not been chipped off by flying porter-bottles or the heels of Wellington boots, its surface had afforded an irresistible temptation to those

> imaginative undergraduates who displayed their artistic genius in candle-smoke cartoons of the heads of the University, and other popular and unpopular characters. (Bede 45)

Added to these markings of delinquency are the markings of ownership. For example, Verdant notes the name of "Smalls," his room's former occupant, scrawled across his door and is assured that it may be taken out and replaced with his own inscription. And, significantly, it is this inscription of Smalls that stands in for his predecessor's presence until Verdant finally meets him in the flesh many chapters later. At the end of the series, we see a similar instance of inscription when Verdant takes part in the graduation tradition of adorning fellow students' chimney-pieces with one's portrait, to become a part of a college collage of colleagues long-since graduated. Like the quiet delight of marginalia discovered in an old library book, the perennial marking and remarking of students upon the university that this and the delinquent graffiti represent inspire the nostalgic thrill of former occupation that the university in particular inspires. Indeed, in a place accustomed to the constant passing through of people, the markings of past inhabitants are alluring for the new occupant because they establish his/her place in a very particular timeline of tradition. They suggest a connection to a ghostly line of prior selves, and thus reaffirm a personal link to nostalgia. This is one of the key brands of commodified nostalgia in touristic university literature and varsity fiction; nostalgia for the "university experience" is mapped onto a deserted landscape where traces and spectres of "actual" experience are appropriated for the thrill of the uninitiated.

Nostalgic Untourability: Illusions of Access and Authenticity

The second type of untourable space nostalgically rendered in touristic university literature is the closed or back space of academia. This space is theoretically untourable because it is typically off-limits to outsiders, and because it does not cater to tourists but rather to a "real-

world" academic function. University guidebooks play up the nostalgia of these authentic spaces of academic study and routine by emphasizing their closed and exclusive nature. But, again, this emphasis on the closed serves primarily to incite the thrill of allowable trespass since the university is made open to visitors for short privileged glimpses. In effect, as the guidebooks construct it, to tour the open university is to tour nostalgically through the closed university.[49] Just as the deserted university gains certain appeal from the spectral student, so too does the open university gain appeal from the hints of usual closure and the knowledge of permissible entry. In its toying with openness against the allure of closedness, one might logically designate this kind of untourable university an intriguing touristic example of Foucauldian heterotopia, a space that offers the illusion of entry but "hide[s] curious exclusions" and in fact marks the person who enters with the cast of the excluded (Foucault, "Other Spaces" 26).[50] Foucault argues that heterotopias "always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable" ("Other Spaces" 26); we see the guidebooks demarcating precisely this kind of space in their continual emphasis of the hours of opening/closing for various university buildings, as well as the details of admission. The index to Alden's *Guide*, for instance, includes a fairly substantial table of the hours of admission to "chief places of interest" along with the admission fees. And most of the guidebooks emphasize the visitor status of the tourist by making it clear that he or she must be admitted and accompanied by a university member in many places. But significantly, the court of appeal still predominates; Alden's *Guide* tempers its admission regulations by luring the tourist in with the tantalizing idea of allowable trespass: "Not unfrequently a group of strangers may be observed peeping with timid gaze through the gateway of some College, fearful lest in taking a step across the threshold they should be guilty of trespass, and little dreaming that the beauties beyond the portals are 'theirs to enjoy'" (vi). Thus,

right at the outset, the guidebook very clearly positions Oxford on the ever-shifting boundary between open and closed space, where the university is framed with an aura of the forbidden, but one that is charmingly denied.

Without question, the most closed-off, exclusive, backspace of the university, around which both varsity fiction and tourist literature draw a curtain of intrigue, is the student's room. The student's room is the innermost recess of the university, where the student becomes a scholar and the scholar a graduate, where the rigorous labours of academia are carried out. The college room is the direct descendant of the monastic cell and therefore is fundamental to ideas of university authenticity and to their nostalgic appreciation. And if, as Foucault maintains, the monastic cell is a model for disciplinary space,[51] then the college room also authenticates the university as a disciplinary institution, most fascinating not for the knowledge and paperwork that is produced there, but rather for the human work that is developed there, for the students that are molded and improved within its walls. Intriguingly, in their presentation of these untourable back rooms, the Oxbridge guidebooks establish them as an important part of the tour without actually touring them at all. For, if the quads, museums, open-gated chapels, and college walks are all occasionally brushed with the identity of public space, as the tourist is ushered through, the student's private study chamber certainly is not. And yet, the nostalgic university tour depends greatly upon the allure of this unseen *brain space*, and especially that of the renowned scholar known to have inhabited it for a spell. Indeed, the guidebooks build up the mythology and mystery of these rooms so as to maintain the university's identity of privacy and exclusivity even as the tourist is walking through. In Stanford's Cambridge *Guide*, for instance, there is considerable nostalgic intrigue surrounding the college rooms of Sir Isaac Newton (thought to be on the first floor of Trinity), John Milton (said to be on the left side of Trinity's court), and

Erasmus (believed to be at the top of Queen's College Tower), the supposed locations of which are all pointed out but never accurately mapped or visibly displayed. The mythical identity of these rooms and their locations, along with the great works supposed to have been composed within them,[52] lends a certain intrigue to the university as a residence of genius, but a kind of inaccessible genius created and owned by the university alone. We see this same fascination with brain space in Virginia Woolf's iconic twentieth-century essay *A Room of One's Own* (1929), in which creative liberty, privacy, and psychological impenetrability are longingly ascribed to one's own intellectual realm, and in which Woolf argues vehemently for the necessity of such spaces—historically and traditionally reserved for men—for women. The various gendered constructions of the college room will be of greater importance in later chapters, but, for this argument significance lies in the touristic framing of Woolf's reflections; the high regard held for the private brain space, as Woolf's work presents it, is initiated by a nostalgic university tour. As her narrator walks through the streets of one of England's educational bastions, eschewing specificity for a nod to their mythic union ("Oxbridge is an invention"), she is struck by the sense of trespass that we have argued is cultivated in the university tourist's psyche, but her argument is most critically motivated by considering the unseen but nonetheless felt "quiet rooms looking across the quiet quadrangles" (Woolf 5, 30). Her thoughts are absorbed by the allure of the untourable private study space, and the ideas of authenticity (and privilege) that are tied to it: "And (pardon me the thought) I thought, too, of the admirable smoke and drink and the deep armchairs and the pleasant carpets: of the urbanity, the geniality, the dignity which are the offspring of luxury and privacy and space" (Woolf 30). Like Dickens in his journalistic urban wanderings, Woolf adopts the guise of the uncommercial tourist in her socio-cultural and gender-mindful essay, and yet both nevertheless align with the commercial guidebooks in their

invocation of nostalgic untourability. Woolf continues a noticeable trend of the Victorian Oxbridge guidebooks with respect to the scholar's room: while it is kept truly untourable backspace, and never a tangible destination, it is nonetheless charmingly rendered in the visitor's imagination such that it becomes an integral addition to the nostalgic tour and an important part of the university's presence.

Varsity novels also display a clear fascination with the typically untourable scholar's room, but, unlike the guidebooks, they make a point of allowing the varsity visitor behind the curtain and revealing the spatial contours and narrative possibilities of this intimate setting. In fact, far from a varsity novel particularity alone, the fascination with rooms dedicated to mental pursuits, to brain spaces, persists across Victorian fiction. Recall Sherlock's cluttered sitting room where great epiphanies are had. Consider Casaubon's private study of frustrated creation and its power to disturb Dorothea's peace of mind. And let us not forget Dr. Jekyll's backstage office behind his laboratory, the troubled mind behind the transforming body.[53] The appeal of these spaces in fiction, unlike, say, the drawing room, kitchen, or parlour, is the link to creation, psychological intimacy, and, above all, privacy. There is also the connection to ideas of masculine identity here, since these private spaces are invariably a male prerogative and offset other public rooms where women are featured more predominantly. With the popularity of realist fiction, the private study becomes a valuable setting in counter-distinction to the more staged fronts of public space, against which the realities of a character's more private and intellectual routines are exposed and explored. But the college room in particular bears a double layer of closedness, in its association with both the interiority of the mind and with the exclusivity of the university itself. In the *Verdant Green* series, the extreme interiority and recessed nature of the college room is emphasized when, at the beginning of their university tour, Verdant and his

father are shown up to the freshman's own room for the first time and find it to be situated virtually in the college garret, at the very top of a long, dark, twisting staircase, with a low cobwebbed ceiling. Although the very awkward nature of the room's location is played for laughs, with Verdant's father expressing some concern over his son's ability to escape his lofty room in the event of a fire, it offers the pleasing conciliation of an authentic view of the university outside, a view familiarly framed nostalgic: "The window looked with a sunny aspect down upon the quad, and over the opposite buildings were seen the spires of churches, the dome of the Radcliffe, and the gables, pinnacles, and turrets of other colleges. This was pleasant enough" (Bede 47). So we see, just as the university railway station offers a perfect vantage point of nostalgic appreciation from without, the college room offers the same from deep within the academic sphere. It is interesting that both positions depict this similar view—the impenetrable yet dreamy spires that iconize Oxbridge in popular imagination—suggesting that, for the varsity reader, interiority is the same as exteriority when it comes to unlocking the secrets of the "actual" university. The interiority of the fictional student's room maintains the closed untourability of the university for the reader who may only appreciate it as culturally shared nostalgic images. Verdant's first acquaintance with his college room is further aligned with academic authenticity as it pertains to ideas of identity formation. This is most clearly spelled out in Mr. Green's ardent pleasure at seeing his son established in his "own college room" (48) and his equally ardent regret that his absent wife will not have the same pleasure. This noted preference on the part of Mr. Green points to the outsider's designation of this space as an exhibit of academic authenticity, but importantly one that depends upon installation, seeing the student authenticated in situ.

But if Verdant's tour of his own room begins the novel's exploration of the authentic college room, it is his acquaintance with another room at Oxford much later on that allows the novel to gesture cheekily to the illusion of authenticity that tourist sites inspire. In the second book of the series, Verdant has occasion to visit certain college rooms in St. John's occupied by an eccentric fellow student named Mr. Foote, a set of "show rooms" carefully done up by the occupant and made tourable for the viewing pleasure and curiosity of university visitors. The narrator comments on the touristic appeal of Foote's rooms in such a way that points directly to the nostalgic appeal of authenticity and typically untourable backspaces: "It was chiefly on account of the lavish manner in which Mr. Foote had furnished his rooms, with what he theatrically called 'properties,' that made them so sought out: and country lionisers of Oxford, who took their impressions of an Oxford student's room from those of Mr. Foote, must have entertained very highly coloured ideas of the internal aspect of the sober-looking old Colleges" (Bede 211). The idea behind Foote's rooms for those touring nostalgic "lionisers" in the novel is that they are authentic examples of Oxford college rooms. But to the reader and the perceptive Oxford student in the novel this sequence blatantly suggests *in*authenticity in nostalgic presentation and consumption, or what Dean MacCannell terms "staged authenticity."[54] Indeed, when Verdant walks into Foote's rooms, the staged room is set meticulously with those choice artefacts of the college room, the kind which would serve to stir Woolf's critical imagination in later years: oak panels finely engraved, velvet couches and lounging chairs, pianoforte, writing tables and reading stands of all sorts, and book stands of every variety. The most suggestive of Foote's props are indeed the books themselves, symbols of the studious identity, displayed in an elaborately carved book-case, and "gorgeously bound in every tint of morocco and vellum, with their backs richly tooled in gold" (211). That the books are mere props, however, is made evident

by the mention that they are ordered by the foot rather than according to their contents, and thus, like the entire room, they are just as much for form as for function. Bede even directly references the stage comparison by having the rooms equipped with a functioning trapdoor for when the always game Mr. Foote is called upon to demonstrate his learning with impromptu scenes of Hamlet leaping into Ophelia's grave. Of course the staged nature of the authentic student room exhibit is nothing without Mr. Foote himself, the living artefact on display, the Oxford student in his natural habitat. Bede creates in Foote, dubbed a "striking example of the theatrical undergraduate," a hyper-aware actor on the academic stage, blessed with "great powers of mimicry and facial expression…to imitate any peculiarities which were to be observed either in Dons or Undergraduates, in Presidents or Scouts" (212). Reminiscent of Lamb enacting the student in the deserted university streets, here we have another nod to performance, this time in the interests of illuminating authentic figures behind-the-scenes. Indeed, Bede uses Foote throughout his varsity series to point comically to the theatrical possibilities in any number of typical university scenes, like drinking parties or Town & Gown rows, by dictating stage directions, dramatis personae, scenic blocking and generally drawing attention to the performativity of authenticity.[55] MacCannell's theory of staged authenticity, as it pertains to tourist sites, elucidates a modern cultural fascination with displays of backstage authenticity exactly like Foote's college rooms, normally hidden spaces marked and marketed for tourist accessibility and consumption that aim to demystify and reveal. MacCannell argues, however, that the staged authentic only mystifies further and becomes in fact a false back alongside the false fronts of usual touristic public spaces.[56] In *Verdant Green*, what the false backspace of Foote's room does is acknowledge culturally accepted "impressions" of the authentic student's room, while at the same time keeping the "real" college room untourable and only imaginable.

And so, stepping back, we have the illusive college room deep within the illusive university, packaged within the fictive frame of the varsity novel; at every step of illusion, nostalgia is the veil of appeal.

In many ways, Foote's Oxford show-rooms concretize the authentic student's room, or rather the idea of the student's room, as that quiet, serious, study space of refined and purposeful academic clutter; in short, it commodifies the aesthetic ascetic as academic authentic. But, aside from the obvious illusion of Foote's rooms, Verdant comes to realize the myth of the academic cloister over the course of his freshman year, discovering "that the quiet retirement of college-rooms, of which he had heard so much, was in many cases an unsubstantial idea, founded on imagination, and built up by fancy" (Bede 119-120). This realization is a hallmark of the varsity novel genre, which is absorbed in the entertainment of disillusionment or surprised expectations, where wide-eyed freshmen arrive at Oxbridge seeking the stuff of fancy and finding instead the messy displays of real life. Indeed, for Verdant, the glimpse behind the curtain, his access into the true backspace of the student's room, is, as the varsity novel constructs it, quite literally a confrontation with mess. To clarify, while the *Verdant Green* novels are busy humorously debunking the myth of the authentic study space, they simultaneously establish a different kind of authentic college room, one with its own kind of allure and its own kind of nostalgia: the scholar's room as a messy space of loud play, delinquency, and academic rebellion or escape. One of the varsity novel's trademark entry points of intrigue is its ushering of the reader, alongside the unsuspecting freshman, into the backrooms of Oxbridge which dispel the discipline of the academic cloister and are very far indeed from the dens of thought and developing genius that the dreaming spires would profess to hide.

Fascination with the disorderly rooms hidden within the university begins in Bede's series when Verdant visits the room of his friend Larkyns for the first time and marvels at its eclectic display; containing mirrors and grooming utensils, animal masks, hunting schedules and equipment, fishing rods, cricket bats, pipes and alcohol, and lecture lists pinned up haphazardly over everything, it is a striking and nearly complete exhibit of masculine youth. Verdant passes through Larkyns's room with the wonder and interest of a touring museum patron, examining each item for character traces of his decidedly altered childhood friend, using the disorganized display to frame and inform the image of the lounging figure of Larkyns, surrounded by his entourage of rowdy companions. Again, a sense of allowed but cautionary touristic trespass is present in the exposure of this room, with the reader sharing Verdant's discovery of a space made tourable only by way of literary confidence. Bede plays with the ideas of representation and authenticity when he has the room's occupants cheekily justify the conspicuous profusion of liquor and beer to the visiting freshman as medically prescribed tonics for over-study and hard reading, thus re-establishing the mythical idea of the authentic student study, even while it is clearly a simple ruse. In this way, the student room as play/idle space becomes almost the true backstage that the varsity novel reveals behind the false front of work and study. Murray's Oxford *Handbook* courts the nostalgic allure of the messy college space and its link to youthful character in a similar way, allowing its tourist to revel in the delinquent pasts of famous scholars. For instance, in pointing out Samuel Johnson's rooms over the gateway of Pembroke College, the guidebook adds intrigue to the space by mentioning that he was reportedly seen once throwing a pair of old shoes out its windows and seen often lounging outside its doors with friends keeping them from their studies (Murray's *Handbook*, 179). Similarly, passing by Shelley's rooms on the first floor of University College, from which he was later expelled, the

guidebook conjures a colourful image of the space as follows: "In his time, books, papers, boots, philosophical instruments, clothes, pistols, linen, crockery, bags, and boxes were scattered on the floor and in every place; tables and carpets stained with large fire spots; an electric machine, air-pump, solar microscope, &c.…." (Murray's *Handbook*, 156). Here we see the same touristic fascination with disorderly clutter that is used to present the fictional Larkyns's room, fortifying the idea that there is some nostalgic draw to the idea of undisciplined space incongruously and rebelliously situated within the walls of academic discipline.

Unlike the "authentic" study cloister, governed by the demands of learning, work, and solitude, the room of idleness, mischief, and sociality is the backdrop to the student-governed university experience to which the varsity novel draws attention and from which it mines its chief sources of entertainment. As the varsity novel displays it, the room of delinquency dominates over the room of discipline because it is separate from the institution's direct control and in fact provides a stage for youth to enact the university's power and render it a game. This is wonderfully exemplified in a comedic sequence in *Verdant Green* where Verdant and his friend Bouncer, the text's paragon of academic delinquency, set out to prank an unsuspecting new student by hijacking the matriculation exam.[57] They lead their victim up to one of their rooms, where the mess of delinquent youth is hastily swept aside and replaced with pens, ink, the false test paper, a devious Examiner, and the duped yet earnest freshman (Bede 147). In this moment the college room doubles as both disciplinary and delinquent space, but with the clear understanding that the former is at the mercy of the latter. Furthermore, if we acknowledge the appealing liberties of identity attached to "a room of one's own," and if we recall the elder Mr. Green's thrill of excitement over the thought of his son's installation and eventual studious development in his own college room, the room of delinquency gains additional influence in the

varsity novel by its formation and fortification of an entirely distinct character of academic authenticity, one that sits confidently alongside the serious scholar, with nostalgic ties to boyhood and play. There will be more to say on this topic in the next chapter which is concerned with the ways in which play is rendered nostalgic in the varsity novel as a strategic nod to lost boyhood, but for now it is enough to emphasize the productive function of the play space. The varsity novel and the Oxbridge guidebooks suggest that just as the mythical authentic study room gives birth to the typical solitary disciplined scholar, the nostalgic backspace of the delinquent college room produces figures like Bouncer, who drink and smoke profusely, prank and socialize, cheat and flunk, and barely manage to graduate, if in fact they do at all.[58] The nostalgic popularity of these academic delinquents is a result of texts that create space for them at the heart of the university, making room for them to play and live the university experience on different but no less authentic terms, texts that showcase them in the traditionally untourable college room, made accessible through a literary backstage pass.

Nostalgic Untourability: The University of the Past

Authenticity lives in the present but it is a product of the past. Yes, to long for the authentic is to long for the genuine article as it was at the beginning. The third and final kind of nostalgically untourable space I shall discuss is the university of the past. In nostalgic Oxbridge literature, fictional or otherwise, the idea of the authentic university is the university affectionately enveloped in the knowledge and feel of its historical associations, of "time without decay":[59] its pre-scholastic functions, its architectural foundations, its political and social movements, its age-old customs, and its former graduates.[60] Indeed, the touring nostalgiac is in many ways an emotional archaeologist, motivated by unearthing the feel of the past, keenly attuned to where Arnold's whispers of Middle Age enchantment are embedded in the site. Now,

touristically speaking, one cannot (re)visit the past; and nostalgia, the longing for a lost time, is born out of this painful understanding. And yet, this is precisely the commercial conceit of the Oxbridge guidebooks, that one can in effect tour the past as it is written upon and suggested by the architectural and spatial features of a particular site. The guidebooks package the nostalgic experience of the past by disregarding the present functional life of the university in order to foreground its impressive yet purely non-functional history. We see, for instance, great attention paid to the openings and foundations of colleges and halls as the tourist is led through, and nothing of the mass of scholars enclosed within them. Alden's *Guide to Oxford* details the momentous opening of New College in 1386, and makes a point of noting that it has remained virtually unchanged since then (18). Stanford's Cambridge *Guide* does the same with Trinity Library and Hall, noting the former was designed by Sir Christopher Wren and the latter founded by Edward III, whose arms remain blazoned over the door (35). That architectural age is intrinsic to touristic appreciation is proven by how the guidebooks assess newer buildings. On Keble College, established in 1870, Alden's notes "Its appearance strikes one as very unlike that of the other colleges; but when the glare of colour is toned down by age, it will not fear comparison with its older companions, which it worthily rivals, both in extent of area and number of students" (16). The guidebooks' stance on age as quality, along with their frequent notice of traces of the past left unchanged in the present, contribute to the nostalgic experience of the tour. The guidebooks construct a tourist well prepared to consume these traces, as we see when Alden's points to the remnants of the Old City Wall girding the New College gardens, left standing since the English Civil War, and encapsulates it for easy consumption as "an interesting relic of the olden time" (21). The appeal here is the idea of timelessness, that the tourist is touring a space out of touch with the typical passage of time. Or, in talking of historical traces,

one might note the appeal of the palimpsest; for instance, in resurrecting the monastic identities of the universities for the tourist as he/she passes by the cloisters of Oxford, or the former Benedictine Convent of Cambridge's Jesus College, the guidebooks stoke the feelings of quiet reverence, and focussed solitude that have seeped through to colour the university's modern identity. But, of equal appeal are the traceless histories of the sites: the missing saints' effigies on Oxford's Divinity School windows, for example, destroyed during Edward VI's reign, or the mythological suggestion that the learned Anglo-Saxon King Alfred established Oxford's first scholastic hall ("University Hall") on the site of University College, centuries before the university was supposed to have begun (*Alden*'s 8-9, 35). Attending to a traceless history, the guidebooks position their tourist in an entirely imagined site.

As the Oxbridge guidebooks present the possibility of touring the untourable past, conceptualizing a tourist literally stepping through time, we are brought very near to the idea of virtuality and its framing of the tourist experience. Alison Byerly's recent study on "virtual travel" in the Victorian age examines the development of narrative realism in Victorian fiction, but specifically through discursive comparisons to various media of virtual travel such as panoramas, travel guides, railway journeys and railway guides.[61] As Byerly discusses, the rhetoric of representational movement and representational place in both travel media and realistic narrative facilitate an art of imagined presence or more aptly an art of virtual presence that allows reader, viewer, or audience member to be "moved to a place beyond his or her own subjective experience" (28). In this way, the reader becomes a virtual traveller of sorts. The Victorian Oxbridge guidebooks are a perfect example of Byerly's identified virtual media; nostalgically motivated as they are, they move their reader-tourist through the virtual realm of the past, seeing what once was and adulating those who came before.[62] Indeed, while the

guidebook tourist walks through the actual university of the present, and even while the guidebook establishes a modern foothold by having the tour unfold narratively in the continuous present ("pursuing our course," "we suddenly come upon," etc.), the tourist is encouraged to keep one foot in the imagined past. And in fact it is the act of walking, the text's attention to the steady pace and step of the tourist, that facilitates Byerly's idea of virtual movement into a different space. The Oxbridge tourist is constantly reminded of his/her gait, as the guidebook directs his/her steps through the various paths of the university: told to turn here, head there, climb up sets of stairs, walk through and under arches and doorways, and stop at various junctures for picturesque views. By keeping the tourist constantly aware of his/her physicality—through walking and also the touristic working of the senses—by not allowing absolute absorption into the history as a generic history text does, the guidebook emphasizes the co-existence of past and present throughout the tour and in doing so allows nostalgia to flourish. That is, one must have a strong hold on present reality and one's physical presence in reality in order for nostalgia, which brushes this reality with regret, to work. And, especially, one must have a strong sense of one's interaction with a site as a feeling person in order for emotions and/or commodified emotions to surface.

Varsity novels cannot beckon their reader into a virtual university of the past in the same way that the guidebooks can for the very simple reason that the modern functions and components of the site—the students, exams, lectures, youthful exploits, and daily academic routines—form the necessary and entertaining stuff of plot, stuff with which the reader is expected to be absorbed. And yet, even while this is so, varsity novels trade on the historical and cultural appeal of the Oxbridge sites, and gloss their venerable age with a grandeur that both inspires the scholar-protagonists to rise to greater levels of worthiness while at the same time

humorously offsetting their childish pranks. The ancient university in the varsity novel is a setting borrowed for its nostalgic aura of the past to be sure, but not at all for any focussed exploration of it. Oxford and Cambridge are sites with their own stories, but ones that are overridden (and sometimes mischievously overwritten) by the stories of fictional scholars such that the university of the past becomes an acknowledged but necessarily untourable background. What makes Bede's varsity series somewhat unique, and fittingly for an author whose pen-namesake is the father of English history,[63] is the way that it keeps alive this untourable space of the university's history, keeping the reader in touch with both past and (fictional) present as the guidebooks do. To be exact, Bede makes the past accessible in *Verdant Green* through the use of chapter endnotes that, while maintaining the novel's cheeky narrative tone, are used to both resurrect and correct historical knowledge of an Oxford that rests otherwise the unexamined canvas beneath the graffiti of youth and fiction. Using Oxford historical texts, including James Ingram's *Memorials of Oxford*, as guides, Bede's varsity narrator teaches the reader to appreciate the history behind the hijinks and the fact behind the fiction. The endnotes offer historical explanation for curious university names and designations as they pop up in the narrative, such as the Divinity School's quadrangle being called the "Pig-market" or New Hall Inn "The Tavern" or the long-debated meaning behind Brasenose College.[64] For the Brasenose endnote, Bede prefaces the historical correction with these lines: "Although we have a great respect for Mr. Larkyns, yet we strongly suspect that he is intentionally deceiving his friend. He has, however, the benefit of a doubt, as the authorities differ on the origin and meaning of the word…" (79). The note is attached to the scene where Verdant is escorted on his prank tour, and with the subtle tone of playful admonition we see Bede maintaining his narrative persona and staying within the fictive frame of the plot, rather than stepping outside of it entirely as a mere

corollary of typical textual detachment. By doing this, Bede constructs a reader who is able to keep one foot in the fictional landscape and the other in a historical backdrop, seeking pleasure from both the imagined and the remembered, as he/she is led comfortably by the same guide in both spaces.

Another way that the endnotes resurrect the university's past is by offering a historical back-plot to the fictional plot in play, through which the reader is urged to briefly detour. This is evident, for instance, with the historical endnotes affixed to the 'Town and Gown' row in the second book of the series. Town and Gown riots, organized annual street-brawls between students and townsmen, are as much a formulaic prerequisite of the generic varsity novel as sentimental approaches and freshman pranks, beginning in the genre-launching *Reginald Dalton* where it is inscribed as a most unexpected event in the streets of a peaceful university town.[65] Varsity novels use them not only as additional university initiation for the scholar-protagonist, but also as a way of tapping into the appeal of the university as a place of ritual, and more precisely as a place where ritual opens up a portal to the past. As Verdant prepares to take part in his first town versus gown skirmish, on Guy Fawkes Day no less, Bede opens the sequence with the historical layering of both Fawkes's gunpowder plot (1605) and Oxford's infamous St. Scholastica Day riot (1355), a particularly violent Town and Gown affair which resulted in numerous scholars slain.[66] He then adds a third layer of historical nostalgia by having the university men defeat their townsmen rivals against a history of religious persecution "on the spot where, some three centuries before, certain mitred Gownsmen had bravely suffered martyrdom" (Bede 178).[67] The endnotes flesh out the back-plot layerings by offering factual detail about the St. Scholastica Day riot, and the supposed location of the Oxford martyrdom (Bede 167-68, 181). With these historical footholds, Bede rather amusingly sets an historical

stage of danger and sacrifice for his own comical rendition of the Town and Gown riot (wherein his hero exhibits great shows of cowardice and spectacle cleaning) but more importantly he nudges the reader's nostalgic instincts for identifying Oxford as historically hallowed ground upon which generations have seen fit to match more than battles of wit. As a brief detour, the historical endnote necessarily delineates the main tour of the fictional plot, but it also allows the varsity novel to cordon off an untourable past that contributes to the marketability of university nostalgia.

In closing off discussion of the nostalgically untourable past, and its discursive linking of fictional and nonfictional touristic literature, one cannot overlook a particularly amusing sequence in Bede's varsity series in which the author engages directly with Oxford guidebooks as texts important to the cultural dissemination of university nostalgia. In this sequence, the delinquent Bouncer teaches Verdant how to write an exemplary letter to the "maternal relative" at the "home department" and uses an Oxford guidebook to produce the ideal epistolary model, one of "amusement blended with information" (185). His scheme is explained in this way:

> as soon as ever I came up to Oxford, I invested money in a Guide Book; and I began at the beginning, and I gave the Mum three pages of Guide Book in each letter. Of course, you see, the Mum imagines it's all my own observation; and she thinks no end of my letters, and says that they make her know Oxford almost as well as if she lived here; and she, of course, makes a good deal of me; and as Oxford's the place where I hang out, you see, she takes an interest in reading something about the jolly old place. (Bede 185)

Bouncer then proceeds to read from one of his exemplary compositions to mother and sister, which begins with customary salutations on health and weather, and then moves abruptly into

guidebook text, which, as his instruction makes clear, has been cut up piecemeal and copied verbatim throughout:

> '*My dearest mother, – I have been quite well since I left you, and I hope you and Fanny have been equally salubrious*. […] *We had rain the day before yesterday, but we shall have a new moon to-night*. […] *I will now tell you a little about Merton College*.' – That's where I had just got to. We go right through the Guide Book, you understand. – '*The history of this establishment is of peculiar importance, as exhibiting the primary model of all the collegiate bodies in Oxford and Cambridge*…' (Bede 187; italics added)

Through Bouncer's scheme, Bede once again emphasizes the touristic identity of the university town and the extent to which Oxford's cultural appeal is the product of touristic presentation and suggested methods of consumption. Bouncer's mother is made the unwitting tourist here: expecting a kind of shared academic experience through the personal observations of her son, she is instead forced to know and experience the university as the tourism industry would have her experience it.[68] There is an undeniable sense of commodified nostalgia here as Bouncer's mother, like the guidebook tourist, is urged to embrace a mass-produced form of nostalgic appreciation that dares to replace the personal sensation that comes of one's own experience, or the shared cultural sensation that is expressed in personal ways. The humour of Bouncer's letter lies in its missing that crucial personal link to nostalgia; it is a completely lifeless glimpse into the university of the past, without the important encryptor of human emotion through which history is coded into proper nostalgia. Notwithstanding his usual naïveté, Verdant recognizes the lifelessness of his friend's letter, as he concedes with irony that "It certainly contains some interesting information" (Bede 188). With respect to touristic methods of university appreciation, Bouncer's letter (detailing in particular the "academical revolution" of Walter de Merton's

development of the college system of housing and discipline) teaches that to experience Oxford, to appreciate the "jolly old place," is to be entirely absorbed by its formative past. In fact, the past so entirely consumes the letter that Bouncer's Mum is left with very little knowledge of her son's university life (just as the guidebook privileges the past effectively effacing from its tourist's vision the living routine and youthful presence of the university). Thus, in the same way that the *Verdant Green* series demonstrates a meta-cultural awareness of university tourism's strategical illusions of openness and authenticity through Foote's staged college rooms, through Bouncer's letter it demonstrates a similar awareness of university tourism's illusion of the past as a realm into which one is transported. And, as with Foote's rooms, this awareness is presented through comedy, as Bouncer's Mum is jolted violently from the present into the past and back again without any regard for transition or continuity. Indeed, the letter's signing off is as abrupt as its opening, with "Love to Fanny…your affectionate son etc." following immediately upon the last historical tidbit that Bouncer has decided to copy (Bede 188). The illusion of the tourable past is undeniably suggested here, but while it is certainly a nod to the precepts of commercial tourism literature, Bede is also pointing very obviously to the touristic realities of fiction. For, even as he has the misguided Bouncer earnestly construct epistles through which his mother might know, live, and love the university, Bede still points to the idea of untourability as a discursive trend of the varsity novel as touristic text; once again, attempts at truly knowing the university are thwarted by the immaturity and scheming of varsity youth for whom the university of the past is merely a page in a textbook. Indeed, throughout, even as this varsity novel displays cunning awareness of what a touristic university text is expected to do, that is, use the past to transport and transfix, it is also keenly cognisant of the limits and expectations of varsity fiction which, sustained by the currency of happy youth with future aspirations, can only allow the past

and tradition so much influence without veering into tragic territory.[69] As I have argued, however, the historical miseducation, the brief historical detours, the sidelong glances at the university of the past even while the university of the present is cast as the amusing stomping ground for irreverent Victorian youth, are enough to brush even a comedic and at times farcical varsity novel like *Verdant Green* with moments of wistful longing.

The Souvenir and Token Experience

The university tour would not be complete without a visit to the souvenir shop, and the purchase of some token to encapsulate the site's authentic identity and to materialize memories of the touring experience. And certainly a chapter focussed on the idea of commodified nostalgia could not be complete without devoting some attention to the commodity itself, to the purchasable, consumable *thing* that lovingly objectifies the university for easy storage in the visitor's memory. And so, by way of final discussion, as I consider here the cultural encounter between university and touristic souvenir, the discourse that emerges, I would argue, is nostalgia for the token experience, in which the token of experience and the experience itself are one and the same for the university visitor. More precisely, it is the token experience of nonbelonging that the university souvenir renders nostalgic, such that the object is wrapped in the desire for intimacy with the academic space, but an unrequited desire since it is also a reminder of undeniable touristic distance. On the linking of the souvenir with nostalgia, it is helpful to turn to Susan Stewart's analysis on the souvenir as object of desire, indelibly tied to its site of consumptive origin through the "language of longing" (135).[70] Stewart defines the souvenir as an object that travels from an event and site of origin to memory and home, acquiring nostalgic value only insofar as it represents the distance from and loss of original experience (135). Importantly, she points to the souvenir as an object empowered through narrative, that is,

through the articulation of desire that makes meaning out of the object's lost connections and pertains only to the possessor's original experience (136). And finally, and perhaps most significantly for my discussion, Stewart analyzes the souvenir as a substitute for ideas of authenticity: meaning that it comes to encapsulate in object form some illusive suggestion of the site's authenticity and one's experience of it. She writes that "as experience is to an imagined point of authenticity, so narrative is to the souvenir. The souvenir displaces the point of authenticity as it itself becomes the point of origin for narrative" (136). With these ideas in mind, it is quite intriguing to consider the ways that a university souvenir, or rather an Oxbridge souvenir, might capture some authentic "essence" or touristic identity of its hallowed institution. More intriguing still is the thought that the Victorian guidebook and varsity novel might produce out of the mere idea of the university souvenir a kind of nostalgia that, further emphasizing Oxbridge exclusivity, is a charming consolation prize for disallowed intimacy.

The *Verdant Green* series first engages with the idea of the souvenir before the eponymous character sets off for Oxford, as objects of longing, not for the university, but rather for the home. As he prepares to leave the domestic sphere for the academic one, Verdant is presented with handcrafted items by all the women in his family, who are described as having "fully occupied their time until the day of separation came, by elaborating articles of feminine workmanship, as souvenirs, by which dear Verdant might, in the land of the strangers, recall visions of home" (Bede 28). Verdant is presented with purse, braces, and pocket-watch from his three sisters, a pair of woolen comforters knit by his aunt Virginia's "own fair hands," plus other "woollen articles of domestic use" from his mother (Bede 28). The familial association of these items links them to the home, with their handcrafted individuality clearly separating them from the mass-produced commodities of the shop. Of great importance is the fact that these are

designated “feminine” articles, evidently cementing the link between women and their domestic domain, such that they are not only the makers and purveyors of its token trinkets and objects, but nostalgic objects of the home themselves. Thus, as the eligible son sets off for his academic tour, he is encouraged to think nostalgically of home by way of these objects which simultaneously represent the Manor Green and its women who are necessary fixtures there. It is worthy to note that, with these home souvenirs, the traditional connection between nostalgia and homesickness is highlighted,[71] a common varsity novel emotional trigger as the university becomes a youth’s first new place of residence. Bede continues to tap the established emotional well of traditional home-inspired nostalgia when he has Verdant succumb to a legitimate bout of homesickness on his first night at Oxford as he listens to a melancholy strain of “Home, sweet home” playing outside his college gates (56). Significantly, the home and the university are often placed in counter-position to each other in varsity fiction; both are sites of belonging, residency, development, and nostalgia, but they work in opposition to each other in terms of influence such that belonging to one requires giving up the other, and the reality of one necessitates the reduction of the other. Thus the university is very much the anti-home in varsity fiction: once admitted there the home is reduced to a cherished keepsake. Conversely, for those *of the home* (mothers and sisters, servants and children), for whom the university cannot be a lived experience, it must necessarily be a trinket, something brought home to prompt “visions of the university.” And so we have in *Verdant Green* an important souvenir exchange between these two sites of nostalgia, whereby the presentation of domestic souvenirs is answered by the sending home of university souvenirs, and it is this exchange that brings forth nostalgia for lost spheres of experience and the wistful sense of nonbelonging that envelops the souvenir owner.

Almost all Victorian varsity novels mark as momentous the university-bound man's graduation of belonging from the home to the university,[72] and thereafter from the university to the world beyond. In *Verdant Green*, touristic text that it is, the title character's shift to domestic outsider is marked by the souvenir, and his female relatives are marked analogously as touristic outsiders by the university souvenirs that Verdant buys for them at the tourist shop of one Mr. Spiers, famed for *papier-maché* "remembrances of Oxford" and an assortment of trays, tables, screens, desks, portfolios, and albums all displaying views of Oxford "from every variety of aspect" and executed with the highest quality of "truth and perception" (Bede 108). From Spiers's shop Verdant purchases a fire-screen with a view of his college for his mother, a writing-case depicting a view of Oxford's High Street for his aunt, and a model of the Martyrs' Memorial for his sisters. In sending home tourist souvenirs of Oxford, Verdant effectively marks his female relatives as tourists, in the same way that Bouncer does his Mum with the guidebook-plagiarized letter: they are those who may tour, love, and long for the university, but may never truly know it, and those for whom commodified forms of nostalgia and "perceptions" of authenticity are intended. And yet, even this is not quite right. One can almost say that the souvenir sent home from the Oxford son to his home-bound maternal relative is devoid even of commodified nostalgia, is a dead souvenir in fact. For, if the nostalgic value of the souvenir is made from the memory of experience, and the tourism souvenir from the memory of a tour or visit, as Stewart argues, then this text is essentially positioning these women, with their memoryless trinkets, as distanced from the university twice over, first as non-members and then as non-tourists.[73] The form of Spiers's souvenirs, as miniaturized essences and captured views, is significant here too. Oxford's authenticity as a site of exclusivity is fortified by the ability to aesthetically replicate it and sell a cheapened and miniaturized version of it to those who do not

belong: to tourists, the working class, and women.[74] As a token of exchange, the souvenir in this varsity series comes to symbolize the distance between site and experience, as it pertains to gendered access and movement. Indeed, one might say that, for Verdant's women, souvenirs of a miniaturized university simply replicate the impossibilities of admission on a smaller scale.

The Oxbridge guidebooks market the souvenir as an important addition to their tours, and a nostalgic material complement to their nostalgic immaterial experience. By far the most heavily marketed touristic souvenirs in these texts are the "photographic views" of the university, mounted, bound, engraved, framed, and collected for the benefit of the tourist who may not wish to leave the visual impressions of the tour in the charge of memory alone. The photographic view serves as a companion piece to the views that the guidebooks peddle and impress upon the reader, like the quintessential Oxford bird's eye from atop the Radcliffe gallery or from the cupola of the Sheldonian Theatre. In the prefatory pages of Alden's Oxford *Guide* one sees advertised purchasable series of "Oxford views" from various publishers and photographers ("Mansell's"; "G. W. Wilson & Co."), including notice of Alden's own printing offices where views and other souvenirs sit alongside the guidebook itself on the shelves of the shop. Similarly, Murray's Oxford *Handbook* ends its guided tour by encouraging tourists to visit the print shops of Mr. Ryman or Mr. Wyatt for beautiful prints and photographs of Oxford (182).[75]

In fact, in an interesting marriage of fiction and nonfiction, and quite appropriately for an analysis dedicated to the many ways that touristic literatures are discursively linked, Murray's *Handbook* advertises the shop of "Spiers and Son" as an ideal site of "ornamental goods, guide-books, maps, and stationary" for Oxford visitors looking for purchasable impressions of the university town (182). That Bede would have Verdant visit a real souvenir shop during his Oxford tenure seems perfectly fitting given the series' obvious touristic impetus. And he

certainly chose the right one; Spiers and Son were particularly well known in England as representing Oxford and its university on the tourism map and as a site of aesthetic display.[76] The shop was famed for its Oxford views grafted upon paper-maché as well as various objects such as chairs, tables and screens, pen trays, cigar cases, fans etc. and even exhibited its view-decorated wares to great acclaim at the London, New York, and Paris Exhibitions.[77] It is rather interesting to consider the idea of the university souvenir on display off-site, Oxford objects taking part in what Thomas Richards calls an "exhibition of things" (3),[78] if only because it suggests a kind of commodified nostalgia once again: that is, the university made consumable as an exhibit of authenticity, reduced to an essence of place with an attending nostalgia that has nothing at all to do with the experience of being or having been there, let alone the experience of knowing it intimately. Indeed, Bede nods to the exhibitionary potential of the university town early on in his series' first book when he sets his protagonist on course for the "great Oxford booth of this Vanity Fair" (29). Whether put on exhibit outside the university walls, sent home to relatives without a university pass, or sold from within to itinerant nostalgiacs, the university "view" as souvenir in touristic literature is imbued with the memory of nonbelonging. For the guidebook tourist, photographic souvenirs like those found in Spiers' shop capture the university as the tourist wishes to see it, objectifying Urry's romantic tourist gaze of undisturbed beauty,[79] but also as the tourist must see it: from the streets, from provisionally opened colleges, from atop, from afar, from perspectives of certain impenetrability that mark the distance between outsider and insider, the same perspectives that varsity novels pay homage to as their protagonists slowly graduate from the former to the latter. But, importantly, along with the token experience of nonbelonging, the guidebooks also rather oddly court the token experience of non-experience, positioning the souvenir as a consolation prize for what the tourist does not have

time to see. I have already mentioned the guidebook tour's constructs of expediency and time dependency, and this comes to colour the significance of the photographic souvenir as well, such that, in the absence of time for sightseeing, the guidebooks are often keen to suggest the purchase of the photographic view as a conciliatory substitute. And the phrasing, often touting that "views may be obtained" at various shops, further emphasizes the guidebook's easy shift from active experience—the seeking out and seeing of the view oneself—to passive acceptance of pre-packaged experience. The significance of this of course is that the souvenir comes to represent the absence of even touristic experience, but with seemingly the nostalgia of touristic appreciation still intact.

Finally, as if to drive home the associative connection between the tourist souvenir and the nostalgia of token experience that persists in touristic literature, Bede's varsity text draws particular attention to Spiers's rather suggestive name. That "Spiers" puns on the university's most commanding and collapsible feature, and not to mention its most nostalgically-charged feature, suggests, according to this varsity novel, the unabashed commodification of sentimental authenticity that occurs at tourist sites, as well as in touristic literature. Bede jabs knowingly at this idea by having the mischievous Larkyns, in a misquote of a Wordsworth sonnet,[80] attribute the "intoxication" of Oxford to a souvenir shop and its dizzying accumulation of things as he leads Verdant inside: "O ye Spiers of Oxford! your presence overpowers the soberness of reason!" (108). The misappropriation of Oxford's intoxicating atmosphere, along with Verdant's temporary disorientation as he surveys the shop's contents and nearly succumbs to a fit of overconsumption, form a comedic microcosmic rendering of the "dreaming spires" allure that has proven so arresting to writers and the reading public. In this moment, Bede is gesturing

pointedly to the power of university nostalgia as a distempering agent certainly, but one which, coupled with touristic impulse, becomes something that one cannot help but buy into.

The "Old Shop" Revisited

In 1885, monthly magazine *The Leisure Hour* published in its December issue a short piece called "Oxford Revisited," by "Cuthbert Bede, B.A., author of *Verdant Green*." In it, the author revived his famous varsity characters Verdant and Bouncer, and imagined them balding old gentlemen returned to visit their much-changed old university, refreshing memories of youth, revisiting old varsity haunts as they walk through Oxford, and musing, in the humorously unusual but rather fitting words of Bouncer, "[h]ow well the old shop looks" (817). This piece is not an overtly commercially-aware touristic text like the *Verdant Green* series and the Oxbridge guidebooks, whose keen attention to the marketable, consumable, and ultimately commodifiable construct of the ancient university as it engages with the Victorian tourism industry has been the focus of this chapter. Nevertheless, this varsity novel addendum clearly adopts the conceit of the tour, and, more clearly still, for the sake of nostalgia, a connection that I could hardly fail to include. As the fictional former students tour thoughtfully through their Oxford, they are led by a knowledge of the place as it was and urged, by a sense of sentimental attachment to the "stirring scenes of their undergraduate days in the distant, but not dim, past," to sigh with some regret over all that has changed (818).[81] Unquestionably, this is a touristic stance of which the honourable Mr. English and the Oxford Tourist Committee would wholeheartedly approve. Yes, in this short, seemingly inconsequential, thirty-years-late postscript to the varsity series, the tour is strategically harnessed and strategically focussed in the service of both university and literary nostalgia; as the reader is led once again on a virtual tour, he/she is urged to remember fondly the "real" mid-century Oxford, Verdant Green's fictive Oxford, and, importantly, some idea of

Oxford constructed by a nostalgic mixture of the two. Bede's use of the tour to promote Oxford nostalgia here in the pages of a periodical further underscores the literary interplay between Victorian Oxbridge and Victorian tourism out of which the discourse of university nostalgia is born. And, purely in terms of effect, what is suggested here, and so too in the guidebooks, is the idea that nostalgic expression gains some artistic and representational momentum when attached to the tour; that, in literature especially, the tour provides an effective access-point into a nostalgic space. If nostalgic musing is somehow in step with passing through, one might logically argue that it has something to do with time itself: that it is never still but continually moving forward, that it is the very thing that makes memories and nostalgia necessary conveyances by denying anything more than a mental return to the past, prompts nostalgiacs to relish the experience of walking down memory lane and the thrill of travelling through time.

Notes

[1] Reported in "Oxford Tourist Committee," *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, Saturday 18 March 1899.

[2] Referencing Thomas Cook (1808-92), famous father of the packaged tour and Victorian tourism industry leader.

[3] The railway's cheap tourist tickets facilitated more and more day excursions, but also contributed to the increasing mobility of the working classes. In *Working-Class Organizations and Popular Tourism, 1840-1970* (Manchester UP, 2005) Susan Barton notes that the working classes were especially drawn to railway day-trips in the days before paid holidays, especially since the railways had been offering reduced fares for travelling tradesmen since 1839 (29). This committee acknowledges the valuable presence of the working classes in the tourist crowd in their stated anticipation of a number of Manchester touring parties, especially the 4000 staff from the Thames Ironworks at Blackwall. Despite the typical designation of Oxford and Cambridge as upper-class spaces, there is no class prejudice expressed in this meeting, only prejudice against certain types of modern tourists.

[4] Originally published in *The London Magazine* in 1820, then included in *Essays by Elia* (1823).

[5] Alison Byerly, noting the rapid expansion of domestic travel in the nineteenth century, deems it an "inverted manifestation of the imperialist agenda that had made foreign travel and exploration so popular" (8). In particular, Byerly links domestic and foreign travel accounts within the discourse of exoticism: "Many domestic travel accounts show a desire for a taste of the exotic, as authors attempt to look at the familiar British landscape with the sense of distance previously applied to foreign parts. Even as they appreciate its thorough Englishness, they attempt to experience that "here" as if it were elsewhere…" (9). See *Are We There Yet?: Virtual Travel and Victorian Realism* (U of Michigan P, 2013).

[6] From the introductory volume of Foucault's *The History of Sexuality*. In his discussion of "Method" Foucault cites the "tactical polyvalence of discourses" whereby discourses are not subject to uniform, binary, or stable constructions. For Foucault, discourses work tactically within a field of force relations in a myriad of ways, and, importantly, "there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy" (100-02).

[7] "The Reverend Edward Bradley chose the pseudonym of Cuthbert Bede from the names of the two patron saints of Durham, from whose University College he had received his degree in 1848" (qtd. in Proctor 78).

[8] By 1870 it had sold 100,000 copies; sales doubled again with the publication of a cheap print edition (see "Introduction to the Modern Edition," Nonsuch Classics). Mortimer Proctor also notes that the first part was already in its fourth edition after a year (80).

[9] Laura Valentine's *Picturesque England: Its Landmarks and Historic Haunts, as Described in Lay and Legend, Song and Story* (1891) designates all of these sites—alongside the familiar Stonehenge, Avebury, Canterbury Cathedral, and, assuredly, Oxford and Cambridge—as "picturesque," each one "remarkable" in history or legend for having "some glorious or pathetic memory attached to it" (Preface). Valentine's text quite clearly links domestic tourism to nostalgic sentiment, and in turn nostalgia to nationalism; nostalgia becomes something that one tours *for*.

[10] As the son of a country squire and heir to Manor Green, Verdant is decidedly an insider by class. The text humorously emphasizes this identity before his Oxford tour of duty begins: he is descended from landed gentry dating back to the Norman Invasion with a ridiculously named ancestor named Greene the Witless, corroborated by an entry in Burke's *Landed Gentry* which lists the Greens as a "family of some respectability and of considerable antiquity" (Bede 9). That

he never quite belongs in Oxford among similarly privileged peers further upholds Oxford's touristic identity in the text.

[11] Full citation: *A Handbook for Travellers in Berks, Bucks, and Oxfordshire. Including a Particular Description of The University and City of Oxford, and the Descent of the Thames to Maidenhead and Windsor* (London: John Murray, 1860).

[12] Full citation: *Alden's Sixpenny Guide to Oxford* (Oxford: Alden & Co., 1874). The popular text was reissued in multiple editions; by 1899, it was already in its 25th edition.

[13] Full Citation: *Tourist's Guide to the County of Cambridge: With Descriptions of the Chief Objects of Interest, Topographical, Historical, and Antiquarian* by Arthur George Hill (London: Edward Stanford, 1882).

[14] John M. Mackenzie has drawn attention to nineteenth-century guidebooks and their promotion of an imperial mindset through the historicization of other lands that highlights British involvement significantly. See "Empires of Travel: British Guide Books and Cultural Imperialism in the 19th and 20th Centuries" in *Histories of Tourism: Representation, Identity and Conflict* (Channel View, 2005, pp.19-38).

[15] See *Consuming Traditions: Modernity, Modernism, and the Commodified Authentic* (Oxford UP, 2009). Outka accesses ideas of commodified authenticity by focussing on model communities and homes, models of pastoral and domestic aesthetic, department store displays etc., all of which were used to spark nostalgic consumerism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

[16] On the topic of "marketing the intangible" see John Beckerson and John K. Walton, "Selling Air: Marketing the Intangible at British Resorts" (2005), which discusses the way that the Victorian tourism industry, and seaside tourguides especially, marketed the air at British seaside

resorts for its health-restoring qualities. A comparison might be made between marketing nostalgia and marketing air: both intangible products are deemed revitalizing in some way, and an antidote to industrialization and modernity. Nostalgia even attains a tangible atmospheric quality in fiction and poetic prose, a mistlike essence that permeates a site. See for instance Mr. Larkyns's quote in the first book of *Verdant Green,* describing the air of Oxford: "There is something in the very atmosphere of a university that seems to engender refined thoughts and noble feelings; and lamentable indeed must be the state of any young man who can pass through the three years of his college residence, and bring away no higher aims, no worthier purposes, no better thoughts, from all the holy associations which have been crowded around him" (Bede 22). This idea of atmospheric nostalgia, or breathable inspiration, is discussed again in Chapter Four as well as the conclusion.

[17] Proctor emphasizes *Verdant Green's* significance in the comedic university novel subgenre, as a text that "fixed the style of the comedy of university life" (78). Proctor notes its "lively narrative and farcical comedy," its frequent sacrifice of credibility to the demands of humour, and its mature humour, even as it establishes and embodies the *locus classicus* of the "irresponsible spirit of college life at Oxford" (80).

[18] On the idea of a painless nostalgia, Proctor suggests that *Verdant Green*'s hapless humour and carefree comedy fell in line with the spirit of the times, academically speaking. Because the Oxbridge university reforms were too recent to be truly felt in the 1850s, nostalgia for the university of old was not a painful sensation or melancholy sentiment in Bede's mid-century novels (Proctor 83).

[19] In *Capital: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production*, Marx discusses the commodity in terms of a separation of product from labour. A commodity is something useful but wholly "independent of the amount of labour required to appropriate its useful qualities" (Marx 2).

[20] The Oxford line of the Great West Railway, terminating at Grandpont Station, was officially opened on 12 June 1844, after two prior successive bills were vetoed by the university. The line would extend further into the city in 1872 with the establishment of the Botley Road station (and eventual closing of Grandpont). The first Cambridge railway opened at nearly the same time as Grandpont, in 1845, an extension of the Eastern Counties Railway. For further detail consult the South Oxford History webpage and "The Coming of the Railway to Oxford."

[21] For an analysis of the way that the railway facilitated an industry of cheap printed material and was involved in the question of public education, see Aileen Fyfe's *Steam-Powered Knowledge: William Chambers and the Business of Publishing, 1820-1860* (U of Chicago P, 2012).

[22] Fyfe stresses that railway bookstalls offered not only popular fiction, but also more edifying literature. Thus railway literature was part of a trend on various modern ways of educating the masses. One of Routledge's enormously popular railway series, the *Popular Library* (est. 1850), was dedicated primarily to educational texts (history, biography, travel, science). (See Chapter 12 "Instruction in the Marketplace," in *Steam-Powered Knowledge*).

[23] This detailed account, complete with scans of the original bill's stipulations, is research courtesy of the South Oxford History Website. See "The Coming of the Railway to Oxford."

[24] Titled "The Approach to Venice" in *Selections from the Writings of John Ruskin* (1871), this excerpt opens Volume Two, Chapter One of Ruskin's *The Stones of Venice* (1853).

[25] See "On Modern Travelling" in *Macmillan's Magazine* (1 Nov. 1893).

[26] In *Consuming Places* (1995) Urry argues for the centrality, objectification, and endless reproduction of the "gaze" in tourist services (132). He distinguishes between the "romantic" and "collective" form of the tourist gaze: the former emphasizes solitude, privacy, authenticity, undisturbed beauty, and a "semi-spiritual relationship with the object of the gaze"; the latter prizes the public, cosmopolitan spaces of busy touristic activity, and depends on the presence of people (rather than desertion) for enjoyable atmosphere (Urry 137-138).

[27] This second quotation is from a large extract taken from the *Quarterly Review* and quoted in Murray's *Handbook*, an extract steeped in Oxford nostalgia. It continues as follows: "The same river which in the metropolis is covered with a forest of masts and ships, here gliding quietly through meadows, with scarcely a sail upon it—dark and ancient edifices clustered together in forms full of richness and beauty, yet solid as if to last forever; such as become institutions raised not for the vanity of the builder, but for the benefit of coming ages; streets, almost avenues of edifices which elsewhere would pass for palaces, but all of them dedicated to God; thoughtfulness, repose, and gravity in the countenance and even dress of their inhabitants; and, to mark the stir and business of life, instead of the roar of carriages, the sound of hourly bells calling men together to prayer" (142).

[28] Grandpont Station (est. 1844) faced the city from the south; the Botley Road Station (est. 1872) faced it from the west.

[29] See *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life* (1955). Lewis's autobiography details his first acquaintance with Oxford and, significantly, a Victorian-inspired nostalgia of approach first frustrated and then gratified by the presence and positioning of the Botley Road railway station: "I sallied out of the railway station on foot to find either a lodging house or a cheap hotel; all agog for 'dreaming spires' and 'last enchantments.' My first disappointment at what I saw could

be dealt with. Towns always show their worst face to the railway. But as I walked on and on I became more bewildered. Could this succession of mean shops really be Oxford? But I still went on, always expecting the next turn to reveal the beauties, and reflecting that it was a much larger town than I had been led to suppose. Only when it became obvious that there was very little town left ahead of me, and I was, in fact, getting to open country, did I turn round and look. There, behind me, far away, never more beautiful since, was the fabled cluster of spires and towers. I had come out of the station on the wrong side and been all this time walking into what was even then the mean and sprawling suburb of Botley" (184).

[30] One can draw a twentieth-century parallel to Harry Potter's "Hogwarts Express" in J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, which facilitates a similar journey of transition and initiation into the academic realm. Just as Bede renders nostalgic the coach commute to school in the era of the modern railway, Rowling uses the railway journey to trigger nostalgia for leisurely steam journeys of the past in an era of express rails and jet planes. Also consider that nostalgia is triggered in both instances because both do not technically exist and are left for the reader only to be desired: while Verdant's coach has since become obsolete, Harry Potter's train exists only in the realms of magic and the imagination. Interestingly, Beerbohm's *Zuleika Dobson* also romanticizes the railway in its opening pages, suggesting that at the turn of the century the railway was already deemed quaintly Victorian.

[31] "Coach" was also a slang term for tutor in Victorian academia. "Slow" also sets up the antithetical "fast set": in Victorian universities and varsity novels, the "fast set" were students known for reckless spending, rowdiness, and a generally rambunctious jaunt through their university years. Varsity novels, like the *Verdant Green* series and *Tom Brown at Oxford*, often situate their protagonists within or on the periphery of the fast set to maximize the potential for

adventure and intrigue. But, importantly, association with the fast set is never at the expense of academic success, for the novels more often than not have their heroes realize the slow pace to success in their final terms.

[32] For more on this, see Philip Edwards's *Pilgrimage and Literary Tradition* (Cambridge UP, 2005).

[33] See Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (1478).

[34] St. Frideswide is the patron saint of both the city and University of Oxford. As it is told, Frideswide, the daughter of a Mercian king, fled marriage to become a nun in Oxford (where Christ Church currently stands). The commemoration of St. Frideswide's Day was regularly celebrated in Victorian Oxford. The three martyrs—Anglican bishops Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley, and Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Cranmer—were tried for heresy and burnt at the stake in 1555, during the reign of Mary I. The Martyrs' Memorial was erected in the early 1840s at St. Giles St., Oxford, to commemorate the event. With respect to monastic heritage, the city of Oxford has been home to an Augustinian Priory (1122), the Cistercian Rewley Abbey (1280), and Franciscan and Dominican friaries in the 13th century, among others.

[35] For a different consideration of secular pilgrimages in Victorian fiction, see Barry Qualls's *The Secular Pilgrims of Victorian Fiction* (Cambridge UP, 1982).

[36] See Chapter Four for a more focussed discussion on the use of pilgrimage in Hardy's novel.

[37] For domestic travel especially, see Defoe's *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*, 3 vols (1724-1727).

[38] See "On Modern Travelling" in *Macmillan's Magazine* (1 Nov. 1893).

[39] In L. T. Meade's *A Sweet Girl Graduate* (1891) and Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* (1895), respectively.

[40] There is a definitive class angle embedded in this tourism critique: it is the combination of speed and working-class accent that leads to Verdant's confusion. As the novel suggests, the tourism industry's nonchalant amalgamation of social classes leads to sites not properly presented or consumed.

[41] The text's use of this term is significant because it points to the commercial identity of the tour as something sold and "swallowed" (74). Notably, its use in Bede's text with the connotation of error and misleading information again supports the idea of untourability. The chapter is titled "Mr. Verdant Green Calls on a Gentleman who is 'Licensed to Sell.'"

[42] See "Night Walks" and "The City of the Absent" in *The Uncommercial Traveller* (1860), pp. 233, 239-40.

[43] Published in *Cornhill Magazine*, 1876.

[44] For more on the touristic allure of country houses, manor homes, and estates in 18th-, 19th-, and 20th-century England see Ian Ousby, "Envious Show: The Opening of the Country House," in *The Englishman's England: Taste, Travel and the Rise of Tourism* (Cambridge UP, 1990).

[45] Lamb's text was reprinted numerous times in Victorian periodicals, proving its natural alignment to Victorian thought with respect to university nostalgia.

[46] That the striking appearance of old architecture which the guidebook tourist encounters depends greatly upon the absence of humanity is proven by the stigma against restoration that often accompanies the guidebooks' descriptions: "'Restoration' (though, unhappily, applied to one or two buildings) has fortunately left untouched most of the ancient work, which remains as it was at the time of the particular foundation" (Stanford's *Guide*, 30). Thus, a pose of nostalgic resentment is a key element of these guidebooks, a resentment that clearly upholds the deserted

ruin in its denigration of the interference of modern man into the more peaceful and natural workings of time.

[47] See Revd. Frederick Arnold, *Oxford and Cambridge: Their Colleges, Memories, and Associations* (1873).

[48] In Lamb's essay, "G. D." refers to George Dyer (1755-1841), English classicist and writer. Dyer was himself an avid university nostalgiac, with two texts dedicated to the history and "privilege" of the University of Cambridge: *History of the University and Colleges of Cambridge* (1814) and *Privileges of the University of Cambridge* (1824).

[49] Even today the illusion of the "open university" continues for tourists of Oxford and Cambridge. The ancient university is predominantly a closed place; both St. John's College's Old Library at Cambridge and the Old Bodleian at Oxford, for example, are opened only for special occasions. Also the short-lived annual Open Cambridge festival (with walks/tours of historic Cambridge, churches, blue plaques, Words Carved in Stone tour, etc.) and "Open Days" at Oxford imply that the "closed" university is the norm.

[50] See Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," in *Diacritics* (Spring 1986).

[51] See Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975), pp.143.

[52] John Milton, for instance, is described as having written his "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity" in his Trinity rooms, where he lived and wrote for seven years (Stanford's *Guide*, 53).

[53] From Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes* series (1887-1927), George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871), and R. L. Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) respectively.

[54] See "Staged Authenticity" in *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (1976).

[55] The character is even nicknamed "Footelights" in the text, highlighting his tendency to illumine the staginess in any scenario.

[56] MacCannell eventually concludes that the tourist's entry into backspaces is so often orchestrated and inauthentic that the distinction between front and back regions in touristic spaces breaks down or even ceases to exist: "It is always possible that what is taken to be entry into a back region is really entry into a front region that has been totally set up in advance for touristic visitation. In tourist settings, especially in industrial society, it may be necessary to discount the importance, and even the existence, of front and back regions except as ideal poles of touristic experience" (101).

[57] The Matriculation exam was a required pre-entrance exam for prospective Oxford students, and a student's first acquaintance with university control. In the varsity novel it is often a source of anxiety, establishing the strictures of the university early on, so that the text may ease the tension over time, steering its protagonist into more carefree situations thereafter. As a ritual of oath-swearing (newly admitted students were expected to subscribe to the 39 Articles of the Protestant faith until the law changed in 1854), it also facilitates a kind of individual bond of expectation with respect to the student and his conduct throughout his university years.

[58] In fact, Bouncer does not graduate. After numerous attempts at his final exams, including one spectacular fail with an ingenious crib coat, he decides to "dispense with the honours of a Degree" after all (Bede 367).

[59] See Lacordaire's previously quoted extract, from Murray's *Handbook*, 176.

[60] With former graduates in mind, the university of the past can also be classed as a kind of scholastic shrine. Ian Ousby writes of the popularity of the literary shrine and the literary pilgrim in English tourism, noting the extra layer of touristic interest garnered by a place in its

association with writers and the composition of literature (see "Literary shrines and literary pilgrims: the writer as tourist attraction" in *The Englishman's England*, Cambridge UP, 1990). The scholastic shrine of the university is marketed in the guidebooks through the colleges, each one characterized differently from the others in its associations with the "Eminent Men" educated within them. Stanford's *Guide* in particular teaches its tourist to identify King's College with Sir Robert Walpole, Queen's College with Erasmus, Corpus Christi with Marlowe, Christ's College with Milton, Jesus College with Coleridge, Trinity with Tennyson, and Pembroke College with both Spenser and Johnson (50). It further immortalizes the famous student by pointing nostalgically to the university's statues of its proud sons Sir Isaac Barrow, Lord Bacon, and Sir Isaac Newton. Alden's also imbues Oxford's colleges with the spirits of students past—Oriel is particularly aglow with the momentous presence of the Tractarian trio of Newman, Arnold, and Pusey for example—but, with Addison's Walk, the "delightful avenue" near Magdalen College reported to be a favourite haunt of Joseph Addison while a student there, it adds to the more concrete idea of residence the more suggestively Romantic idea of academic leisure and contemplative routine (34).

[61] See *Are We There Yet: Virtual Travel and Victorian Realism* (U of Michigan P, 2013).

[62] In his tour of "English Cities and Small Towns" (1945), John Betjeman acknowledges the virtual experience of the guidebook as a portal to the past. He proclaims the pleasures of Victorian guidebooks in particular, asserting that "[t]he best guide books of all are the old ones published in the last century, Black's, Murray's etc." (107) because they are attuned to descriptive details of a site's past, but toured with the immediacy of present experience. Thus, as he tours England in the wake of WWII, Betjeman indulges in Victorian nostalgia and uses old Victorian guidebooks to access it. Intriguingly, in seeking out texts from the Victorian era, one

might also say that he makes the Victorian guide itself a relic, a portal to the tourism industry of the past rather than a profit for the industry of the present ("English Cities and Small Towns," in *The Englishman's Country*, 1945).

[63] The nickname of Saint Bede, otherwise known as the Venerable Bede, famed English monk of Northumbria. His most famous work is the 8th century *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*.

[64] The Divinity School's quadrangle, known as the "Pig-market," fell into ruin under Henry VIII and Edward VI, and was subsequently converted into a garden and pig-market (Bede 58). New Inn Hall was known as such "because the buttery is open all day, and the members of the Hall can call for what they please at any hour, the same as in a tavern" (Bede 255). Although confused by the affixation of a brass nose on the college gate, believed to be a later addition, the name is more properly thought to be a corruption of "brasin-huse," denoting the brew house belonging to King Alfred, which is believed to have sat at the college's current location (Bede 80).

[65] Lockhart emphasizes the incongruity of the violence against the university backdrop, even while acknowledging how it too contributes to university authenticity: "In short, by this time the High Street of Oxford exhibited a scene as different from its customary solemnity and silence, as it is possible to imagine. Conceive several hundreds of young men in caps, or gowns, or both, but all of them, without exception, wearing some part of their academical insignia, retreating before a band rather more numerous, made up of apprentices, journeymen, labourers, bargemen—a motley mixture of everything that, in the phrase of that classical region, passes under the generic name of *Raff*. Several casual disturbances had occurred in different quarters of the town, a thing

quite familiar to the last and all preceding ages, and by no means uncommon even in those recent days, whatever may be the case now" (*Reginald Dalton: A Story of English University Life*, 136).

[66] The St. Scholastica Day riot of 1355 began as the result of a dispute between two Oxford students and a town taverner. The entire riot would last two days and end in numerous deaths.

[67] See n. 34.

[68] This moment urges further consideration as a gender comment, on how Victorian women in particular were compelled to experience the university as outsiders (visitors, tourists, spouses, etc.) before they were finally admitted as scholars. Victorian varsity novels often use the male scholar's female relatives as cyphers for touristic appreciation of the university, and as a way of highlighting the scholar's own sense of belonging, pride, and insider's nostalgia. In Chapter Three, my analysis of women's varsity novels will address whether the idea of the female outsider is dispelled by the rise of the female scholar or whether it is merely enclosed anew within the university's widening walls.

[69] In Chapter Four I consider what happens when a heavy emphasis on past and tradition overcomes the powers of youth, and what nostalgia looks like as a disharmonious and decidedly destructive force.

[70] See Chapter 5, "Objects of Desire," in *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Duke UP, 2003; originally published 1984).

[71] Referring to the origins of nostalgia, as theorized by Johannes Hofer of the University of Basel, Switzerland. Hofer's 1688 dissertation examined case studies of homesickness among Swiss mercenaries and his fellow students. Etymologically, "nostalgia" comes from the Greek "algos" for pain, and "nostos" homecoming, or return home.

[72] Importantly, the university-bound woman is not granted this same momentous transition in fiction. In Chapter Three I examine how women's varsity fiction constructs the female scholar as distinctly home-bound, irrevocably tied to associations and ideas of home.

[73] Ironically, Stewart calls the souvenir a domesticating article, because external experience is internalized, brought home (134). Here it is only the souvenir and not the associative experience that is brought home.

[74] One might add varsity fiction readers to this list (whatever their social make-up), with the varsity novel acting as an aesthetic replication of university experience.

[75] Another marrying of fact and fiction, Cuthbert Bede has Verdant purchase "choice specimens of engravings" for his college room at Ryman's and Wyatt's before heading to Spiers's souvenir shop (see subsequent discussion) (107).

[76] Oscar Wilde is known to have been a frequent patron of Spiers's shop during his student days at Oxford, as evidenced by his hefty bill owing to the establishment, now held at the Bodleian. Wilde's bill is an interesting mirroring of Verdant's own over-expenditure at the same souvenir shop. Bodleian link: http://treasures.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/treasures/oscar-wildes-bill/

[77] As detailed by the Victoria and Albert Museum Collections webpage, the Spiers and Son exhibits won honourable mentions and prize medals at the Exhibitions. The V&A Collection includes a pair of hand screens from Spiers and Son's shop, decorated with the interior of Christ Church Hall and a view of Christ Church's Tom Tower. Sources: V&A Link: http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O315054/pair-of-hand-spiers-son/; see also the Paris Universal Exhibition Catalogue 1855, specifically *The Catalogue of the Works Exhibited in the British Section of the Exhibition* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1855).

[78] See *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England* (Stanford UP, 1990).

[79] See n. 26.

[80] The actual sonnet, "Oxford, May 30th 1820," is as follows:

Ye sacred Nurseries of blooming Youth!

In whose collegiate shelter England's Flowers

Expand—enjoying through their vernal hours

The air of liberty, the light of truth;

Much have ye suffered from Time's gnawing tooth,

Yet, O ye Spires of Oxford! Domes and Towers!

Gardens and Groves! your presence overpowers

The soberness of Reason; till, in sooth,

Transformed, and rushing on a bold exchange,

I slight my own beloved Cam, to range

Where silver Isis leads my stripling feet;

Pace the long avenue, or glide adown

The stream-like windings of that glorious street,

—An eager Novice robed in fluttering gown!

[81] Some of the Oxford changes commented upon include the new tram car travelling up High St., the Great Western Station approach (both of these draw on the ubiquitous nostalgia for the coach approach, as the men remember fondly their Warwickshire coach arrival), the now "degenerate customs" of their former colleges, the loss of the "venerable elms" on the Broad Walk, and the now "subdued" spirit of Commemoration Week (Bede, "Oxford Revisited" 817). The piece ends with a particularly poignant bit of nostalgia: "To revisit one's University after many years' absence must always be a matter of deep interest, even to the most frivolous-minded; the sight of

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the well-remembered scenes of youth must awaken mingled memories of pain and pleasure – pain that opportunities were wasted or not made the most of – pleasure at recalling old friends and old scenes, and old associations….whatever may be the fortune of their after-career, Oxford men will always delight to revisit Oxford, where not even the prosaic tram-car can altogether destroy the poetical charm of 'the streamlike windings of that glorious street.' Oxford still remains what it has ever been – a Queen of Cities and a City of Palaces" (Bede, "Oxford Revisited" 820).

Chapter Two

Lost Boys and Varsity Play

Preface

The talk had died and the ink long dried on John Henry Newman's lectures at the New Dublin Catholic University, delivered over a series of Mondays in the late spring of 1852,[1] when, more than two decades later, the idea of a university surfaces anew. A proposal for England's first civic university is set adrift upon the tide of public opinion, and very soon is engulfed in a sea of national debate. Raising the eyebrows and stirring the nostalgic indignation of many an Oxbridge man, Manchester's Owens College, an upstart vocational institution of local ambition, dares to aspire to the title and authority of "university." And Manchester, the country's northern cotton metropolis where the "modern art of manufacture has reached its perfection" (observes local denizen Friedrich Engels)[2] but academic aspirations remain evidently unsatisfied, dares to claim the designation of university town. "Yet what are the amusements to be had in a city like Manchester?" asks an anonymous contributor to the 12 August 1876 edition of the *Saturday Review* in one of many published opinion pieces on the proposal—this one titled, blandly but to the point, "Manchester as a University." The suitability of Manchester as a university site has been bandied about in the press on a number of fronts, from its northerly location to its industrial dependency, from its population density to its class make-up, and even, not surprisingly, on the purely sentimental matter of its simply not being Oxford or Cambridge. "Yet what are the amusements to be had in a city like Manchester?" muses the anonymous *Saturday Review* contributor, opting not to wrangle in the mire of more well-stirred arguments, but instead directing the debate to the idea of the university as an important site of play. The idea is suggested largely in response to a recent town poll by the professors of the ambitious Owens

College on the advantages of a new university, a popular theme of which, in the ensuing published letters of the poll's participants, was the reputation of the ancient universities for idleness and leisure, deemed especially distasteful to persons of "industrious and frugal habits" ("Manchester as a University," 203). The popular opinion it seems is that England's oldest universities have become lazy, have resorted to "idle ways and excessive amusements"; a new university, and especially a university of Manchester, would resist this laxity, encouraging in its academic work ethic a reflection of its industrious surroundings. Academic industry or, perhaps, industrious academics: this is to be the civic university ideal. Our *Saturday Review*er calmly objects, however, with, one imagines, a retrospective glance to younger and more carefree days of his own, noting that this popular criticism of Oxbridge "seems to have led some of those whom the Professors of Owens College consulted to forget that some amount of amusement is essential for everybody, and most of all for students between eighteen and twenty-one. All work and no play, especially if that work has to be done in a very large and very smoky town, will certainly make Jack a dull, and probably make him a vicious boy" (204). Here is an argument against England's first civic university and the industrial town which aims to be its inaugural seat, based upon an ideal of university play and a certain skepticism for the industrial site's ability to cater to this ideal. "Yet what are the amusements to be had in a city like Manchester?" he urges, a question which would have worked quite as effectively in a rhetorical sense, hanging unanswered, the associations of northern England's "smoky town," its many factories and slum districts, crashing upon the reader's mind and sending it recoiling from the thought of young Jack seeking amusements in such a place. But, this concerned reviewer has a point to make, and so, for the sake of argument, we must consider what amusements *are* to be had in Manchester:

> Bicycling, perhaps, in the quieter streets; bathing, in a swimming bath; boating, by going over to Liverpool; cricket, in a ground which can easily be reached by railway. These are not the surroundings which are likely to attach the student to the memory of his University life, or to give him that keen corporate feeling which is scarcely ever wholly absent even from men who have least cared for or appreciated Oxford and Cambridge while they were in residence. Wherever a University is, it should be able at least to hold its own against the surroundings in which it is placed, even if it does not altogether dominate them. ("Manchester as a University," 204)

And here we have it: compelling this anonymous critic to weigh in on the civic university question is not in fact the question of university amusement at all. Or, rather, it is not *merely* this. While the plight of a Manchester undergraduate forced to travel by rail to reach his cricket field may tug at the heart, what is at stake here is not university play alone but, more importantly, what it inspires: that "keen corporate feeling" of nostalgia. A University of Manchester cannot hope to dominate the landscape of its graduate's heart and mind any more than it can the landscape of its urban surroundings, warns this concerned citizen, especially if it cannot provide those memories upon which the emotions can play.

INTRODUCTION

Ideas of a University: The Civic College Movement and Oxbridge

Not ours the groves of Academe,
Where learned pedants drowse and dream;
Not ours the cloistered calm retreat,
Around us roars the city street,
Whose surging tides of ceaseless strife
Sound like a bugle call to life. [3]

In 1880 England's first civic university was established successfully in the popularly dubbed "Cottonopolis" of Manchester.[4] Named 'The Victoria University' (to appease its queen even if it could not appease its many naysayers) the institution was founded, as *The Times* reported a year after its opening, "for the express purpose of harmonizing study with the aspirations of commerce and industry,"[5] a harmony many Oxbridge loyalists found to be discordant. The university's proposal and subsequent charter followed in the wake of the civic college movement, an important thrust of the Victorian knowledge industry, which saw a collection of colleges, led by the trailblazing Owens College, rise up in the midst of the country's provincial industrial centres from mid-century onward beneath a gaze of Oxbridge prejudice.[6] Resistance was founded on a perceived incompatibility, stubbornly maintained, between an institution of higher learning and an industrial town, and on a certain preference, as stubbornly maintained, for academic seclusion. An academic institution "should be an independent body, fenced round by its own privileges" argued Mark Pattison, famed Oxford academic, in his "Oxford Essays" of 1855 (419). Pattison used the University of London[7] as an example of ill-advised academic situation as compared with Oxford, "crushed under the superior weight of metropolitan life." "A university should be situated," he insisted with a little help from Tennyson, "like a poet's garden, 'Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite beyond it'" (Pattison 420).[8] But then, a glance at this section's epigraph, a popular turn-of-the-century Liverpool

undergraduate chant, suggests that there were many who rejected the cloistered air and misty isolation of Oxbridge and rather enjoyed that classrooms had finally landed in the midst of the busiest worlds, industrial hubs like Liverpool, Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, and even Manchester. But the civic-Oxbridge tension went beyond the question of whether academic institutions ought to be founded *in the midst* or *in the mist*. As the anonymous *Saturday Review* article, the Owens College poll, and the Liverpool undergraduate chant indicate, tension stemmed from what divergent sites of industry and isolation imply: the important distinction between work and idleness. This chapter begins with an interest in the cultural encounter between the civic college movement and ancient Oxbridge, where lines of distinction and tension are drawn around ideas of vocation and liberality, industry and idleness, work and play. A wider Victorian cultural confrontation between work and play encompasses this academic confrontation and will be useful to consider very soon in connection with this chapter's literary analysis, but for now it is prudent to begin with a brief overview of the movement that solidified the ancient university's association with play by compelling it to play devil's advocate.

In comparing the vocational ethos of the civic college to the liberal ethos of Oxbridge, it is helpful to employ Sheldon Rothblatt's consideration of institutions as hypostatised ideals, as thinking entities that "incorporate some essential truth, purpose or essence" (5). In this way, one can talk about both institutions as having ideas of their own and, in line with divergent characterizations, as having two very different ideas of the university. The civics, for instance, were academic disruptors, committed to dismantling academic exclusivity by removing the requirements of religion, gender, and money that had kept Oxbridge a bastion for Protestant, aristocratic sons for centuries.[9] From the start, the civics, first colleges and then universities,[10] did not see themselves as competition for Oxford and Cambridge, but rather as completely new

and antithetical kinds of academies, built for an entirely different set of students, and dedicated to a newfound vocational purpose. They courted middle-class students at a time when, as Samuel J. M. M. Alberti notes, that class was seeking expressions of its "cultural maturity" (338), wanting, adds William Whyte, to set itself apart from both the increasingly literate working class[11] and the idle aristocracy (111-112). Urban-dwelling middle-class parents embraced the idea of a college that would offer a healthy balance among work ethic, business acumen, and some (rather vague) sense of culture; where they could send their sons to be educated and not fear that they would return every evening "looking down upon the occupation of their fathers" (qtd. in Whyte 112). The civics attracted the offspring of local businessmen, clerks, and manual workers, most of whom were living at home and working nearby when not in the classroom.[12] Indeed, situated in major commercial and manufacturing cities as they were, the civic colleges not only embraced the roaring city streets, but, more importantly, did their best to complement the rhythms of their industrial and commercial surroundings by offering evening, part-time, and occasional studies in order to cater to work-study lifestyles. In addition to supporting local working students, the civics were keen to support local industry by offering varied curricula which included a heavy focus on technical training and the sciences—metallurgy in Sheffield for instance, textiles in Leeds, brewing in Birmingham, naval engineering in Liverpool and Newcastle—new and specialized sciences in high demand and demanding a forum for instruction (Alberti 343-44). In return for their vocational service to the community, the civics sought financial support from their home-cities and, for the most part, received it. Most were launched initially by local mercantile-industrial benefactors (those frequently noted include cotton merchant John Owens, pen manufacturer Josiah Mason, and cutler Mark Firth, college namesakes all) and then were kept afloat by civic funding. Indeed, unlike Oxbridge, which was

financially independent and comparatively at ease, the civics had to *work* exhaustively for their subsistence, appealing for philanthropic endowments and federal government grants in order to stave off financial ruin.[13] And, as the response to one such financial appeal demonstrates, the civics were also continually working, and at times to no avail, to justify their existence in the face of Oxbridge prejudice. On 21 December 1895, *The Times* reported as a delegation from a handful of the civics, including the newly-minted Victoria University, sat before the Chancellor of the Exchequer requesting an ongoing endowment of £15,000 per year for their struggling institutions. The Chancellor ultimately deferred the financial decision in the interests of further inquiry (with consideration, no doubt, on the role of vocational colleges in the looming new century) but he wasted no time with the decision of allegiance, which fell swiftly in favour of his renowned *alma mater*: "'As an old Oxford man myself I must confess to a feeling, which you may call a prejudice, that University education, in the full sense of the term, can hardly be obtained except at our old Universities, because they alone, at any rate for the present, have those traditions and sentiments attached to them which, to my mind, have enormous influence on what I call University education'" (qtd. in Vernon 47). Thus, even as the civics professed to be something different from the ancient universities[14]—aligning with work, vocation, industry, and urban expansion—they were inevitably brought into conversation with Oxbridge and, in this, almost always lost the argument of nostalgia.

The Chancellor's prejudice notwithstanding, a sentimental or traditional idea of Oxbridge could not remain unqualified because it was not in a position to be unchallenged. In an age of major academic restructuring,[15] with scientific academies, exhibitions, technical schools, and now civic colleges to contend with, Oxbridge was not left to "drowse and dream" but had to set its learned pedants to promoting its particular brand and identity which might in turn inspire

nostalgia of a more qualifiable nature. And, almost one year exactly after Owens College was founded and the idea of professional education was making the rounds, one of the ancients' most learned and pedantic of pedants, John Henry Newman, took the stage to promote the Oxbridge way.[16] It began as a series of public discourses to celebrate the inauguration of Dublin's New Catholic University, but the scope of Newman's *The Idea of a University* (1852) ultimately went far beyond Dublin in its more broadly applicable pontification on what any new university ought to be. And what it ought to be, he concluded, disregarding the momentum of professional education as well as the established research model of German and Scottish universities, was a reiteration of Oxbridge in all but faith. The only idea of a university worth its salt was one that depended upon *liberal* education.[17]

The liberal ethos of Oxbridge is, in Newman's estimation, directly adverse to vocational education in that it cultivates the intellect "for its own highest culture" rather than being "sacrificed to some particular or accidental purpose, some specific trade or profession, or study or science" (109). It celebrates a mind learning freely rather than one chained to some greater function or utility. And the rejection of "sacrifice" is significant here because, as I shall demonstrate, varsity fiction uses the scholar-martyr and his tragedy of overwork to reposition the Victorian work ethic. In short, resisting provision or preparation for work, as well as the production of knowledge, the liberal university has instead a purely pedagogical mission and is valuable first and foremost for its contribution to character formation within its walls (Rothblatt 16). But what is the connection to play? The Civics' connection to work is rather more self-evident because of their purpose and intent to align with local industrial needs, but the argument of this chapter (and, more precisely, the nostalgia of this chapter) depends upon establishing a

sure link between Oxbridge liberality and play, one that goes beyond simply arguing that Oxbridge was anti-vocation in its pedagogical endeavours.

With his study of Newman's legacy as it has influenced various modern and contemporary ideas of the university,[18] Rothblatt helps in this regard by identifying a critical link between Oxbridge liberality (in the Newmanian sense) and intersecting ideas of play, delinquency, and leisure in Victorian university culture. Rothblatt's analysis is anchored by the recognition that Newman's "idea" of university liberality emphasizes "freedom" first and foremost (177): the freedom to learn unfettered by the expectations of postgraduate profession; the freedom to explore one's interests, talents, and character; the freedom to collaborate and socialize; the freedom to observe rules or break them; the freedom to mature on one's own terms and govern one's own time; and, above all, the freedom to play.[19] Indeed, this last freedom is, according to Rothblatt, the one on most prominent display in Victorian Oxbridge where a strong undergraduate subculture emerged out of the void of boredom and "excessive leisure" that had typified Georgian Oxbridge for years and would later give some credence to the stereotype of an idle Oxbridge that fueled the Civics' critical and foundational fire in the following era (107). As Rothblatt explains, the subculture emerged in the early decades of the nineteenth century (when, incidentally, Newman was himself an undergraduate at Oxford)[20] at a time when enrolment was increasing rapidly, and nearly twice as many degrees were being awarded as had been in the previous century (135).[21] Out of this student population boom developed a student subculture of play, encompassing pursuits both industrious (team sports, athletics, clubs, games) and idle (gambling, drinking, socializing, debate) of both sanctioned and unsanctioned varieties.[22] Aligning with Newman's adherence to character and pedagogy, Rothblatt notes that, of the sanctioned variety, games-playing and competition were granted special significance in

Victorian Oxbridge as exercises of character-building, masculine development, and other moral value (123).[23] The irony is that even unsanctioned play, including that bordering on delinquency, was deemed valuable by the universities, constantly striving as they were for a balance between restraint and liberty in a culture that was never quite certain whether university students were boys or men. That is, *alma mater* preferred to leave strict discipline to the domestic sphere and elsewhere, believing instead that the wayward lapses of an undergraduate's "formative years" ought to be tolerated, taking comfort in the "safety valve" notion that "irregular conduct was self-correcting and would soon be outgrown" (Rothblatt 178, 146). Contemplating the irreverent undergraduate of the Victorian university's subculture of play, Rothblatt ultimately sees him "perfectly matched" with Newman's idea, the ideal inmate of a place for "being young" (177). If, then, we are convinced that Victorian Oxbridge, alongside one of its most vociferous sons, believed in the idea of a university as a time and space specially carved out for youth and play separate from a later existence when responsibilities of adulthood and work are assumed, we should not be at all surprised to find that the varsity literature of the time contributed just as heartily to this same idea. By giving new definition to a cultural understanding of "university years," and by giving rise to cult figures of academic play who would come to be the stock heroes of university fiction, the nineteenth-century undergraduate subculture effectively launched the idea of the varsity of play alongside the genre of youth fiction dedicated to celebrating its appeal. And if I suggest in this chapter, in line with my broader project's unifying thread, that nostalgia frames this appeal across varsity fiction from mid-century onward, it is with the understanding that idle Oxbridge, no longer alone in the field of higher education (where the restless civics were roaring loudly), and no longer impervious to the winds of change, was now in a position to be longed for.

Work-Play: A Rhetorical Debate

In this chapter, my analysis of varsity literature works within and around the juncture of confrontation between work and play as it manifests in Victorian cultural discourse. While I began by considering how this encounter plays out on a more intimate stage, between the civics and Oxbridge, and their bristling ethics of vocational and liberal education respectively, I also suggested that this academic encounter is part of a larger picture, a wider cultural conversation on work and play more generally. Before turning to the argument of this chapter, it is important to survey the key ideas that this work-play dialectic brings forth because they form the basis of the confrontational rhetoric and, ultimately, inform the discourse of nostalgia that emerges in the varsity literature to be analyzed. Both a Victorian work ethic and play ethic more broadly defined arose out of the industrial revolution which signalled a clear division between labour and "time-discipline"[24] on the one hand, and leisure and time off on the other (Bailey 4).[25] The Victorians were keenly interested in, or at least certainly aware of, a cultural interest in matters of work: in questions of who ought to work and who ought to be exempt or forestalled, how and when to improve working conditions, and how to harness work for imperial progress, to name but a few.[26] But then so too were they immersed in a new culture of recreation or "modern leisure" that, as Peter Bailey observes, makes its debut in Victorian England after mid-century (4). Matthew Kaiser also assigns play to the Victorians by not only touting it as a "modern sensation" but, further, by applying the concept of a "ludic world order" to the Victorian era whereby Victorians understood themselves as part of a "world *in* play:" "a world in which nothing is immune to the infectious logic of play, in which everything—death, war, earnestness—has the capacity in theory to be exposed to play, overwritten by it, infiltrated by it, represented by it" (9).[27] In the course of his argument, Kaiser expands "logic of play" to "play logics," arguing that the Victorians recognized, embraced, and taxonomized a prolific variety of play logics from

sport, to game, to recreation, to child's play, to mischief and other kinds of delinquent play (15).[28] I borrow Kaiser's observation as a foundational premise, based on the understanding that "varsity play" incorporates as many logics as "Victorian play" more broadly; to parse them defies the logic of this project since all are subject to nostalgia.

To understand the key ideas of the Victorian work-play conversation most pertinent to this chapter's study it is helpful to stage a brief debate between work ethicists Thomas Carlyle and William Fulford, and play ethicists Robert Louis Stevenson and Oscar Wilde, all of whom contributed to the rhetoric of their respective camps. Carlyle's presence here begs little justification; in Book III of his enormously influential *Past & Present* (1843), titled "The Modern Worker," Carlyle provides the era's preeminent manifesto on noble work. Alongside him, speaking with admittedly less repute but no less conviction, we have William Fulford, who co-founded, edited, and wrote for the short-lived undergraduate-run *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* (1856) alongside fellow students and better-known members William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones.[29] Fulford's "The Work of Young Men in the Present Age," published in the magazine's September issue, pairs nicely with Carlyle's piece in its application of his "noble" argument to Oxbridge youth. For the ethics of play, Stevenson and Wilde prove a perfect pair, using parody to promote play (in the form of idleness and contemplation) in their essays "An Apology for Idlers" (1877) and "The Critic as Artist" (1891)[30] respectively. Ideally suited not only in their mutual support of leisure in the face of Victorian *busy*ness, these two also employ similar structural conceits, parodying classical rhetorical forms, the Apology and the Dialogue,[31] which were, incidentally, firmly entrenched in the pedagogical curricula of Victorian Oxbridge. One might say, quite accurately, that, in these essays, a defence for play dons academic robes for its day in court.

One of the important rhetorical questions brought forth by this hypothetical work-play debate would be the extent to which work in all its forms is inherently noble. Carlyle's opening argument would posit the nobility of all work, and, going further, declare that "in all true Work, were it but true hand-labour, there is something of divineness" (175). Drawing inspiration from monastic life and purpose, as his text does, Carlyle would inevitably punctuate his argument with the idea of sacrifice, insisting that work must contain some element of sacrifice, for one cannot wear a noble crown if it is not a "crown of thorns" (131). But this motion for sacrifice would be stalled by the advocates for play and pleasurable pastime, who see only pain and waste in sacrificial action. Stevenson would suggest that "wherever there is an element of sacrifice, the favour is conferred with pain, and, among generous people, received with confusion" (879), to which Wilde would add even more emphatically that, indeed, "[it] takes a thoroughly selfish age, like our own, to deify self-sacrifice" (1043). The implied attribution of selfishness to the sacrificial worker would inevitably trigger a shift to the topic of idleness, cueing Carlyle to cast *his* aspersions on the "Idle Aristocracy" and its "Donothing Pomp" (156). "One monster there is in the world: the idle man" (175) states Carlyle, throwing down the gauntlet for Wilde who would counter that, in fact, "to do nothing at all is the most difficult thing in the world, the most difficult and the most intellectual." Plato is deemed an exemplary model for "the importance of doing nothing,"[32] proving that contemplation, even idle contemplation, is not only the "noblest form of energy" but also the "proper occupation of man" (Wilde 1039). And especially for the young man, Stevenson would add by way of support, noting "beyond a doubt that people should be a good deal idle in youth" for "[e]xtreme *busyness* whether at school or college, kirk or market, is a symptom of deficient vitality" (874). With the work-play discussion now brought round to the question of university youth, William Fulford, who until now would likely have let

Carlyle lead the argument, perhaps feels justified in chiming in. The young Oxonian would begin by emphatically sounding a death knell for idleness ("[t]he Age of Idleness has passed away"), then temper this ringing pronouncement with the gentler insistence that it is the duty of the young man today to avoid leisure and instead "to learn his own peculiar work" and "*earnestly* to pursue that work, whatever it may be" (Fulford 559; emphasis added). His choice of adverb here is a deliberate and strategic bid for influence; attributing university youth's aptitude for dutiful work to their embodiment of that ubiquitous epithet attached to the most admirable of Victorians would likely sway the argument in his favour: "Let those who doubt the earnestness of our young men, mark well the stamp which the inward mind impresses on the face of those who, year by year, go forth to labour from Oxford and from Cambridge; on those who, pale with too much work, and with lives led in close alleys and dark, damp cellars, yet pore in our Mechanics' Institutes over deep and weighty books" (Fulford 560). "With such earnestness, with such true energy, why should we not hope for great things from our youth?" Fulford would ask finally, seeking to drive home his point that the idea of noble, sacrificial work is, at the very least, alive and well at the universities (560). But here is where Fulford's otherwise sound rhetoric might fall prey to the exacting wit of Stevenson, who would note that the sacrificial working scholar, he of the "ancient and owl-like demeanour" and "dyspeptic" constitution, might be alive at the universities but he certainly could not in anywise be called "well" (876). When any one of those "fine young men who work themselves into a decline" are "driven off in a hearse with white plumes upon it" one cannot help but feel a sense of waste in the unjust trade of "priceless youth" for whatever else is expected to come after (Stevenson 881). "Books are good enough in their own way," Stevenson would conclude wryly, "but they are a mighty bloodless substitute for life" (874).

Out of this debate we gather certain rhetorical ideas arising from the Victorian work-play confrontation to include that of noble work, admirable or pointless sacrifice, monstrous or productive idleness, the various effects of work or leisure on one's mental or physical health, and, finally, the important question of how young men in particular (including university students) ought to spend their precious time.[33] For the purposes of this chapter, it is important to note that both proponents of work and leisure in Victorian England depend upon the rhetoric of wasted time to make their ethical arguments, but have very different ideas as to what is at stake. For the Victorian work ethicists, time is currency that ought to be spent wisely, lest one risk "not succeeding," which Carlyle names the most fearful fate of his time.[34] Wasted time is thus any time not spent in work or disciplinary action, time that is not productive and forward-thinking, time that jeopardizes one's future.[35] For Victorian play advocates, however, what is at stake is not some prescribed vision of grown-up success but, rather, life itself. Wasted time is only that which does not contribute to a life enjoyably and pleasurably lived. Not surprisingly, in the academic arena the rhetoric of wasted time was crucial to pushing the Civics' work-focussed ethos while simultaneously repudiating Oxbridge's idle reputation.[36] Consider, for instance, what a *Times* Manchester correspondent had to say on the newly-chartered Victoria University and its strong sense of the "value of time":

> Northern parents have real fear of the influence of University life upon their sons. […] The year, with its short terms and its long vacations, represents to them a good deal of time wasted and no time employed to the best result it can be made to yield. A University of their own will be free, they hope, from such obvious faults as these.[37] The division of term and vacation will be less marked when it involves no change of surroundings, no

> long journeys from one part of the country to another, no plunge backwards and forwards, between an air of earnestness and of dignified, scholarlike repose.[38]

Intriguingly, in designating the ancient universities as time wasters, the writer points emphatically to their remote situations and the long journeys that they demand, assuming a certain antipathy among his northern readers for what is meant to be a trigger for nostalgic desire among readers of varsity fiction and its surrounding literatures.[39] Indeed, in the plunging "backwards and forwards," there is even the sense of journeying through time with Oxbridge imaginatively situated in a kind of otherworldly dimension where the pace is slower and the air more restful. And again, though his purpose is to stamp a fault upon the "real" ancient university, this writer has inadvertently stumbled upon one of the constructed appeals of the fictive varsity, which invites readers to plunge joyfully and wistfully into an unapologetically idle world, a world of prolonged youth, and look back upon the journey as time well spent.

The Idea of a Varsity: Leisure, Loss, and Longing

In this chapter I shall consider how Victorian varsity fiction participates in the dynamic confrontation between work and play in the Victorian era, how it plays with the rhetorical structure of each argument within the context of (imagined) Oxbridge culture and, most importantly, how it gives rise to a particular strand of university nostalgia. The nostalgic discourse that I identify, emerging from this Victorian work-play confrontation, is one in which ancient Oxbridge is featured as a nostalgic site of boyhood play. I argue that Victorian varsity literature assumes its readers or, more appropriately, constructs its implied readers, to possess a certain emotional attachment to the liberality of Oxbridge over the vocational practicality of newer institutions like the civics, as much as they are assumed to desire short-lived boyhood and play over the longer-lived and never-missed realities of adulthood and work. Two varsity novels

that inspire this nostalgia are Thomas Hughes's *Tom Brown at Oxford* (1861) and Henry Cadwallader Adams's *Wilton of Cuthbert's: A Tale of Undergraduate Life Thirty Years Ago* (1878).[40] Like the *Verdant Green* series, these two Oxford-set novels follow the passage of young undergraduate protagonists, Tom Brown and Gerald Wilton, through their formative years at Oxford, trading on the appeal of youthful irreverence against the backdrop of England's oldest academic institution. Both are prototypical examples of varsity fiction in their adherence to the comedic genre perfected by the *Verdant Green* series,[41] in their inscription and celebration of Victorian masculine ideals, and, most importantly for this analysis, in their depictions of and veneration for an Oxford of play. In fact, these two novels are among those indebted to what Mortimer Proctor terms the "rowdy tradition" of the varsity novel, depicting the "rough-and-tumble" life of "undergraduate revelry," where students run amok, defy authority, and get into all kinds of mischief in a veritable "comedy of undergraduate errors" (74-77).[42] Steeped in the culture of wild undergraduate play, they feature energetic amusements such as horseback races and steeple-chases, breakfast and wine parties, rowing and cricket matches, juxtaposed with more idle pastimes like fishing, gambling, smoking, and drinking: all typical fodder for the varsity novel scene, establishing for readers a colourful spectrum of varsity play.[43] What separates these two novels from Bede's farcical and playful romp through Oxford, however, and what makes them particularly appropriate for this chapter's nostalgic focus, is the extent to which their playful spirit is often grounded by sober realities and their academic playground infiltrated by an argument for work.

In its exploration of the nostalgic discourse of university play across varsity literature more broadly defined, this analysis will pair these two varsity novels with shorter varsity narratives published in popular Victorian periodicals *The Boy's Own Magazine* (1855-1890) and

The Boy's Own Paper (1879-1967).[44] Aimed at both younger and teenage boys, these periodicals, like varsity novels, are part of Victorian boyhood culture, and the varsity narratives published within them important participants in the propagation of a collective nostalgia for university boyhood and play.[45] The six short varsity narratives selected from these periodicals for discussion throughout this chapter are "College Days: The Siege" by An Old Oxonian (*BOM* 1863); "Tournaments Holden at Oxford" by An Old Oxonian (*BOM* 1863); "A Noisy Night in College" by An Oxford Man (*BOP* 1882); "Recollections of a Freshman's Life at Cambridge" by a London Barrister (*BOP*, 1887); "Blifkins of Brazenface" by An Oxford Graduate (*BOP* 1893); and "An Idle Day at Cambridge" by W. Lloyd Summers, B.A. (*BOP* 1895).[46] As the authorial bylines indicate, these varsity stories all hang upon the same nostalgic hook: a former university undergraduate, now matured, looks back upon his college years, and reminisces about particular episodes of riotous play. The nostalgic foundation of these periodical stories aligns them perfectly with the novels of Hughes and Adams, both of which also contain retrospective narrators taken with remembering a pre-reform Oxford of the 1840s[47] and, as Adams's subtitle indicates, with invoking the charms of "undergraduate life thirty years ago." Keeping in mind that the periodical stories are aimed at pre-university schoolboys and thus anticipate a slightly younger audience than the varsity novels, what is most interesting about them as nostalgic neighbours for the novels is the way that they connect the experienced Oxbridge man (the nostalgic narrator) with the inexperienced, potentially Oxbridge-bound boy (the restless reader) in their mutual imagining of the varsity. The opening lines of "Recollections of a Freshman's Life at Cambridge" provide the clearest example of this bridging of identities:

> Cambridge! What a host of visions the word calls up. To me, the writer of this paper, those visions are of days now long past: days of almost unalloyed pleasure; days whose

> sum make up the four pleasantest years of my life; days which stood on the threshold of life's career, and in which that career received its earliest shape. To you, the reader of what I write, those visions very likely are the day-dreams of a life on which you have not yet entered, but to which you are looking forward with all the impetuosity of youth, eager to throw off the yoke of school, eager to begin the life of a 'Varsity Man. (430)

As this excerpt demonstrates, these periodical varsity narratives sit on a meticulously-drawn line between backward-musing recollections of the graduated adult and forward-thinking anticipations of the schoolboy, and in so doing establish the university as a wholly imagined space, a "vision" of past and future simultaneously.[48] Which suggests, rather interestingly, that nostalgia can direct its longing to the future in a way that does not mitigate its obsession with the past. But, while past and future may align in these narratives, present experience has no place in them because the present negates the distance of time and experience that is necessary to nostalgia. All of this goes to show that the periodical narratives are crafty contributors to the discursive output of university nostalgia; but also, and in their attentions to the day-dreaming boy especially, it shows that they support this project's understanding of collective cultural nostalgia unbound by personal experience and licensed entirely by longing.

Remembering that nostalgia blends longing with loss, however, it is at this juncture that we are prompted to ask: what of the lost boy? As this chapter's title indicates, nostalgia for the varsity of play in varsity fiction is coupled with nostalgia for the lost boy. The university is imagined a space for the playing boy, but then also a space where this same boy is inevitably lost and left behind. Importantly, fictive Oxbridge does not disregard the adult professional that its student is destined to become, but, rather, only allows him to appear through gradual or *graduated* transformation, culminating in a ritual of graduation (or pseudo-graduation) when the

boy is understood to have finally outgrown his university.[49] In fact, the grown-up student, whether narrator or character, is crucial to the nostalgia of varsity fiction as a position of vantage, offsetting the lost boy as a figure to be studied and longed for and as a kind of symbolic entity or resident spirit of the university remembered. In talking of "lost boys," the literary mind turns inevitably to *Peter Pan* (1904),[50] and this chapter adopts the term with the expectation that an allusion to J. M. Barrie's famous rabble-rouser and his youthful band, boys of everlasting play and never growing up, will haunt its use at every turn. Indeed, this chapter is indebted to the cultural associations that Barrie's work attaches to the idea of the lost boy—of displacement, intransience, play, mischief, resistance to growing up, and irresistible appeal—associations which add a layer of meaning to the varsity boy's lost identity even in the context of other considerations. For instance, an inclination, even a passing inclination, to compare the fictive varsity to a kind of Neverland, a place of prolonged boyhood and arrested time, a place that plays with time, provides an interesting literary counterpart to my ongoing consideration of a heterotopic university in the Foucauldian sense.[51] In the previous chapter, I considered the ways in which the tourist's Oxbridge toys with penetrability and exclusivity simultaneously. In this chapter, it is most relevant to highlight the heterotopic space as it opens up what Foucault calls a "heterochrony," an *other* iteration of time "when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time" ("Of Other Spaces," 26). The university qualifies here quite easily, not only in its preservation of an extended boyhood, but also in the institution of its own markers and rituals of time separate from those of the world outside. One's university tenure is analogous to a life lived, bookended by ritualized birth/baptism (matriculation) and death (graduation), with worktime and playtime, term and vacation, organized in between the two such that the university years constitute an enclosed existence, and the university itself a universe unto itself. Then too,

let us not forget that university time is also a kind of looped time, with every new cohort of freshmen rebooting the academic lifecycle over again. The varsity novel situates its lost boy in this heterochronic space, and relies as much on the appeal of university life (and death) as it does on the appeal of university lifestyle. Indeed, adjusting the Manchester correspondent's idea once more, the conceit of the nostalgic plunge, of diving back in time to recollect one's university years, works best if those years are as distant as a former life and the lost boy a ghost of one's former self.

In setting up the argument for this chapter, I have suggested that, out of the Victorian work-play/Civics-Oxbridge cultural confrontation, the nostalgic sentiment that emerges aligns with the cause for play. However, in keeping with this project's adherence to polyvalent discourse, it is not enough to state that university nostalgia in varsity fiction upholds one side of the argument and simply discards the other.[52] I am not interested in how university nostalgia resists the various developments of the knowledge industry—here, the civic college ethos of industrious academics—but rather in how it strategizes a path of participation that fortifies the ancient university's identity in the modern age. My argument here, then, must demonstrate how a nostalgic discourse in varsity fiction works strategically at the rhetorical meeting-point between varsity work and varsity play in such a way that supports both and leaves Oxbridge firmly at the centre of desire. Here is where the idea of wasted time comes in to play: as introduced earlier, wasted time is a significant rhetorical meeting-point for the Victorian work-play confrontation, and provides here the ideal means for understanding and appreciating the multi-strategic approach of the playful nostalgia on display in the "rowdy" novels and narratives selected for this analysis. As we turn now to the literature, I shall consider how a discursive nostalgia for a university of boyhood and play emerges in these varsity narratives by adopting and repurposing

"wasted time." First, at a narrative level, wasted time is repurposed in the service of nostalgia as a past of play recollected and narrated from an adult perspective. With this line of thinking, wasted time is soon understood to be synonymous with nostalgia in the world of varsity fiction, and is an important part of how the stories are told. Second, at a character level, wasted time is applied to figures of both overwork and overplay in these narratives, allowing each side of the work-play argument to have its own cautionary varsity tale. Establishing the limits of excess and the centre of balanced play, these wasteful and/or wasted students are the prototypical lost boys of fictive Oxbridge; they embody the idea of a varsity as a time and space for the young, along with its magic and sometimes tragic appeal.

PART ONE: NOSTALGIA AND WASTED TIME

The Ticking Timepiece

Both *Tom Brown at Oxford* and *Wilton of Cuthbert's* begin with a warning, a reminder of the unforgiving and unrelenting passage of time. In the "Introductory" pages to Hughes's novel, as Tom Brown passes through the gates of St. Ambrose College for the first time, eager to begin his university life, his eye is caught momentarily by the great college sundial[53] fixed over the lodgings of the fictional Oxford college[54] in which his varsity story is about to unfold. The sundial's grandeur and gleam in the afternoon sun draw Tom's attention, and the reader's, to its Latin inscription underneath: "Pereunt et imputantur." That the inscription pauses his grand Oxford entrance, "raising sundry thoughts in his brain," suggests the erstwhile schoolboy has grasped its English meaning ("they perish and are reckoned")[55] well enough to acknowledge the solemn reminder—on the first day of his varsity adventures no less—that while the hours of a day and a life must inevitably waste away, they must not and cannot be wasted (Hughes vi). The

title page of Adams's novel includes an epigraphical poem of similar sentiment to that of the St. Ambrose sundial, with the theme of passing time front and centre:

> *The young man lifted his earnest eyes –*
>
> *'Oh, tell me, my father, for thou art wise,*
>
> *Is it better to live till the set of sun,*
>
> *Or to die, when the morn hath but scarce begun?'*
>
> *The old man sighed, and he shook his head;*
>
> *'I cannot tell thee, my son,' he said.*
>
> *'But whether thy days be many or few,*
>
> *Do thou the work that thou hast to do.*
>
> *For him, who his Master obeys and fears*
>
> *The butterfly's hour is a thousand years.*
>
> *For the service of sin, and for idle sport,*
>
> *The thousand years of the oak are nought.'* (Adams Epigraph)

While Hughes's college sundial hints at a directive for avoiding time-waste in its mention of the hours' eventual reckoning, this rather melodramatic exchange between wise age and inquisitive youth offers far more pedagogical clarity and judgement on the subject of wasted time. Falling in line with the Victorian work ethic as well as the ideology of muscular Christianity,[56] both of which heartily denounce "idle sport," this epigraph preaches the use of precious time for noble work, and, in rather an intriguingly circular way, renders time itself, or rather the perception of it, the promised reward or punishment for heeding or ignoring the warning of perishing hours. Whether the "butterfly's hour" stretches into a "thousand years," or the oak's thousand years collapse into nothing at all depends entirely on one's (mis)management of time. It is important to

note, however, that the short-lived working life and the long-lived idle life are the foundational correlations here, before perception and judgement change the rules of the game. Indeed, this epigraph sets the initial links between work and premature death on the one hand and play and everlastingness on the other that its novel continues to forge, links used by both varsity novels in fact, to construct the nostalgic identities of their varsity workers and players.

The idea of time in the abstract as a disciplinary force is as old as time itself. But it is only with the development of the timepiece that the perishing hours are given a concrete symbol, with a face to read and a voice to heed. In his influential essay "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism" (1967), E. P. Thompson charts the rise and supremacy of clock-time in industrial Europe, from the proliferation of personal timepieces beginning in the fourteenth century, to the erection of public and church clocks in towns and parishes in the sixteenth, to the technical advancements of clockmakers in the eighteenth (which reaches its zenith a century later in Victorian England where the clock-making industry is for a time unrivalled). As Thompson observes, the rise of the timepiece across these centuries heralds an era of "time-discipline" at a time when "new rhythms" of industrial life are calling for regulation, an era of time-sheets and clocking-in and -out, of working hours separate from leisure hours, an era when the ringing clock bell usurps the sun in dictating the rising and setting of workers and their various duties (57, 69).[57] And, as we have seen in our consideration of the civics' ideal of academic industry and their repudiation of idle Oxbridge, the evolving and at times warring ideas of a Victorian university owe much to the establishment of "time-discipline" in industrial England as a benchmark of modern worth. As the opening warnings of Hughes's and Adams's novels indicate, this makes its way into the world of varsity fiction where time stands alongside the imposing spires of Oxford as a formidable force of intimidation, one that casts an equally

imposing shadow of waste.[58] Indeed, the varsity novel sets time, and more precisely the college clock, as the ultimate academic taskmaster, aligning perfectly with the broader Victorian connection between clocks and discipline.[59]

It is after his college sundial's somewhat abstract warning has made its initial impression on him that Tom Brown begins to understand in a more practical sense the extent to which university hours are reckoned and regulated. In the novel's first chapter, as Tom writes home to his school chum Geordie to inform him (and the eager reader by proxy) "what sort of a place Oxford is," he explains university life in terms of how the hours are filled: twelve hours of lectures per week, chapel every morning at eight and evening at seven, "Hall" dinner at five o'clock (of which one is expected to attend at least four per week), and a nightly curfew to be in gates by the stroke of midnight (Hughes 5). Any time left over may be spent at one's own disposal. Doing its utmost to maintain this strict academic regularity in fictive Oxford is the college clock, which strikes often throughout both novels, marking the hours and their quarterly progressions, reminding the reader that this fictive varsity of play is steadied by an institution of discipline. Indeed, we hear the chiming clock interrupt casual chats and social gatherings, summon students to chapel and hall, warn of the evening curfew and the danger of being entered in the porter's books while out gallivanting in town,[60] and, importantly, incite movement in the students when prolonged play inches dangerously close to excessive, plot-stalling idleness. That the college clock is as exacting a disciplinarian as the much maligned college don is proven with the character of Austin Wardleigh, the quintessential varsity playboy[61] of Adams's novel. Throughout the novel, Wardleigh vacillates constantly between the distracting amusements of university life and a noble determination to do better, but his most momentous "fit of idleness" prior to his final exams coincides with a change of lodging in his final year from his college

residence to a set of rooms on Oxford's Broad Street. That this move outside his college signals a move outside the influence of its clocks is made evident by its unfortunate effect on his daily routine: no longer summoned to attend morning chapel, he rises later and later every day, his breakfast hour moving steadily from eight to nine to eventually ten o'clock (Adams 329).

In most cases, the plot tensions of the varsity novel turn on whether or not the protagonist will realize "time-discipline" before his university time runs out. And the Cinderella-hour for the varsity hero, when play is supposed to end and university hours *are* finally reckoned, is the hour of the exam. Indeed, varsity novels use the university exam, what Adams's narrator calls a "nineteenth-century inquisition" (101), as the ultimate test, not of knowledge, but rather of time management.[62] In Adams's text, for instance, Wilton spends the crucial weeks leading up to his Little-Go exam[63] entirely engaged in social functions and tournaments organized by the Bentham Society (Adams's take on a typical spirited Oxford debate club), completely neglecting his readings and study. That the outcome is sure to be bleak is suggested by Wilton's sombre arrival at the exam school on the fateful day, dressed in his "sober black coat" (Adams 101),[64] and then by his unexceptional performance there where he breaks down during the section on Euclidean mathematics.[65] But Wilton manages to escape failure (the dreaded "plucking" that ends many a varsity career[66]) if merely "by the skin of his teeth," and this, coupled with the shame of this close call, serves as one of the novel's important lessons on folly and time mismanagement (Adams 104). The threat of the varsity hero's near-ruined prospects is not meant to weigh too heavily upon the young reader's mind however; varsity novels may invariably set on their narrative horizons the daunting prospect of exams and the prescribed goal of obtaining "firsts," but they do so even as many of their characters happily shirk the straight and narrow path of disciplined study and even as the varsity protagonist proves time and time again that he is never

really in danger of failing. Really, it is precisely because the exam looms large at the varsity novel's end that varsity play is rendered both irresistible in its toying with anti-discipline, and fateful in its ties to the characters' university destinies. Thompson observes that parish church bells and tolling clocks would eventually come to be the symbolic sounds of destiny and eternity, reminding men of mortality, resurrection, and judgment (64), which makes it all the more fitting that exam day, academia's judgement day, be heralded by the clock. Sure enough, on the "fatal Monday" that Wilton and Osborne are set to take their final exams, they hear the college clock strike dreadfully, "having as awful a sound to their ears, as that of St. Sepulchre's had for the criminal about to expiate, in the olden time, his guilt on the scaffold in front of Newgate" (Adams 321, 322). A rather morbid simile, but one that works well in the varsity novel world where, as we shall see later when we return to this scene in another context, the university exam often carries with it the heaviness of death.

Thus, with the clock ticking away the wasted minutes and striking at the threshold of destiny, varsity novels invariably set their characters the daunting task of prioritizing their time, which takes considerable skill to do and considerable gumption to refuse to do.[67] Making the task all the more daunting for the impressionable protagonist is that he is often surrounded by steadfast workers on one side, the university's so-called "reading men" whose academic discipline guarantees them enviable firsts on their exams and heightened career prospects, and players/idlers on the other, those of the "fast set" whose lack of discipline guarantees them enviable social status and a fun romp through their university years. The "reading men" of influence in our two novels are John Hardy, a senior undergraduate who becomes Tom's unofficial tutor and mentor, and John Osborne, one of two close public-school friends who accompany Wilton to Oxford (the other is Wardleigh). There will be more to say on these two

overworked varsity lost boys, but it is enough to stress here that it is Hardy and Osborne who, each with self-imposed daily schedules of rigid regularity, heed the clock most, and, in so doing, put a great deal of well-intentioned pressure on the protagonists to mark time well.[68] So difficult in fact is the task of time in a varsity of delightful distraction that varsity fiction milks the struggle for all of its melodramatic and plot-thickening potential. Both Tom and Wilton have bouts of undisciplined play or idleness—most notably, circumstances involving a disreputable pub (with Tom) and an illicit party ending in a riot (with Wilton)—that bring them close to ruin; and while they, as the varsity heroes, must inevitably find their ways back to paths of academic redemption, the novels take delight in making examples of other characters who are not so wise. The surprise is that these exemplary players and idlers are not always meant to incite the reader's censure. One of the short periodical varsity narratives provides a humorous and harmless portrait of an undisciplined undergraduate dealing with the opposing pressures of prioritization and procrastination, and the inevitable sense of wasted time that tags along. In "An Idle Day at Cambridge," the ubiquitous mature narrator recalls a particularly memorable day of his university youth spent chasing the hours as they pass, running from lectures to rowing practice to chapel to social gatherings to debate club, etc., all the while trying in vain to carve out some time for his academic studies. The frustration of the young would-be scholar is felt but so too is an objective humour over his inability to avoid distraction. The paradoxical conclusion of this lighthearted narrative is that an "idle" day has been anything but, but is deemed so nonetheless due to lack of work; this sets up my next discussion perfectly, for, while the narrator's younger self bemoans guiltily a "lost" day, the mature narrator finds it to be a choice memory of his Cambridge experience, and reframes it as an occasion for nostalgia.

The Nostalgic Narrator: Repurposing Wasted Time

While both Hughes's and Adams's varsity novels open with the sound of the ticking clock, this sound is crucial to the calling forth of nostalgia. In varsity fiction, the wasted hours of varsity play are reckoned alongside the hours of varsity work but, rather than cause for criticism, they are repurposed constructively at the narrative level in the service of nostalgia. First, in the broadest sense, one might say that nostalgia of any kind depends upon the idea of wasted time: that is, time having wasted away, having passed into the past, having been used up without the possibility of being used again. Wasted time underscores nostalgia's inherent sense of loss, not irresponsible loss couched in judgement (*you didn't use your time wisely and now it's gone*) but rather inevitable loss that recognizes the uncontrollable reality of time.[69] In short, to invoke nostalgia is to summon the spectre of wasted time. And in varsity fiction, to invoke nostalgia for boyhood play is to summon the lost boy from across the vast waste-land[70] of time that separates the mature narrator from the lost boy and his varsity of play. Without a doubt, the narrator, he who waxes nostalgic about Oxbridge days gone by, and summons the lost boy of his own playful past, is essential to this invocation in varsity fiction. The nostalgic stance of the narrative voice is established quite early in Adams's novel for instance, before the story begins in fact, as the narrative is dedicated (in poetic form) to varsity friends of old, "friends of life's earlier hours, / Whose glow still lights the gathering eventide" and who "[s]wung the light bat" and the "lusty oar" at his side. Adams's narrator summons these lost varsity boys and gestures fondly to their mutual love for cricket and rowing, both for his own sake and for that of his friends' now grown-up selves, for whom it is hoped the varsity tale to come shall awaken "gentle memories" of the past lain dormant through the "softening haze" of age. The perspective of varsity fiction's nostalgic narrator towards the varsity scene and its boys is most often typified by a mixture of familiarity and distance, described best, perhaps, in an 1871 *London Society* article where an

aged Cambridge graduate walks the familiar grounds of his *alma mater* taking it all in as a self-proclaimed "intelligent foreigner": "you examine your former self—the boy who first roamed the Cambridge streets, as if doubting the doctrine of identity; examine him in memory, curiously and minutely, as some strange being" (40).[71] Viewing the younger self as a foreigner, from the shores of adulthood—the nostalgic conceit employed famously by Dickens in *A Christmas Carol* (1843) and Charlotte Brontë in *Jane Eyre* (1847)—makes the passage of time all the more poignant by emphasizing its transformative power, and by confronting the longing subject with an object self set at an unreachable distance. This is used often in varsity fiction but, as I shall demonstrate, wasted time is not only the vast gulf of perished hours that facilitates this distance; it is also a *perspective* on time and its value, a certain adherence to the work ethicists' correlation of play and wasted time, that separates the narrator from his younger and now stranger self.

Throughout *Tom Brown at Oxford*, the narrator often takes the liberty of nostalgic pause, interrupting Tom's youthful varsity plot in order to exercise a voice of maturity and consider certain scenes of play and sport from the perspective of wistful experience. The effect of these moments is such that the narrator takes on some character definition as a nostalgic persona, one who is positioned strategically across from an implied reader of similar nostalgic bent. Indeed, tapping into collective nostalgia is an important part of Hughes's narrative interjections, where the nostalgic narrator pursues a rapport with the novel's "gentle reader" that is, more often than not, based on a bond of boyhood play recollected (4). One moment in particular, the narrator's musings on varsity rowing, will serve as a typical example of the nostalgic pause, and, importantly, one in which the nostalgic sentiment makes good use of wasted time. The context of the scene is the first "bump race" of Tom's varsity rowing career,[72] where he is honourably called upon to ply the oars for his own college boat. Bump races and other rowing competitions

are momentous events in the world of Oxbridge sport, drawing undergraduates away from their books to the river banks to cheer on their college crews, and very useful events in varsity fiction for letting loose the playful and competitive spirits of varsity characters away from academic pressures while still maintaining certain veneration for the universities that host the races and through which they stand to be celebrated. As the St. Ambrose boat races toward the finish line in this early chapter of Hughes's novel, the voice of the narrator interrupts the roar of the riverside crowd to address his readers (separately by sex) and translate the excitement of a rowing match through the language of nostalgia: "Dear readers of the gentler sex! you, I know, will pardon the enthusiasm which stirs our pulses, now in sober middle age, as we call up again the memories of this, the most exciting sport of our boyhood (for we were but boys, then, after all)" (Hughes 149). "For you, male readers," he continues, appealing now to a readership of assumed kinship whose fluency in boyhood nostalgia breeds (for him) considerably greater confidence,[73]

> [y]ou *ought* to understand and sympathize with us in all our boating memories. Oh, how fresh and sweet they are! […] the noble river reach, the giant poplars, which mark the critical point of the course; […] Cantab and Oxonian, alike and yet how different, hurling along together, and hiding the towing-path; the clang of Henley church-bells, the cheering, the waving of embroidered handkerchiefs, and glancing of bright eyes, the ill-concealed pride of fathers, the open delight and exultation of mothers and sisters; the levee in the town-hall when the race was rowed, the great cup full of champagne […] remember, we were boys then, and bear with us if you cannot sympathize. (Hughes 149-50)

The nostalgic sentiment is strong here, as the narrator is seized with pulse-stirring memories of the past and paints the scene anew for his (male) readers with whom he joins hands in taking his nostalgic plunge. But it is important to note that the narrator's nostalgic gaze, and really the entire passage's nostalgic effect, depend upon the vast expanse of time that is felt to exist between a narrator of "sober middle age" and the carefree boy he once was, an expanse of time that is punctuated perfectly by the simple phrase "we were but boys, then, after all" and its more concise echo "we were boys then." Indeed, the narrator's constant reference to "boys" and "boyhood" here and throughout the novel, and their situation in the nebulous time of "then" or "long ago," points to the narrator's position apart, a figure outside the frame of reference, on the edge of a time wasted away.

If, as suggested earlier, nostalgia in varsity fiction is inspired not only by wasted time as distance in time, but also by wasted time as a perspective on time worth, it is well worth noting the subtle hint of apology in the statement "we were but boys, then, after all." One can easily detect the narrator's adult perspective on play in this nostalgic pause, one that separates him (once again) from the lost "boys" he envies. Words such as "pardon," "sympathise," and "bear with us" contribute to the apologetic tone, suggesting the narrator's adherence to the work ethicists' correlation of play and wasted time, and, one might add, to the idea that nostalgic narration or nostalgia more simply is just as wasteful. But this apologetic tone works toward another agenda: the narrator establishes the link between time-waste and play but only so as to emphasize that its undoing is the privilege of boyhood. The adult narrator is thus set at a distance from his boyhood self on the plane of worldview, with a matured perspective that he cannot deny, but also does not prioritize. Indeed, in varsity fiction, an adult or work ethicists' perspective of time-waste is one purely of vantage rather than advantage, a lens through which

the playing boy appears an even more appealing and stranger being in his utter lack of care for prescribed adult notions of time worth.

Repurposing the perspective of time-waste for nostalgic effect is a prominent feature in the periodical varsity narratives, prompting me to widen my discussion somewhat. These short varsity adventures also employ narrators of apologetic inclination; and, since they depict decidedly more "rowdy," destructive, and more seemingly pointless play than the novels do, and moreover are almost always focussed on the delinquent exploits of the narrators themselves, one could say that they actually have much more to apologize for. For instance, the "Oxford Man" who narrates "A Noisy Night in College" recollects a particularly wild night of bonfires in his college quad after curfew wherein prominent dons and other disciplinarians are burned in effigy; meanwhile the "Old Oxonian" narrator of both "College Days: The Siege" and "Tournaments Holden at Oxford" recalls, first, how a varsity prank of pelting unsuspecting students out his window with a pea-shooter leads to an impromptu war with a fellow-collegian and his cronies, and, second, his participation in an unofficial varsity tournament of armchair and sofa racing on the quad, which results in countless smashed college furnishings much to the delight, notes the narrator drolly, of the town's upholsterers (151). And yet, despite these delinquent antics, the apologetic tone of the periodical narrator is even less sincere than that of the novels, the logical consequence one might say of a focus on short, episodic memories of decontextualized play and a lack of concern for character development and redemption. The "Oxford Man" offers his readers the following disclaimer, for instance, before delving into his tale of the "Noisy Night" of bonfires, toying with apology for a moment before ultimately tossing it away along with any liability for the shenanigans about to be related: "if it should seem to any of you that some of the noble deeds soon to be spoken of are just such as one might expect from noisy schoolboys, do

not, I pray you, blame the ancient one who now tells the story. Boys will be boys, although they may have gone up to Oxford and started a growth of whiskers thereat" (687). Yes, because the "boys will be boys" attitude generally prevails without shame in the periodical varsity tales, and especially those in the "Boys' Own" publications, their use of the adult apologist is far more ironic than in the novels, aligning with Stevenson's "An Apology for Idlers" and other iterations of the ancient apology of defence.[74]

In the periodical narratives, the narrator indirectly defends varsity play and its acknowledged waste of time, rendering it appealing and useful by emphasizing a certain compatibility with the outside world of adulthood, by suggesting that newly-whiskered varsity men are only so many boys in a suspended time of play. And compatibility is a key word here, for, while the nostalgic gaze of a varsity narrator typically blends familiarity and distance, it becomes quite clear from these selections that the periodical narrator's nostalgia leans far more heavily upon the familiar. That is, while varsity nostalgia is often inspired by emphasizing the impassible distance between wasteful playing boy and industrious man, here nostalgia is motivated by bridging this distance and rediscovering the overgrown, forgotten path of kinship between the two. Indeed, as has been mentioned, the "Boys' Own" stories trade on the narrative relationship between the grown-up storyteller and his boy reader. The tales told by the "Old Oxonian" demonstrate most effectively this nostalgia of forgotten kinship. In them, the rhetoric of time-waste persists throughout, in the disapproving voice of the dean for instance at the conclusion of "Tournaments Holden at Oxford" who scolds the apprehended chair-racers for having "wasted their evening in dissipation" (151), or in the apologetic voice of the Old Oxonian himself at the start of "College Days: The Siege" who feels compelled to point out he was an "inoffensive member of the university" and a keen advocate of studious discipline before falling

victim to the tempting amusements of the fast set rascals who initiate the "siege" at the centre of the story (533). Yet, even with this persistent thread, the narratives make of the wasted stuff of boyhood play, and specifically rowdy combative play, the foundational material of ideal Victorian masculinity and vitality. Both tales argue that the "combative nature" of mankind is developed in boyhood and under the auspices of the varsities that prize healthy competition, and that in these rambunctious chair-racers and pea-shooters the military man and the competitive industrialist are sure to find their origins. In "The Siege," military metaphors are used deliberately to align the undergraduate and his playful skirmish with the military man and his war, and, in noting "how apparently trivial and unimportant are the causes of war," the narrator files both under the category of play (533). Similarly, the "restless gownsman" and company who combat university boredom by inventing the ad-hoc sport of chair-racing in "Tournaments" are heralded as embryonic captains of industry (151). Championing them, and defending the aggressive, competitive nature of their varsity play, the Old Oxonian states that "[a]ll industry is a battle," that "he who fights not at all is the lazy, idle, contemptible being who lives on the labour of the industrious, a clog to the world's progress" ("Tournaments" 151). Notably, in defending play he uses the rhetoric of industry and idleness, sharing Carlyle's disgust for the "monstrous" idle man, but suggesting what Carlyle does not, that the player can be just as noble and progressive an antithesis as the worker. Thus, the Old Oxonian encourages his readers to see *un*wasted potential in the undergraduate delinquent, the irreverent player who begets the revered worker, the boy who begets the man,[75] a great part of which is the potential for nostalgia as a trigger of desire for lost origins. And if there is wistful joy in a forgotten kinship remembered, then so too is there a touch of sadness in the state of having forgotten in the first place; the old narrator emphasizes this symbolically as the chair-racing tournaments and its tale both come to

an end, declaring that "after that memorable morning, chairs and sofas were permitted to stand peacefully in the rooms of their owners" ("Tournaments" 151). Just as it is for the adult who has become disconnected from his wasted boyhood (or recollects it as regrettable waste), the nostalgic nudge here is for playtime stilled, the sad process by which everyday objects of adult life are divested of the magic of childhood play.

In closing this first part, I return to the plea of Hughes's narrator at the end of his emotional rowing recollection, his earnest request that the reader "bear" with him in listening to his sudden effusion of nostalgic feeling, in order to reiterate what was suggested then: that in varsity fiction, part of the nostalgic strategy is the subtle idea that nostalgia itself is a waste of time. Indeed, it makes some sense to end a discussion on "Nostalgia and Wasted Time" with a look at how varsity fiction renders the wasted time of play synonymous with nostalgia, thereby repurposing the work ethicists' most detested material (wasted time) into one of narrative's most useful (nostalgia). I have noted how varsity fictions set the university as a place of perishing hours, stressing the importance of time worth and prioritization for its cast of characters, but the narrator also takes to reminding *himself* (and his readers) that the clock is ticking and that nostalgic musings can only go on for so long. Indeed, nostalgic varsity narratives often end with the consideration of whether or not nostalgia is worth the expense of time or rather has exceeded some practical idea of allotted time.

In the final Oxford-set chapter of *Tom Brown at Oxford*, as Tom returns for a Master's in the summer term, we find him a considerably more restless university resident than ever before, bemoaning the "weeks wasted" kicking his heels while awaiting his degree,[76] and the narrator subtly echoes his protagonist's awareness of time-waste in one of his final nostalgic flourishes (Hughes 499). The chapter opens with the lines "One more look into the old college where we

have spent so much time already, not, I hope, altogether unpleasantly" (Hughes 499), and then nudges the reader's nostalgic appreciation for one of this novel's familiar varsity settings and its familiar sounds: Hardy's cozy rooms in which Tom has matured and learned, and where the river activities and the "distant sounds of mirth" from some nearby undergraduate's rooms drift through the open windows (Hughes 499). Acknowledging that "so much time" has been spent in amusement at St. Ambrose, the narrator toys with apology again and a polite posture of guilt in his "hope" (and its correlative doubt) that the reader's time has at least been spent pleasantly if not usefully. The suggestion of course being that amusement, or pleasure, is the most important measure of time worth in varsity youth fiction. In a similar vein, "Recollections of a Freshman's Life at Cambridge" uses the conceit of a sudden awareness of time-waste to prompt the London Barrister to cut his recollections short and effectively bring his narrative to a close. The series ends with the narrator's confession that while "[t]here are many other pleasant things dwelling in the depths of my memory that I would tell you of: of our sports and pastimes, of football, of cricket, of boating […] etc., I fear to weary you" (490). The narrator's fear here, however, is as much a posture as the doubt expressed by Hughes's narrator on the extent of his reader's enjoyment. Especially when one considers the London Barrister's earlier position on idle dreaming, made clear in Part I of the series, as he recalls a morning spent fantasizing about his imminent studentship at Cambridge:

> That morning I gave myself up entirely to dreaming. It was holiday-time, and even now I think the morning not ill-spent, though I look back on it with all the excitement of youth knocked out of me, and though I have long fully realized the value of time. Surely the contemplation of the golden vision that opened out before my dazed eyes was worth a morning's dream. ("Recollections" Part I. 430)

From this rumination, one is left to conclude that time might be just as well spent contemplating one's varsity past as it is the "golden vision" of one's varsity future, and especially within the context of varsity periodical stories, where nostalgic visions of past and future, of the remembering man and the imagining boy, are intimately aligned. And yet, while the reader may well be prepared to see through the narrator's veneer of apologetic concern, the series still does end with a time-conscious narrator, wary of nostalgic narration devolving into waste, certain that the exhaustive exploration of another's memory must become tedious and time-wrenching eventually. But even a nostalgia deemed wasteful does just as well in a strategic sense for, with this closing, nostalgia is returned to the "depths" of intimate experience, with the words "my memory" stressing a divide between the narrator and his readers, and delineating a boundary between his memory and their imagination. With this closing, the reader is reminded that the narrator's recollections of varsity play are his own, but only after enough of them have been shared to render them, and those withheld, a source of longing.

PART TWO: NOSTALGIA AND LOST BOYS

The Varsity Rule of Three: A Structural Overview

The same Manchester correspondent who, in his ardent support of the promising new Victoria University, saw fit to disparage the awkward "plunge" from term to vacation at the ancient universities, also took aim at the odd disparity between two particular types of students to be found there: the "curious and opposite specimens of extreme industry and extreme idleness" (9).[77] Critics of Oxbridge, it seems, had at this point begun to move beyond the one-sided charge of "excessive amusements," inherited from the Georgians, to a more balanced criticism of excessive play *and* excessive work. Roaming the old college walks are still those familiar students who "aim chiefly at getting pleasantly through their time" notes the correspondent,

"taking, or perhaps not taking, a degree in the end but with the *minimum* of work in either event" (9). But, Oxford and Cambridge are not entirely the "stagnant" places they once were, he continues, "[t]heir waters have been stirred" by industry, and the pleasant and carefree idler is now joined by a hardworking and painstaking brother who "goes through his University course to the satisfaction of his examiners and tutors" only to emerge a "melancholy wreck" and the ultimate sufferer of "educational fussiness which claims its yearly victims and never surrenders its hold upon them" (9). A curiously dichotomous pair indeed, but, for all the critical bluster of the civics and their supporters, these figures of excess in fact strengthen the identity of Oxbridge in Victorian cultural imagination and contribute to a discourse of nostalgia that keeps it at the centre of modern influence. In this chapter's second part, I aim to examine more closely the "specimens of extreme industry and extreme idleness" in Hughes's and Adams's varsity novels: the ways in which they embody disparate prototypes of the lost boy, different constructs of wasted time, and, ultimately, how all of this serves a discursive nostalgia for university boyhood and play.

Before turning to the lost boys themselves, however, I must first pause briefly to outline the structure in which they are arranged and through which their differences are weighed. Varsity novels adhere to a rule of three,[78] whereby the balanced protagonist, the ideal varsity boy, is positioned between these two excessive and unbalanced counterpoints of idleness and overwork. Tom Brown is the *everyboy* of healthy balance in Hughes's novel, positioned between and influenced by rich varsity playboy Drysdale on one side, all lavish parties and casual lounges, and disciplined scholar John Hardy on the other, a recluse generally to be found amid a pile of dusty books in his meagre college room. While Tom vacillates between periods of overwork and delinquency throughout his varsity years, his character is refined in its association with these

figures of excess to reach the admirable equilibrium worthy of his heroic varsity destiny. Similarly, Wilton (of Cuthbert's) is the balanced protagonist in Adams's novel, flanked by the player Austin Wardleigh and the (over)worker John Osborne, his closest and yet diametrically opposed varsity allies. The balanced character structure of Adams's novel is far more meticulously and deliberately drawn than in Hughes's novel and is thus worth examining in some more detail here. Adams emphasizes the roles of Wardleigh and Osborne as opposing forces in the novel very early on, having the narrator introduce them to the reader as "types of two divisions of men, with which all are familiar who have had any experience of Oxford life," namely, the distinct divisions of the fast set and reading set into which the varsity player and worker typically fall (Adams 47).[79] And, moreover, while the protagonist Wilton gets his own chapter of introduction, Osborne and Wardleigh are obliged to share theirs so that the reader is better able to appreciate their polarity, one seeking the "quiet student life" and the other the "gayest society of the college" (Adams 38-39). Then, with the two poles set accordingly, Wilton is carefully positioned at middle ground, "resolute to obtain a first class, and go in for University prizes" but also wanting "in the vanity of his heart, to be distinguished in other ways—as a good rider, a crack oar, a successful cricketer, a dead shot etc." The narrator continues, "[h]e knew he had a fair chance of succeeding in all these endeavours, if he went judiciously to work," emphasizing Wilton's sense of balance further still by suggesting that his determination to "work" applies equally to academics and sport (Adams 48).

There is also an important class element to the varsity rule of three, which adds another layer of meaning to the work-play dichotomy of characters like Wardleigh and Osborne, Drysdale and Hardy. Indeed, one cannot consider the work-play dichotomy in the varsity novel, nor in ideas of Oxbridge at large, without noting how it is informed by the "two nations" of rich

and poor. Varsity novels contribute to the idea of Oxbridge as highly class conscious by emphasizing the clear distinctions among its characters' socio-economic situations, and by having those situations dictate how their varsity lives, as either workers or players, are lived. Drysdale and Wardleigh, both heirs to wealthy country estates, live varsity lives of luxury, and illustrate rather blatantly the extent to which varsity leisure and idleness are rights of privilege. Hardy and Osborne, the sons of a retired marine of reduced circumstances and a poor parson from the manufacturing districts respectively, demonstrate that varsity work is not merely the unusual penchant of the pedantic don, but rather a necessity for the student of humbler origins. Indeed, in Hardy and Osborne, Hughes and Adams construct varsity characters for whom play is as much a luxury as the velvet furnishings and wine parties they cannot afford. And even within this class reading of the rule of three, the varsity protagonist occupies a satisfying position of balance. Neither Tom nor Wilton, both comfortably upper middle-class, have so much wealth that the loss of a month's college allowance through gambling or unwise expenditure is deemed inconsequential, but neither have they so little that an afternoon skipping class or enjoying a game of cards is tantamount to toying with one's university fate.

Adams's attention to the varsity rule of three extends beyond the initial establishment of the three friends' predilections and social situations, to those key moments throughout the narrative when it directs their character development. In particular, Adams makes his three Oxonians hyper-aware foils of one another, such that their extreme differences act as self-regulators. Osborne, for instance, is often viewed by the other two as an example worthy of emulation even if his rigid self-discipline sets an impossible standard for them, prone as they are to "fits of idleness" (Adams 20). And Wardleigh is especially grateful for his association with both Osborne and Wilton, because it keeps the young playboy from degenerating into a more

shameful version of himself. Observes Wardleigh of his more studious comrade, for instance, as the possibilities and pressures of summer vacation loom ahead: "He makes one awfully ashamed of leading such a lazy life as one does, day after day. If it wasn't for John Osborne, I should have said it was impossible for a fellow to read during the summer" (Adams 173).[80] But, importantly, the conversation continues with Wilton reminding his discipline-challenged friend of the unhealthy excess in Osborne's exhaustive work ethic, and its likely result: a summer spent "in a wretched room" where "he'll sit and addle his brains over his books till he's half dead, and will come back to Oxford and finish the job, by quite killing himself" (Adams 174). Indeed, emulation is never without a troubling afterthought where Osborne is concerned, for Wilton and Wardleigh often consider their hardworking and constantly ailing friend with a certain degree of imminent foreboding; and this resets the scales, keeping their work-guilt in check, and casting their more playful and carefree lifestyles in the glow of healthy life-giving appeal.

The varsity novel's rule of three refutes the persistent rhetoric of Oxbridge as a place of extremity without centrality, of polarity without balance, of excess without moderation. It points to the importance of balance in varsity life, and suggests that Oxbridge, or at least its fictive counterpart, prizes the balanced scholar who knows how to divide his time between work and play. But even as their overall character structures endorse balance, one cannot deny that varsity novels contribute to the idea of excess that pervades the Oxbridge identity in their offering up such prominent and plentiful examples of the pleasure-seeking rascal and the hard-nosed worker throughout their pages. The noteworthy distinction, however, is that varsity novels do not present these "specimens" of excess as unfortunate or useless by-products of the university system; rather, they are understood as integral components in the formation and framing of the ideal varsity boy and his success, and thus as necessary to Oxbridge culture as they are endemic to it.

Furthermore, the nostalgic sentiments attached to these divergent varsity boys depend upon the juxtaposition and sense of comparison promoted by the varsity rule of three. Nostalgia envelops both lost boys of excess as resident spirits confined to the university, but their extreme divergence renders their embodiments of waste complementary. As for their balanced brother—and Tom Brown shall be the case study here—I shall consider the feeling of nostalgia that emerges as he graduates to "intelligent foreigner," a nostalgic position made all the more poignant by virtue of his juxtaposition with those who fail to graduate in more ways than one.

Graduating to Intelligent Foreigner: Tom Brown's Strange Being

It is a strange thing that, in varsity fiction, the protagonist's graduation ceremony is often either completely overlooked or given cursory attention, lacking the pomp and circumstance and solemnity one would expect from the ceremonial culmination of his university years.[81] In *Tom Brown at Oxford*, one never doubts that the titular hero will graduate (as varsity heroes must) but the momentous occasion is only inferred based on his return for a Master's degree at the end of the novel. Wilton's graduation ceremony is similarly unmentioned, although his success of earning a first on his final exams (alongside Osborne) is presented as an assurance that he does indeed graduate. In fact, the only university ceremony granted any attention at all in the novels, Oxford's grand Commemoration Day,[82] is one more concerned with celebrating the prestige of the university itself rather than its honorees: it is featured in an early chapter of Hughes's novel allowing Tom to play tour-guide to his visiting cousin Katie and imminent love interest Mary at his varsity's most festive time, and briefly midway through *Wilton of Cuthbert's* as the backdrop to a scene of noisy delinquent protest where a rowdy group of undergrads causes a row in the theatre[83] with the intent of forcing a widely unpopular proctor from the ceremony rather unceremoniously. Strange as it may seem for a university novel not to end with a traditional cap-

and-gown send-off, the idea of university graduation is nevertheless essential to the satisfactory conclusion of a Victorian varsity tale; but, it has less to do with celebration and far more to do with transformation and nostalgia. Graduation in the varsity novel is instead the culmination of a graduated or gradual transition from university boy to man of the outside world, the moment the varsity son is understood to have outgrown his university of play. However, the lost boy that is left behind in this moment of the varsity protagonist's transformation does not at all disappear. Rather, he becomes, for the changed varsity protagonist, a figure of nostalgic contemplation, a spirit confined to the university as a newly-envisioned place of the past, in the same way that he is, for the reader, confined to the varsity novel itself as a figure of timeless longing. Which is to say that a key part of the protagonist's "graduation" in the varsity novel is the eventual adoption of the perspective of the nostalgic narrator discussed only moments ago, the retrospective view of the "intelligent foreigner" which sets the lost boy self at a critical distance and makes of him that curiously "strange being" in now a curiously strange place. In short, one might say that nostalgia is the varsity novel's most important ritual of graduation in its performance of two significant functions: first, it establishes the necessary transformation of the protagonist which triggers the narrative's end; and second, as the "graduate" is compelled to look back upon what is left behind rather than what lies ahead, it establishes the desired fixity and unchanging quality of the university for varsity readers who are either waiting to get there or waiting to return.

If Tom Brown is to be our case study for this kind of varsity graduation, we must begin by noting how very boyish he is made out to be at the start of his university existence, so that his transformation can be appreciated all the more. Recognizing that a good many of his readers would have come to know the young student from the first novel in which he is featured, *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857), Hughes is careful to keep alive the youthful charm of the Rugby

pupil, and has his narrator insist in the introductory pages that "we must not be surprised to find him quite as boyish, now that we fall in with him again, marching down to St. Ambrose's with a porter wheeling his luggage after him on a truck as when we left him at the end of his school career" (v). While this continuity of youth is certainly an attempt at linking Hughes's varsity sequel with its widely popular precursor, the original "school novel,"[84] Tom's boyishness would likely have been emphasized anyway, for, as has been noted already, varsity novels gain much traction from the amusing prospect of wide-eyed and error-prone boys entering the university setting and "having a go" at varsity life with the same zeal they would a game of billiards or backgammon or any other adult game for which they are wholly unprepared. But while Tom begins young, enjoying a handful of university firsts as the nostalgic narrator and reader muse wistfully over his shoulder—his first row on the river, his first bump race, his first breakfast party, his first town-and-gown row—it is only a matter of time before we, and Tom himself, begin to see the signs of age.

Tom's self-aware transformation begins at the tail end of his freshman year, at a pivotal moment of ethical reflection following a disagreement with his mentor Hardy. The rift is instigated by Tom's sudden interest in a local town pub and his ill-advised attentions to the young barmaid there, for which Hardy deems it his duty to offer the harshest of reprimands. The episode marks one of the more immature lapses of the varsity hero in the course of the novel, and is punctuated at its worst point by a severe downward spiral of ethical despondency (following Hardy's criticism) wherein he abandons his academic work, his rowing, and his old friends to seek the company of "the very worst men he knew in college, who were ready enough to let him share all their brutal orgies" (Hughes 178). Expectedly, in succumbing to the "worst," Tom finds carefree, mind-numbing solace in the company of Hardy's antithesis, Drysdale, who is only too

glad to let Tom "drown thought" in his orgiastic rooms of bingeing, betting, and boisterous play (Hughes 171). Tom eventually bounces back, however, reconciling with Hardy and reclaiming his former balance, but his brief sojourn to the darkest depths of irresponsible play leaves him feeling newly dissatisfied with the varsity of play. This comes to the fore during an important conversation with Hardy, as the two newly-reconciled friends stand gazing at the skyline of a distant Oxford, from a wooded hillside a few miles outside the university town. "Don't you like this view of Oxford?" asks Hardy, offering up the typical nostalgic frame of appreciation for the tall towers and glowing spires at a distance, approving it a "splendid old place, after all" (Hughes 242). But Tom has begun to outgrow his university at this point, and responds with the full weight of experience upon him that it seems to him now a "chilly" and "deadening" place to live (Hughes 242). In the conversation that ensues, we learn that the varsity ennui Tom is beginning to feel is directly related to a life of leisure that is beginning to lose its lustre: "I want a new line. I don't care a straw for cricket; I hardly like pulling; and as for those wine parties, day after day, and suppers, night after night, they turn me sick to think of" (Hughes 243). Part of Tom's self-aware transformation is also a feeling of confinement that bespeaks the restlessness of the varsity boy's spirit on the edge of imminent growth. "[I]t's the sort of shut-up, selfish life we lead here that I can't stand" complains Tom, reassessing his varsity existence, "[a] man isn't meant to live only with fellows like himself, with good allowances paid quarterly, and no care but how to amuse themselves.[85] One is old enough for something better than that, I'm sure" (Hughes 243). Tom is indeed on the threshold of transformation, but being "old enough" to move beyond one's boyish ways is not enough to graduate in the world of varsity fiction.

It is not enough that Tom feels his age, that his university is suddenly a strange or foreign place; an important part of varsity fiction graduation dictates that he must also feel the

strangeness of his former self. In order to become the "intelligent foreigner" of nostalgic contemplation, he must be able to recognize and confront his lost boy, which, in turn, keeps the boy alive for the benefit of the reader's nostalgic imagination. This recognition informs three important moments of Tom's gradual maturity at Oxford. First, as part of his recovery from the bout of varsity debauchery mentioned above, the narrator underscores Tom's newfound self-consciousness using the imagery of a chasm to emphasize the division of old self from new. As Tom sits contemplating how his life has changed over the past few weeks, the narrator illuminates the following thought: "He could hardly get back across the gulf which separated him from the self who came back into those rooms after Easter, full of anticipation of the pleasures and delights of the coming summer term and vacation" (Hughes 219-20). In this moment, the lost boy, the "self" of the past, is rendered a focus of unattainable longing, but one that is clearly defined by emotion and environment. Then, when the unanticipated summer arrives, heralding the end of his freshman year, there is another moment of self-reflection that demonstrates the extent to which a boyhood self has become detached and discernable as a separate entity for Tom. Looking back at his freshman year, inarguably the most playful of his varsity years, he marvels that the short ten months since matriculation "seems twenty years" long, but follows the thought swiftly with a determination to recapture his youth for one night's worth of amusement. "I'm going to be a boy again for to-night" he vows, heading off to join his friends, summoning the boy from the start of the novel, but only so that he might "play" him for one more carefree evening (Hughes 316). Indeed, the fact that Tom now plays at boyhood, adopts his former self as a useful yet temporary varsity role, suggests that the boyhood self is irrevocably lost. Finally, the idea of the chasm of divided selves is repurposed at the end of the novel in a scene we have already visited, when Tom returns for his Master's term restless and distant, and feels sharply the

"great gap" that exists between himself and the so-called "youngsters" now inhabiting his old college. "They look on me as a sort of don" he says glumly to Hardy, suggesting that he sees through their eyes an aged version of himself and thus can no longer see himself as the boy he was (Hughes 500). It is at this moment that we recognize a graduate of the fictive varsity. Not only because he declares that he has "done" with Oxford, that it now feels strange to him and he strange within it,[86] but also because his mingled feelings of regret and frustrated longing place him on par with the nostalgic narrator in this scene, he who opens the chapter with that wistful cast of finality in his "[o]ne more look into the old college where we have spent so much time already" (Hughes 500, 499). Indeed, Hughes places Tom and the narrator side by side here, both taking one last look, both returning to the university with feelings of sadness and recognized change; and if Tom is somewhat more morose in his return, it might be read merely as a condition of proximity, a kind of postpartum melancholy for the boy so recently and yet no longer a part of him.

They Perish and are Reckoned

"Oh! what a noble heart was here undone,
When Science 'self destroyed her favourite son!"
—Lord Byron, *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (1809)

"Oh, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!"[87]
—William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

While the successful varsity graduate manages gradually to outgrow his university, separating from his boyhood self and leaving it behind him in a blaze of nostalgic retrospection, the failed varsity graduate does not manage to move on at all, but continues to embody lost boyhood in a state of suspended or even frozen varsity time. I turn now to an examination of those "curious specimens" of overwork and overplay as depicted in varsity fiction, those whose ill-developed natures and excessive predilections prop up the protagonist and his appealing sense

of balance. The nostalgia generated by these failed graduates is directly antithetical to that of the successful graduate: rather than change and momentous departure, the feeling is instead linked to unchanging fixity and the idea of varsity entrenchment. Rather than leave Oxford, characters like Hardy and Osborne, Drysdale and Wardleigh instead remain, and are ultimately enfolded into the university's nostalgic identity, and this, in the varsity novel, is deemed just as worthy of celebration.

Beginning with the chronic overworker, this varsity figure, often melancholic, despondent, solitary, and painstakingly disciplined, punctuates the sadness of and yearning for lost boyhood by virtue of his premature varsity aging. He is a figure aged before his time through overwork,[88] who fails to meet the varsity standard of maturity by gradation and degree (thus, failed graduation). In his self-imposed seclusion, living a life "spent over books and behind sported oaks" (Hughes 47),[89] he is akin to the solitary ascetic monk and, as Rothblatt attests, a threat to the community of affable male sociality and play fostered by the idea of a liberal university (125).[90] Indeed, his threat to the Victorian ideal of a liberal varsity community is such that he must be and often is a victim of persecution and prejudice in varsity fiction plots at the hands of playful and popular youth, as is seen most candidly in the short periodical tale "Blifkins of Brazenface," where a solitary bookish ghost of a student opts out of paying subscription to support his college rowing crew and is persecuted mercilessly and rendered a university pariah up until the very last moment before his inevitable death. And while the tale takes a moral stand on the cruelty of Blifkins's persecutors, who do feel remorse in the end,[91] it still manages to uphold the ideal of sociality (which he failed to live up to) by having them make amends *en masse*, thronging the quadrangle outside his deathbed window to cheer him and his recently won classical scholarship. Finally, in his dedication to academic work at all cost, the overworking

scholar is a figure of the industrious world outside the university, misplaced in the varsity of play and tragically conspicuous in the "rowdy" varsity novel of play. Indeed, tragedy envelops the varsity hero's melancholy working brother (and one such brother is often all that the comic varsity novel will allow, and all that its nostalgic project requires) because "at all cost" often implies the ultimate sacrifice and makes of this figure an anchor for sober reflection on the idea of a university as a space of pressure, competition, solitary study, and self-destruction. For, as much as the varsity overworker espouses Carlyle's doctrine of "noble work" and noble sacrifice in his life's purpose, the figure ultimately casts work in a critical light by having waste overshadow nobility in the youthful varsity setting. In short, the Victorian varsity novel casts the overworked student as a figure of waste: of wasted time, youth, potential, spirit and, often, life itself.

The similarities between John Hardy and John Osborne, the hardworking scholars of Hughes's and Adams's novels respectively, extend far beyond their Christian names. As typical monkish scholars, motivated by academic discipline and wary of idleness and time-waste, they are easily aligned. Both function as mentors and are tasked with dispensing sober wisdom to the everyboy protagonists at the centres of their novels. In their stillness and quietude, both sit in stark relief against their universities of rowdy play, choosing to spend both varsity time and vacation time in industrious solitude, all the while painfully aware that their humble financial situations leave them no choice at all. Indeed, both Hardy and Osborne are the representative figures of work in their respective novels, but this is so not only because they are hardworking students; in their respective roles of *servitor* and *scholar*,[92] they are also both working students, tied to their academic institutions through contractual obligations of labour in exchange for monetary compensation. At the start of Adams's novel we are introduced to Osborne as a student

of institutional charity, nominated as a young boy to attend the Clergy Orphan School, then later selected to be the "foundationer"[93] at his public school Harchester, where his scholastic fees are funded because his family's meagre finances cannot support his intellectual promise. Osborne's institutional indebtedness continues as he turns to university; he is granted the Harford scholarship[94] to begin his Oxford studies and he continues to be supported financially by his university via prizes and awards in exchange for the sustained excellence of his academic work. Similarly, Hardy's Oxford tenancy is also contingent on his ability and willingness to work, but his work is far more menial and his position more ripe for class prejudice. As a college servitor, Hardy (dubbed a "strange granite block of humanity" by the narrator as if to emphasize with material bluntness his working-class identity) is effectively a working-class citizen of the university, labouring for his university in exchange for free or significantly reduced college fees and the right (and privilege) to study there (Hughes 70). When young Tom first encounters the solitary, brooding Hardy, he is at a loss to account for the senior scholar's social exclusion and his seeming inferiority complex, believing Oxford to be "*the* place in England where money should count for nothing" and where all undergraduates who qualify for a degree, qualify to be called a gentleman (Hughes 46, 50). Fittingly, it is Drysdale, one of the university's recognized gentlemen,[95] who clears things up for Tom, explaining, when the naïve freshman asks what a servitor is, that he is "something in the upper-servant line": "I should put him above the porter, and below the cook and butler. He does the dons' dirty work, and gets their broken victuals" (Hughes 50).[96] Yes, as Drysdale makes clear with this blunt explanation, whose carelessness arises as much from the playboy's youthful character as it does his patrician sense of entitlement, Hardy occupies a specific rank on the Oxford social scale, one that is entirely predicated on a compulsion, urged by the alienating combination of necessity and ambition, to work.

It is not just work, however, but also waste that unites Hardy and Osborne. For, more than the bookish, monkish, or labouring scholar of necessity, both are typical examples of the martyr-scholar in varsity fiction, compelled to give all to their university, and waste away in the process. Indeed, only in their dual identity of working scholar and martyr-scholar, do Hardy and Osborne reach the height of their nostalgic potential, marking Oxford a revered site of academic passion.[97] The martyr-scholar was very much a cult figure in the Victorian era,[98] and very much in line with a larger cultural interest in death and melodramatic sacrifice of all kinds. One of the most popular academic martyrs in the nineteenth century, and a real-life prototype for the martyrs of varsity fiction, was Henry Kirke White, a Cambridge student and poet of excessive study and overwork, whose untimely death at the age of twenty-one after only one year of university study inspired nostalgic tributes in five consecutive decades from 1825 onward from the likes of Robert Southey, Lord Byron, Henry Francis Cary, and Robert Chambers.[99] From these tributes it is clear that White's prominence and permanence in nineteenth-century cultural imagination is not so much due to his poetic skill (which, if it did not quite match that of the greats of his age, was certainly admired by them), but rather a result of his early death, unfulfilled potential, and, importantly, his consumption at a pivotal point of mounting genius, not only by the disease which gripped him early in life[100] but also by the intimidating expectations of the ancient university which ought to have tapped rather than sapped what intellectual and physical energy he had when he arrived there. Indeed, by all accounts, the university and specifically the university exam were destructive influences on White's already hardened work ethic and weakened constitution; Southey argues in his biographical sketch[101] that, while the "seeds of death" were already in him, "the place to which he had so long looked on with hope, served unhappily as a hot-house to ripen them" (32). And yet, for all their criticism of the

university and its "*high-pressure system*, under which the faculties of White were crushed and annihilated" (Willmott 48), these writers gain much and make much of the university setting: the image of White withering away in his college room, collapsing from delirium in the midst of his exam studies, being buried in All Saints churchyard outside the gates of St. John's College where he lived and died a freshman. Indeed, if the many writings on White teach us anything, it is that the iconic figure of the martyr-scholar and the cultural discourses of tragedy, waste, brilliance, etc. that attend him cannot be separated from the academic setting that frames his tragedy. Cambridge owns Henry Kirke White, or at least a very identifiable part of him, and whatever tragic allure or tragic nostalgia envelops him must include his university. This is why the comedic, youthful varsity novel does not risk upsetting its nostalgic project by embedding the martyr-scholar in its plot; Hardy and Osborne add a melancholy beat to the charm of fictive Oxford, and by now it should be clear that nostalgia sits as comfortably with heartache as it does with carefree appeal.

Fittingly, it is to the aching heart that I must now turn in examining Hardy, for his embodiment of waste is somewhat different than that of his perishing brothers. Described as a first-rate boxer as "strong as a horse" (Hughes 152), Hardy's constitution is too strong, too *hardy* in fact, to waste away. Indeed, unlike Blifkins, White, and Osborne, Hardy's martyrdom is not a wasted life, but rather a wasted heart. That is, throughout the novel, the age and sorrow of Hardy are directly linked to the extent of his love for a changing and (for him) a dying Oxford. Hardy is what one might call a tragic nostalgiac, stubbornly resistant to change, and in love (to the point of pain) with a dream of Oxford past that is in his view fast fading away.[102] The most ardent expression of Hardy's tragic love for Oxford occurs early in the novel, in a chapter aptly titled "An Explosion,"[103] when Tom is just getting to know the reclusive scholar and has yet to realize

the extent of his passion. In this chapter, Tom visits Hardy's rooms only to discover its occupant fuming over a cruel undergraduate trick played upon a fellow servitor, and about to erupt in a passionate outburst against the modern university and its careless, reckless, and undisciplined undergraduate: a "youngster" with "health, strength, and heaps of money," but "bound to no earthly service, and choosing that of the Devil and his own lusts" (Hughes 67). "What do they do for themselves or for this university?" he asks heatedly, multiplying the "youngster" into a crowd of likeminded delinquents, "they are ruining themselves body and soul, and making this place, which was meant for the training of learned and brave and righteous Englishmen, a lie and a snare" (Hughes 67-68).[104] In this scene, Hardy is noticeably preoccupied with the idea of service, with the question of how best to serve the ancient university and its traditions.[105] In fact, in Hardy's case, it would be more precise to narrow the idea of work ethic to an ethic of service; Hardy serves his university not only in his capacity as a hired servitor, but most emphatically in his role of bleeding-heart nostalgiac. His passionate rant before Tom is one such demonstration of his nostalgic service, and the martyr's pain is felt as his field for criticism widens to include the modern mercenary identity of his beloved institution: "I shouldn't get so furious, Brown, if I didn't care about the place so much. I can't bear to think of it as a sort of learning machine in which I am to grind for three years to get certain degrees which I want." Then, the height of his passion: "But to live in the place and love it, too, and see all this going on, and groan and writhe under it, and not be able—" (Hughes 68-69). Hardy finishes his sentence by punching his cupboard, punctuating his now wordless frustration with shattered boards and dishes. Because Hardy's suffering is not physical but emotional, that of the straining heart rather than the dying body, the groaning and writhing that betoken the martyr's pain are figurative descriptions rather than actual experiences, but the pain is felt nonetheless.

Before I consider how Hardy's wasted heart finds its eternal resting place at Oxford, it is important to note that Hughes pairs Hardy's university reverence with that of his father, both subscribing to the idea of an Oxford of ancient presence and hallowed learning in such a way that points rather emphatically to the intergenerational inculcation or *passing down* of nostalgic discourse. Indeed, when his father visits him at Oxford, we learn the extent to which Hardy's Oxford nostalgia, along with the sense of waste that attends it in this particular case, is a cultural legacy that has been adopted and redressed in the guise of family inheritance. The two are indeed remarkably similar in their love for Oxford, but with the senior Hardy's decidedly more lighthearted. Harkening back to this project's first chapter, one might say that Captain Hardy is the quintessential nostalgic university tourist, viewing the site as a kind of utopia, "resolutely bent on seeing nothing but beauty and learning and wisdom within the precincts of the university" and endowing "even the most empty-headed undergraduate" with a "fancy halo of scientific knowledge" (Hughes 240). And, like his son, his nostalgic sentiment for Oxford depends upon the idea of noble academic work. "Dawdling and doing nothing were the objects of his special abhorrence," notes the narrator, "but with this trifling exception the captain continued steadily to behold towers and quadrangles and chapels and inhabitants of the colleges, through rose-colored spectacles" (Hughes 240).

But, this shared nostalgia of father and son, this stubborn devotion to a particular "idea of a university" and resistance to its changing atmosphere of youthful irreverence, are both deemed pointless endeavours in Hughes's varsity novel. Captain Hardy's nostalgia is met squarely and bluntly by Drysdale's wry humour, which dismisses both man and myth as ridiculously out of touch with the modern varsity he knows and the unapologetically playful young inmates now steering its course. "He's a regular old brick, is the captain," he says to Tom on the last day of

the old man's Oxford visit, "but, by Jove, I can't help thinking he must be poking fun at us half his time. It is rather too rich to hear him talking on as if we were all as fond of Greek as he seems to be, and as if no man ever got drunk up here" (Hughes 240). Indeed, this retort might just as easily have been directed at Hardy himself, but the narrative gains far more by depicting *his* university nostalgia as tragic rather than ridiculous. Hardy's nostalgia is deemed a tragic waste because it leads to useless exertion, like punching a cupboard and having nothing to show for it but a bunch of broken dishes, or attempting to force an ideal into reality when an opposing ideal is already taking hold. In the end, Hardy's heartache turns to heartbreak, as he realizes (in the very same scene and very same conversation in which Tom realizes he has "done" with Oxford)[106] that his love for Oxford has become too heavy to bear; that the university's modern vices, which were but triggers for indignant criticism for the undergraduate he was, have become "a sore burden" and "enough to break one's heart" for the fellow he is now, who belongs to the university and must shoulder its modern identity (Hughes 504). It is at this moment that Hardy breaks from his father: when one "looks at matters here without rose-colored spectacles," he says, removing finally the filter of nostalgia that allowed the old man to tour Oxford and see only the university of his dreams, "it gives one sometimes a sort of chilly, leaden despondency, which is very hard to struggle against" (Hughes 504). And yet, while the discarding of his father's figurative spectacles signals Hardy's final disheartened rejection of his father's legacy, the scholar-martyr cannot so easily doff the cultural legacy of nostalgic discourse he has internalized and continues to articulate even in despondency and devastation, for nostalgia incorporates both the struggle to hold onto what one cannot and the realization that the struggle must end in inevitable failure. While Hardy's nostalgic heart is weakened and eventually abandoned for waste in the end,[107] his nostalgic identity maintains, and the novel's nostalgic project runs strong,

encapsulated perfectly in Tom's response to Hardy's admission of defeat: "I am sorry to hear you talk like that, Jack, for one can't help loving the place, after all" (Hughes 505). Indeed, and the varsity novel is banking on its reader feeling the same. For all its fatality to the young heart that bore it, and in many ways because it proved powerful enough to be fatal, the novel makes of Hardy's abandoned nostalgia a discarded treasure left in the dust for another to find.

In *Wilton of Cuthbert's*, there is no equivocation when it comes to academic sacrifice: the overworked scholar dies, plain and simple. With Osborne, the reader is urged to mourn not only a perishing nostalgic heart, but a young and promising life ended too soon. Throughout Adams's novel, Osborne's weakening health is consistently a topic of concern among his varsity friends, and especially between Wilton and Wardleigh, the other two points of the varsity novel triumvirate who are positioned just so, that they might regard their friend's deterioration with equal parts worry and wonder. Osborne is described early on as having not "an atom of constitution" and as being destined to inherit the epidemic of his father, a headstrong cleric who "died of overwork" (Adams 19).[108] Although Osborne's weakness is observed throughout his time at Oxford, it is not, however, until his senior undergraduate year that death is written upon his face, and he grows alarmingly thinner and paler as his final term approaches. Even the young scholar himself has a premonitory inkling of his own early demise: "I sometimes have a fancy that I shan't be a long-lived man," he declares (Adams 142), displaying a degree of detached self-awareness that links him to Henry Kirke White, whose martyrdom is emphasized all the more by his preparation for death in the midst of his studies.[109] He is said to have intimated to a close friend, reports Southey, in one of their last conversations that "were he to paint a picture of Fame, crowning a distinguished under-graduate, after the Senate-house examination, he would represent her as concealing a Death's head under a mask of beauty" (33).[110] And just so for

Osborne; for it is not simply the end of term that is to mark the end of days for Adams's martyr-scholar, but, more precisely, his final exam. As promised, we return to that "fatal Monday" mentioned earlier to consider what happens after his college clock tolls the hour of Osborne's exam with the solemnity of St. Sepulchre's death knell (Adams 321, 322).

In typical form, Adams's novel has Osborne's final exam day constructed as an academic parody of Judgement Day, with the university examiners sitting in as his final and decidedly intimidating panel of judges.[111] As I intimated earlier, varsity fiction has a fondness for melodrama and fear-mongering where the university exam is concerned, linking it to the discourses of time-discipline and anti-discipline, but also to the idea of university destiny in its metaphorical association with the finality of death. And for the most part this association *is* metaphorical, as in the sarcastic musings of Hughes's narrator (a moment of literal gallows' humour in fact) on the similarities between an exam student and a condemned criminal: "I suppose that a man being tried for his life must be more uncomfortable than an undergraduate being examined for his degree, and that to be hung—perhaps even to be pilloried—must be worse than to be plucked. But after all, the feelings in both cases must be essentially the same, only more intense in the former" (257). But for the martyr-scholar the association is literal and the final exam is often synonymous with actual, inevitable death.[112] And indeed, as is suggested by both White's tributes and Adams's treatment of Osborne, inevitability pervades the martyr-scholar's exam: the inevitability that, by sheer exhaustive effort, the scholar will succeed with flying colours, coupled with the inevitability that this same effort will somehow kill him.[113] As Osborne faces his final "inquisition," its fatality is confirmed by his body's gruesome collapse: "white and thin as a spectre" to start, he turns from ghostly to "ghastly" as the trial continues, perspiring heavily, until the moment his head falls forward and a stream of blood pours from his

mouth (Adams 328).[114] Once Osborne's sacrifice on the altar of academic achievement is complete, a parodic reading of the scene continues with the senior examiner declaring, as Osborne's limp body is carried out of the exam hall, that "[h]e need not return," and that his performance has "entirely satisfied" them (Adams 328). The examiner becomes a kind of grim reaper in his satisfaction not only with the knowledge spewed forth by the scholar but with the blood, sweat, tears, and life wrenched from his being. Indeed, if Osborne's utterly wasted body in this utterly melodramatic scene demonstrates the extent to which this sacrificial scholar has not wasted his precious university time, it also illustrates, and more pressingly, that morbid cautionary tale of waste told by the play ethicists, of "fine young men who work themselves into a decline, and are driven off in a hearse with white plumes upon it" (Stevenson 881).[115] Yes, wasted youth is the tale of woe here, but one cannot forget that it is specifically for the lost *boy* that varsity fiction invites its readers to feel the greatest heartache. And so, as Wardleigh carries his unconscious friend outside, the nostalgic narrator steps in to remind us: "Wardleigh raised him in his powerful arms, and carried him—alas! he was as light as a boy of ten years old—into the quadrangle" (Adams 328). Not only do we see here the player's strength in direct opposition to the (over)worker's weakness, but the narrator also suggests that Osborne's wasted body makes him seem boyish, when he has never appeared throughout the entire narrative to possess this quality.[116] The narrator's interjection stresses a longing for boyhood lost through the sad irony of its brief reappearance in the body's dying hours, with the acknowledgement of waste embedded in that pivotal word "alas," a more concise iteration of the "mighty bloodless substitute" of bookwork for life.

So then, how are they reckoned, this martyr-scholar and his perishing hours? How does he contribute to the varsity novel's nostalgic project and, more broadly, to the ancient

university's modern identity as a nostalgic space? His is a cautionary tale of overwork that positions play in the glow of appeal, but his reckoning goes beyond this. He points to the nostalgia of lost boyhood, both by being a boy who never was (who worked and never played), and by being a boy who dies; but his reckoning goes even beyond this. As I concluded with Henry Kirke White, the martyr-scholar's death invariably ties him to his university and thereafter marks the site with a kind of nostalgic holiness, as a shrine for the sacrificial scholar and his lost youth. Thus, in *Wilton of Cuthbert's*, Osborne's ultimate reckoning is that his death gilds Oxford in the same way that White's does Cambridge. To this end, Adams cannot simply let his young martyr perish in the examination school following his collapse; instead, Osborne must be relocated to Wardleigh's college rooms whose lofty windows afford him a "striking view of the principal buildings of the University" (as so many varsity novel windows do) and thus provide ample scope for him to bless his university at the moment of his passing (370).[117] From his deathbed with a view, Osborne looks upon his "Dear old Oxford" and writes his memories upon the varsity landscape, brushing it with a nostalgic haze that transforms it instantly into a space of the past:

> Every object he beheld was associated with some particular of his undergraduate career – the most prized of all the memories of his short, but most happy, life. There was the library […] where he had sat many an hour, consulting books which were otherwise out of his reach; there was the University church, where he had listened to many an eloquent and gifted preacher; there was Magdalen, the sweet music of whose services still lingered in his ear; there, above all, were the examination schools, where his three years' work had been brought to its test, and had stood the trial. (Adams 371)

Of note is the fact that Osborne's nostalgic eye is drawn only to those places associated with work and duty, thus emphasizing his noble work ethic to the last, and the university as the site of his noble struggle. By attaching his memories to his university as he does, Osborne is effectively enshrining himself, fixing himself to the site, and ensuring that his life becomes a part of the nostalgic fabric of his varsity. In the next moment, one that rivals the melodrama of his exam-hall ordeal, Osborne's transformation into a resident spirit of his university is completed when, just as he begins to lose consciousness for a second time, "on the eye of his spirit" arises a vision of Oxford dissolving before the splendour of heaven, the "Great City, with its gates of pearl, and its foundations of precious stones" (Adams 371).[118] Thus, just as the martyr-scholar's body is wasting away and he is becoming more and more spirit-like, his university takes on an ethereal presence to match, a presence, in fact, that renders Oxford suitably intangible for the varsity fiction reader who is urged to share Osborne's nostalgic feeling that "there is no place like it on this earth" (Adams 371) and that the ancient university is never more real than when it is a carefully constructed dream.

Proud and Insolent Youth

"Proud and insolent youth, prepare to meet thy doom."
—J. M. Barrie, *Peter Pan* (1904)

This is Captain Hook's threat to Peter Pan at the end of Barrie's play,[119] as the final battle between age and youth is set to take place and the old pirate relishes the thought of forcing his young tormenter, the epitome of play without consequence, to face his punishment at last. Before this chapter is brought to an end, there is one more lost boy to whom we must direct our attention: that curious specimen of excessive play more reviled by the Civic supporters than his martyr brother because of his complete and utter incompatibility with the Civic ideal of academic industry and his complete and utter compatibility with the popular liberal idea of a university as a

space of short-lived, oft-reprimanded, yet fully established play. The playboy is as ubiquitous to varsity fiction as the spires and quads themselves, and gives the "rowdy" tradition its primary source of both youthful energy and idle attitude. Like the martyr-scholar, the varsity playboy is another failed graduate who does not outgrow his university, but rather grows to be a part of it. Like the martyr-scholar, he is a figure of excess primed for criticism (for another kind of wasted life) but, as with the martyr-scholar, it is this very excess that leads to his nostalgic identity. And finally, alongside the martyr-scholar and the boy that the varsity hero ceremoniously leaves behind, the varsity playboy is yet another variation of the varsity lost boy, but this time one that is amusingly familiar. Indeed, in the varsity playboy, we have the closest thing to Barrie's intransient lost boy: the boy of everlasting youth who can exist only in a place of frozen time; the boy who refuses to grow up and bear the burdens of adulthood; and, most assuredly, the proud and insolent youth who refuses to meet his doom.

Drysdale and Wardleigh are the boys of play who frolic through the fictive Oxfords of Hughes's and Adams's novels. Wardleigh is identified as a "ringleader of all mischief" and Drysdale as possessing a "recklessness and contempt of authority" that "approached the sublime" (Adams 28; Hughes 125), both suggesting that, like Peter Pan, their delinquent vitality has a kind of legendary status which renders them ideal representatives of the rowdy varsity spirit. First, as heirs to wealthy family estates, both boys are immediately identified with the varsity life of privileged leisure. When we first meet Drysdale, in a chapter titled "Breakfast at Drysdale's,"[120] we learn of his gentleman-commoner privileges,[121] his popularity amongst the raucous "fast set" of St. Ambrose college, and his reputation for hosting lavish breakfasts in his lavish rooms for all who care to attend.[122] Wardleigh is made similarly comfortable at St. Cuthbert's, his "long purse" securing him the most expensively furnished rooms in the college, and his "capital horses,

his wines, and his open-hearted hospitality" making him "a general favourite at once" (Adams 38-39). The ready allowances of Drysdale and Wardleigh add to their playful tendencies to be sure, but so too do their own character inclinations for fun, which lead them to revel in the idle amusements of gambling, smoking, and card-playing, and take off on excursions of fishing, partying, racing, pub-hopping, shooting, and yachting. And all the while, the novels are careful to emphasize that these playboys are figures not just of play, but of anti-work. When Wardleigh is introduced as one of the Harchester trio to attend Oxford, he is differentiated from his school chums as being "not likely to work very hard" in his varsity years, or, if anything, likely to apply himself only to that which happens to "please his own fancy" (Adams 19, 27). As for Drysdale, lacking the saving graces of occasional guilt and good intention that are granted to Wardleigh, he is the uncompromising epitome of varsity idleness. Indeed, rarely encountered in any other but his typical lounging posture, Drysdale makes his antipathy to work very clear: "the 'books, and work, and healthful play' line don't suit my complaint," he says to Tom after the varsity hero tries in vain to convince him to take up the "splendid hard work" of varsity rowing at the very least.[123] Drysdale then moves from a personal to a more general rule, to argue that his "complaint" is in fact sanctioned by Oxford itself: "No; as my old uncle says, 'a young fellow must sow his wild oats,' and Oxford seems a place specially set apart by Providence for that operation" (Hughes 51-52). With this reasoning Drysdale becomes a clear antithesis to Hardy,[124] sitting on the other side of Tom (who lends an ear to both), with a very different idea of the university, but with just as strong a conviction that his conduct is dictated and validated by it.

If, as my argument in this chapter stipulates, varsity fiction participates in a Victorian work-play conversation through the discourse of nostalgia, and specifically through the strategic construction of nostalgia for boyhood and play, it would make sense to assume that the varsity

playboy wears the mantle of boyhood nostalgia with the most ease. And indeed he does. Varsity novel playboys like Wardleigh and Drysdale, along with the raucous boys so fondly remembered by the nostalgic narrators of the periodical varsity tales, court nostalgic longing simply by virtue of their carefree lifestyles. But again, there is no nostalgia without loss or at least the suggestion of loss, and so an important note in the nostalgia of the varsity playboy is the understanding that varsity play, however appealing, is short-lived and must eventually be left behind. With Wardleigh, the playboy's short-lived existence is suggested through the character's propensity for procrastination, his habit for delaying responsibility and work even as he knows that they must inevitably be faced. Indeed, unlike Drysdale, Wardleigh is aware of his university time passing (because one cannot procrastinate without an awareness of time) even if he finds himself unable to resist falling into the "vortex of pleasant distractions" that is varsity life (Adams 330). He is continually making promises to Wilton and Osborne that he will begin reading "like a dragon" or "like a house on fire" (or some other such simile of exaggerated emphasis) at some future point when play will have presumably ended (Adams 288). "I mean to begin reading myself, next week," he vows to his two companions at the end of their last Long Vacation before their final undergraduate year (and its final exams) is set to begin, in an attempt at persuading them to join him in a picnic, one of many "schemes for enjoyment" that have taken him away from his work all summer long, and throughout his varsity years (Adams 236, 238). "This is positively the very last time," he adds, chipping away at their more disciplined resolve, while also nudging the reader to feel a certain sadness that the life of play may be about to end. But the prolonging of this feeling is the very key to Wardleigh's nostalgic identity. Indeed, because his life of never-ending play is made possible not through carelessness but through procrastination,

his existence lies on the threshold of maturity and responsibility, with the end of play kept in sight but always at bay.

While Wardleigh exemplifies the boy of play as a boy of delay, Drysdale is the varsity boy everlasting. Indeed, if nostalgic longing for the lost boy depends upon the construct of time that surrounds him, one might logically say that while the clock stops for Osborne, and is slowed down for Wardleigh, it continues to strike the same hour for Drysdale, and this becomes the source of his appeal. Throughout Hughes's novel, Drysdale points to the university as a Neverland-esque space of timeless fixity because he plays without a care for its end, and because he fails to graduate and leave the university behind. It is not until the very end of the novel, however, and one specific scene in fact, that Drysdale comes to embody the playboy's nostalgic identity as a resident spirit of the university, rendering the university, by default, a site of nostalgic enclosure once again, owning the playboy and his antics as much as it does the martyr-scholar and his tragedy. The scene is located in the penultimate chapter of *Tom Brown at Oxford*,[125] one of a few at the end of the novel in which Tom's life in London is detailed. As the chapter opens we discover Tom stewing in depressive thought over his post-varsity existence which is decidedly unsettled: he is without work but feels the pressure of either touring abroad or "buckling to a profession" (Hughes 524); he has taken to haunting the Belgravia neighbourhood of his beloved Mary even though their engagement is all but broken; he half-heartedly assists his friend in tiring charitable endeavours about town; and he envies another friend's plans to emigrate to New Zealand and has all but decided to leave England himself. If Tom's miseries at this varsity novel's end set its young readers to wondering glumly "what amusements are to be had in a city like London?" it is likely that the sudden and unexpected arrival of Drysdale in this moment would excite in them the same rush of nostalgic affection for the university that it does

in Tom: “a rush of old college memories, in which grave and gay, pleasant and bitter, [are] strangely mingled” (Hughes 535). But, importantly, Drysdale is only a catalyst for stirred memory here because he has not changed, and his visit proves the extent to which the varsity playboy is a static figure: he comes with his familiar terrier Jack in tow, drops into his “old lounging attitude on the sofa,” gives news of old college friends, and declares that he is in town only to settle an old college score (Hughes 536). The uncanniness of an unchanged Drysdale out of varsity context has Tom notably baffled in this scene, and prompts him to view his old friend as a kind of ghost of the past, a boy he thought he had lost: “How strange!” he thinks to himself, “is my old life coming back again just now?” (Hughes 535). Indeed, in varsity fiction, the playboy is not only static, but also, and especially as a secondary character (which he almost always is in varsity novels), he is purely functional as a piece of the university for the novel hero to digest. In this scene he is a figure of nostalgic contemplation for Tom, prompting him to adopt the retrospective of nostalgic age once again, viewing Drysdale as a figure apart with the same longing that he viewed his outgrown self at the moment of his varsity graduation. That Drysdale functions as such for Tom is proven by the newly-rejuvenated hero’s insistence on staging his guest so as to best trigger authentic memories of his varsity past:[126] “Come, Drysdale, take the other end of the sofa, or it won’t look like old times,” directs Tom, arranging him on the sofa with cigar-case in hand, “now I can fancy myself back at St. Ambrose’s.” Drysdale even participates in Tom’s game of nostalgic university conjuring; from his carefully arranged position, he looks out the apartment window and muses “one can fancy one’s self back in the old quad looking out on this court” (Hughes 535-36). Quite clearly, the ever-youthful Drysdale is a stage prop in this moment, appearing on the dingy stage of Tom’s London chambers, but

nevertheless a *property* of the scene he signifies, Tom's (and the reader's) nostalgic vision of the varsity of idleness and play.

In the end, the varsity fiction playboy does not die, cannot die in fact, both because the comedic genre would not allow it, and because he is not so much flesh and blood as he is a kind of symbolic entity of the liberal university itself.[127] Or, rather, of the *idea* of a liberal Oxbridge of play, because fiction trades in ideas only. No, even while the novels position him as excessive, irresponsible, and wonderfully wasteful, he does not meet his doom. Quite the opposite: the varsity playboy proves the rule of survival of the fittest (where idleness and amusement are the life-giving tonics) and not only outlives, but usurps the position of his unfortunate working brother. In *Wilton of Cuthbert's*, for instance, we see Wardleigh usurp Osborne's place by marrying his sister Helen Osborne and taking on the domestic provider role the deceased scholar ultimately cannot fulfill. Similarly, in *Tom Brown at Oxford*, Drysdale takes over as the fixer of Tom's problems at the end of the novel,[128] when Hardy, following his fatal heartbreak, all but disappears from view. Indeed, because they survive and prove good enough in the end, Wardleigh and Drysdale, like most varsity fiction playboys, are counterarguments for university success, resisting not only the Victorian work ethic, but what Rothblatt identifies as the "Victorian success ethic" (185),[129] which, in the context of the Victorian university and the ideas spinning around it, would dictate that the scholar must dread failure and the dreadful possibility of not graduating. In fact, these fictional playboys, and the rowdy varsity fiction tradition in general, are key players in a discursive counter-revolution that emerged in Victorian university culture in resistance to this dread and the long-held belief that to experience the university was to work hard and pass through its rigorous tests and trials or else die trying. It was a counter-revolution that saw fit to recalibrate the traditional markers of varsity success and re-write the

idea of university experience, so that parties just as wild and raucous were thrown for those undergraduates who were "plucked" as for those who managed to grasp one of the academy's coveted brass rings (Rothblatt 197).[130] But in rewriting university experience as one that must include play, one necessarily rewrites university memory and what is deemed worthy of that "keen corporate feeling" of nostalgia. And we know that at least one anonymous Victorian, in his concern over the civics and what they stood for, knew nostalgia to be the ultimate determiner of academic merit, in its judgement by degrees of longing, and in its prizing only that which has stood the test of time.

Notes

[1] In reference to Newman's *The Idea of a University*, published in the same year as it was delivered in Dublin (1852).

[2] From *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845). Engels was born in Germany, but moved to Manchester when he was twenty-two years old; he worked in manufacturing and rose to prominence publishing his observations on the slum districts of his new home city, and later in his collaborations with Karl Marx.

[3] A Liverpool undergraduate chant of unknown origin, quoted in William Whyte's *Redbrick* (134), which cites it from the *Liverpool Students' Song Book*.

[4] A nineteenth-century nickname for Manchester, pointing to the booming cotton industry of the city.

[5] "The Victoria University." *The Times*, 15 April 1881: p.7.

[6] Some of these included: Yorkshire College of Science (1874), Mason Science College (1875), Firth College (1879), University College, Liverpool (1881).

[7] The University of London, founded as London University in 1826, was not technically a part of the civic college movement. It began as merely a degree-granting institution, rather than an institution of learning and education.

[8] From "Oxford Studies" (1855). This line is from Tennyson's early poem "The Gardener's Daughter."

[9] In his bequest, John Owens stipulated that the college founded in his name not include religious tests or entrance conditions of any kind. Also, most Civics admitted women to their classes, and were thus far ahead of the ancients on the grounds of gender equality and access to education.

[10] Although some of the Civics would call themselves "University Colleges," they were in fact not universities but colleges, because they could not grant degrees, and their students were

therefore required to take their examinations and apply for degrees at London. As Vernon notes, to becomes universities, the Civics needed to be formally recognized by the Privy Council (46). To be granted university status, civic colleges needed to prove adequate student population and facilities, financial independence, independent governance, and a well-rounded arts and sciences curriculum (Vernon 46).

[11] A bill mandating elementary education for all children was passed in 1870.

[12] William Whyte offers some statistics: at the turn of the century, 90% of Bristol, 78% of Leeds, 75% of Liverpool, and 73% of Manchester students were local; nearly 40% of civic students were the children of small businessmen, clerks, or manual workers (145).

[13] In late 1880s all major colleges were in financial difficulty and had to approach the government for help; by 1889, twelve claimants were still waiting on funding (Vernon 47).

[14] Regarding the Civics/Redbricks, scholars differ greatly in their conclusion as to whether the institutions became more like Oxbridge over time. Sarah Barnes adheres to the "academic drift" theory, whereby the Civics eventually "renounced their original ethos, attempting to replicate as much as possible of the Oxbridge ideal amid the smog and squalor of their urban, industrial settings," in other words, "drifting" into the Oxbridge model (272). In a similar vein, Vernon considers how Oxbridge presided over their transformations into universities, with vetting processes, etc. Whyte wholeheartedly disagrees with the assimilation theory and maintains they always were something different.

[15] Recalling again the Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge (1850) and the subsequent Oxford University Reform Act (1854) and the Cambridge University Act (1856). (See Introduction, n. 7.)

[16] Whatever the Liverpudlian students may have been insinuating in teasing Oxbridge for its "learned pedants," Newman's pedantry is here only qualified as painstakingly disciplined,

meticulous, and pedagogical to a fault. Indeed, most Victorians respected him greatly for his intellect and style.

[17] "[W]hat is really meant by the word?" asks Newman of liberal education. "[F]irst, in its grammatical sense it is opposed to servile […] As far as this contrast may be considered as a guide into the meaning of the word, liberal education and liberal pursuits are exercises of mind, of reason, of reflection" (80-81).

[18] See *The Modern University and Its Discontents* (1997).

[19] Rothblatt's third chapter, "The First Undergraduates Recognizable as Such," identifies a late Georgian, early Victorian shift in undergraduate attitude toward the university that renders the university a place of liberty and self-exploration, a place to exercise defiance but still inspire love, a place that supports the development of youth with "just the right mixture of restraint and liberty" (177-78).

[20] Newman entered Oxford in 1816 as a member of Trinity College, and received his B.A. degree in 1820.

[21] Rothblatt does not speculate on causes for the early nineteenth-century Oxbridge student population increase; however, one might consider the post-Napoleonic return of military men and the newfound freedom of young men in general during peacetime as contributing to its rise.

[22] Play infiltrates Oxbridge to an unprecedented degree in the second half of the century. The arrival of athletics and organized sport (including cricket, racquet sports, rugby, soccer, polo, golf, lawn tennis, hockey, fencing, boxing, etc.), formerly the domain of the public schools, develops what J. A. Mangan terms a "cult of athleticism" at Oxbridge from 1860 onward ("Bloods" 45).

[23] Paul Deslandes corroborates this point in *Oxbridge Men*, especially the idea that university play contributed to masculine instruction. Mangan also notes that, in its intent to foster masculine

character and imperial training in the nurturing of a "universal Tom Brown," athletics and sport were expected and hoped to be an "antidote to hooliganism" at the universities (*Games Ethic*, 18; "Bloods," 38). The idea that hooliganism might disappear, however, that all the varsity rascals would trade in their badges of mischief for rugby uniforms, would prove to be a rather naïve notion. Delinquent play was kept alive and well at Oxbridge and formed the basis of its appeal in literature. At most, one might suggest that it moved over to make room for athletics on the playing field of varsity play.

[24] See E. P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism" (*Past & Present*, no. 38, Dec. 1967, pp. 56-97.)

[25] In *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, Peter Bailey cites the Ten Hours Act of 1847 as crucial legislation for differentiating work and leisure (56).

[26] Apart from political discussion, there was also a strong social interest in the characters and settings that various working environments (usually urban) produced, inspiring narrative and investigative projects by writers such as Mayhew, Engels, Dickens, Eliot, Greenwood, and Stead, among others. See Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor* (1851), Engels's *The Conditions of the Working Class in England* (1845), Dickens's "A Walk in a Workhouse" (1850), Greenwood's *A Night in a Workhouse* (1866), and Stead's *The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon* (1885).

[27] To elaborate, Kaiser's "ludic world order" describes how the Victorians viewed their world and their lives through ideas and metaphors of play. He cites Darwin's association of biological evolution with competition as a noteworthy example. Kaiser deems the Victorian world the first that sees itself in a parallel world of play, without a space of exteriority. That is, he sees it as completely immersed in an illusive funhouse mirror of play, without the "epistemic foothold

offstage," the stable vantage point of consideration, that is granted to Alice for instance when she finds herself in Wonderland (the literary analogy is Kaiser's own, phrased rather uniquely: "in which Victorian England, in the shape of a little girl, leaps into a microcosm of itself" (2)). Importantly, in a ludic world order, play cannot be designated merely an "antidote to all things unpleasant" including "joyless work." Because nothing is external to play and everything has the propensity to be infiltrated by it, work cannot be considered the antithesis to play. My project responds to this, first, with agreement: I use confrontation instead of opposition to emphasize that the discourses of work and play merely encounter each other but do not stand as antagonistic or incompatible opposites in varsity literature. In considering the confrontation between work and play in the varsity novel, I do not suggest that it does not at times develop through interplay, through an exchange of ideas and with considerations of playful works and laborious plays. Indeed, the varsity novel and Oxbridge culture more broadly depict work as play (i.e. competitive exams, prizes for performance, methods of cheating etc.) and play as work (in gruelling sport, for instance). This project moves away from Kaiser's argument, however, in one crucial area: rather than designate play an overarching, all-encompassing logic that subsumes work, I position play in a relational dialectic with work where the ability and tendency to subsume and infiltrate is reciprocal. Instead, the more important all-encompassing logic for this project is that of nostalgia, a discourse that embraces both work and play strategically.

[28] Kaiser argues that the "taxonomic proliferation of various play logics" was embraced by the Victorians and projected onto their world in order to give it structure and coherence, but also in order to betray the "illusoriness of that coherence" (15). In other words, the breakdown of play into play logics provides different filters of reason and coherence which, either alone or layered, encompass a Victorian understanding of their own world.

[29] The periodical, publishing essays on social reform and aesthetics, poems, reviews, and short stories, ran only twelve monthly issues from January to December 1856. It was founded by a "set" of undergrads (7 Oxonians and 1 Cantab) who called themselves the Brotherhood, and was financed by Morris. The magazine contained many articles in support of Carlyle, Ruskin, Tennyson, and other major Victorian critics and aesthetes, and was reviewed favourably (in letters to the founders) by Tennyson, Ruskin, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti; Rossetti even contributed three poems to the publication. See rossettiarchive.org and Patrick Fleming for more detail.

[30] Interestingly, although he is not considered a supporter of Newman, Wilde acknowledges Newman's cultural cachet as a figure of Oxford nostalgia in the opening of his essay. He invokes the nostalgia of Newman and his time at Oxford thus: "the world will never weary of watching that troubled soul in its progress from darkness to darkness. […]whenever men see the yellow snapdragon blossoming on the wall of Trinity they will think of that gracious undergraduate who saw in the flower's sure recurrence a prophecy that he would abide for ever with the Benign Mother of his days" (1010). Other Victorians who acknowledge Newman as a nostalgic fixture or ghost at Oxford include Matthew Arnold in his "Emerson" discourse (*Discourses in America*), and Thomas Hardy in *Jude the Obscure* (1896).

[31] Apologia is Greek for a speech of defence, while a Dialogue is a conversational and often pedagogical exchange between two or more people. Plato's *Apology* and Socratic dialogues are well-known examples, the first of which makes an important appearance in *Tom Brown at Oxford* as a pivotal mind-clearing text for the titular undergrad (Hughes 211). For another Victorian example, consider Newman's own *Apologia pro Vita Sua* (1864).

[32] The subtitle for Wilde's piece: "With some remarks upon the importance of doing nothing." While the majority of Wilde's dialogic essay is focussed on criticism and art, the few remarks on the importance of doing nothing are significant, as the subtitle suggests.

[33] The idea of youth spending time, unwisely, over books is not a Victorian particularity. The Romantics were famous proponents of education via nature over books (see Wordsworth's "The Tables Turned" (1798)). Even earlier, Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (1599) mocks traditional book education through the character of Orlando and his poorly written poems nailed incongruously to Arden's trees.

[34] From *Past & Present* (1843), p. 124. For time as currency, see Karl Marx's *Capital* (1867): in the section titled "The Working Day," Marx asserts the value of "labour-power" as dependent upon "working-time," that is, the number of hours in a day that it takes to "produce" the means of subsistence (214-15). Thus, the working day becomes a fixed commodity of time that the capitalist buys and uses.

[35] According to Foucault, disciplinary institutions like the prison, school, workhouse, and barracks seek to exhaust time rather than waste it. They endeavour to teach the economic use of time (see *Discipline and Punish*). For an interesting analysis of a Victorian connection between time-waste, spatial-waste, and the critical stance toward the London poor, who were seen to invite ruin upon themselves by wasting time in idle or playful pursuits, see John Scanlan, "In Deadly Time: The Lasting On of Waste in Mayhew's London." Scanlan focusses on Henry Mayhew's exposé on London vagrants through the lens of time waste and unproductivity.

[36] Proctor notes that, during the Victorian era, despite attempts at reform and better management, "both fact and fiction made it luridly clear that the universities were still the domain of fresh spirits who did little more than waste their fathers' money and their own time" (57).

[37] A "University of their own," breaking from the Oxbridge mould, calls to mind Woolf's titular "room" breaking from pervasive masculine spaces to nurture autonomous creation and authority. A purely anachronistic connection, admittedly, but a kind of prefiguring echo that a post-Woolf reader cannot help but notice. In addition, Woolf's "room" was conceived while visiting (masculine) "Oxbridge" (Cambridge actually), so "a university of one's own" is suggestive from all angles of this pairing.

[38] See *The Times* [London], 13 July 1880: p. 9.

[39] In Chapter One, I discussed how the (long) journey to Oxford facilitates nostalgic approach, and is thus crucial to situating the ancient university as a nostalgic destination in popular imagination.

[40] Thomas Hughes (1822-96), lawyer and writer, graduated from Oxford in 1845. *Tom Brown at Oxford* is the sequel to his wildly popular *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857). Henry Cadwallader Adams (1817-99), a student at Oxford's Magdalen College, became an English cleric, schoolmaster, and youth fiction author.

[41] This, according to Proctor (78).

[42] See Proctor's chapter 5, "Persistence of the Rowdy Tradition," for a more detailed account of this generic tradition. Proctor divides the rowdy tradition into two developments: earlier narratives in which rowdy university play is scandalous and casts university life as disreputable, and a later development of pure comedy, in which depictions of the "harmless merrymaking of undergraduates" paint university life as frivolous and undeserving of harsh criticism (78). Both Hughes's and Adams's novels fall in the latter type, established (according to Proctor) by the *Verdant Green* series, yet Proctor qualifies them further by noting that *Tom Brown* moves away from *Verdant Green* in its alignment with the growing trend of realism in varsity fiction, while *Wilton* distances itself from *Verdant* in its increased sentimentality and development of the

"undergraduate Crichton" character (120). See Proctor's chapters 6 and 7 for these further distinctions.

[43] Other popular pastimes include cribbage, whist, picquet, and billiards.

[44] These two periodicals are only two of many "Boy's Own" titled publications, produced in the United Kingdom and the United States beginning at mid-century, many of which continued well into the twentieth century. *The Boy's Own Magazine: An Illustrated Journal of Fact, Fiction, History & Adventure*, founded and run by Samuel Beeton (1830-77), was the first ever periodical publication for the entertainment and moral instruction of British boys. Beeton was also the publisher of Mrs. Beeton's *Book of Household Management*. *The Boy's Own Paper*, published by the Religious Tract Society, came later but had the greatest longevity of any of the "Boy's Own" publications. It was published weekly until 1913, when it switched to monthly issues. Both periodicals contained the same sorts of adventure, nature, and sports stories; the *Paper*'s contributors included some well-known writers such as Arthur Conan Doyle and Jules Verne. For further information on these types of boys' publications, and especially their contribution to a Victorian discourse of masculinity, see Kelly Boyd.

[45] Underscoring the link between "Boy's Own" literary culture and the varsity novel, the text of Adams's novel used for this chapter is actually the 1880 edition published as part of Griffith and Farran's "Boy's Own Favourite Series," retitled for the series as *College Days at Oxford*. In the publisher's advertisement pages, a description for this series highlights the intent to appeal to both parents and boys, and, importantly the extent to which boys and their "pocket money" were fast becoming a viable commercial market: "Under this Title we issue, in one uniform series, a number of the best known and most popular books for boys, written by their favourite authors, such as W. H. G. Kingston, G. A. Henty, Rev. H. C. Adams, Jules Verne, E. Marryat Norris and others. […] The volumes are appearing one a fortnight. They do, by the purity and healthiness of

their tone, commend themselves to parents, guardians, schoolmasters, and all who have the charge of youth, while to the boys themselves they are the best attractive investment for their pocket money that has been put before them."

[46] The *Boy's Own Magazine* pieces narrated by "An Old Oxonian" are part of a short series of episodic vignettes narrated by the same anonymous graduate, identified simply by his *alma mater*. The only other series is "Recollections of a Freshman's Life at Cambridge," serialized in five parts across consecutive weekly issues from April 2-30 1887. All others are individual stories.

[47] This was the turbulent decade that sparked concern for the Condition of England: rapid industrialization, Chartism, the Corn Laws, and general social unrest. It was also, with the Tractarian movement and Newman in mind, the decade that Oxford stood front and centre on the cultural stage. Both authors acknowledge the Oxford movement in passing without letting it detract from their novels' playful priority. Introducing the "reading set" of his Oxford, Hughes notes that they "were diligent readers of the *Tracts for the Times*, and followers of the able leaders of the High-church party, which was then a growing one" (3). Sometime later the hero Tom is almost "baited" into joining the High Church set (see ch. 9 "A Brown Bait"). Similarly, Adams notes that "Newman's influence in Oxford was at its height" at the time of his tale's narrated events (80).

[48] Hughes and Adams also emphasize the schoolboy identities of their protagonists Tom Brown and Gerald Wilton. Their histories at Rugby and Harchester, respectively, are touched on occasionally throughout the novels, and most forcibly at the beginning so as to draw on the intrigue of the schoolboy's first experiences of university.

[49] While "real" Victorian Oxbridge may have waffled in classifying its inmates as boys or men, the fictive varsity bets on the boy from the start. The varsity novel gains much currency from the idea of the boy entering Oxbridge, building its plots upon the tensions between boyish temptations, desires, habits, and those of the developing man.

[50] The play *Peter Pan, or the Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up* premiered on 27 December 1904 at the Duke of York's Theatre in London. Barrie later expanded the story and published it as a novel in 1911.

[51] See Foucault's "Of Other Spaces."

[52] See Introduction and Chapter One (n. 6) on Foucault's "tactical polyvalence of discourses."

[53] The most famous sundial in Oxford is the "Pelican sundial, located in the main quad of Corpus Christi College.

[54] Both novels make use of fictional colleges, St. Ambrose and St. Cuthbert's, as settings for their varsity tales. In this way they follow a varsity fiction trend of juxtaposing imagined Oxford colleges with real ones, and of emphasizing the fictive identity of Oxbridge (once again, Woolf's "Oxbridge is an invention" comes to mind) (*A Room of One's Own,* 5).

[55] These words originate from the Roman poet Martial, who was translated into English for a Victorian readership by R. L. Stevenson. It is a common sundial sentiment, inscribed on the sundials of St. Buryan Church at Cornwall, Gloucester Cathedral, Lincoln Cathedral, All Souls College, Oxford, and the astronomical clock at Exeter Cathedral. For a then-contemporary Victorian examination of sundials and their mottos see Margaret Gatty's *The Book of Sun-Dials* (1872).

[56] Chapter 11 of Hughes's novel titled "Muscular Christianity," defined as "the old chivalrous and Christian belief, that a man's body is given him to be trained and brought into subjection, and then used for the protection of the weak, and advancement of all righteous causes and the

subduing of the earth, which God has given to the children of men. He does not hold that mere strength or activity are in themselves worthy of any respect or worship…" (Hughes 112). Among the chief proponents of muscular Christianity in Victorian England was Charles Kingsley.

[57] For Thompson, the antithesis of clock-time is natural time, which is based on the rhythms of nature and the irregular rhythms of human energy. Natural time typified pre-industrial Europe and especially agrarian and task-oriented work. Thompson suggests that a gradual shift in "time-sense" from natural to clock-time is accompanied by certain judgement, that "to men accustomed to labour timed by the clock" a more relaxed delineation of work and social life "appears to be wasteful and lacking in urgency" (60). This critical stance was often expressed through a rhetoric of "time-thrift" by the Victorians, who were, more often than not, keen to express concern over the leisure of the masses and the time-management of the labour-force (Thompson 78-90). For an earlier philosophy of time, to which Thompson is particularly indebted, see the works of Henri Bergson.

[58] The formidable discipline of the clock features more broadly in Victorian and Edwardian children's and youth literature. More specifically it is a terrible and often irritating harbinger of adult anxiety: consider the white rabbit's neurotic pocket-watch checking in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, or even Captain Hook's acute phobia of ticking clocks in *Peter Pan*.

[59] With an intriguing connection to Hughes's fictional Oxonian, the most famous college clock tower in Oxford is the "Tom Tower" of Christ Church College, with its six-tonne bell "Great Tom." It was designed by Christopher Wren in the mid-seventeenth century.

[60] The Porter is an important figure of discipline in varsity fiction. Regarded with equal parts annoyance and fear, his job is to guard the college gates and ensure appropriate punishments are doled out to those irresponsible undergrads who "knock in" after curfew. Midnight curfew is the

university rule as honoured as it is broken in varsity fiction, being one of the ways varsity delinquents are distinguished from varsity heroes. Adams's protagonist Wilton, for instance, acknowledges "knocking in" after twelve to be the heaviest "sin" of college life, next to that of keeping a dog (94). In his role of university watchman and keeper of the evening hours, the Porter is in many respects as close to a personification of the college clock as varsity fiction constructs. The anonymous periodical tale "A Noisy Night in College" highlights this connection by having both clock and porter monitor the college streets in tandem in the calm before the storm of delinquent nighttime behaviour begins: "At last twelve o'clock struck from the many steeples of Oxford, and soon afterwards the porter started on his journey through the quads, putting out the gas-lamps" (687).

[61] This designation will be used throughout the chapter to refer to varsity boys of play. Although it rings with contemporary suggestions of commercialism, pornography, and sexual promiscuity, the term is used as it was in late Victorian England (as confirmed by the *OED*) to refer simply to a young man of wealth who leads a life of pleasure and irresponsibility, and for whom the suggestion of promiscuity is entirely incidental and/or optional. Indeed, the playboys of varsity fiction are not portrayed as carefree men-about-town (its marketing to youth could not very well allow this), but there is a subtle hint of young-blooded, carefree sexuality that allows the playboy label to work. Drysdale, for instance, gets Tom into trouble in one of the novel's episodes when he invites the young protagonist to accompany him on an outing with a prostitute.

[62] See James Elwick's *Making a Grade: Victorian Examinations and the Rise of Standardized Testing* (2021) for a detailed look at standardized testing both at the universities and as overseen by other scientific organizations. Elwick analyzes not only the official repertoires that enabled

standardized testing, but also the delinquent "counter-repertoires" (cramming, cheating, cribbing, etc.) adopted by examinees in response (6).

[63] Formally called "Responsions," and also nicknamed "Smalls," this was the first of three exams undertaken by undergraduates for an Oxford degree.

[64] Wilton's "sober black coat" does double duty here: it is both an indication of his premonitions of failure, and a nod to Oxford's dress-code regulations for exams and other formal ceremonies. Students were and still are required to attend exams, matriculation, graduation etc. in *sub fusc* (*sub fuscus* is Latin for dark brown), dark formal attire with appropriate college and degree gowns.

[65] Interestingly, Newman also broke down during his final exams, and graduated with a kind of provisional degree.

[66] In Victorian university slang, to be "plucked" is to fail one's exams or merit censure in some other way so as to prevent the awarding of one's degree. The term is most clearly explained by Cuthbert Bede in a footnote for *The Adventures of Mr. Verdant Green*: "When the degrees are conferred, the name of each person is read out before he is presented to the Vice-Chancellor. The proctor then walks once up and down the room, so that any person who objects to the degree being granted may signify the same by pulling or 'plucking' the proctor's robes. This has been occasionally done by tradesmen, in order to obtain payment of their 'little bills,' but such a proceeding is very rare, and the proctor's promenade is usually undisturbed" (125).

[67] Varsity novels mine much intrigue out of the way that the Oxford scholar spends his Long Vacation ("Long Vac"). More broadly, the Long Vacation urges certain philosophical contemplation on wasted time: is it a time for play or a time for catching up on work? Alternately, is it a time somehow owned/associated with the university still, even though it often

entails leaving the university for a time? The idea of university "vacations" as controlled by the university is suggested in "Recollections" when the Cambridge-bound boy takes a moment to savour and mourn his last summer "holidays," soon to transform into "vacations" ("ah me! the last "holidays" I should ever have; thenceforward they would be but "vacations"). Indeed the distinction between a holiday and vacation is tied to expectations for relaxation vs. work, the university's Long Vacation is only that which its name suggests, a time when the site is vacated, but, as the varsity novel makes clear, not a time when work is expected to end. In Adams's novel, we see the pressure of using the Long wisely when Wilton vows to spend his final vacation reading before his entrance into the exam schools in his final year, and finds the enjoyments of summer too tempting to resist (220).

[68] Both Hardy and Osborne are paragons of discipline and academic industry whose schedules border on the compulsive. Osborne's daily schedule includes: an hour of morning work before chapel, chapel, a brief walk in the college gardens, breakfast, solitary reading time before lectures, lectures till 1:30 pm, a walk with a companion of his own set between 2-5 pm, hall dinner, tea or wine in a friend's room, two hours of work before bed, bed (Adams 38). Hardy's is understood to be just as rigid. In one memorable scene, a long evening conversation between Tom and Hardy is interrupted by the clock striking eight, sparking in the former intense guilt at having wasted his friend's time and kept him from his work, which the latter aims to dispel by insisting that from eight to ten o'clock he allows himself to be found "generally idle" (Hughes 47). The idea of a scheduled idleness is somewhat of a joke in the context of the varsity novel where the clock and its impertinent hours are anathema to idleness and play. That Hardy subjects idleness to the clock's discipline further positions him outside the varsity of play.

[69] There is an important distinction between the transitive and intransitive form of "waste." Grammatically, the transitive (in the sense of "the boy wasted his time") requires an object for the verb and most often a subject; it implies action and triggers judgement. The intransitive, in the sense of something wasting away, implies a certain passive helplessness, a process that is underway. It presents no subject upon which to heap judgement or blame.

[70] Both "vast" and "waste" derive from the Latin root *vastus* (empty, desolate) and *vastare* (to lay waste). In its linkage to vast, waste has a very close spatial neighbour, and can suggest the idea of immense space, or a great void. Vast can also describe time or space. Both words connote emptiness in different senses as well. This etymological kinship is important to this chapter, which often uses waste to apply to expanses of time, but those that are traversable in a spatial sense, and are used to mark an actual space (the university) with a sense of time.

[71] See "Cambridge University Life" (*London Society: An Illustrated Magazine of Light and Amusing Literature for the Hours of Relaxation*, Jan. 1871, pp.33-41).

[72] A "bump race" is a rowing competition in which boats race in single file and each one attempts to bump the boat in front and avoid being bumped by the boat behind. It dates back to 1827 at Cambridge and 1815 at Oxford.

[73] Hughes's narrator does not credit his female readers with any capacity for empathy or emotional imagination, fearing they will be "hopelessly unable to understand the above sketch" and, by implication, the feelings it inspires (Hughes 149).

[74] See n. 31.

[75] The idea of the boy begetting the man is a paraphrase of "The Child is father of the man," a line from William Wordsworth's "My Heart Leaps Up" (*Poems, in Two Volumes* (1807)). The poem's last three lines were used as the epigraph for the famous ode "Intimations of Immortality," published in the same volume.

[76] Unlike in North American universities, the MA at Oxford was (and is still) an honorific degree awarded to eligible Bachelors of Arts, based on their successful completion of a certain residency at the university and payment of a nominal fee rather than completion of any additional study. In the Victorian era, Bachelors (like Tom) were required to spend at least three weeks out of every term in residence at Oxford during their undergraduate study and 2-3 years after that in order to qualify for the degree. See J. Parker's *The Oxford University Calendar* (1831) for details. This chapter opens with Tom completing his final three-week residency in the summer term.

[77] See n. 38.

[78] A long-held idea in writing and in other artistic presentations is that a trio of characters, images, ideas, words, etc. is the most satisfying and brings the greatest harmony.

[79] Oxbridge youth culture is organized through "sets" or groups of students interested in specific activities or endeavours. Varsity fiction is fond of organizing its characters into these sets or, at least, of making the reader aware of them. Hughes's narrator goes into some detail on sets at the start of Tom Brown's Oxford adventure, describing the "reckless extravagance" of the fast set who rule the scene at St. Ambrose, as well as the reading set, the boating set, and other more obscure or ad-hoc groups like the sporting set and the High Church set (1-4).

[80] On the idea of the rule of three as a structure of self-regulatory potential (and by extension, Oxbridge as an institution of disciplinary self-regulation), one can make a logical connection to Foucault's observations on disciplinary systems as arranging individuals in a "network of relations" and intersections, whereby one ultimately defines and disciplines another (*Discipline and Punish*, 145-56).

[81] At the end of the *Verdant Green* series, Verdant's graduation ceremony is rendered ridiculous: Verdant and his fellow graduates are marshalled along "in wild confusion," kissing books,

repeating oaths, and, above all, paying fees (Bede 378). The scene provides the perfect opportunity for Bede to take a satirical punch at a mercenary Oxford because the graduates are told three times not to forget the fees.

[82] Commemoration Day at Oxford, in late June, is the annual *Encaenia* ceremony at the Sheldonian Theatre. It is part of a week-long, tourist-heavy, celebration at Oxford known as Commemoration Week, which includes college balls, the Show Sunday Parade, sermons, etc. The *Encaenia* ceremony begins with a formal procession in full academic regalia; once inside the theatre, honorary degrees are conferred, university benefactors are honoured, and prize poems and essays are read aloud. Appropriate for this chapter, there is a longstanding tradition, alive and well in Victorian Oxford and fictive Oxford, of wild and often disruptive undergraduate revelry (in the form of protests, cheers, commentary, etc.) from the upper balcony of the theatre.

[83] The name of the chapter is in fact "A Row in the Theatre" (chapter 12).

[84] A popular genre of youth fiction focussing on the exploits of boys and/or adolescent students in a public or boarding school setting. *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857) is considered the trend-setting originator of the genre. The genre remains popular today, with twentieth / twenty-first century examples often including a supernatural element as in the *Harry Potter* or *Vampire Academy* series.

[85] This feeling of confinement returns in the novel when Tom becomes interested in national and social issues (specifically the "condition of England" problem, prompted by the writings of none other than Carlyle himself, read at Hardy's recommendation) and longs to step out into the world and contribute to a positive change: "He was beginning to feel himself in a cage, and to beat against the bars of it" (Hughes 471).

[86] His actual words are: "But even the river makes me rather melancholy now. One feels one has done with it" (Hughes 500).

[87] After appearing in Lord Byron's ode to the late Henry Kirke White (in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*), these first lines were reprinted in the "Tributary Verses" addendum to *The Poetical Works of Henry Kirke White* (1840). The second epigraph is Ophelia's famous lament over Hamlet's apparent madness (3.1.151), a lament for the tragic loss of a young scholar's mind.

[88] "Overwork" is the term used throughout Adams's novel to describe the cause of Osborne's misfortune and ultimate demise. The term echoes and confirms Robert Burton's analysis of Scholar Melancholia in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), attributed to "overmuch study" and a solitary, sedentary life (300).

[89] This line is used to describe Hardy in the novel. To "sport the oak" or "sport one's oak," a slang phrase dating from the eighteenth century but still used in the Victorian era, is to close one's door to signal a desire for quiet work or study. The phrase is used quite often in varsity fiction where the college room is a key space of work and interrupted work. In the novels, sported oaks are invariably signals for work and solitude, while open doors are invitations for play and social activity.

[90] In emphasizing the extent to which male sociality was an admired, sought-after trait in Victorian England and its universities, Rothblatt notes that "a sociable man—respectful and modest before his superiors, generous and frank with his equals, condescending and affable to inferiors—was by proven conduct a liberal man. Liberality implied comradeship and a life in public. The lonely man could never be liberal" (126). Similarly, one might recall that scholasticism is the antithesis to monasticism in the university context and with regard to the universities' developments; the distasteful idea of the outdated monk was in many ways

resurrected in the figure of the stereotypically antisocial, crabby, melancholic, and ultimately unappealing Oxford don.

[91] Indeed, Blifkins's death is attributed equally to his self-destructive work ethic and to the cruel mistreatment by his fellow collegians.

[92] A scholar designated a student on scholarship. The term "exhibitioner" was also used at both universities.

[93] This term refers to poorer students selected to receive endowments provided by the founders of institutions to assist with application finances.

[94] The novel makes much of the competition for the Harford scholarship because both Wilton and Wardleigh are vying for the same honour. Adams details the Harford competition in chapter two ("The Three Harchesters") so as to set up a number of important themes that will come to bear on the varsity novel's plot: the "rule of three" dynamics discussed earlier, the similarity in the three young men's intellectual ability (because the competition is understood to be remarkably close), the extent of Osborne's poverty compared with his more comfortable schoolmates (because he is deemed the most deserving financially throughout), and finally the generosity of Wardleigh (Osborne ultimately wins the scholarship because of Wardleigh's valiant gesture of bowing out of the competition at the last minute, when the two are virtually the last candidates standing).

[95] Drysdale is classed as a "gentleman-commoner," an Oxford term designating those few wealthy enough to pay double college fees in exchange for special privileges and exemptions. The equivalent designation at Cambridge is "fellow-commoner." Students able to pay regular tuition themselves, without scholarships or financial assistance, are called "commoners" (Oxford) or "pensioners" (Cambridge). Tom Brown is among the latter.

[96] The Cambridge equivalent to the Oxford servitor is the "sizar," of which Henry Kirke White was one at St. John's College (see discussion on White in paragraph following). Rothblatt notes that "sizars and servitors were emancipated and elevated into the ranks of students proper at the turn of the nineteenth century, leaving the domestic services of the colleges to be performed by the gyps, scouts and bedmakers" (142). Hughes's novel is set in the 1840s, however, and thus its servitor is still subjected to these laborious and often humiliating chores.

[97] This applies in both the secular and very pointedly in the Christ-like sense of the word.

[98] Scholar martyrs or dying scholars appear for example in Newman's *Loss and Gain* (1848), Arnold's "The Scholar-Gypsy" (1853), Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1874), Ward's *Robert Elsmere* (1888), Wilde's *The Portrait of Mr. W. H.* (1889), Lee's "Amour Dure" (from *Hauntings*, 1890), and Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* (1895), among others. Much earlier, Edward Bulwer-Lytton also penned a series in the *New Monthly Magazine* called *Conversations with an Ambitious Student in Ill Health* (1830-31), the subject of which is obvious. And yes, the student dies here too.

[99] *The Poetical Works and Remains of Henry Kirke White* (1835) (with a "Life" by Southey); *Conversations at Cambridge* (Wilmott, 1836); *Lives of English Poets from Johnson to Kirke White* (Henry Cary, 1846); *The Poetical Works of Henry Kirke White* (1840, 1855) (with eulogy by Byron); *The Book of Days* (1864, Robert Chambers).

[100] For a detailed analysis on the glorification of consumption in literature from the Renaissance to the Victorian era, see Clark Lawlor's *Consumption and Literature: The Making of the Romantic Disease* (2007) and especially chapter five ("Wasting Poets") for a consideration of how consumption was deemed the "glamourous disease of the beautiful and the genius" in the Romantic period and throughout the nineteenth century (112). Incidentally, consumption (what the Victorians called tuberculosis) was known as the "wasting" disease due to a tendency for the muscles and infected organs (lungs mostly) to waste away.

[101] Because of an interest in White's earlier published poems, Southey was consigned (with White's brother's permission) all of the young scholar's papers after his death. He arranged, edited, and prefaced them for publication in *The Poetical Works and Remains of Henry Kirke White*. In perusing them, Southey is struck with the idea, among others, of youthful "industry": "These papers (exclusive of the correspondence) filled a box of considerable size. Mr. Coleridge was present when I opened them, and was, as well as myself, equally affected and astonished at the proofs of industry which they displayed. Some of them had been written before his hand was formed, probably before he was thirteen" (38).

[102] In fact, Hardy is the first of two tragic nostalgiacs considered in this dissertation. Chapter Four will consider Thomas Hardy's Jude Fawley (*Jude the Obscure*) in a similar light, with the important distinction being the difference between nostalgia as wasted passion (Hardy) and nostalgia as destructive force (Jude). Also, Jude is less a martyr for the university and more a victim of it. For an interesting consideration of the kinship between Hughes's and Hardy's novels, see C. J. P. Beatty, "Thomas Hardy and Thomas Hughes" (*English Studies*, 1987).

[103] Chapter seven.

[104] Hardy's rant aligns wealth and delinquent play together as the unhealthy combination so lethal to his beloved Oxford.

[105] The lead-in sentences to this quotation address the idea of service directly, inspired by Hardy's belief in the nobility of military service: "A young officer, be he never such a fop or profligate, must take his turn at guard, and carry his life in his hand all over the world, wherever he is sent, or he has to leave the service. Service! yes, that's the word; that's what makes every young redcoat respectable, though he mayn't think it" (Hughes 67). Hardy's approval of military service is inspired by his father, a retired marine, whom Hardy honours with a military sword hanging proudly on his college room wall.

[106] Tom's aforementioned "graduation" chapter (chapter 45, "Master's Term").

[107] This moment marks the end of Hardy the scholar in the novel. It is a figurative death, of course, since he does remain alive in the novel's remaining pages, but it is no less certain and sombre an ending than that of Osborne. Interestingly, Hardy leaves Oxford and swiftly winds up engaged to Tom's cousin Katie, perpetuating the varsity novel's cheeky association of marriage and academic death. (*Verdant Green*'s final post-Oxford book was titled "Married and Done For").

[108] Thus, Hardy and Osborne are linked once again: both are understood to have inherited their work ethic from their fathers, Hardy his sense of nostalgic service, and Osborne his self-sacrificing dedication to work. It is interesting to note that "overwork" is not only designated a genetic strand here (and one that is supposedly visible in the subject's features), but also a pathological identity. This extends beyond varsity fiction, however; invariably, the Victorians deemed it just as well to declare that one had died from "overwork" as to attribute cause of death to fever, tuberculosis, etc.

[109] Willmott is the one to suggest this awareness most clearly. Seymour (interviewed by Willmott in one of his *Conversations at Cambridge*) notes: "For some weeks before the student was gathered to his rest, the slightest glance at the pallid worn expression of his face would have sufficed to convince any one that without some prompt alteration of his pursuits, the days of the youthful scholar were numbered … He himself was perfectly conscious of his peril, and seemed every hour to detach himself more and more from the bonds of the world, and to prepare for his journey into a far country" (Willmott 60).

[110] The Senate-House examination was the former name of Cambridge's Mathematical Tripos Exam, which changed around 1824. Interestingly, Willmott takes up this line of White's, in his *Conversations at Cambridge*, in order to emphasize the scholar's martyrdom and add to his own

critical position on Southey's soft-edged consideration of White's demise and what he considered the university's burden of blame: "The academical life of Kirke White, even viewed through the affectionate narrative of his biographer, was only a prolonged preparation for a sacrifice. The Death's Head is always visible under the mask. Anything more heart-rending than the sufferings of this gifted Martyr is not to be found in the pages of romance" (Willmott 48).

[111] Rothblatt notes that Oxford's examination structure changed at the turn of the nineteenth century from entirely oral disputations (with pass/fail assessment) to mostly written exams. This was partially prompted by the college administrators' recognition of the greater "disciplinary potential" of the written exam, which required more prep work and solitary study (158). By contrast, the orals promoted sociality and collegial debate. By 1830 Oxford's BA exams required five days of writing and only one day of *viva voce* examining (Rothblatt 162).

[112] The temporal alignment of the exam with death points to the heterochronic identity of the university in popular imagination, as a space of alternate and accelerated time.

[113] Unlike Osborne's tale, however, which uses foreshadowing to suggest the inevitability of the scholar's exam-induced death, the White tributes use a curious kind of foreboding in hindsight, because his cult-status has already "spoiled" the revelation of his death. It is an instance of dramatic irony instead.

[114] Henry Kirke White's post-exam deterioration is similarly gruesome. In *Lives of English Poets: From Johnson to Kirke White*, Cary notes that the brilliant scholar's health declined rapidly after attaining the high honour of his exam results. One witness, his laundress, entering his college room, discovers him "fallen down in a convulsive fit, bleeding and insensible" (Cary 417).

[115] Adding to the sense of waste is the fact that both Osborne and Wilton obtain the only two firsts in their college when the exam results are posted. Thus, Adams suggests that the overworker pays too much for the same return in the end.

[116] He is called "old John" or "old fellow" by his friends throughout (Adams 57, 213).

[117] Interestingly, Osborne passes away with the sounds of the lively university outside his window in the same way that both Blifkins (of Brazenface) and Jude Fawley do. Osborne dies as the noise and bustle of the Oxford cricket match drifts in through his window; Jude dies hearing the provoking sounds of Commemoration day. Thus, there is a certain cultural interest in academic sacrifice against an incongruous backdrop of carefree and seemingly indifferent merriment.

[118] On the idea of the university as a kind of heaven for its departed scholars, consider that Neverland was also imagined a kind of afterlife for boys. This ties in with the acceptance of death in *Peter Pan*, in which the titular hero proclaims that "[t]o die will be an awfully big adventure" (Barrie 125).

[119] 5.1.193

[120] Chapter three.

[121] One of which is the exemption of chapel attendance for double the college fees.

[122] The college room has been a source of particular interest throughout this project. In Hughes's novel, Drysdale's room underscores the class polarity between him and Hardy. It is "lofty" and "very pleasant," "paneled with old oak," and handsomely furnished with cushioned window seats, hanging gardens and an assortment of "well-framed paintings and engravings on the walls." Hardy's room, however, is meagre with scanty, uncheerful furniture, and dingy carpeting and wallpaper (Hughes 20-21). Then there is the difference in window views that the rooms afford. While Drysdale's window looks out on the picturesque college quad, where scholars and

undergrads while away their leisure hours, Hardy's looks out into the college's back yard, busy from morning till night with scouts and boys "cleaning boots and knives," bed-makers "emptying slops and tattling scandal," and scullions "peeling potatoes" (Hughes 39).

[123] Interestingly and, at times, confusingly, Hughes's novel alternates between classifying rowing as play or work, depending on the circumstance. The sport is used to propel Hughes's support of muscular Christianity throughout the novel, whereby any physical exertion for productive and moral gain is praised, and is thus understood as a kind of work. But then, in its association with youthful competition, and extracurricular fun that pulls students away from their studies, it is also very clearly a form of play.

[124] Once again, their rooms spell out their work-play polarity with regard to academic work. Hardy's room is short of furnishings but wonderfully stocked with books and work materials: Tom observes, upon first entering Hardy's room, an old Oxford table "on which lay half a dozen books with writing materials" and a bookcase "pretty well-filled" (Hughes 30). Of Drysdale's room, Tom notes that "there was plenty of everything except books—the literature of the world being represented, so far as Tom could make out in his short scrutiny, by a few well-bound but badly used volumes of classics, with the cribs thereto appertaining, shoved away into a cupboard which stood half open, and containing, besides, half-emptied decanters and large pewters, and dog-collars and packs of cards, and all sorts of miscellaneous articles to serve as an antidote" (Hughes 21).

[125] Chapter 49, titled "The End."

[126] Recall Chapter One's discussion of "staged authenticity" (see Dean MacCannell) as it pertains to the college room and its nostalgic power. Unlike the touristic context, however, here there is no suggestion of inauthenticity; Tom's staging of Drysdale is presented without any suggestion of irony in its affect.

[127] The martyr-scholar *must* die to become his own kind of symbolic entity.

[128] It is Drysdale who succeeds in mending the relationship between Tom and Mary, by clearing up a misunderstanding regarding Tom's character.

[129] As Rothblatt attests, Carlyle's *Past & Present* (1843) was an important text for the discourse of the fear of "not succeeding": "what is it that the modern English soul does, in very truth, dread infinitely, and contemplate with entire despair? What is his Hell; after all these reputable, oft-repeated Hearsays, what is it? With hesitation, with astonishment, I pronounce it to be: The terror of "Not Succeeding"" (Carlyle 124).

[130] "There can be no disgrace," observes Rothblatt, "if the community refuses to acknowledge disgrace, and what appears to be failure is actually, by the operations of a reverse code of values, a form of success. This is the charivari syndrome, turning the world upside down" (198). Proctor cites pre-Victorian varsity novel *Confessions of an Oxonian* (Thomas Little, 1826) as launching what would become typical fare for the genre, the celebration of failure in raucous fashion. The narrator of Little's work decides to give an elaborate supper to "celebrate" his rustication from Oxford. Proctor notes how the dishes are itemized across the length of four pages, and the whole affair becomes "an orgy which is probably not equaled in all university fiction" (67).

Chapter Three

Lost Women and Varsity Homemaking

Preface

For the Victorians, the idea of a women's college or, more boldly, of a women's varsity was a vision long before it materialized. A poet's vision in fact, a man's vision actually. Three years before donning the crown of poet laureate,[1] Alfred Tennyson published *The Princess: A Medley* (1847),[2] a seven-part narrative poem in blank verse featuring a daring Princess who founds a women's university and a desperate Prince who embarks upon a quest to bring her back home.

How fitting that a mind so recently steeped in Arthurian lore, taken with the shining feats of knights and their king in Camelot ("Sir Galahad," "Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere," "Morte d'Arthur") and the pining of women on the outskirts of that same legendary kingdom ("The Lady of Shalott")[3] should have been seized all of a sudden with the vision of a queendom, a women's university in the form of an Amazonian fortress, fiercely defended against the incursion of men by its Princess and her "monstrous womanguard," and welcoming all women, from all corners of the "bookless wilds," whose "love of knowledge" rivals the ardour of chivalry and leads them to its walls (Tennyson 4.540; 2.42-43). How appropriate that this particular poet's vision should rely upon the quest narrative, with the wayward female scholar (however indomitable her spirit) cast as the holy grail of a Prince's longing heart and rapturous gaze, a treasure to reward the noble resolve of the hero who seeks his lost bride against the wishes of his father and keeps a picture of her close to his heart. And how very unsurprising that the women's academic fortress should be infiltrated covertly[4] and then attacked overtly at the poem's conclusion, "their sanctuary violated" by an oppressive army of men brooking no

opposition to their control, and their fearless leader compelled ultimately to "scatter all our maids / Till happier times each to her proper hearth" (Tennyson 7.1-2; 6.283-84). Entirely unsurprising, for although the newly captured and hastily besotted Princess must fly to her neglected hearth, this is not an admission of defeat so much as a concession to the deferral of a dream, for is it not expected that kingdoms or queendoms of idealistic enterprise invariably dissolve into the stuff of legend to add power to their ideals and stoke future hearts with longing?

Yes, but, if Arthurian legend is motivated by nostalgia, the longing for a lost vision of the past, as surely it is, how utterly inappropriate it is for the vision of a women's university, a vision of the future for mid-century Victorians, to be framed thus. How troubling that the poet's nostalgic vision of a women's college is, at the start of his poem, actually the hijacked vision and future hope of a young nineteenth-century woman, Lilia,[5] whose idea to become a "great princess" and the noble foundress of a women's university where women are taught all that men are, is taken over rather abruptly by a rowdy set of university undergraduates who slyly usurp her subjectivity: reframing her vision as a man's quest with an opposing objective; resituating her college as an experiment of the past tried and failed; and recasting the iron-willed, steel-tempered Princess and her fellow scholars as golden-haired "sweet girl-graduates," unthreatening objects of male longing, easily scattered and easily rendered homebound (Tennyson, Prologue 134, 142; 2.185; 6.215).

INTRODUCTION

Domestic Collegiate: In Defence of a Women's College

> *"Oh, but you know the story, […] rooms were hired. Committees met. Envelopes were addressed. Circulars were drawn up. Meetings were held; letters were read out; […] The Saturday Review has been very rude. How can we raise a fund to pay for offices? Shall we hold a bazaar? Can't we find a pretty girl to sit in the front row?"*
>
> —Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (1929)[6]

The idea of a women's college emerged in the Victorian cultural imagination long before any college doors actually opened, but it would be ridiculous to suggest that it began as a man's vision, when it was so clearly the project of women, and a product of their combined efforts to fund, establish, market, and defend it. Indeed, women's entrance into Cambridge and Oxford would not have happened without the foresight and perseverance of the many women who made up the various committees for women's higher education across England throughout the nineteenth century, groups committed to the cause through social and institutional lobbying, and the implementation of university-level lectures and examinations for women around the country. The two largest and most influential of these committees were the Committee for Promoting the Higher Education of Women (in the south) and the North of England Council for Promoting the Higher Education of Women, the latter being a large conglomeration of smaller associations from Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, and Sheffield brought together, in a stroke of very timely insight in 1867, by Anne Jemima Clough[7] just when the women's college movement at Oxbridge was gaining ground. Indeed, Clough's vision of bringing lectures to women (since women could not yet go to lectures) became the inspiration for Cambridge's Newnham College, founded by Dr. Henry Sidgwick[8] and his wife Eleanor Sidgwick[9] in order to bring a separate university education to women while still enclosing them within the (figurative) walls of Cambridge.[10] This made Clough an ideal choice for the college's first principal when it opened in 1871 (Tullberg 44). But Newnham was not the first women's college to break ground at

Cambridge; it was preceded by Girton College, the flagship for women's higher education, established in 1869 by Emily Davies, Barbara Bodichon,[11] and Lady Stanley of Alderley,[12] visionaries all. Indeed, if I begin this chapter's argument by insisting that the idea of a women's college was conceived by women, the evidence might effectively begin and end with the indomitable Davies,[13] Girton's first principal, who not only wrote the Victorian manifesto on *The Higher Education of Women* (1866), but campaigned tirelessly through her many published articles, circulars, and letters to various newspaper editors for the opening of Oxbridge's first college for women[14] and for the right of the female scholar to be educated and examined alongside her male counterpart.[15] What earns Davies special credit here, in a chapter more concerned with the colleges and their fictive portrayals than the ideals that launched them, is the fact that she took the cause for women's higher education one step further by arguing that, rather than being scattered around the country, female scholars and would-be scholars ought to have a fortress in which to congregate, and this fortress ought to be affiliated with one of the ancient kingdoms of learning (Cambridge, as it turned out), even if obliged to sit on its outskirts.

But here is where the story of a women's college becomes somewhat more disheartening, for although it is true that the visions of women dictate its conception, it is also true that the visions and fears of men dictate its perception. Insofar as the idea of a women's college was constructed in the Victorian cultural imagination, through manifestos, articles of defence, exposés, personal accounts, and women's varsity fiction, it was in effect the second coming of Lilia's ambitious dream, hijacked by patriarchal fancy. And patriarchal fancy (infused with a healthy dose of nostalgia) has always been staunchly protective of Oxbridge and resistant to anything that proposes to change it. It is this resistance that forms the basis of tension in the cultural confrontation between the women's college movement[16]—the engine of the knowledge

industry with which this chapter is concerned—and the long-held ideal of a male-dominant, monastic,[17] patriarchal university. As Susan Leonardi notes, Victorian academics and Oxbridge nostalgiacs had a very real fear that the masculine "haven" of intellectual and social growth that the universities had been for centuries would be "diluted" by the presence and increasing academic power of women (20).[18] This fear for the dissolution of male academic privilege played out in the restrictions placed upon the students of Oxbridge's women's colleges—the inability to attend university lectures without permission or chaperonage for one[19]—and also in the violence aimed at them on those occasions, such as the hotly contested motions for women's degrees,[20] when this privilege was deemed to be especially vulnerable. Following the defeat of the two motions at Cambridge (in 1897 and 1921) for example, violent riots broke out against the women's colleges, impressing upon the mind of one Newnham student that her college "temporarily resembled a beleaguered fortress" (qtd in Bogen, *Narratives* x).[21]

The most strategic resistance of all, however, is that which makes its way into the narratives of acceptance and promotion. Woolf's tongue-in-cheek observation in *A Room of One's Own* that a fledgling college for women would benefit from a pretty girl in the front row as a marketing strategy explains why constructions like Tennyson's "sweet girl graduate" (an epithet which came to typify the women's college scholar throughout the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries), were so popular in women's varsity literature. Reframed as a vision of beauty and sweetness, the female scholar is unthreatening. Indeed, Victorian women's colleges and their students were subject to strategic patriarchal *re*visions in their cultural presentation, and often by those visionary pioneers, like Davies herself, most ardently in support of their success, but knowing full well that it would require a somewhat conservative approach. That is, in an academic environment ruled by patriarchal prejudice and misogyny, where a respected Oxford

professor like Dr. Pusey[22] could proclaim the establishment of the women's colleges to be "one of the greatest misfortunes" and feel comfortable that he was speaking to a common cultural complaint (Brittain 69), supporters of the women's colleges did not have the luxury of pure, unencumbered visionary expression, but instead, like Tennyson's Princess (more warrior than scholar) were obliged to take up defensive posts. Eleanor Sidgwick for instance was compelled to defend the women's colleges against the pernicious argument that a university education was ill-suited to women's minds and could lead to anything from mild confusion to chronic mental derangement. John Ruskin was one notable academic who believed in the argument of female confusion: "I cannot let the bonnets in, on any conditions this term," he said of a series of his Oxford lectures, "they would occupy the seats in mere disappointed puzzlement" (qtd. in Brittain 39).[23] More serious was a belief in the female scholar's susceptibility to "brain-fever" or "neuralgia" (Bogen, *Narratives* xi; Vickery 20), so often levelled at the women's colleges that Sidgwick's most famous women's college exposé, "Health Statistics of Women Students of Cambridge and Oxford and of their Sisters" (1890), was saddled with the burden of proof, unable to present to its readers a vision of the intellectual heights to which a university education might raise England's daughters because it was too busy reassuring them that it would probably not kill them,[24] and might just make them better wives and mothers.[25]

Just as the women's college advocate had to defend against the argument of the dying girl, so too was she called upon to defend against the New Woman[26] (a figure of arguably more concern for conservative Victorians), and to distance the college girl from her if she had any hope of survival. "There are no New Women at Somerville College," insisted its principal Agnes Catherine Maitland[27] in 1897, when interviewed for an exposé on the college, "[s]he does not exist here." "You will find as much gentleness, courtesy, and right womanly feeling among girls

in college as in every set of girls," she concluded ("Somerville College" *Western Mail*). But actually, steering clear of the controversial New Woman at the century's end was hardly possible given that the college girl, or "Girton Girl,"[28] the stereotypical bespectacled and breeched bluestocking, had attracted the same prejudice and scorn since the colleges' earliest days for her supposedly ungainly, unfeminine demeanour, and for her seeming ambivalence to marriage.[29] In one of her articles of defence ("Colleges for Women"), Elizabeth Wordsworth,[30] the first principal of Oxford's Lady Margaret Hall,[31] openly admitted an initial aversion to the idea of a female scholar in order to build a new idea of the figure upon a common ground of prejudice: "In my younger days, if I had been told at a party that a young lady belonged to a Ladies' College, I should have preferred occupying the stiffest of upright chairs in a thorough draft, to sitting by her on the most comfortable of sofas" (246). An amusing assertion certainly, but troubling too in its offering further proof that women's college advocates were often only able to promote an appealing vision of the college girl by completely destroying or disavowing her ugly academic sister,[32] a crude image of anti-woman that patriarchal fancy had designed.

The most pervasive argument against Oxbridge's residential women's colleges, however, and indeed that which seemed to lie unspoken within all others, was the argument of the endangered home: a patriarchal fear for the loss of a domestic ideal that the college-bound woman provoked. The idea of a lost home and its lost woman brought about by the advent of the women's colleges are the points of tension driving my analysis in this chapter and the triggers of longing for the strain of nostalgia that emerges in the women's varsity novels I shall discuss presently. Before turning to the novels, though, it is important first to consider how attention to the endangered home became the first line of defence for women's college advocates Davies and Wordsworth, because the defensive vision they promoted (along with others) in response to that

of the abandoned home and its lost angel—that of the homely college—would come to inform the nostalgic visions in Victorian women's college fiction. Both Davies and Wordsworth anticipated the argument of the lost home in their respective college writings, taking great pains to address it and thereby allowing the establishment of a problematic dialectic between home and college to become a critical part of the discourse of the women's college movement, with the college woman inevitably stuck between, and often simultaneously within, the two. The tactic was to placate their readers' *homely* fears by offering assurances of their shared loyalties, and by setting the home on a cultural pedestal that the women's college dared not and could not ever attempt to reach. Wordsworth insisted that, despite the college's potential for offering quality education to women, it nonetheless offered "a very poor substitute for the best home-made article" (251). On this note Davies was even more emphatic: "The mere suggestion that our sacred, time-honoured, happy English home can have anything to learn from such an upstart, new-fangled institution as a College for women, must, I fear, be felt to be an audacity, if not an outrage" (Davies, "Home" 146). Yet, at the risk of inciting this outrage, both women very tactfully proceeded with the argument that the college's influence on the home was "likely to be beneficial" in its provision of "excellent training for future wives and mothers" (Davies, "Home" 146; Wordsworth 248). In short, these academic pioneers mounted a college defence against the fears provoked by the college-bound woman by invoking the comforting vision of the graduate who brings the fruits of her learning back home.[33] "We want to turn out girls so that they will be capable of making homes happy," Wordsworth stated, effectively closing the loop between college and home and rendering the former subordinate to the latter as a kind of off-site domestic training ground (qtd. in Brittain 36).

But the cultural fear over and nostalgic longing for a lost domestic ideal were not only triggered by concern for the "unsexing" of the college woman; they were triggered just as strongly by the perceived loss of a deeply entrenched cultural vision, the characteristically (middle-class) Victorian vision of the homebound woman which college residence was supposed to threaten. Indeed, the Victorians were strongly attached to the idea of the homebound woman, ensconced in her domestic bower, and especially drawn to the comforting fantasy that (provided she was "incorruptibly" good) the home would magically materialize around her wherever she went, as evocatively captured by Ruskin in *Sesame and Lilies* (1865):

> And wherever a true wife comes, this home is always round her. The stars only may be over her head; the glowworm in the night-cold grass may be the only fire at her foot; but home is yet wherever she is; and for a noble woman it stretches far round her, better than ceiled with cedar, or painted with vermilion, shedding its quiet light far, for those who else were homeless. (78)

This was the quaint patriarchal vision many Victorians, and especially those inclined to attack the new women's colleges, held dear to their hearts, and it was this vision that women's college advocates had to contend with in their promotional efforts. Indeed, Davies, Wordsworth, Sidgwick, Clough et al. knew well that their fellow countrymen and countrywomen were reasonably willing to accept the idea of women at Oxbridge, so long as the Home followed them there, and back again. Thus, out of this understanding arose the need not only to envision how the women's colleges might benefit the home (thereby indirectly promising that the sweet girl graduates would indeed return), but also the need to envision the women's colleges *as* homes—building, marketing, and fictionalizing them as such—so that the image of the homebound woman was not disturbed. Significantly, for the purpose of this chapter's argument and its

organization, it bears emphasizing that, where the women's colleges were concerned, Victorians were comforted by the idea of the homebound woman in both senses of the term: educated but ultimately bound *for* home; educated but simultaneously bound *by* home.

And so the idea of a homely college was born. Davies began a defensive trend that took hold throughout the women's college movement by marketing Girton College as a ladies' home under the academic provision of Cambridge. It would be a college with as much discipline, community, protection, and seclusion[34] as the most "time-honoured" of English homes,[35] whose students would be under the direction of "women of experience" exercising the "supervision and control as would be practised, under the same circumstances, by a wise mother" (Davies, "Some Account" 552).[36] Supporting this kind of rhetoric were the domestic architectural schemes[37] of the academic fortresses themselves. Coined "Domestic Collegiate" by Newnham's famed architect Basil Champneys,[38] these architectural schemes "encoded widely held beliefs about women's role in society" as Margaret Birney Vickery observes in *Buildings for Bluestockings* (xii).[39] Both Girton[40] and Newnham were built in the Queen Anne style—with exterior detail typical of country manors and houses including bay windows, white trimmed dormers, inglenooks, turreted towers, white painted sash windows, curly pedimented gables—usually associated with rural England and its "evocation of a quaint and cozy domesticity" (Vickery 31). The Queen Anne style was preferred for a women's college over the traditional Gothic of Oxbridge's colleges because it was understood to connote modesty and beauty instead of grandeur and sublimity (Vickery 52). Another deliberate stepping away from the traditional template of Oxbridge men's colleges was the choice of a horizontal corridor system of student rooms rather than the "well system" of vertically stacked rooms accessible via narrow staircases,[41] a decision behind which lurked the encoded patriarchal belief that, while male

students could manage and indeed required the autonomy and freedom of movement that independent stairwells and privately accessed rooms afforded, female students would be better suited to (and their critics better consoled by) the increased supervision and protection that the corridor system promised.[42] With the varsity novel in mind, Vickery also points out that the corridors formed the basis of the social networks at women's colleges, and very much so in their fictional representations, where friendships and rivalries were formed based on the configuration of residents occupying rooms along the same passage (45). However, as Davies knew only too well, these carpeted corridors of Girton were most valuable—like the round family tables in the dining hall of Newnham,[43] the William Morris designs and photographs adorning the drawing room walls of Somerville, like the servants' quarters, the in-house baths,[44] the communal reading rooms, the cheerful fires, and the general air of coziness—not for the home comforts they might offer the college girls themselves (for it is likely many would have gladly accepted a vacated medieval tower for their Oxbridge lair had it been offered, and, in any case, their subjective visions of the college were deemed entirely beside the point) but rather for the home comforts they signalled to the envisioning eyes of others, seeking both an appropriate frame of acceptance for the sweet girl graduate and a nostalgic frame of longing for the lost woman she had displaced.

A Beleaguered Fortress: The Women's Varsity Novel

In this chapter I explore the role of the Victorian women's varsity novel at the point of confrontation between the women's college movement and patriarchal Oxbridge: as a contributor to the home-college dialectic, to the construct of the homely college, and, most importantly, to a cultural discourse of nostalgia for the lost home and its lost woman that the idea of an Oxbridge women's college evokes. In keeping with this project's acknowledgement of polyvalent nostalgic

discourses that emerge at junctures of cultural confrontation between the ancient universities and specific engines of the burgeoning Victorian knowledge industry, nostalgias that work to support contradictory ideas but all within the same strategy of fortifying Oxbridge's identity in the modern age,[45] I point in this chapter to the subversive identity of home-focussed nostalgia in varsity literature. It is both a force of acceptance and resistance, inviting women to feel "at home" at Oxbridge and feel *for* home while there, as the male scholar has always done, while simultaneously functioning to separate them from the male stronghold as objective figures bound to the home in both instances. That is, as much as the homely college and the sharing of home-longing are used to indicate that women have become a part of the modern university, they are also used to keep them apart from it by reifying the patriarchal constructs of women as domestic residents and nostalgic objects. Thus, I identify a particularly patriarchal strand of nostalgia in women's varsity novels, stories as attached to the idea of the "sweet girl graduate" as she is imagined to be attached to home.

The focus novels of this chapter are L. T. Meade's[46] *A Sweet Girl Graduate* (1891)[47] and Frances Bridges Marshall's[48] *The Master of St. Benedict's* (1893), narratives that open with their young female protagonists Priscilla Peel and Lucy Rae about to embark, with great excitement and trepidation (and facing more than a little skepticism from home), upon university studies at St. Benet's College of Kingsdene and Newnham College of Cambridge, respectively.[49] Both are popular examples of the women's varsity novel (otherwise called the "women's college novel" or "college girl novel"), a specific offshoot of the varsity novel genre detailing the highs and lows of the varsity protagonist as she passes through her college years just as the male-focussed varsity novel does, but with the sensations of insularity and intrusion added to the narrative mix, sensations unique to the student of an Oxbridge women's college who sits on the outskirts of a

revered university against which she sits a peripheral afterthought. Indeed, it is no accident that Meade names her novel's university "Kingsdene," designating the site a den for kings,[50] and emphasizing the extent to which women do not yet belong. Both novels are written by authors who contributed prolifically to the women's varsity genre through novels, short stories, and journalistic exposés,[51] and enjoyed minor celebrity status among middle-class female readers between the ages of fourteen and twenty-five who consistently ranked them among their favourite novelists and regularly sought out their books in public book-trade columns in exchange for works by Scott, Dickens, Yonge, and other more established writers (Mitchell 14).

Assuredly, just as rowdy boys' varsity novels are imbedded in Victorian boys' culture, women's varsity novels are part of what Sally Mitchell has identified as a huge surge in girls' culture from 1880 to the early twentieth century, catering to the "new ways of being," "new modes of behavior," and new opportunities open to young working- and middle-class women through fictional representations (3).[52] As Mitchell's central argument posits in *The New Girl* (1995), the intensity of girls' culture is such that it spawns the emergence of a "new girl" in women's varsity literature, and in late-Victorian girls' literature more generally, a girl between child and married woman who pursues hobbies, work, an avid social life, and even college life. In fact, aligning perfectly with this chapter's analysis, Mitchell offers this thought-provoking definition of the late-Victorian "new girl" in terms of the new cultural space that is cleared out for her existence in between homes: "Girlhood, in its archetypal form, is bounded on each side by home: by parental home on one side, by marital home on the other. In the space between the two family homes—for however many years that space might last—the new girl has a degree of independence" (9). An interesting definition because it suggests, on the one hand, that the new girl finds (or rather is granted) a temporary escape from the home during these in-between years,

but, on the other hand, that inasmuch as she is "bounded" by home she does not really escape it at all. Even her indeterminate time of independence is framed by it. In other words, Mitchell suggests here that, where the Victorian new girl is concerned, being independent and home-bound are not mutually exclusive, a suggestion of great import to my analysis of the varsity girl.

The word "new" is key to the critical study of women's varsity novels, and the culture of new colleges and new girls that launched them. The word in many ways legitimizes and defines the Victorian novels in particular, which critical studies like Anna Bogen's often situate outside a "golden age" of women's university narrative of the early twentieth century when Oxford finally granted degrees to women (in 1920) and female scholars and their fictional counterparts had a stronger sense of belonging and identity (*Narratives*, xix).[53] The significance of late Victorian novels like Meade's and Marshall's cannot be overlooked because, if their early emergence and the relative instability of the female varsity identity within them do not qualify them as "golden age" varsity texts, they certainly do as "*new* age," valuable precisely because they were published when the women's colleges were new and the very idea of women's university experience was new. In fact, not only are they vital to the varsity genre as explorations of new Oxbridge spaces, faces, and fictive traditions, but also as part of a larger network of Victorian literature dedicated to the exposure of the women's colleges, of which Davies's promotional writings form a critical part, and from which I have selected this chapter's neighbouring discursive texts. Indeed, because the women's colleges were such new and such sheltered places on the Oxbridge map, they attracted what I term *literatures of exposure*, tasked with exposing and explaining the new among the old by framing it in the most culturally appealing way. Selections from these women's college exposés (investigative reports, interviews, tours, essays

of defence, and their accompanying images[54]) will be considered alongside the novels throughout my discussion.

There is a persistent problem, however, with the Victorian women's varsity novel and women's college exposé in terms of how the women's college is exhibited by them. It is not, however, the problem that Mortimer Proctor identifies (in his foundational study of the nineteenth-century English university novel) in the chapter he dedicates to a rather disturbing dismissal of women's contributions to the genre. Labelling their novels a "quaint and preposterous bypath of university fiction," Proctor complains that Victorian women did not know enough about Oxbridge to be able to write at all convincingly of its lifestyle (149).[55] "The catalogue of these works is happily not large, but the point of view they reveal is unmistakable for its total disregard of reality" he states, damning them for their unwillingness to conform to a universal (or, male) perspective of fictive university experience (Proctor 146). Proctor's criticism is unsound because, first of all, there is no "reality" where varsity fiction is concerned, but rather a series of cultural constructions; "Oxbridge is an invention," Woolf reminds us, and it is as pointless to deconstruct and measure degrees of truth among its various fictional parts as it is to plague its inventors, an immaterial mass of cultural voices, with the threat (5). The term "women's varsity" lies especially outside the rigid frame of "reality" upheld by Proctor because there was never any such thing in the Victorian era. But if one uses it, as I do in this chapter, not to imply institutional ownership or even belonging, but rather to emphasize the ownership of university experiences and ideas, the term has undeniable cultural value. Second of all, in disparaging the "point of view" of the women's novels in particular, Proctor completely disregards the fact that their difference is inevitable. As Judy Batson points out in her study of women at Oxford,[56] female students "entered a very different world" from their male

counterparts, one far more secluded and calm, without double suites, menservants (aka "scouts" or "gyps"), raucous parties, and lavish meals and wines at their disposal (33).[57] Within this world of difference, one should expect that women's varsity fiction would develop its own formulae, including, for example, in-house debates and lectures, college room and corridor intrigue, careful decorative depiction, examination tensions and health scares, walks "into" the university centre, and, especially, late-night cocoa parties and other intimate gatherings. Indeed, the university, from the "point of view" of a women's college looks manifestly different: "[m]en lived in the Oxford most often featured in guidebooks—a magnificent architectural treasury of pinnacles, domes, and ancient quadrangles," notes Batson, in a fortuitous nod to the theme of Chapter One, while women lived on the outskirts of this Oxford in humble buildings with "no architectural pretensions" (Batson 33). No surprise, then, that a focus on these buildings forms a part of the new formula of women's varsity fiction, and also no surprise that in a culture where "Domestic Collegiate" must inform all visions of a women's college, women's varsity novelists contribute to its homely construction as much as Davies or Wordsworth.[58]

No, the problem with women's varsity novels is not one of nonconformity (because, in spite of Proctor's complaint, they dictate varsity genre formulae as much as they widen its parameters) but rather one of conformity. For inasmuch as they, like their featured colleges, are all about the new, they nonetheless enter spaces dominated by the old, where cultural appeal is governed by old associations, and where old associations are inevitably bound to patriarchal ideas.[59] And, as I have argued throughout this dissertation, where Oxbridge is concerned, cultural appeal is dominated by nostalgia, which prizes the old, revering the oldest associations the universities have, including the inarguably patriarchal one that designates them the seat of man in contradistinction to the domestic seat of woman. The problem with the Victorian women's

varsity novel, then, and my argument for this chapter, is that it conforms to a patriarchal nostalgia that insists on rendering the women's college a quaint domestic container and its women objects of nostalgic fancy, both evoking the vision of homebound woman in place of, and often at the expense of, a new vision of the university-bound woman which ought to prevail. In short, the women's varsity novel is as much a "beleaguered fortress" as a nascent women's college, as much a "sanctuary violated" as the Princess's university, only, instead of men looking for their lost women, it is invaded by a nostalgic longing for the same. And just as Tennyson's Prince and his comrades don female disguises in order to infiltrate the Princess's academic lair, the patriarchal nostalgia that infiltrates the women's varsity novel wears as covert a disguise in its discursive polyvalence, as both a force of acceptance and resistance, as a tool of capture under benign pretense.

Although this chapter advances an original argument in considering the varsity novels of Meade and Marshall as unfortunate purveyors of a patriarchal nostalgia for home and homebound women, on a broader level it reiterates a common feminist objection to Victorian women's varsity texts as endorsements of restrictive gender roles and conventional expectations and thus as ill-befitting the "rebellious" women's colleges and their "courageous pioneers, who were in many ways breaking out of society's conventions" (Vickery 77). Sally Mitchell, for instance, takes issue with Meade's failure to follow through on the promise of her novels' subjects—studious and career-minded New Women—who invariably take conventional turns or else are upstaged by unappealing simpletons with no higher aspirations than marriage (20).[60] Similarly, Ann McClellan is critical of Marshall's treatment of the female scholar in her novels (which, in her estimation, come dangerously close to "late-Victorian morality tales" on the seductive dangers of women's higher education), and specifically her refusal to champion her

more courageously in a culture all too quick to question and degrade her (331).[61] Mitchell puts it best, perhaps, in stating that women's varsity fiction is only "safely feminist" with mere "whiffs of quiet subversion" (63). While there is no faulting the feminist dedication of Meade and Marshall to the experiences of the women's college student and her brave foray into academia, it is nonetheless problematically undermined by a nostalgia that encourages the reader to see her with a man's eye and yearn with a man's heart for the lost woman of domestic origin and aspiration. To participate, in other words, in a patriarchal vision. Indeed, because nostalgic thought has a propensity to envision and for revision, to (re)construct images upon which to focus longing, the vision shall be of great significance to this chapter (its weight must already have been felt in this introduction) in its consideration of how the college girl is rendered a nostalgic object. For these discussions, I lean on Laura Mulvey's theory of the objectified woman of the patriarchal gaze in visual culture, but focussing on visual and figurative imagery instead of cinematic and, more importantly, replacing erotic objectification and the pleasures it elicits with nostalgic objectification and its pleasures. The latter shall not be a huge departure at all, for both the nostalgic and erotic patriarchal gazes are motivated by powerful longing, enabled by cultural construct, and both have a reductive, manipulating effect on the objects of their desire.

There is an obvious kinship between this chapter and its predecessor in their mutual consideration of nostalgic longing for lost figures in varsity fiction, a longing which fortifies the modern identity of the ancient universities in the Victorian cultural imagination as places of nostalgic preservation for figures (rowdy playboys and homebound women) deemed threatened by the advent of new academic institutions. The distinction, however, lies in what precisely nostalgia attempts to preserve when comparing boys' varsity novels with girls' and how this

comes to affect the academic identities within them. As discussed in Chapter Two, male-focussed varsity literature evokes nostalgia for a particular stage in a man's life (boyhood), a constructed identity of play and idleness that does not diminish the scholar's capacity for growth and self-identification but rather very much depends on it. I considered how the university boy becomes a separate entity of nostalgic contemplation for the graduated man, an object self which he desires and which draws him close to his *alma mater*. In this chapter, however, nostalgia is triggered by the prioritization of a restrictive domestic identity for women that does indeed diminish the female scholar: her growth by prizing the domestic woman at her expense, and her subjective identity by lifting her out of the university and into the homely visions of nostalgic cultural consumption. Moreover, in comparing the lost figures of both chapters, it is worth noting the disparity in terms of succession and its import to the women's varsity novel, and specifically to the patriarchal bent of its nostalgic discourse: while male-focussed varsity fiction has the man succeeding the boy (who in turn becomes lost and ripe for nostalgia), women's varsity fiction has the girl (in all her forms: college girl, Girton girl, new girl, sweet girl graduate) succeeding the woman (the lost domestic). Indeed, the nostalgic placement of the lost and more mature woman as a figure of the past, an older self or ancestor of sorts, almost suggests a kind of regression where the college girl is concerned, a moving backwards, and this comes to colour her portrayal in varsity fiction as regrettably falling from maturity rather than regrettably heading toward it as the varsity boy is.[62]

Finally, on the subject of regression or backwards movement, a few words on structure shall close off this introduction. Falling in line with *retro*spective nostalgia more generally, as well as the patriarchal nostalgia emanating from Meade's and Marshall's novels specifically, this chapter considers women in retrograde where their connection to the university is concerned,

moving backwards from the cozy interiors of their college rooms to the rustic and domestic "bookless wilds" outside the university walls. That is, this chapter's structure and movement, which follows women as they are homebound rather than university-bound, as they are politely escorted out of the university and returned home, is meant to further emphasize the nostalgic thrust of the varsity texts under discussion. Part one considers women homebound *within* the university, as homemaking varsity students, domestically framed as objects of nostalgic appeal. Part two considers women homebound *outside* the university, inhabiting and embodying visions of home for both the nostalgic varsity man and the compromised varsity girl. Importantly, throughout both parts, the three most useful words for organizational and rhetorical purpose shall be those which have already featured heavily throughout this introduction—homely, homebound, and homemaking—those shifting, layered terms of double and sometimes triple meaning, valuable precisely because of their precarious natures which both underlie the polyvalence of this chapter's nostalgic discourse and match the precarity of the Victorian college woman's existence in its varsity texts. First, in describing visions of the women's colleges and their various interior spaces, as well as visions of the varsity girl herself, "homely" designates both appealingly homelike, and its unappealing (or ugly) opposite. In designating rustic demeanours and spaces, this term shall also prove useful in a third sense when considering the so-called "bookless wilds," the rustic ex-university space unto which the varsity novel heroines ultimately return. The layered meanings of "homebound" have been introduced already (bound *by* home, bound *for* home) and it is enough to stress here that, in the Victorian cultural imagination, the homebound woman is as prevalent a nostalgic vision for a women's college as the "dreaming spires" are for a man's varsity. Finally, the term "homemaking" partially overlaps with "homebound" through a shared meaning. At face value, of course, the term designates the act of making a home, and this

meaning shall inform my discussion in part one on the keen attentions the women's college novelists and exposé writers give to the varsity girl's ability (or inability) to create a comfortable home for herself and others within the university. But it does indeed overlap with "homebound" in its second meaning, designating not only the making *of* home, but making *for* home, both terms thus attached to the women's college student (fictional or otherwise) in her perceived movement homeward. As we turn now to the literature, we shall see that the two meanings of "homemaking" effectively bookend this chapter's analysis, beginning with the fictive varsity girl's act of making her college home, and ending, not with her momentous graduation, but rather with a momentous homemaking set to the sound of the envisioned varsity reader's nostalgic sigh: indeed, the female scholar earns her honours and varsity heroine status in setting out, not upon paths new and unknown, but rather upon the well-worn path back home.

PART ONE: A ROOM OF HER OWN

Cozy Visions and Optical Elisions

In her role as editor of *Atalanta*,[63] L. T. Meade took it upon herself to promote Girton and Newnham through published exposés that invited the readers of her monthly magazine into the women's colleges for literary virtual tours of their grounds and interior spaces, using her clout as one of the most popular varsity novelists of her age to add weight to her first-hand accounts and certain authority to her assessments of what was most worthy of interest. And, most worthy of interest to the roving eyes of outsiders (according to Meade) were the students' private rooms, the small domestic nooks of academic residence nestled deep within the colleges and generally off limits to those without special invitation. "I have been into several of the students' rooms," boasts Meade of Girton's in particular, "and cannot speak too highly of the refinement and taste which they exhibit. The home-like appearance of the bright little sitting-rooms, with their quaint

windows and simple decorations, cannot fail to impress all visitors favourably" ("Girton," 327). In designating the "home-like appearance" of the college rooms their most impressive feature, Meade joins a host of women's college writers and reporters specifically drawn to the college room not because of its ability to offer a glimpse into the lived experience of academic life for women (although this serves as brief pretense for many) but rather because of its irresistibly charming replication and nostalgic suggestion of home. The anonymous reporter of "Life at Newnham College," for instance, tasked with exposing the interiors of the second women's college established at Oxbridge to the curious readers of the *Manchester Times*, sees fit to comment in great detail on the idiosyncratic variety of the rooms' domestic decoration—the "host of yellow pots" in one, the "five o'clock sets, Swiss carvings, and many-hued china pots and bowls" in another—and especially on their various aspects of homely clutter (371).[64] Displaying an equally domestically-trained eye, the anonymous reporter of "College Life for Women" (1891) stokes reader interest in women's college life by exploring first the "charming retreats" found at the heart of the college, and attesting that their owners invariably "take great pride in these little dens" (10). This supposed pride of the rooms' residents is matched by the pleasure its visitors are expected to take in viewing these spaces as familiar settings of careful domestic display against the more sternly masculine academic backdrop of Oxbridge and, moreover, as sites evoking longing for the feminine and/or the maternal. Indeed, as Jane Hamlett suggests, observing that the many instances of domestic decoration in nineteenth-century men's college rooms worked in part as homages to the lost parlours and drawing rooms of their mothers, the college room exists culturally at this time as a nostalgic space for the lost feminine (8). But, the stakes are rather different where the homely women's college room is concerned, for, while male students might be understood as nodding to a nostalgic vision from afar, female

students are depicted, and especially so in varsity literature, as embodying the vision themselves for the benefit of others, and one that significantly compromises the identity of the female scholar. Moreover, from a varsity fiction perspective, while boys' varsity novels may depict lavish rooms or give some mention of room decoration, such passages are mere backdrop rather than the subject of intense activity and anxiety as is the case in women's varsity novels.

Women's varsity novels are linked to a wider catalogue of late-century New Woman fiction keenly interested in the rooms, lodgings, and rented quarters of single independent women and how these living spaces or alternative homes frame the unconventional rhythms of their lives (Hamlett 163).[65] For the "new girl" of the Victorian women's varsity novel, the college room is the setting for her unconventional task of university study, but the novel will invariably ignore this, attaching far greater importance in terms of plot to the room's conventional function as a space for domestic display and education. As in the women's college exposés, the more cluttered and (artfully) crammed the space is the more homely charm it exudes.[66] Both Meade and Marshall acknowledge this appeal by way of contrast at the start of their novels, emphasizing the unwelcoming bareness of their varsity heroines' rooms on their first nights in college residence against the more homely and sumptuously filled ones of other already-established collegians. Priscilla is immediately struck by the "unhomelike feel" of her room at St. Benet's, whose "absence of all ornament" renders it distinctly inferior to the "luxurious rooms" of her fellow students, made bright with flowers, fires, and electric lighting and made homely with their clutter of "pictures on the walls and lounges and chairs scattered about" (Meade 18, 28). In Marshall's novel, Lucy evinces a physical aversion to the "desolate" and "dismal" aspect of her "little bare room" at Newnham, shivering at the sight of its minimal furniture and lack of fire (1:48), and then feeling its coldness even more after returning from her

first cocoa party in a neighbour's room where she was warmly enchanted by a scene of varsity coziness: a room crammed with girls snugly settled on an assortment of furniture and a little writing-table equally crammed with a spread of "sweets and cakes and fruit, and cups brimming over with the nectar of Newnham" (Marshall 1: 67).[67] For both Priscilla and Lucy, empty college rooms trigger homesickness (nostalgia's pathological ancestor), but also great anxiety as these new scholars begin their university tenure already trailing in a daunting competition of varsity homemaking.

Unlike Lucy, Priscilla's sense of domestic inferiority is not bolstered by internal anxieties alone but in large part by the external peer pressure and torment she endures from the varsity novel's token mean girls who nickname her "Plain Propriety" on her first night in college[68] because of the shockingly Spartan aspect of her room, and continue to persecute her for not furnishing it quickly enough. "You're so dreadfully unsociable, not a bit like an ordinary St. Benet's girl" says one of her persecutors, criticizing Priscilla's varsity homemaking indirectly by implying its negative impact on her social character, which does not appear to fit the established mould of the social domestic whose parlour is always open to callers (Meade 58). Another criticism follows, one that begins with a similar argument of sociality but, the pretext proving too cumbersome, stumbles back to the more obvious target at hand, the room itself: "After you have been at St. Benet's a little longer you will know that we not only appreciate cleverness and studious ways, but also obliging and sociable and friendly manners; and – and – pretty rooms – rooms with easy-chairs, and comfortable lounges, and the thousand and one things which give one a feeling of home" (Meade 60). As this faltering articulation reveals, there is an obvious obsession in women's varsity fiction for "pretty rooms" and their "thousand and one things," and for Meade it is the ideal subject for building up her varsity protagonist's heroic qualities at the

start of the novel as Priscilla learns to withstand and then stand up to the cruel varsity home-shaming of the St. Benet's girls. When Priscilla finally confronts her tormenters, she does so with confidence and style, displaying her empty trunk before an audience of college girls as a parallel container of emptiness to sit alongside her bare room, offering it up as explanation for why she cannot fill her room to satisfy their homely standards. "[Y]ou will be good enough to notice that there are no photographs concealed in this trunk, no pictures, no prints," she declares, "nothing here to make my room pretty, and cozy, and home-like" (Meade 60). She then produces for further examination her similarly empty purse containing little over a sovereign and asks rhetorically whether it would be enough to purchase the domestic luxuries she is criticised for not possessing. Notably, while Priscilla's humble origins have already been introduced to the reader long before this moment in the narrative—the poverty of Penywern cottage, the penniless aunt, the dependent sisters, the second-hand clothing—it is only now that the reader comes to understand their import for her varsity life. As emphasized in the last chapter, varsity fiction spells out class privilege in particular ways. Thus, just as varsity play and idleness are distinct privileges of the wealthier undergraduate in boys' varsity fiction, the act of varsity homemaking, the ability to create a college room of homely clutter and cozy contrivances[69] deemed praiseworthy by the appraising eyes of others, is a privilege of the upper middle-class girl in women's varsity fiction.[70]

Priscilla's trifecta of empty containers (room, trunk, purse), with larger containing smaller in Russian nesting doll fashion, provides an ideal entryway into part one's governing idea of domestic containment: the idea that, as women's varsity literature depicts it, Oxbridge's reluctant embrace of the women's college is effected figuratively through the enclosure of the home within it as an appropriate frame of reference for the female scholar who is thereby

contained in every sense of the term. I have, throughout this dissertation, aligned Victorian Oxbridge, and specifically its fictive or imagined identity (the "idea of a university"), with heterotopic space, each chapter considering a different angle of the space—its illusory openness, its heterochronic iteration of time—as theorized by Foucault.[71] The idea of a university containing the home within it (both homely college and homely room) prompts consideration of the heterotopia from the angle of containment as well, as a site in which "other" sites are "simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted" (Foucault 24), as a place that is capable of containing within it several "other" spaces that are incompatible or even antithetical to one another and the larger site (Foucault 25). Thus, women's varsity literature contributes to a heterotopian reading of imagined Victorian Oxbridge in its preoccupation with varsity homes whose intimate, comfortable appeal depends greatly on a perceived incompatibility with their larger container sites of academic work and vaulted grandeur, along with "other" contained spaces imagined within such as the stark monastic cell or the gentleman-commoner's chambers of rowdy undergraduate play.

In considering ideas of domestic containment, of smaller homes (college rooms) within larger homes (women's colleges) enclosed within larger unhomely sites, alongside Foucauldian heterotopian theory, which points to the tensions of illusion, compatibility, and purpose where container and contained are concerned, it is also productive to consider Susan Stewart's study of the dollhouse or miniature home,[72] and arguably even more so because the tensions she points to (similarly, of illusion, compatibility, and purpose) are grounded in nostalgia. For Stewart, the appeal of the dollhouse is not only its representation of "domesticated space as a model of order, proportion, and balance" but also its identity as an object of longing, located (as are most miniatures, she notes) at places of either origin (i.e. childhood) or ending (i.e. impending death or

obsolescence) where it is nostalgically infused and distanced (68). For the purposes of this analysis, and remembering (as Stewart does) the Victorians' characteristic interest in miniatures as a means of study and preservation in a world of rapid industrial change (68-69), it is helpful to consider the fictive women's college room a kind of miniature or dollhouse version of the Victorian home. This association works especially well for women's varsity literature wherein the college room is used to incite nostalgic feeling in those who view it from the outside as a vision of both playful domestic replication and domestic loss. And, importantly, it is only objectively that the dollhouse *is* viewed, Stewart emphasizes; it is an object "consumed by the eye" of the outsider rather than a space of subjective experience (62), just as the women's college room is rendered an objective vision in varsity literature, and one that is used to capture (and corner, as I shall explain) the female scholar rather than contribute to her academic subjectivity.

But Stewart's paradigm needs one crucial adjustment in order to apply properly to varsity literature's visions of the women's college room. Stewart considers the dollhouse miniaturized by scale: a perfectly proportioned yet scaled down version of the real house, with its smallness registering for the outside viewer in comparison with the larger house it fits within and the larger body it cannot fit within it (Stewart xii). In women's varsity literature, however, the smallness of the homely college room is measured or, rather, to use Meade's term, is *impressed* upon the viewer's eye through visions of coziness and elision of space. In short, as with Stewart's dollhouse, the eye does not merely consume or translate the varsity space without some willful participation in an illusion: just as, with the dollhouse, the eye alternates between choosing to see or not see the oversized surroundings and bodies which become either "remarkable" or grotesque in juxtaposition (46), the eye of the varsity room visitor or exposer renders it an illusive vision of

both concentrated domestic space (cozy corners) and elided domestic space (rooms upon rooms, without division), which are key to its nostalgic appeal as my discussion to follow shall demonstrate. And as for the body, that the envisioned college girl does indeed fit in her college room, her miniature varsity-made home, that she can be contained within and framed within so appealingly is necessary in women's varsity literature, for she is the focal-point of the nostalgic vision, the doll that makes sense of the house as the varsity towers grotesquely far above her.

It is quite appropriate that Priscilla's heated defence of her bare college room is sensitive to the idea that "home-like" space is defined by the appeal of coziness and not only by the appeal of the "pretty" (Meade 60). Not only appropriate within the context of Meade's novel—in which the descriptor "cozy" or the synonymous "snug" appears twelve times at least and where characters are constantly inviting their college-mates to join them for a "cozy time" or for a "cozy read by the fire"—but also quite appropriate in the context of women's varsity literature more broadly throughout which there appears to be something of an obsession with domestic coziness, with fires, cocoas, clutter, and general collegial warmth.[73] While another project, with a wider scope and a more cynical argument, might read this pervasive varsity trope of collegial warmth and coziness as a subliminal compensatory response to the idea of the university as an otherwise cold and unwelcoming place for women, or else (more cynical still) a place that has the propensity to render women cold and un-nurturing,[74] I consider it only as one of varsity literature's preferred methods of rendering the nostalgic charm of the women's college and its rooms, narrowing the vision to concentrated corners, nooks, and other intimate recesses of domestic space in order to capture their "sweet" inmates within.

Although the colleges were rather spacious dwellings with ample grounds, the women's college exposé writers nonetheless depict them as an accumulation of small, sheltered, and low-

lying spaces, with girls parcelled in various corners of intimate activity. As for instance Eleanor Field does in her Newnham exposé "Women at an English University" (1891), surveying, for the benefit of her American reader's envisioning eye, an enticing varsity scene of girls "curled up under the trees with a book, wandering arm in arm up and down a shady avenue, or forming cozy little tea parties in sheltered nooks" (288-89). But, as one would expect, it is the private college rooms that prompt the exposé writer's most intense evocations of the cozy vision, as Meade's own assessment of Newnham's reveals: "The impression these students' rooms gave me was all that was charming. They are quaintly contrived with odd windows peeping out in unexpected corners. The decoration is simple, and the young owners allow one to get a peep at their individual characters and tastes in the adornments, the photographs, the books, which are scattered freely about" ("Newnham," 527). Here is the charm of homely clutter, quaint contrivances, and "unexpected corners" impressed upon the viewer; but Meade also underscores, in her repetition of the optical verb "peep" in these lines, a verb used frequently throughout women's college literature to describe the kind of microscopic consumption and exposition that the colleges are seen to invite, inspire, or even (as cloistered spaces of private female residence) allow,[75] that the vision of college coziness in women's varsity literature is an illusive rendering, a reductive manipulation, by the objective eye.

If the cozy college room is a narrowed vision, one must consider what is not being seen, and therefore outside the frame of longing. First, there is an intimate subjectivity to the construction and ownership of cozy space, that is noticeably absent in women's varsity literature. The appeal of "a room of one's own" at a college for women was a popular theme in the private homebound letters of Oxbridge's first cohort of female students (and long before Woolf enshrined the idea in feminist discourse) which, as Carol Dyhouse observes, "sparkle with

exhilaration at the prospect of enjoying personal space" and a place for self-expression (91).[76] Indeed the connection between personal space (and especially that bearing a cozy aspect) and *selfness* permeated a wider discursive sphere of women's independence in Victorian England, within which the women's college movement worked, even to the extent of alerting a critic such as Lady Margaret Hall's Elizabeth Wordsworth, whose support of women's autonomy was ever padded with skeptical conservatism, to the suggestion of self-indulgence: "Not only single men, but single women, have their lives made a great deal too comfortable. Everywhere one sees little suites of apartments and clubs springing up, nice little sets of tea-things and cozy contrivances, for making a single, or at least a dual life as easy and self-indulgent as possible" (247). Thus, whether important self-affirmation or cautionary self-indulgence, coziness is understood to encode the self as much as it encloses space. In Victorian novels this is characteristically the case, as Thad Logan insists, identifying coziness among the three conventions of domestic description[77] (alongside scarcity and excess)[78] as the truest expression of selfhood in the fictive room of one's own (207-08).[79] But this is precisely what makes the cozy obsession in women's varsity literature so strange because rather than encode metonymic intimacy between space and character, as Logan argues is the Victorian norm, contributing to the subjective identity of the college girl through the appeal of domestic ownership and arrangement and expression, coziness in women's varsity literature seems instead to encode nostalgia and domestic containment for the outside viewer. Indeed, there is no indulgence in the appeal of "a room of one's own" in women's varsity literature, only an indulgence in visions of the homebound woman.

Also sitting outside the frame of the cozy room vision is the functional purpose of the college room as academic work space. When college girls are objectively framed as visions of coziness alone, the integrity of their scholastic identities is undermined and so too is the integrity

of the women's college as a space of serious academic work. In fact, because the studious use value of the women's college room is absent from its cultural presentation and consumption one might logically consider the cozy room as it appears in women's varsity literature a fetishized commodity in the Marxist sense,[80] one whose cultural cachet is its visual suggestion of home, contribution to the idea of "domestic collegiate," and nostalgic evocation.[81] I shall consider now two presentations of the cozy vision, the first in Meade's novel, the second in a student-penned Newnham exposé, both of which display the college room as a narrowed space of fetishized coziness, with the college girl captured therein as an object of longing, and her intellectual activity either disavowed or reduced to an aberrant curiosity within her domestic container. With these two examples, the diminishment of the intellectual academic identity in favour of the domestic vision is especially disheartening because the two girls captured—*Sweet Girl*'s most popular girl Maggie, and Newnham's celebrated scholar Philippa Fawcett—are in fact Tripos champions, those rarest of Cambridge scholars who have placed among the highest in their Honours exams.[82]

First, of all the homely rooms in Meade's *A Sweet Girl Graduate*, Maggie's is the paragon of picturesque domestic coziness,[83] and perfectly in keeping with the popularity and enviable beauty of Maggie herself. The reader encounters the room upon Priscilla's first visit there, for her first cocoa party, and sees first hand why it is hailed as the "prettiest" of the rooms at St. Benet's (Meade 35):

> The room was crowded with knick-knacks and rendered gay and sweet by many tall flowers in pots. A piano stood open by one of the walls and a violin lay carelessly on a chair not far off. There were piles of new music and some tempting, small, neatly bound books lying about. A fire glowed on the hearth and a little brass kettle sang merrily on the

> hob. The cocoa-table was drawn up in front of the fire and on a quaintly shaped tray stood the bright little cocoa-pot and the oddly devised cups and saucers. (Meade 35)

This room is the epitome of the cozy Victorian parlour, articulating feminine accomplishment and entertainment as well as a homely lived-in appeal with its clutter of knick-knacks and touches of disorder. Then of course there is the "little brass kettle" singing "merrily," as cloying and ubiquitous a symbol of idyllic Victorian domesticity as anything found throughout the many imagined depictions of the era's angel-blessed houses. As well, there is an emphasis on smallness—the "small" books, the "little" kettle and cocoa-pot—working alongside the clutter to contribute to the cozy aspect. But Maggie's "sweet" room is not nearly as impressive for the "cozy contrivances" it contains as it is for the "sweet girl" it contains, for the picture of Maggie snugly settled in her room triggers many enthusiastic effusions of joy from various characters throughout the novel as they invariably come upon her and cannot help but punctuate the vision with exclamations of "How snug you are here" or "How cozy you look here" (Meade 35, 70). Indeed, the figure of Maggie framed by her cozy room is rendered for visual consumption in the novel, not only for the domestic delight of her fellow fictional collegians but also to trigger a kind of homely longing in the varsity reader through the gaze of the narrative eye. In one telling moment, for instance, we encounter Maggie alone in her room at perhaps the only time in the novel that she is not the centre of a social gathering or the focus of another girl's pointed fawning or envy. As Maggie sits alone, having "curled herself up in her luxurious chair" and "arranged a soft pillow under her head," the reader is urged to indulge a voyeuristic pleasure and gaze upon the resting college girl as a picturesque figure of cozy familiarity, with the narrator noting that "[in] this attitude she made a charming picture" (Meade 67). But the domestic still-life is disturbed, and Maggie shifts from an object of familiarity to one of strangeness, when she

suddenly rises from her chair, crosses her small room, and sits down at her bureau to begin reading from the lamp-lit pages of a book, *Prometheus Bound*.[84] The narrator continues but now voyeuristic pleasure and longing are replaced with voyeuristic curiosity as the reader is urged to examine the female scholar at close range, and wonder at her like an exotic bird in a cage:

> Any one who had seen Maggie in her deep and expressionless sleep but a few minutes before would have watched her now with a sensation of surprise. This queer girl was showing another phase of her complex nature. Her face was no longer lacking in expression […] A fine fire filled her eyes; her brow, as she pushed back her hair, showed its rather massive proportions. Now, intellect and the triumphant delight of overcoming a mental difficulty reigned supreme in her face. (Meade 68-69)

Just as the sudden movements of a caged bird become something to marvel at, a captured bit of otherworldly nature reframed within the cultured confines of a Victorian parlour, the female scholar at work becomes a strange object of startling complexity within the culturally-preferred frame of college room coziness, a thing to peer at in bemused wonder. And importantly, that Maggie's sudden turn to studious activity is registered through the "fire" in her eye and the "massive proportions" of her brow proves how ill-suited the activity is, and unsettling, in a room that is prized for cozy repose and smallness.

The Philippa Fawcett exposé, titled "Miss Fawcett at Newnham College: By One of Her Friends,"[85] makes a similar attempt to capture its sweet girl graduate in a narrow vision of fetishized coziness for the benefit of cultural consumption, similarly reducing the academic identity of its celebrated figure, Cambridge's first "Lady Senior Wrangler." The writer, a fellow Newnhamite and self-proclaimed friend of Fawcett, shines a brief spotlight on the recent Tripos Champion, endeavouring to fight the perverse cultural belief that "women's colleges are peopled

by a sort of impossible race of eccentrics" ("Miss Fawcett," 1) but not at all resisting the cultural temptation to counter the contention of eccentricity with domesticity, re-centering the woman of superior intelligence in a domestic frame. The narrowing of the objective lens, where Fawcett's domestic sweetness is brought into central focus and her academic achievements are allowed to blur on the periphery, is emphasized rather remarkably in this exposé. The reporter allows her reader to follow Fawcett's imagined movements as she leaves behind her the varsity crowd outside the Senate House steps where the exam announcements have just been read aloud and the scholar's extraordinary victory has been hailed widely[86] and makes her way to the close and cozy interior of her room in Clough Hall, a "pretty little chamber" with "a mahogany bureau, an old oak table, a bed in one corner, and a thoroughly cosy chair" ("Miss Fawcett," 2). That the quiet, domestic charm of the room is meant to contain the academic identity of the female scholar, just as her name would have been contained in brackets on the exam results list denoting a success that risks exceeding the bounds of her sex, is suggested not only by the fact that Fawcett must return *here* in order for us to know her, but also by the fact that the room's domestic touches are seen to temper or soften any suggestion of harsh unfeminine academia. The reader's inquiring eye is directed to observe how photographs, reliefs, and water-colours cover over the "severe plaster walls" of the college, and, importantly, how the "rows of mathematical tomes" and other volumes of varied reading sitting on the scholar's bookshelf are "prettily bound by the fingers of their owner, who is also, by the way," and here the reporter drives home her objective to domesticate the female scholar, "not too emancipated to be an expert needlewoman, with a nice skill in embroidery" ("Miss Fawcett," 2).

The reporter's finishing touches to this strategically reassuring vision of Fawcett's cozy room include an invocation of the ubiquitous singing kettle—"[if] it be tea-time, a kettle singing

on the hob completes this characteristic little corner of Newnham life"—and attention to the corner, a space of special significance to the constructed domestic appeal of the women's colleges and their rooms, and where this Tripos champion is neatly stowed away ("Miss Fawcett," 2). Indeed, I contend that the fetish of coziness in women's varsity literature trades on the appeal of cozy corners and in fact many of the women's college exposés include accompanying images pointing to this popular trend. Both a *Windsor Magazine* Girton exposé and a *Hearth and Home* advertisement for London's Westfield College, for example, include close-up images of college room corners, appropriately cluttered and enticingly captioned "A Cosy Corner in a Girton Room" and "A Typical Snuggery" respectively (Appendix Figs. 1, 2). Then, one step further is the pervasive desire to see the college girl herself within the frame (Appendix Figs. 3, 4, 5) literally cornered within the much larger university that contains her. Philippa Fawcett herself is even captured in this way (Appendix Figs. 6, 7), with the only two extant photographs commemorating her exam success[87] cornering the recent champion in her college room (the one standing wistfully at her corner window and the other reading in her "thoroughly cosy chair") just as her friend's exposé does, although the latter far more problematically so in its indulgence of the readership's perceived preference for not only containing her, but insulating her from her very public and publicized success.

Again, one must remember that the homely college room is a constructed illusion in women's varsity literature, a vision that obscures. As I have shown, its persistent presentation as an objective vision usurps the subjective experience of a varsity room of one's own, its fetishized coziness purely for consumptive display distorts the functional purpose of the room as academic workspace, and its containment of the female scholar perpetuates the indulgent cultural stereotype of the "sweet girl graduate," she who goes to college but is inevitably bound to the

home. But if the fictive women's college room is a manipulative rendering of academic space, it is also an illusive rendering of the home, a mere replica (or dollhouse) that no number of quaint furnishings, cluttered knick-knacks, or cozy corners can truly disguise.[88] Indeed, in women's varsity literature, notwithstanding the pleasures that are elicited from the displays and attempts at authentic varsity homemaking, the identity of the women's college room as a false or illusory home is never forgotten but rather openly acknowledged, and most especially in its elision of domestic space. That is, one of the most common ways that the women's college room visually *impresses* in the exposés and novels, one of the key ways that it is envisioned and exposed, is through the illusion of elision: as a compressed replica of the Victorian home with all necessary rooms layered within. In the exposés, this illusion, this shifting form and function of the college room, is laid bare, eliciting much bewilderment and affected confusion of the kind expressed in an exposé of Oxford's women's colleges for the *Girls' Own Paper*. "Let us go up and see their rooms" urges the anonymous reporter, and then:

> As we are ushered from one to another, we feel inclined to ask, "Where do the students sleep? or do they work so hard they do not give time to sleep, as we ordinary mortals do?" Each room looks like a pretty sitting-room. Most are of medium size, some smaller, some larger. During the day the beds are hidden by chintz covers, which transform them into sofas! Wash-hand stands are concealed with equal cleverness, and each student finds herself in possession of a nice study for the day, in which she takes great pride. ("Education for Women at Oxford" 695)

Or else, eliciting much praise for ingenuity, of the kind expressed in Meade's Newnham exposé:

> How clever and skilful are their many contrivances to shut away the bedroom element, and promote that of the drawing-room! In short, few visitors would guess that the

> inviting-looking sofa, with its oriental covering, may have to do duty at night as a place for repose. (Meade "Newnham" 527)

Few visitors indeed, for while the Victorian home is typically recognized to be a place of division (as is the dollhouse, more exaggeratedly), with private space separate from public space, men's space from women's, children's from adults',[89] the homely women's college room is depicted as one of elision—part parlour, bedroom, and study—taking on the aspect or function of two or three rooms simultaneously or alternately and with furnishings of dual purpose such as tables for both study and meals, trunks and stools used for guest chairs, and the much-noted bed which doubles as a couch. In the novels, the optical *elisions* of the college room are just as evident, exposing the illusion of the varsity-made home, and, as with the exposés, the bed features quite prominently: both Meade and Marshall place their protagonists in rooms with noteworthy sofa-beds and strategically-placed curtains to shut away various aspects of the rooms' private functions,[90] and in one memorable instance the disguised bed of one of Lucy's new college acquaintances is exposed by the narrator when she declares, ironically, that "nobody but a Newnham girl would have dreamed it was a bed" (Marshall 67). Indeed, as women's varsity literature depicts it, the college room is an illusion, and the college homemaker an illusionist whose skill and cleverness depend rather unconventionally on the shifting edges of the illusion remaining visible, and on the homemaker herself imagined behind the scenes in a continuous act of varsity homemaking.

If the varsity-made home is a visible illusion, then it is unquestionably a false or failed home. In the Victorian women's varsity novel, alongside the many depictions of successful varsity homemaking are just as many depictions of those that fail, with much humour mined out of the inept college homemaker whose attempts at playing house on the varsity stage render her

inoffensively childish or offensively ignorant. Thus, the female scholar in varsity literature is condemned on two fronts: both eclipsed by the ideal domestic and aligned with the failed. In *A Sweet Girl Graduate*, for instance, Meade has Priscilla attend a cocoa party in a college room of ridiculous décor intended to raise a laugh out of the reader and sit in contrast to Maggie's room of picturesque perfection and cozy comfort. The room is described as being "showily furnished" with a profusion of Japanese paper lanterns, hung from ceiling wires and festooned haphazardly to "grotesque and almost bizarre" effect, making the overall impression of this varsity nook, as assessed by its visitors, "the reverse of reposeful" (Meade 129).[91] Similarly, in *The Master of St. Benedict's*, Lucy's first college social call is an invitation to tea across the corridor in a college room as unhomely as its resident, "a solid-looking" red-haired girl nicknamed "Capability" Stubbs, is homely (Marshall 1:49).[92] Stubbs's room, judged to be "distinctly utilitarian" with "nothing aesthetic about it," registers domestic failure most prominently in its presentation of chaotic rather than quaint clutter: "a bookshelf full of books" sits next to a cabinet "crammed with specimens," the tea-things are laid on the flap of the bureau with "some cakes in one of the pigeon-holes" (Marshall 1:50).[93] These failed varsity homes and homemakers contribute greatly to the humour of their novels to be sure, but they are also an important contribution to their novels' nostalgic projects. Returning to the dollhouse analogy, we discussed how it incites nostalgia in its identity as replication, but Stewart also stresses that a key part of nostalgia is the mourning for inauthentic replications and repetitions (23). According to Stewart, crucial to nostalgia is the "inability of the sign to 'capture' its signified," the sad recognition of falseness, inauthenticity, and illusion (23-24). The varsity-made home, then, and most especially that bearing signs of failure, triggers nostalgia for an irreplaceable, irreplicable authentic, and one that is presided over by a lost angel that the college girl cannot be while she is college-bound,

even while the "sweetest" of her kind is forcibly captured in this façade. Indeed, behind all varsity homemakers—the adept ones whose rooms impress with the illusions of home, the inept ones whose rooms impress with discomfort or horror—sits the lost domestic in both person and place. In fact, as I shall demonstrate in the closing section of this first part, which brings together two analogous scenes in Meade's and Marshall's novels, the idea of the lost domestic haunts the college room in women's varsity fiction, where nostalgic mourning is mingled with the chilling sensation of what is left behind after death.

Angels in the Varsity: Two Hauntings

In order to align nostalgia with a haunting one must recognize that both emphasize what Roberta Rubenstein calls "the presence of absence" (5). In both, the "felt absence of a person or place assumes form and occupies imaginative space as a presence that may come to possess an individual" such that both the nostalgiac and the haunted feel the power of what is lost even as they are transfixed and/or unsettled by the vision that takes its place (Rubenstein 5). "Nostalgia in this sense" concludes Rubenstein, "is a kind of haunted longing" (5).[94] Continuing the college room focus of this first part, my discussion in this section considers two college rooms that trigger this sense of haunted longing: two rooms wherein the absence of the domestic angel is felt so acutely—and in one so deeply as to be a ghostly presence—that the resident scholar and her college are rendered inferior and empty by comparison.

First is the haunted room of Pamela Gwatkin, a central character in *The Master of St. Benedict's* who, like Capability Stubbs, exemplifies the common varsity novel trope of the studious varsity girl who has no disposition for homemaking, in the same way that the studious varsity boy has no disposition for play. Pamela is Marshall's equivalent to Meade's Maggie in all but homemaking skill: in her beauty, popularity, and intellectual capacity, and especially so in

her influence over the novel's protagonist. But she fails at constructing the cozy college room that makes Maggie the envied darling of her college.[95] In keeping with this chapter's argument on patriarchal nostalgia and the ways that the women's college and its inmates are envisioned by outsiders, it is significant that the failure of Pamela's room is registered through the eyes of her visiting brother Eric Gwatkin, who finds occasion in one pivotal scene to snoop around his sister's empty college bower when she is absent ("One can tell so much from a room in daily use what people's occupations are" he muses) but finds it to be a decidedly strange and comfortless place (Marshall 2:62). Importantly, what signals the room's seemingly unfeminine, unhomely atmosphere to the young man's horror-stricken eye is the profusion of books: the various tomes, mostly mathematical, he finds scattered about. Indeed, his immediate discomfort in his sister's book-filled room supports the Ruskinian idea that what differentiates a man's space ("kings' treasuries") from a woman's ("queens' gardens") is the presence of books.[96] It also aligns with the apologetic inclination of women's college exposés to offset an abundance of books in a college girl's room with attention to its feminine ornament and cozy aspect,[97] and, over all, with the persistent cultural fancy that women belong to the romantically-charged "bookless wilds."[98] Moving beyond mere discomfort, however, Pamela's "unnatural" room triggers a physical reaction in her brother that renders the college room one of chilling disturbance. Indeed, the scene is remarkably melodramatic in its description of Eric's unease:

> Eric quite shivered when he saw those books and the problem papers that were scattered about; the ink was still wet on some of them. […] Oh, Nature had made a great mistake! She ought to have made Pamela the man. What was the use of giving all that brain to a woman? […] There were shelves and shelves of books in this girl's room, and there were not a dozen in Eric's […] There were books on Pamela's shelves that made his hair stand

> on end. He groaned as he read the titles, and he had cold shivers down his back. (Marshall 2:62-63)

The shivering, groaning, and hair-raising described here are reactions not only to a figurative coldness but also to a feeling of dread or fright, as Pamela's room raises spectres of academic and gender uncertainty for her brother in consideration of both his own identity and hers. Just as Pamela's academic rigour and intelligence mark her room as coldly unwelcoming, so too does it mark him an unworthy academic and her an unnatural woman.[99] The absence of the warm domestic angel is therefore registered through the reaction of a man who is as chilled by the ghost of absence as he is by the presence of the stark academic space that brings it to mind.

Meade's haunted college room marks the presence of absence with more than shivers and groans however; it bears actual traces of its lost angel, in both faded domestic ornament and ghostly presence, inciting nostalgic feeling in the college girls who either mourn its destruction or feel intimidated by its legacy. The room in question, Priscilla's bare and "unhomelike" college room, is one we have considered already, but I return to it now to reveal one of the key reasons behind the homemaking pressure she experiences there at the start of the novel. When Priscilla arrives at St. Benet's College, she is assigned to a room with a mysterious past, a room considered a "shrine" to more than one college girl and the subject of many hushed whispers (Meade 17). Priscilla soon learns that she has inherited the room of a beloved former student named Annabel Lee, a true angel in the varsity whose tragic college death aligns her with the martyr-scholars discussed in the previous chapter, but, importantly, one who is mourned as much and perhaps even more for a perceived waste of domestic skill and potential as she is for the waste of life and innocence. Indeed, Annabel's identity as the lost domestic in this varsity narrative is emphasized by the mysterious homemaking nostalgia that haunts her old college

room, where faint traces of "picturesque" hand-painted wild roses are still detectable on the walls, and where visions of its homely décor still linger in the minds of the college girls who remember it and cannot enter the room without ecstatic exclamations of nostalgic feeling (Meade 28). "Look," says one of the girls Priscilla is compelled to host on her first night in college, "it was in that corner she had her rocking-chair. Girls, *do* you remember Annabel's rocking-chair, and how she used to sway herself backward and forward in it and half-shut her lovely eyes?" (Meade 31). How appropriate that the nostalgic vision once again features the cornered college girl in a position of cozy repose. The others then chime in, adding their nostalgic touches to a collectively remembered vision of the deceased girl's room: "Oh, and don't I just seem to *see* that little red tea-table of hers near the fire […] That Japanese table, with the Japanese tea-set – oh dear, oh dear! those cups of tea – those cakes! Well, the room was luxurious, was worth coming to see in Annabel's time" (Meade 31).

Annabel is pivotal to understanding the varsity room as a space of domestic interest and nostalgic evocation for the home, but she also contributes to the cultural idea of the women's college as a place where domestic potential dies, an idea suggested not only by her death but also by the fact that she is succeeded by Priscilla who is unable to rise to the homemaking challenge that is set for her. "I have no doubt," says one girl after Priscilla's guests have done with their nostalgic visions of her room's past, that "[w]hen Miss Peel unpacks her trunk, she'll make the room look very pretty, too" (Meade 32). But of course this assertion is not fulfilled for, despite the courage of spirit that the defence of her bare room occasions, Meade's heroine is destined to fail in this endeavour. And it is her inability to carry on Annabel's homemaking legacy that raises Annabel's ghost in Priscilla's distracted mind, rendering the room haunted once again, this time not by feelings of domestic reverence but rather by the feeling of inadequacy that is

supposed to reside in the heart of the female scholar. Priscilla's first night in college is disturbed by terrible visions of the room's painted roses, and more specifically "of the hand that had painted the flowers, of the girl whose presence had once made the room in which she now lay so charming" (Meade 40).[100] The haunting only becomes more intense as Priscilla's guilt grows, and, throughout, Annabel's presence is felt through the domestic activity which she continues even after death:

> [Priscilla] felt absolutely nervous; she had a sense of usurping some one else's place, of turning somebody else out into the cold. She did not believe in ghosts, but she had an uncomfortable sensation, and it would not have greatly surprised her if Annabel had come gliding back in the night watches to put the finishing touches to those scrolls of wild flowers which ornamented the panels of the doors, and to the design of the briar-rose which ran round the frieze of the room. Annabel might come in, and pursue this work in stealthy spirit fashion, and then glide up to her, and ask her to get out of this little white bed, and let the strange visitor, to whom it had once belonged, rest in it herself once more. (Meade 40-41)

The unease that Priscilla feels in the presence of Annabel's ghost is an internalized version of the judgement that Eric Gwatkin casts upon his sister's book-strewn room. The sense of usurpation that links these two hauntings (both Priscilla and Pamela are cast as outlier occupants) suggests that the women's college room is a useful stage in varsity literature for considering the broader idea of the clumsy college girl as an invasive species among Victorian women, one who usurps the rightful place of a more traditional and appealing female spirit.

Before leaving Annabel's haunted room and closing off this chapter's first part, it is important to consider briefly this martyr-scholar alongside the character of John Osborne, the

short-lived scholar of Adams's *Wilton of Cuthbert's*, featured in Chapter Two. Noting the differences between the two tragic figures will further emphasize the differences between the two varsity novel genres (boys' and girls') and their distinct nostalgic projects. First, as already mentioned, Annabel's death is presented as a waste of domestic potential rather than a waste of youthful life (as Osborne's is), and she embodies the lost woman in this regard. Secondly, while both scholars are "destined to a short life" and destined to leave behind legacies that touch their fellow collegians with nostalgic heartache (Meade 249), only the male scholar's legacy is unbound. That is, while Osborne's legacy is the academic achievements and experiences he writes upon his entire university in the moment of his death—the emotional moment, if we recall, that he surveys "Dear old Oxford" from his deathbed window and grafts his memories upon library, chapel, tower, and exam hall enshrining his identity upon them all (Adams 371)—Annabel's legacy is contained within the four walls of her former college room, in the traces of decoration she leaves behind there and in the vision of its former domestic glory living in the memories of her friends.[101] Here is, then, another example of the domestic containment or cornering of the female scholar in varsity literature, for while we may speak of Osborne as a resident spirit of his university following his martyrdom, following her martyrdom Annabel is only allowed to be a resident spirit of her room or, at best, of her homely college. Thirdly, and finally, just as Annabel's nostalgic legacy is homebound in its ties to her college room, so too is her spirit imagined to be homebound in its fateful final journey. After her death she is described as having "gone to the Home best fitted for so ardent and high a spirit" so that her death becomes simply a more divine vision of returning home (Meade 249). But not so for Osborne, for he is a boy scholar and home does not call for his return. As he is dying Osborne's vision of heaven is that of his beloved Oxford dissolving into the holy city, thus admitting him into a more divinely

crystallized vision of the university where he rises to greater heights of knowledge. So, while the martyr scholar is an important trigger for more than one variant of discursive nostalgia across varsity literature, only in women's varsity literature does the figure contribute to a patriarchal variant, one that perpetuates the idea of the female scholar as ever homebound, and one that narrows the scope of the martyr's influence to a domestic sphere, divinely adorned, but nonetheless far removed from the grander academic heavens.

PART TWO: THE BOOKLESS WILDS

Rustication

"*The stars only may be over her head; the glowworm in the night-cold grass may be the only fire at her foot; but home is yet wherever she is*…"
—John Ruskin, "Of Queens' Gardens," *Sesame and Lilies* (1865)[102]

As Tennyson's Prince and his two henchmen stand before Princess Ida, disguised as women seeking entrance into her infamous women's university, the formidable headmistress greets them graciously as strangers from the "bookless wilds": "Your flight from out your bookless wilds would seem / As arguing love of knowledge and of power" (2. 42-43). They are welcomed not only because of their stated interest in the academic fortress to which they have come, but also because of their desire to leave behind the inhospitable wilderness *from* which they have fled. For indeed, and for any woman with a thirst for knowledge especially, the "bookless wilds" represent both a natural space without higher education, and the vast expanse of time that women have been subjected to inferior education; and the woman's university is the vital antithesis, rising out of this wilderness a sanctuary. However, as we know, Tennyson's Princess and her band of female scholars are compelled to leave the university and return to this bookless wilderness at the end of the poem, just as a male student expelled from Victorian Oxbridge is said to be "rusticated" and imagined (however urban his home may in fact be) to be

sent down from the high cultured groves of academe to the wild, rural lowlands of a simpler England.[103] But while the male student's rustication is cause for regret in varsity literature, and a mark of certain immaturity, the rustication of the female scholar is cause for joy and satisfaction, for her return to the bookless wilds, simultaneously a return to nature and home, is deemed entirely appropriate and a mark of maturity. It is also, as Meade's and Marshall's novels demonstrate in their conclusions, the varsity heroine's act of resuming her place, after a brief sidestep into college life, in nostalgic vision.

In this chapter's second part, I continue to explore the home-college dialectic, so pervasively present across women's varsity literature, but with some significant expansion on the one side, so that "home" is understood to encompass the bookless wilds. The dialectic still maintains, and continues to be a patriarchal trap of nostalgic envisioning for the female scholar, but now the university/college is counterbalanced by humble spaces characterized by a blend of domestic and rustic identity, spaces of traditional lore, homegrown teachings, and natural/rural instruction to which women are deemed native. Indeed, we have only to remember Ruskin's idyllic vision of the homemaking woman, she who can make a home where there is only grass underfoot and stars overhead, to know that the Victorians were not only quite comfortable with the idea of women at home in nature, but, more generally, perpetuated what Barbara Gates terms the "pervasive feminization of nature and the naturalization of women" (3).[104] Like potted plants or caged birds, women were habitually imagined to be part of nature, but domesticated just enough so as to be both delightfully and "precariously positioned along a nature-culture axis" (Logan 159).

This idea of "natural" woman came to inform considerations of women's education, such that women were deemed best taught in a classroom of nature and of home (or some mixture of

the two) where they could learn from their environment in a more organic and intuitive way than a more rigorous academic environment would permit. Both Ruskin and Elizabeth Wordsworth were proponents of this and, rather interestingly, both make their arguments by suggesting that a woman's act of learning instantly rusticates or naturalizes her environment in accordance with her characteristically effortless absorption of knowledge. "Let her loose in the library, I say, as you do a fawn in a field," insists Ruskin of any woman one wishes to educate, "[it] knows the bad weeds twenty times better than you; and the good ones too" (84).[105] Similarly, and entirely true to form given her conservative leanings, Wordsworth takes a moment in her defence of women's colleges to lament the loss of a simpler education women used to get at home, an "unconscious education" which she describes as a kind of cultural osmosis: "In old days a 'real lady' was educated by the very atmosphere she habitually breathed. She was taught by the walls of her room, the books that lay about, the people she met, etc." (250-51). It is important to note that both Ruskin's and Wordsworth's rusticated visions of the learning woman do not, in fact, exclude books. Yet these are clearly not the books that so disturbed Eric Gwatkin in his sister's college room, the books of intense study and unfeminine excess; no, books in the natural environment of a woman's education are simply those for casual grazing (to continue Ruskin's simile), are those that "lay about" (to quote Wordsworth) for relaxed consumption. Which suggests that the bookless wilds against which Tennyson's Princess establishes and defends her university, and which I borrow for this chapter as a key space of nostalgia in varsity fiction for deconstructing and reframing the female scholar, is not a space without books or women who read them but rather a space without books of higher purpose and women who use them as working tools for a higher calling. The bookless wilds are therefore the antithesis to the women's colleges; and its "natural" or rusticated woman is in every respect the antithesis of the dedicated

female scholar, who is deemed unnatural in the novels because she abandons her natural classroom for an academic one, her natural home for a college, and her bodily health for mental stimulation, all of which are seen as suffering severely for this neglect.[106] And so, if the bookless wilds have lost their women, then nostalgia must rectify. Women's varsity novels evoke a patriarchal nostalgia for the homebound woman not only by resurrecting her in cozy college rooms and corners, but also by resurrecting her outside the university in humble visions of rustic and homely appeal. In many ways one might consider these visions to be a stronger salve for conservative antipathy to the women's colleges because they require no compromise, no pretense of shared space; with women contained off-site, nostalgically rusticated (or, forcibly expelled), Oxbridge is preserved for male privilege.

One of the key privileges of a male-centric Oxbridge, as varsity fiction demonstrates, is the privilege of nostalgic subjectivity. The male university scholar, like other male adventurers (traveller, soldier, itinerant worker) who seek their fates, fortunes, and educations away from home, has the right to pine for that same home and the women bound to it. We saw Verdant Green exercise this privilege in his melancholy homesickness upon first arriving at Oxford (discussed in Chapter One) attaching great sentiment to the homemade souvenirs of his female relatives as his thoughts drifted towards them, the very same homesickness that inspired the first diagnosis of nostalgia in Johannes Hofer's foundational dissertation on scholars and soldiers pining for home.[107] And if one feels inclined to balk at the notion of painful longing as a privilege, consider these three points: first, that nostalgia is every bit as much an aesthetic sentiment of self-expression as it is one of private pain; second, that nostalgic homesickness is only the prerogative of those who have the freedom to leave the home; and third, that nostalgic subjectivity gives one the power to capture a static vision of home and its inmates, and to reduce

them to owned objects of contemplation and of the past in the service of one's present comfort, making them souvenired visions in effect. The nostalgic musing of the university man is a privilege because it represents the conquering or ownership of two spaces at once, the university in body and the home in mind. But, as I have intimated throughout this chapter, a key point of tension arising in the wake of the college-bound girl is the threat to both these spaces: not only to a privileged space of male learning, but also the perceived threat to the feminized home of male-centric yearning. For male-centric nostalgia only works when the woman (mother, wife, sister; it hardly matters which) stays at home, within the frame of nostalgic vision, the object of a distant man's memories. It requires that the woman be ensconced at home so that the male scholar has someone to return to in thought, but also, reifying the ultimate patriarchal balance, so that he has a gendered *other* to measure the distance of experience between home-life and university life, an alma mater to balance *Alma Mater*.[108]

This tension is felt in the women's varsity novel, which fully subscribes to the patriarchal belief that a longing for home hinges upon the homebound woman to animate the nostalgic vision, and that this nostalgia is all the more potent and important at a time—the cultural moment of women's higher education—when its vision is at risk of losing its central figure. Marshall's *The Master of St. Benedict's* demonstrates most effectively this preoccupation through the memories and yearnings of the titular Master, an aged scholar suddenly confronted with the new reality of the college girl in the person of his spirited great-niece Lucy, who comes to live with him at Cambridge following the death of her father and immediately disturbs the very foundation of his dusty academic existence and entrenched privilege.[109] Indeed, the novel sets a noteworthy example of varsity-set patriarchal nostalgia, as this chapter identifies it, because the yearnings of the Master are not only sparked in fervent resistance to the academic ambitions of Lucy, but are

also persistently presented within a rustic frame. First, even before Lucy enters the narrative, we are introduced to the Master (Anthony Rae) as a pathological nostalgiac: an octogenarian of "impaired" memory for whom nostalgia and dementia are intertwined such that he is constantly "travelling back to the sweet green fields and the hills and valleys of his earliest recollections," the "humble home" on the "bleak Yorkshire moor" where he began his life as a ploughboy, but then also (to extend the conceit of mobility that the novel employs to describe the Master's reminiscing) frequently unable to travel the same path back again to the present, rendering his perspective when the novel opens one of confused reality (Marshall 1:7, 2:142, 2:123). Even before the novel's college girl arrives to threaten the Master's nostalgic visions with more than the loss of years, we learn how indispensable to them are the women who anchor the rustic home in his mind, and especially the later memory of his wife-to-be Rachel who, as a young woman, would stand watch for him at the Vicarage gate upon his returns home from Cambridge "a modest undergraduate blushing beneath his well-earned honours," and greet him always with the same "eager question on her lips: 'What great things have you done this term, Anthony?'" (Marshall 1:4). The Master's recollections are always a journey back "to meet her," not the aged Rachel who lives with him in the college, the respected Mistress of St. Benedict's who now shares in many of the duties and cares of Cambridge life (but whose proximity now makes her ill-suited for the frame of longing),[110] but rather the young woman tied to the Vicarage gate whose appeal is her fixity and easily objectified distance, as well as the power she grants her man by allowing her interest in academia to be satisfied vicariously through him (Marshall 2:126). That Rachel is tied to the Vicarage gate in the Master's vision, next to the old grey church tower of his home parish "gleaming like gold, and pointing the way," is significant because it positions

her as an antithetical beacon of beckoning to the glowing spires of the university (Marshall 2:126).

But homebound Rachel Rae is only one of two women who feature prominently in the Master's homely visions throughout the novel; the second is triggered by the arrival of Lucy and her college schemes. Indeed, with Lucy's arrival, it becomes apparent that all of the energies of Marshall's novel—the tensions, desires, fears, joys—exist in the fraught space between the two poles of the Master and Lucy, the old university scholar and the young college girl, who pull the narrative in opposite directions (but only for a time as shall be seen), not only in terms of plot but also between inner reflections of the past and outer experiences of a changing present and developing future. The nostalgic feeling that erupts in this space between the two (manifesting primarily in the Master's mind) exists as a result of the friction between them, wherein the niece becomes a threat to the uncle's preferred way of viewing the women who people his world. The second homebound woman of the Master's fancy, resurrected as part of this nostalgic eruption in the presence of his niece, is in fact Lucy's great-grandmother and namesake,[111] a dairy-maiden (as the Master is fond of recalling) who managed a corner stall at the butter-market in his hometown.[112]

Lucy's rustic ancestor begins to appear persistently and perversely in the Master's distracted mind only after young Lucy reveals her college ambitions to her uncle and entreats him to allow her to attend Newnham, an entreaty met with great resistance by the Master who argues, with Old Lucy in mind, that all that is wanted in a woman is that she be "able to milk, and make butter, and bring up a family" (Marshal 1:36). "She was a good woman" insists the Master of rustic Lucy, when the subject of attending Newnham is brought up again, "[s]he did not know a word of Greek or Latin, and she only knew enough mathematics to reckon up the

price of eggs; but if she had gone to Girton or Newnham she could not have done more" (Marshall 1:37). Quite clearly, the rustic dairy maiden is the foil to the college-bound girl, a lost female ideal that the Master only realizes is truly lost in the moment that her aberrant descendant threatens to displace or disfigure her memory. The desperation that inheres in the nostalgic instinct of the Master to keep the vision of his sister-in-law intact is such that he not only uses her ideal qualities to disparage the idea of the Girton / Newnham girl who falls short or perhaps too wide afield of the humble measure of a "good woman," but he also insists on re-envisioning Lucy's own identity, on rusticating her, so as to narrow the distressing gap between them. That is, when he looks at his niece, he does not fight the desire of his "impaired" memory to see the older rustic version of her: "she brought back the past to him," notes the narrator, "and seemed a link between the old far-off time and the present" (Marshall 1:164). Nor does he fight the urge to remind Lucy, constantly, of her rustic ancestral past in a way that suggests he also wants it to inform the vision of her future: "There had been two generations of culture between, and Lucy had quite forgotten, until her uncle reminded her, that her great-grandmother used to carry her eggs and her butter to market" (Marshall 1:37). That it does indeed inform her future (as will be detailed shortly) proves that the fraught polarity of the Master and Lucy was only a strategic construct on Marshall's part for cathartic resolution, only a temporary strain for nostalgia to relax. And a patriarchal nostalgia more precisely, for if it is clear that the Master's rustication of Lucy is more than merely the nostalgic eccentricity of a decaying mind in which identities are layered and confused, it must be equally clear, for my chapter's argument to work, that his rustication of Lucy is also more than an old scholar's intolerance to change in the form of university education for women: it is the varsity novel's own *shared* indulgence in the Master's appealing vision of the homebound woman, an indulgence that evolves, and rather distastefully

so for a novel ostensibly catering to the Victorian woman's hunger for academic presence, into wholehearted consumption in its conclusion.

Subject Matter: Visions of Compromise

Before turning to the conclusions of these novels and how they fulfill the Master's specific nostalgic fantasy and a broader cultural longing for the expulsion of the female scholar from the university, it is important to note that both Priscilla and Lucy, at key moments in the novels when homesickness is at its peak and a sense of university belonging is shrouded with doubt, are invited to share in the comforting indulgence of the envisioned homebound woman, and are thereby granted the aforementioned scholar's privilege of nostalgic subjectivity. This is yet another way that nostalgia works strategically as resistance under the guise of acceptance. And this is, in many ways, the underlying problem of these novels in terms of a feminist project, for in allowing their central protagonists to participate in patriarchal nostalgia these novels are also inviting their young female readers to participate in the same, and whatever temporary comfort these rustic, homely visions are seen to affect for both character and reader, must come at the expense of their sex.[113] Indeed, as I shall determine, the homely visions of Priscilla and Lucy are visions of compromise: weak-hearted exchanges of academic equality, autonomy, and presence for the temporary comforts of those dusty, inherited visions of their fathers, brothers, and uncles.

In *The Master of St. Benedict's*, Lucy is introduced as a model of the modern "new girl," arriving at her uncle's house in Cambridge fed up with "mere woman's work" and the "useless trumpery things" she's been taught all her life, and eager to try something new (Marshall 1:21). Lucy's restlessness and dissatisfaction are deliberately highlighted in juxtaposition with the stability and contentment of her older single cousin Mary, also a dependant in the Master's

house; the college-bound girl's academic ambitions are heightened by her disdain for her cousin's apparent willingness to "potter about a parish" for the rest of her existence (Marshall 1:23).[114] But Lucy's staunch rejection of all things domestic is no match for the homesickness she feels on her first night at Newnham, where she is so desperately miserable in her dismal college room and so affection-deprived having only met the stoical Capability Stubbs, that she succumbs to the comforts of a homely vision. Notably, unlike her uncle's, hers is not the vision of a particular place of the past she knows and loves, but rather one of a hypothetical future of domestic wifedom, a regret-tinged vision of a road not taken. Indeed, in her moment of college homesickness, Lucy recalls a little country curate who had once asked her to be his wife, and imagines the appeal of a life as the self-sacrificing domestic angel of his rural cottage:

> Lucy was so utterly miserable as she sat there weeping that, if the red-haired curate had come to her at that weak moment, she would have given up the higher education altogether, and she would have gone away with him to that poor little moorland cottage, and pinched, and pared, and slaved for him, as dear women before her have pinched and slaved for those they love ever since the world began. (Marshall 1:57)

There are a few things to take note of here. First, we might observe the sly way that the narrative voice is made to participate in Lucy's moment of nostalgic envisioning in the final clause of the sentence ("as dear women before her…") through free indirect discourse, as the mediated thoughts of the homesick girl merge into the more wistful and wider-scale commentary of the narrator. The narrator's participation is an attempt at stoking a deep-seated cultural affection for the homebound woman. Second, Lucy's vision is an act of self-rustication, of removing herself from the university; and yet, within the vision itself, the rusticating agency, the power of removal, belongs to a man. Lucy's comforting thought is to be rescued from her college by a

rejected husband, paralleling Princess Ida's more perverse unwilling "rescue" from her own university by her abandoned Prince. Finally, the fact that Lucy conjures this vision in a "weak moment" suggests a compromise is indeed taking place; she must abandon the cause of higher education and betray the ambitions of her academic self in order to give the vision its power. In short it is a vision that demands sacrifice, and the college girl is decidedly weak for giving in to this demand.

In *A Sweet Girl Graduate* the rustic appeal of Priscilla's home, Penywern Cottage, is emphasized immediately, making it an ideal focus for nostalgic thought and an ideal setting for framing the homebound woman.[115] Indeed, although the novel's first chapter is titled "Going Out Into the World" and is supposed to set the stage for a young woman's university adventures, the narrative itself seems more concerned in these early pages not with where its protagonist is headed, but rather with the cozy little Devonshire cottage that is being left behind, and especially with the acute pain and "mental disquiet" that is occasioned in the removal, or, as the narrative calls it, "dislodgement" of the humble girl from her humble home (Meade 56).[116] The homebound woman framed within this homely space, rusticated to perfection both for nostalgic consideration and as a foil for the college girl, is Priscilla's Aunt Raby, she who is left behind and whose description in the narrative renders her the embodiment of "homely" in every sense of the term: "Aunt Raby was dressed in a rough homespun garment. Her feet were clad in unbleached cotton stockings, also made at home; her little, iron-gray curls lay flat at each side of her hollow cheeks. She wore list slippers, very coarse and common in texture. Her whole appearance was the essence of the homely, the old-fashioned, even the ungainly" (Meade 197). In the course of the narrative, Aunt Raby also comes to symbolize the nostalgia that is attached to the home as a lost site of bookless, domestic education. "It's the fashion of the day for the

young folk to learn a lot, and there's no going against the times," she concedes to her niece when she returns home at Christmastime, "[i]n my young life sewing was the great thing. Now it's Latin and Greek. Don't you forget that I taught you to sew, Prissie, and always put a back stitch when you're running a seam; it keeps the stuff together wonderfully" (Meade 208). There is a clear note of angst here as the old domestic gives voice to a preservation instinct in the hope that her home teachings will not die in the memory of the college girl.

As it turns out, Aunt Raby's concern for the loss of the home in Priscilla's heart and mind is warranted, for we learn during this same holiday visit that her new college life has begun to monopolize both spaces and that this is also now a cause of great anxiety for the college girl. "My new life fills my heart; it crowds into all my thoughts," she confesses guiltily to the vicar of her town, and then continues: "I have no room for Aunt Raby—no room for my little sisters. Everything is new to me—everything fresh and broad. […] oh, the difference between here and there! Here it is so narrow, there one cannot help getting enlightenment, daily and hourly" (Meade 204). In this scene, expressing guilt over the forgetting of home so earnestly, Priscilla earns her title of sweet girl graduate with distinction, for if the shadow of patriarchal resistance lurks within these women's varsity novels outside of nostalgic feeling it is in the sweet expression of guilt on the part of the female scholar for wanting something more than home can provide. Interestingly, Priscilla's anxiety here is the opposite of homesickness; she is in fact plagued by thoughts and visions of the university while at home, and feels the guilt (rather than the comfort) of succumbing to these visions. So, returning to the topic of compromise, Priscilla's visions compromise the cause for women's higher education not in the framing of the homebound woman within them but rather in the guilt that accompanies them because she is *not* framed within.

Alma Mater: Visions Embodied

"*we will scatter all our maids / Till happier times each to her proper hearth*"
—Tennyson, *The Princess*[117]

Reading Meade's and Marshall's varsity novels, it becomes quite evident that the fictive Victorian college girl cannot escape the vision of the homebound woman; it figures in her college room, in her guilty or distracted mind, and in the minds of those who use it to condemn her by comparison. But while the vision is always seemingly hovering around her and evoked through her it is only in the conclusions of the novels that the college girl and the vision truly become one. The conclusions of *A Sweet Girl Graduate* and *The Master of St. Benedict's* punctuate their narratives' endorsements of nostalgia for home and homebound woman by having Priscilla and Lucy ultimately come to embody the homebound woman of patriarchal fancy, and ultimately fulfill (it ought to be possible in the fantasy of fiction if nowhere else) the conciliatory promise of Davies and Wordsworth that the college girl is destined to return home. The disheartening suggestion of both novels' endings, however, as indicated at the outset of this chapter, is that Priscilla and Lucy only truly graduate from sweet girls to worthy heroines of their narratives once they are bound for home. In addition, the cathartic resolution expected by Victorian novel readers comes, in these varsity novels, only with the discarding of the academic identity in order to make way for one of domestic and rustic appeal. It comes only with Priscilla and Lucy becoming those lost women, Aunt Raby and Great-Grandmother Lucy, whom they resisted strongly against the varsity novels' stronger and ultimately triumphant nostalgic urging.

Considering Priscilla's return home and embodiment of the lost woman in the conclusion of *A Sweet Girl Graduate*, what is most interesting to note upfront is that it is depicted via vision only. We do not actually get to *see* Priscilla returning home, it is only promised through a visual premonition of Miss Heath, St. Benet's vice-principal, and afterwards confirmed at the end of the

novel. The vision appears during a private exchange between Miss Heath and Maggie on the subject of Priscilla's ultimate decision to give up her "lovely dream" of becoming a classical scholar in order to return home and support her family (Meade 222). Indeed, Priscilla has, at this point in the novel, taken a huge step in the direction of ideal womanhood by abandoning her exams and the possibility of first-class honours, exchanging her scholar's robes for the preferred Victorian mantle of feminine sacrifice. Maggie, whose intellectual and domestic skill are (as we know) evenly matched and whose excessive popularity in the novel does not (to Meade's credit) diminish her as a voice of resistance, expresses a passionate objection to this sacrifice, especially as it entails giving up the "crown of bay" she feels Priscilla is sure to earn as "one of the most brilliant classical scholars of her day" (Meade 265). Perhaps feeling that these words would strike her reader as unrealistic and bordering on absurd,[118] Meade checks Maggie's vision of academic honour with Miss Heath's. "I admit," the ostensibly wiser academic says to Maggie, "that first-class honours would be a very graceful crown of bay to encircle that young head; and yet, […] there are crowns to be worn which cannot fade" (Meade 265-66). "She can wear a nobler crown," she insists (Meade 266), before cementing her argument with the vision:

> I encouraged her to give up her classics for the present and to devote herself to modern languages and to those accomplishments which are considered more essentially feminine. As I did so I had a picture before me, in which I saw Priscilla crowned with love, the support and blessing of her three little sisters. The picture was a very bright one, Maggie, and your crown of bay looks quite tawdry beside the other crown which I hope to see on Prissie's brow. (Meade 267)

Priscilla is here envisioned surrounded by her three sisters, a figure of support and nurturing love, taking the place of the aged Aunt Raby who is notably absent. However "bright" this

picture appears to Miss Heath, to anyone familiar with Victorian fiction, and Victorian cultural sentiment more broadly, and (it is hoped) to the venturesome new girl encountering it in the pages of her varsity novel, it must seem rather dull in its conventionality, a rather well-worn picture of woman as the embodiment of selfless sacrifice and domestic love. And, however "tawdry" the crown of academic achievement may seem to Miss Heath (who bears some fictive resemblance to Elizabeth Wordsworth, a higher education advocate keenly wary of the ugly aspect of the college girl and careful to position her right-faced to the world and within the bounds of propriety), to anyone who locates the appeal of the college girl in her boundless ambition, including (it is hoped) the young varsity fiction reader, this tawdriness is simply the glare of intolerance.

Lucy's return home and embodiment of the Master's rustic vision at the end of *The Master of St. Benedict's* begins as soon as the aged academic dies and his body is brought back to his Yorkshire home to be laid "under the daisies and beneath the dewy heavens," the bookless wilds functioning here as an ideal tomb of nurturing nature, and an antithesis to the university once again in their association with rest against labour. The rustic appeal of the Master's home is registered through the narrator in this scene but also, importantly, through Lucy, who accompanies her uncle's body in its final journey home and feels drawn to the site of one of his most recurring visions, the butter-market. Lucy asks to be taken to the old haunt of her great-grandmother, and cannot help but feel its nostalgic presence:

> Everything had changed, but the old market still stood where it had stood for centuries, with the quaint stalls and the old brown awnings, and the rude boards spread on trestles where the country folk displayed their homely wares. There was an old woman sitting behind that corner stall now, lean and brown and wrinkled as an autumn pear. Lucy

> bought some flowers of her before she went away; it might have been her namesake. (Marshall 2: 167-68)

These lines not only perfectly capture the rusticity of the scene with the layered adjectives "quaint," "rude," "homely," but also the mingling of transience and intransience that is part of nostalgic reflection, the acknowledgement of change through absence and age alongside the pleasure of noting what remains in the midst of that change. That Lucy succumbs to the same nostalgic scenes that sustained the Master in his old age confirms the alignment of the two poles of old scholar and college girl, of past and future into a present that mingles and in many ways flattens both. In this moment, as Lucy considers the Master's vision through new eyes of acceptance instead of resistance, all that is left is for her to step into it and complete her rustication. After the funeral, Lucy does return to Newnham, but only long enough to decide that she would rather accept the duties of marriage than the duties of studying for her Tripos exams. She accepts a proposal from Eric Gwatkin—whom we last saw snooping around his sister's room but is at this point in the narrative a full-fledged Cambridge graduate with a country curacy—and leaves her studies to become his wife in the distant country outside the university. This completes her rustication for the most part, but she must also embody the Master's very specific vision in order for the patriarchal nostalgic instinct that has invaded this varsity novel and is now very clearly driving its conclusion to be fully satisfied. And so, the novel ends by assuring its reader that the college girl has matured into not just any married woman, but into one who "is famous for her poultry, and, like her distant progenitor, prides herself on the excellence of her dairy" (Marshall 2:214).

As Priscilla and Lucy are finally pressed squarely into the frame of patriarchal fancy, both girls are considered to have returned to origins in their successful embodiment of their more

appealing ancestors. Interestingly, the nostalgia that envelops the conclusions of both of these varsity novels is one evoked by reincarnation, which, like replication, imitation, and relived memory, is nostalgia evoked through the joys of a past entity resurrected for present consumption but never perfectly enough so as to eradicate the wistful sadness that recognizes the permanence of original loss. Indeed, if a replica can be both source and product of nostalgic feeling, so too can the reincarnated body, which is simply a replica in flesh and blood. The patriarchal bent of the nostalgic reincarnations as these novels depict them is the joy in retrograde movement mentioned at the start of this chapter, such that the female scholar is not only discarded in favour of the homebound woman (and again, in both senses of the term), but that she, a figure of a new time and fictionalized for new minds, is discarded in favour of an old and faded figure of the past. In Lucy's case, her embodiment of her rustic great-grandmother Lucy after leaving Newnham behind is emphasized through the language of genetic reincarnation, and it is her descendants that are envisioned as completing the final transformation. "Probably in a generation or two they will go back to the low estate from which they sprang," muses the narrator of Lucy's progeny, "and another Lucy may keep the old family stall in the butter-market" (Marshall 2:213). Ideas of time and progress are confused such that in order to move away from the female scholar, one must both move forward generationally and "go back" *de-generationally*, that is, to a simpler form. Similarly, in Priscilla's case, after she has reiterated her determination to abandon the academic path to honour in favour of the domestic one, the narrator notes approvingly that "[t]here was a ring in her voice which she must have inherited from a long line of rugged, proud but worthy ancestors," suggesting that one must look to the past to envision feminine "worth" most clearly, but that a genetic trace of it (here, the

subtle "ring in her voice") *may* manifest in those moments when education and ambition are abandoned (Meade 302).

It is pertinent to close this section on homely visions embodied and college bodies reincarnated, with some attention to *alma mater*, the enduring idea of a university as a nurturing, maternal body. Throughout this chapter I have stressed the prevalence of the feminine home as an antithetical space to the masculine university in the Victorian cultural imagination and argued its importance to the patriarchal nostalgia that sits in resistance to the women's college movement. Indeed, the two spaces must be considered at an adverse distance in order for the home and the homebound woman to hold any nostalgic power, and must be recognized as categorically different in order for the one (the university) to contain the other (the homely college and its homely room) in the guise of protector or nostalgic preserver rather than sit alongside it as academic equal. Unlike other masculine spaces of business, government, commerce, etc., gendered as such in opposition to the domestic feminine sphere, the university is given a maternal embodiment and a maternal character in its capacity to nurture learning and development and provide residential protection. Thus, unlike other spaces within the Victorian masculine sphere, the university is akin to the home in terms of sentiment if not in terms of social designation. As this project has shown in various contexts, both are important spaces of nostalgic evocation that call for their children's return in either body or mind. And, as I have indicated in this chapter particularly, the male scholar's nostalgic subjectivity not only depends upon the object vision of homely woman, but also upon a balance of maternal bodies to travel between.

So, what does *alma mater* mean for the fictive college girl? In the first place, and most broadly, the enduring popularity of the university's maternal embodiment in Victorian

imagination suggests that female presence at Oxbridge is valued only insofar as it represents the maternal, only as body and not as mind.[119] In the second place, with respect to varsity fiction, patriarchal nostalgia's affinity for *alma mater* balanced in both home and university spaces leads to the college girl's ultimate embodiment of an abstract maternal entity once she is bound by home, a counterpart to the figurative identity of the maternal university rather than to the academic identity of its more privileged son. This is regrettably the case in Meade's and Marshall's novels, for Priscilla and Lucy come to embody much more than Aunt Raby and rustic Lucy at the ends of their novels; they become figurative maternal entities for the nurturing and regeneration of tradition. The final lines of *A Sweet Girl Graduate* are dedicated to a heartfelt acclamation of its protagonist following her decision to return home and in recognition of her "sweet" improving influence on the other far more inferior girls of her college. "Women like Priscilla live at the root of the true life of a worthy nation," concludes the narrator, rendering her—through a natural metaphor, the root of a tree of life and progress—the point of origin for future growth. And, contextually, it is clear that the "worthy nation" referred to here is one where the most admirable of women knows her place, and where the college girl gradually comes to learn it. In the case of Marshall's heroine, maternal embodiment does not need to branch out to nature for metaphorical emphasis, for Lucy becomes *alma mater* through the reproductive capacity of her own body, and specifically through its significance as a site of origin and rebirth for the aged male scholar with whom she is forced to share her varsity tale. Indeed, at the conclusion of *The Master of St. Benedict's*, after the narrative voice has reflected generally on the idea of Lucy's progeny carrying her back, genetically, to the rustic butter-stall, it moves on to considering what specifically her reproductive legacy might entail: "The success of the old Master may repeat itself in the male line, and another Anthony—Lucy's boy is called Anthony—

may occupy with equal distinction as a church dignitary another stall elsewhere" (Marshall 2: 213). Thus, Lucy is not only *alma mater* by virtue of her excellent milk and productive womb, but also in the traditional academic sense, in her ability to nurture male scholars and the privilege that leads them, and only them, to distinction. But, rather than end this discussion with the rather less than sweet image of the female scholar coming at the end of this novel to embody the homely womb of the Master's recurring visions, and the disheartening suggestion that he, a character of entrenched privilege and unwavering prejudice against women's university education, is effectively reborn through her, shall we instead envision the hypothetical reaction of the Victorian varsity novel-reading and perhaps even college-bound "new girl" to such an ending, and the sharp snap with which she slams the book shut?

Obituary

In 1897, an anonymous women's college exposé writer for the *Western Mail*[120] pronounces the death of the college girl. Or, more accurately, the death of the earliest of her species, the "intellectual prodigy" or "bookworm" ("A Women's College" 5). Touring the women's colleges of Cambridge, the writer attests that the women's college pioneer, she who arrived on site when the colleges first opened their doors twenty-five years ago, she of "abnormal" and "rarely beautiful" feature, is nowhere to be seen now at the century's end (5). Noting, as his (or perhaps her) eyes survey the landscape, that "the typical student of a woman's college nowadays is a healthy, normal girl, with good complexion, good wits" and, it must be noted, "by no means wanting in regard for the etceteras of life—the adornment of her person and her home," the reporter feels confident in concluding that her coarse bookish ancestor is now "extinct" (5). The reporter expects the world to be relieved, one imagines, by this news that a more acceptable college girl has emerged who happily bears traces of the homely woman

thought to have been on the verge of extinction herself. But for the Victorian varsity novel reader, such a report is hardly worth reporting, because while the "intellectual prodigy" or "bookworm," she who did not feel the need to compromise for the "etceteras of life," is only now being *declared* extinct, she has always *been* a kind of lost woman in varsity fiction. She has always been a sidelined caricature, a cautionary tale, a tragic death, a bracketed name, a figure on the outskirts, an ugly foil for sweetness. "She does not exist here," confirmed Somerville's Principal Maitland without hesitation, and even supposing the Victorian varsity reader could *not* register her elusiveness with regret or even anger, a scholar of today cannot help but consider her loss with a certain frustrated longing for what the Victorian varsity novel might have looked like with her framed within and with something more like a feminist nostalgia animating her desires. Let me end this chapter by stating simply that the writer of this exposé is incorrect in his/her morbid pronouncement; the bookish female scholar is not dead in 1897, for she will find a frame of better exposure in the varsity novels of the next century. She remains simply, as Princess Ida proclaimed, a vision for a happier time.[121]

Appendix

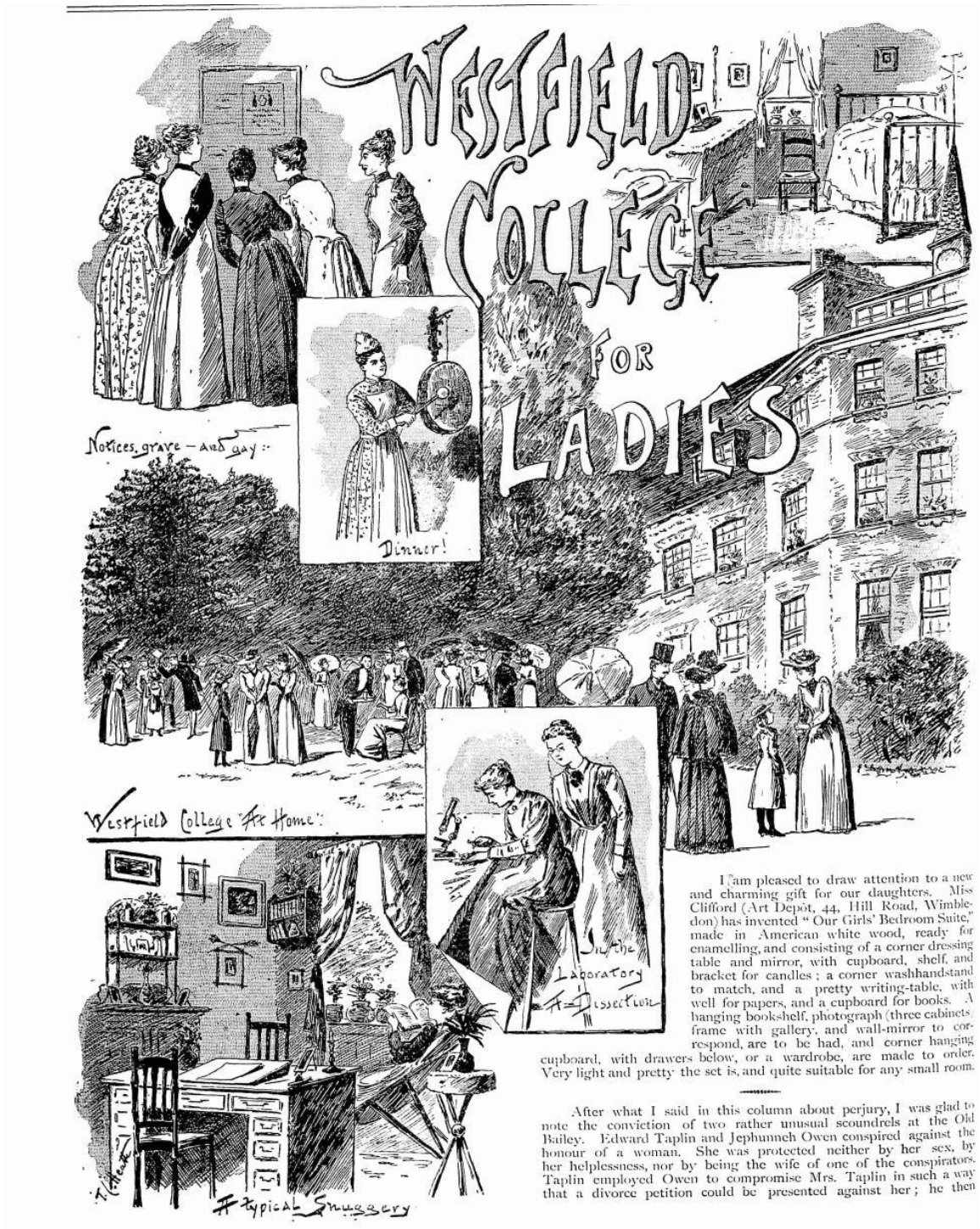
Figure 1: "A Cosy Corner in a Girton Room"

Source: R. S. Warren Bell. "Concerning Girton," *The Windsor Magazine: An Illustrated Monthly for Men and Women*, vol.6, June 1987, p.353. *ProQuest British Periodicals*.

A COSY CORNER IN A GIRTON ROOM.

Figure 2: "A Typical Snuggery"

Source: "Westfield College for Ladies." *Hearth and Home*, no.9, Thursday 16 July, 1891, p. 270. *ProQuest British Periodicals.*

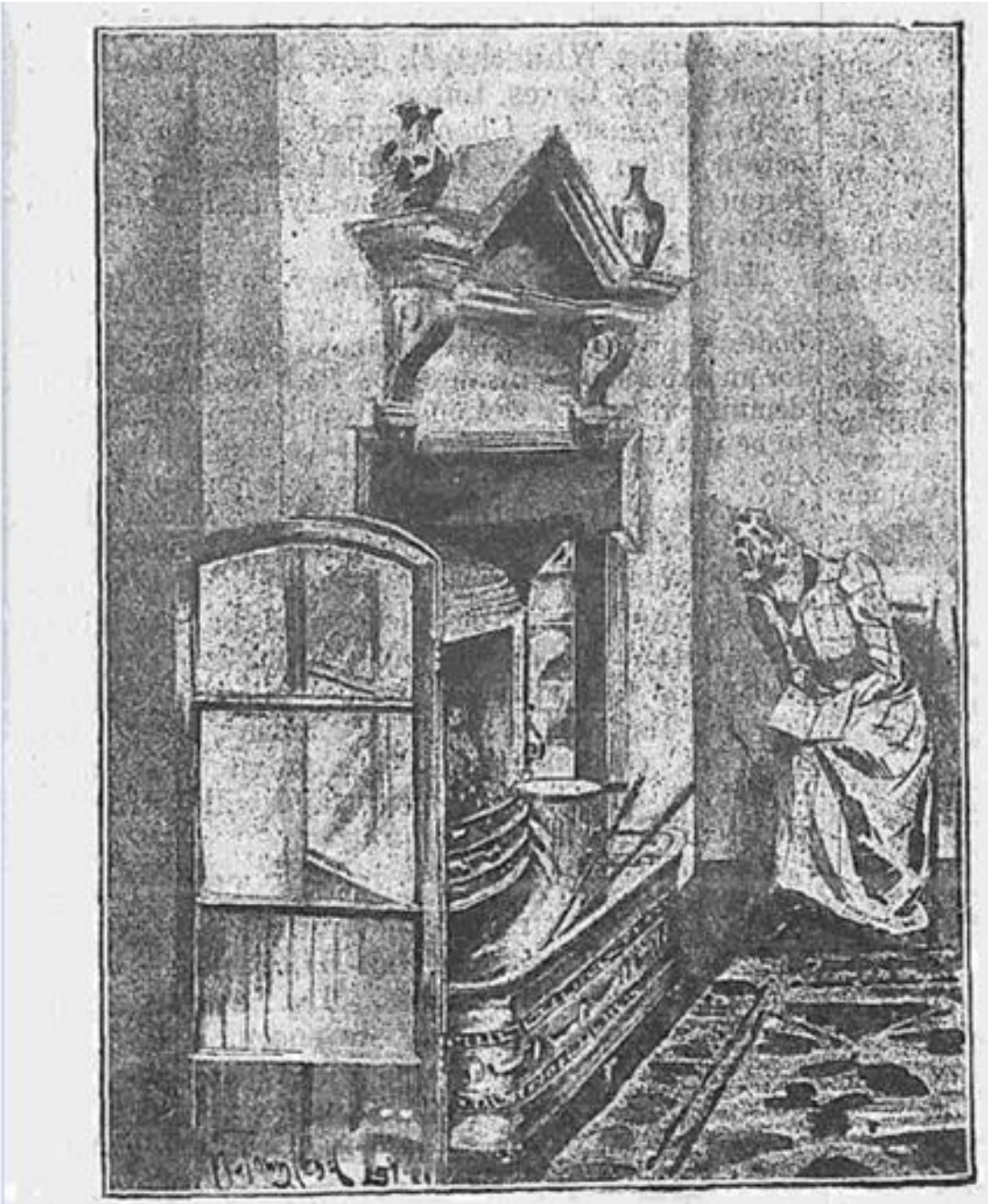


I am pleased to draw attention to a new and charming gift for our daughters. Miss Clifford (Art Depôt, 44, Hill Road, Wimbledon) has invented "Our Girls' Bedroom Suite," made in American white wood, ready for enamelling, and consisting of a corner dressing table and mirror, with cupboard, shelf, and bracket for candles; a corner washhandstand to match, and a pretty writing-table, with well for papers, and a cupboard for books. A hanging bookshelf, photograph (three cabinets) frame with gallery, and wall-mirror to correspond, are to be had, and corner hanging cupboard, with drawers below, or a wardrobe, are made to order. Very light and pretty the set is, and quite suitable for any small room.

After what I said in this column about perjury, I was glad to note the conviction of two rather unusual scoundrels at the Old Bailey. Edward Taplin and Jephunneh Owen conspired against the honour of a woman. She was protected neither by her sex, by her helplessness, nor by being the wife of one of the conspirators. Taplin employed Owen to compromise Mrs. Taplin in such a way that a divorce petition could be presented against her; he then

Figure 3: "By the Fireside in the Dining Hall"

Source: Anon. "Girls and Their Colleges." *The Woman's Herald*, no.2, Thursday 2 March, 1893, p. 18. *ProQuest British Periodicals.*

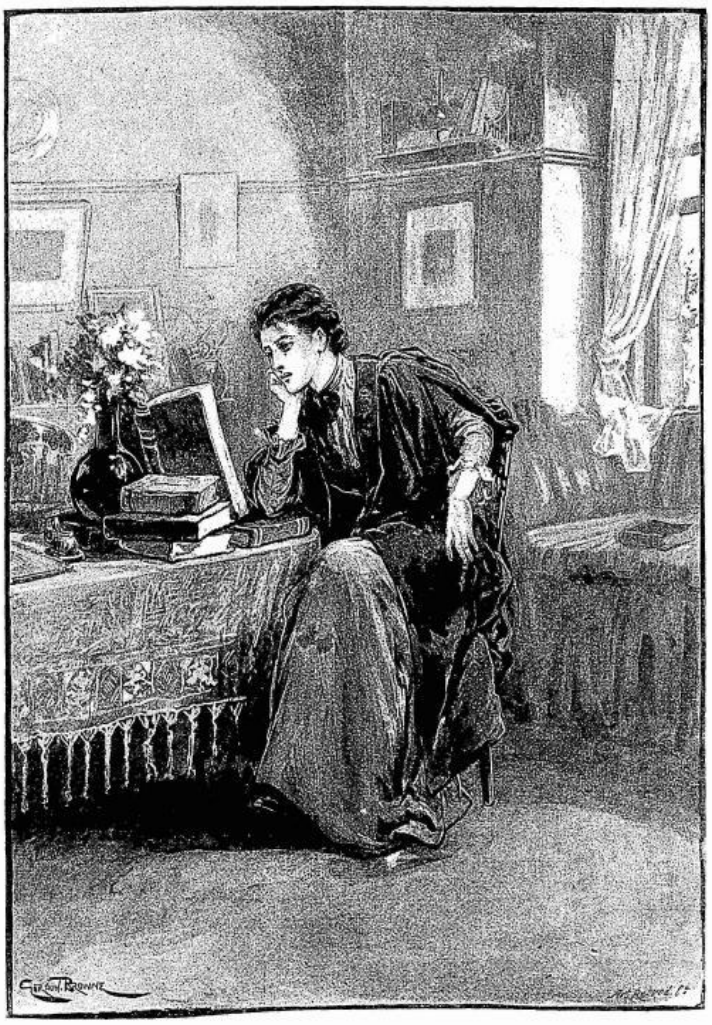


BY THE FIRESIDE IN THE DINING-HALL.

Figure 4: "A Girton Girl"

Source: Sir Noel Paton. "A Girton Girl," *Atalanta,* no. 67, Saturday 1 April 1893, p.1. *ProQuest British Periodicals.*

(This image accompanies a poem by the same name by Sir Noel Paton, a poem which epitomizes the patriarchal gaze and obsession with capturing the female scholar in a domestic frame. The poem opens with the query "How shall I paint her?" and ends with the resolution that he shall paint her "In her college room / White-curtained, husht, alone among her books, / Beside her open casement that o'erlooks / Fair English meads and chestnuts all a-bloom.")



A GIRTON GIRL.

"The guise that fits my brave girl-student best."

Figure 5: "The Ladies' College, Somerville Hall, Oxford."

In July 1880, *The Graphic* published a collection of wood-engraved vignettes of what was then the new Somerville Hall. The engravings were taken from drawings by the first Principal, Madeleine Shaw Lefevre, and her cousin Mrs Nigel Madan. One might note here the resemblance to a doll's house with its compartmentalized structure and the combination of outside façade and interior space (see Susan Stewart discussion).

Sources:
"The Ladies' College, Somerville Hall, Oxford." *The Graphic*, no.557, Saturday 31 July 1880, p.125. *ProQuest British Periodicals*.

Somerville College History Blog: http://blogs.some.ox.ac.uk/archive/2017/04/28/the-new-ladies-hall-at-oxford-somerville/

1. Cottages in the Drive.—2. A Student's Room.—3. View from Lawn Tennis Ground.—4. Approach to the Hall and Entrance.—5. Back View of the Hall from the Garden.
THE LADIES' COLLEGE, SOMERVILLE HALL, OXFORD

Figure 6: Philippa Fawcett in her room at Newnham College.

Source: Millicent Garrett Fawcett. *What I Remember*, New York, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1925, p.141. *Internet Archive.*

PHILIPPA FAWCETT IN HER ROOM AT NEWNHAM COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, 1891.

From a photograph.

To face page 140.

Figure 7: Philippa Fawcett reading in her chair.

Source: [unknown photographer]. "Philippa Garrett Fawcett (1868-1948)." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford UP, Date of access: 17 April 2023.

Notes

[1] Succeeding William Wordsworth, Alfred Lord Tennyson was Britain's Poet Laureate from 1850 to 1892.

[2] The poem, first published in 1847 by Edward Moxon (London) underwent various minor revisions in its subsequent four editions (1848, 1850, 1851, 1853). Years later Gilbert and Sullivan adapted it into *Princess Ida* (1884). The poem's initial publication coincides with the founding of Queen's College, London, and may have been inspired by it, although what the poet envisions is far more ambitious than the London college, which was essentially a residential high school.

[3] All four Arthurian texts were published in Tennyson's *Poems* (1842), a two-volume compilation of old and new compositions. He would return to the theme for *Idylls of the King* (1859-85).

[4] The Prince and two friends successfully infiltrate the women's university disguised as women and would-be scholars.

[5] Before the medieval quest narrative begins, the poem's outer frame details the Victorian setting of a grand Grecian-style estate in rural England where a midsummer party is underway. Lilia, daughter of the country squire, joins a group of her father's houseguests on a nearby hill of Gothic ruins to share stories.

[6] At this point in *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf's narrator is conversing with "Mary Seton," a friend and science teacher at the fictional women's college Fernham. These words comprise Seton's hasty description as to how the women's colleges came to be, and especially how they were funded and supported (Woolf 25).

[7] Its members included Josephine and George Butler as well as Elizabeth Wolstenholme-Elmy. Josephine Butler would succeed Clough as president when Clough was named president of Newnham in 1869. Anne Jemima Clough was the sister of poet Arthur Hugh Clough.

[8] A young philosophy don at Trinity College, Cambridge. He aligned with Clough in support of university lectures for women, but advocated separate women's lectures and examinations and absolutely no form of competition with university men (Batson 12).

[9] Eleanor Sidgwick would succeed Clough as Principal of Newnham in 1887.

[10] Newnham College was located in the nearby village of Newnham, very much on the outskirts of Cambridge.

[11] Bodichon (1827-91), a well-respected educationalist, artist, and women's rights activist, co-founded the *English Women's Journal* in 1858 and was a founding member of many women's rights groups. Bodichon was also a close friend of George Eliot.

[12] A Canadian-born campaigner for women's education and influential political figure, Lady Stanley had established professional relationships with thinkers and educators Thomas Carlyle, F.D. Maurice, and Benjamin Jowett before joining Davies and Bodichon in the project of establishing Girton.

[13] An interesting connection to Chapter Two's lost boy, Emily Davies was the great aunt of the real life Peter Pan, Peter Davies. Llewellyn Davies was her brother and the grandfather of Peter.

[14] Queen's and Bedford College were founded in London in 1848 and 1849, but these were mostly for the education of aspiring teachers.

[15] Davies also campaigned for women to be able to compete against men in university exams. This is one of the areas in which Girton differed from Newnham, requiring that its students complete the Previous exam ("Little Go") and study for the Tripos in timely fashion. Newnham

had no such stipulation, allowing its students to skip the Previous if they wished and take however long they needed to do the Tripos, if they even wanted to at all.

[16] This movement propelled the foundation of a succession of colleges for women in affiliation with Oxbridge from 1869 to 1886: Girton College (Cambridge, 1869), Newnham College (Cambridge, 1871), Somerville Hall (Oxford, 1879), Lady Margaret Hall (Oxford, 1878), and St. Hugh's (Oxford, 1886). The movement spawned its very own off-shoot of varsity fiction.

[17] The monastic heritage of Oxbridge contributed greatly to the lingering suspicion with which traditional academics viewed women. Dyhouse notes that Cambridge had a charter granted by Queen Elizabeth I enabling Proctors to "make search after common women" on university grounds and imprison any deemed suspicious (pending adjudication by the Vice-Chancellor) (56). There is one particularly telling incident of 1860: a group of local girls from a neighbouring town were detained and locked up by a University Proctor who discovered them at an undergraduate party and took them for prostitutes, despite their insistence on being "virtuous dressmakers" (Dyhouse 56).

[18] As late as 1929 Virginia Woolf sensed this aversion to women in her visit to "Oxbridge" and the fictional women's college "Fernham" in *A Room of One's Own*. Her narrator is waved off the grass onto the gravel path by a frantic Beadle with "horror and indignation" in his eyes (6-7); then she is barred from entering the library by a "deprecating" gentleman with a "flutter of black gown" because ladies are only permitted therein with the accompaniment of a Fellow or a letter of admission (9). "Gate after gate seemed to close with gentle finality behind me" notes Woolf's narrator, feeling an acute sense of exclusion (16-17). Her response is one of angry resolution: "Never will I wake those echoes, never will I ask for that hospitality again, I vowed as I descended the steps in anger" (9).

[19] When Girton was ready for occupation, twenty-two out of thirty-four professors allowed women to attend their lectures (Tullberg 56-57). The Association of the Education of Women (AEW) (est. 1879), was appointed to oversee the education of female students at Oxford, collecting fees for lectures and tutorials, arranging for university professors to deliver special classes for women and for women to attend lectures outside of their colleges, enforcing rules and regulations, and hiring resident tutors and chaperones (Batson 22). Chaperonage at lectures was abolished in 1893, but still required for trips to town and visits with tutors (Batson 88).

[20] Oxford and Cambridge were the last two universities to grant degrees to their female students (London University, Victoria University, the four Scottish universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, St. Andrews, and Aberdeen, the University of Wales, and then Durham in 1895 had all given way), not doing so until 1920 and 1948 respectively. At Oxford, female students could only receive a piece of paper from the Delegacy of Local Examinations testifying to their work (Batson 99-100), which was similar to the Girton College Degree-Certificate granted to students in place of the real Cambridge degree, provided they had passed the same exams as required by male undergraduates (Davies, "Home" 143). Women were denied degrees partly because degree holders were granted certain power over the administration and organization of Cambridge; they could vote for university MPs and on decisions regarding administration of the university. (Tullberg 2, 82). Thus, women were thought to be "dangerous by degrees" (see the title of Leonardi's book).

[21] In 1897 an effigy of a stereotypical female student, in stuffed breeches on a bicycle, was hung from a window outside the Senate House in the centre of town, followed by fireworks, bonfires, and shop raids (Bogen, *Narratives* x; McClellan 337). In 1921, a mob of celebratory undergrads

broke the Clough Memorial Gates at Newnham. Bogen cites M.E. Henn as the student with this impression (*Narratives* x).

[22] Edward Pusey was a cleric and Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford for more than fifty years. He was, along with John Keble and John Henry Newman, a leading proponent of the Oxford (Tractarian) Movement in the 1840s.

[23] In *Sesame and Lilies* (1865), Ruskin indirectly deems the university unsuitable for women's education: women should know what men know but know it in a different way, practically rather than theoretically. For Ruskin, women have no need of knowledge for its own sake; it should be given to women "not as if it were, or could be, for her an object to know; but only to feel, and to judge" (80).

[24] The leading proponents of the view that higher education was damaging to women's health were Henry Maudsley (University College London) and John Thorburn (Professor of Obstetrics, Owens College, Manchester). Their works on the subject were "Sex in Mind and Education" (*Fortnightly Review*, 1874) and *Female Education from a Physiological Point of View* (1884). The oddest appellation for the malady of female overwork was coined by Thorburn in his investigation of Owens' College student Annie Eastwood, who died of tuberculosis before completing her studies; Thorburn publicly attributed her death to "over-education" (qtd in Dyhouse 191-92).

[25] Sidgwick concluded that female graduates of Oxbridge were healthier in the long-run than their non-academic sisters, and would produce healthier families. Particularly intrigued by Sidgwick's findings, geneticist Francis Galton proposed a scholarship to encourage female Honours students of intellectual and physical soundness (what he termed their hereditary gifts) to marry immediately after university in order to "swamp the produce of the proletariat by a better

stock" (qtd. in Tullberg 85). He offered £50 upon marriage and £25 upon the birth of each child. Galton's warped home scholarship proposal proves (in line with this chapter's argument) that the home is the final destination for women and the place where they are expected to realize their greatest potential.

[26] Coined by writer Sarah Grand (Frances Elizabeth McFall) in 1894; the New Woman stood for women's suffrage, educational and employment opportunities, sensible clothing, and the abolition of gender constraints (Batson 115).

[27] Maitland became Principal of Somerville in 1889. A firm believer in domestic education for women in conjunction with other university subjects, she was the author of a number of instruction books (*Elsie, a Woman's Victory*; *Cottage Lectures*; *Rudiments of Cookery*; *Afternoon Tea Book*) (Brittain 87).

[28] A common Victorian epithet for any young college woman, the term pays homage to Girton College because it was the inaugural women's college at Oxbridge.

[29] A cause for concern for many parents considering university for their daughters was the fact of very low marriage rates for college-educated women, with most going into teaching or social work (Batson 61). Vera Brittain's college aspirations were challenged by a family friend who reportedly asked, "How can you send your daughter to college, Mrs. Brittain? … Don't you want her ever to get married?" (qtd. in Leonardi 29).

[30] A staunch supporter of the women's colleges, Elizabeth Wordsworth (great-niece of the poet) was akin to Newnham principal Clough and Somerville's Maitland in her support for domestic education (Brittain 36). In addition to her duties at Lady Margaret Hall, Wordsworth founded St. Hugh's College in 1886, the third Oxford women's college, with money from her father's estate (Batson 51).

[31] The college, named for Lady Margaret Beaufort, Henry VII's mother, was like Newnham in its adherence to more traditional ideas of women's education and Anglican Church principles. Somerville, Oxford's other women's college, was akin to Girton in its refusal to compromise women's intellectual endeavours with restrictive ideas of separate education, and also, being nondenominational, in its freedom from strict religious governance. Somerville Hall (eventually College) was named after astronomer Mary Somerville.

[32] This antithetical figure made its way into the obituary of Shaw Lefevre, Somerville's second principal, on 16 October 1914: "She was the very antipodes of the clumsy, masculine bluestocking who was the favourite bugbear of the opponents of women's education. It would be difficult to imagine a more womanly woman; and the importance of such a figure-head to a recently formed women's college, exposed as it was to the freest criticism from friends and foes, can hardly be overestimated" (qtd. in Leonardi 31).

[33] See n. 25 on Galton's proposed scholarship, which would have female graduates using their university education to its greatest benefit in the home.

[34] Both Girton and Newnham were set at appropriate distances from their host universities, in order to avoid the censure that would arise from the scandal of young single women residing and congregating in university towns (where even academic wives were scarce). Davies in particular was adamant that Girton, a test-case for women's colleges at Oxbridge, not be situated within university walls. While its building was under construction, Girton was originally established at Benslow House in the country town of Hitchen, more than twenty kilometres from Cambridge; in 1873 it moved to its current location, four kilometres northwest of Cambridge, on the outskirts of Girton village. Newnham was located first in a small rented house on Regent Street, then

moved in 1875 to the small neighbouring hamlet of Newnham, a rural spot with fields and orchards.

[35] "The vision motivating Newnham from the start was that of an advanced and enlightened household—women dressed in Pre-Raphaelite garb, expanding their horizons in sitting rooms decorated with Morris papers with prints, fans and peacock feathers adorning the walls" (Vickery 56).

[36] Continuing the familial analogy, in her writings on Girton Davies promoted the college's alignment with the Church of England by stressing that students would be expected to attend short daily services, as they had been "accustomed at home" (Davies, "Some Account" 554). Similarly, the first prospectuses for LMH described student life as that of "a Christian family," while Somerville, being nondenominational, claimed only to be "an English family" (Brittain 50). On the college Principals acting in *loco parentis,* Batson notes that they were concerned with their students' dress, hairstyles, where they could walk to on their excursions, as well as their social demeanours and conversational skill while hosting dinners, lunches, teas, etc., (37). Davies also refers to the original six Girton students as the "little band of six" (see *The Times,* 8 Jan. 1898, "Girton College" Letter to the Editor for instance), matched later by public attention to Newnham's original five students, emphasizing women's college cohorts as cozy close-knit families.

[37] Dyhouse notes that Oxbridge women's colleges provided a model for the civic universities and Scottish and Welsh universities in their identities as substitute homes. The benefactress of Manchester's Ashburne Hall insisted "that Ashburne should be a home, not a college" with its students referred to as "daughters" (qtd. in Dyhouse 111). St. Andrews was inspired to create "a Scottish Girton," while Bangor University in Wales welcomed (in the words of Helen Gladstone,

then VP of Newnham) a "younger sister of Newnham" to its university grounds (qtd. in Dyhouse 94-95). Oxbridge women's colleges also influenced the "homely" aspect of American women's colleges. To appear non-threatening to the outside world, many of them established (at the turn of the century and beyond) small "cottages" for their students' living quarters "organized like domestic households" (Inness 27).

[38] Architect Basil Champneys coined and developed the "Domestic Collegiate" style: "It is clear that the life in these must necessarily be of a more domestic character than in colleges for men, and if the style of architecture follows the requirement, the result will be something which may be called 'Domestic Collegiate'" (qtd. in Vickery 69).

[39] Vickery's text is an insightful study of the floorplans, architectural designs, interior layout, and sub-textual meanings of the women's colleges at Cambridge and Oxford. It is the "study of a gender-specific building type" that emerged on the Victorian academic landscape (Vickery xiii).

[40] Girton College has a red-brick design by architect Alfred Waterhouse, who also designed several other buildings in Oxford and Cambridge. Vickery notes that Waterhouse did not borrow inspiration from his Cambridge buildings for Girton, but rather from his domestic work.

[41] Girton was the very first Oxbridge college to adopt the corridor system.

[42] In terms of Foucault's theory of self-discipline, the corridors were valuable in that they encouraged a system of co-discipline, of students monitoring each other (see *Discipline and Punish*). These practices contributed greatly to the varsity novels' conflicts, the idea of fellow students spying, hearing, and always being aware of what was going on in other girls' rooms.

[43] Newnham had rounded tables in the dining hall, rather than the typical rectangular of men's college halls, in order to facilitate intimate familiar dining arrangements. Details of the dining hall at Newnham (as compared to Cambridge's Trinity) are provided in an exposé by an

anonymous correspondent for the *Western Mail:* "One steps from the sober light of [Trinity's] ancient hall into the gay light of the dining-hall at Newnham with something like relief. The contrast makes one feel inclined to smile—even to dance. The hall is entirely white. […] Instead of dark oaken tables, the room is filled with small tables covered with white tablecloths, and whatever the time of the year these are decorated with flowers" ("A Woman's College," *Western Mail*, 3 April 1897, pp. 5).

[44] Girton's ground floor had a reading room, library, lecture rooms, hall/dining room, and laboratory. Its upper floors had student rooms, rooms for the librarian, Principal, VP, bursar, and a wing for housekeeper and kitchen staff. The college also included lecture rooms within the college building (typically, male undergrads left their colleges to attend lectures). Infirmaries were also located within the college house, as well as baths on each floor and live-in servants' quarters.

[45] See Introduction and Chapter One (n. 6) for Foucault's argument on polyvalent discourses, a key methodological influence for this dissertation.

[46] Elizabeth Thomasina Meade (1844-1914), a prolific writer, published at least two-hundred-and-fifty books in her career of various genres, including romances, sensation novels, novels about women's emancipation, supernatural tales, medical mysteries, detective stories, and, that for which she is most well-known, girls' stories. Meade also founded and edited the successful girls' magazine *Atalanta* (1887-1898), a sixpenny monthly geared toward the daughters of the gentry and upper middle class between fourteen and twenty-five years of age, which often featured essays and stories about the Oxbridge women's colleges (Mitchell 11). Although relatively little-known today, Meade was a minor celebrity in her day (Bogen, *Narratives* xiii). Janis Dawson proclaims that no writer made a greater contribution to the development of girls'

culture in Victorian England (132). Meade's second women's varsity novel (after *Sweet Girl*) was *The Girls of Merton College* (1911).

[47] As previously indicated, the title of Meade's novel comes from Tennyson's poem, specifically the lines of an undergraduate's response to Lilia's scheme about a women's university: "Pretty were the sight / If our old halls could change their sex, and flaunt / With prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans. / And sweet girl-graduates in their golden hair" (Prologue. 139-42). Tennyson's medley features throughout Meade's novel: the college women are seen rehearsing for a production of the play, which is performed at a pivotal moment near the end (marking Maggie's and Hammond's love).

[48] Another prolific writer of novels, short stories, and articles, Marshall published more than sixty novels between forty and sixty years of age (Proctor 142). Marshall wrote under the male pseudonym of Alan St. Aubyn (her husband Matthew was from St. Aubyn's, North Devon) (McClellan 332). Educated at Cambridge, Marshall was most well known for her varsity novels, set both at men's and women's colleges, which were recognized as "foundational texts in the varsity novel genre" (McClellan 332).

[49] Both novels feature fictive representations of Cambridge. Marshall's St. Benedict's College is a fictional Cambridge men's college. There are clues that Meade's Kingsdene is meant to be Cambridge rather than Oxford, including the fact that Geoffrey Hammond, the only male university student in the novel, is touted as Senior Wrangler, a term used for Cambridge's top Tripos scholar. There is a coincidental kinship in the novels: the name of *Sweet Girl*'s college, "St. Benet's," derives from "St. Benedict's.

[50] Ruskin connects education, scholarship, and "kingly" power: "well-directed moral training and well-chosen reading" are the marks of kings (68).

[51] I am particularly interested in the pairing of women's varsity novels with the exposé genre of varsity literature. These exposés, published in various Victorian periodicals and newspapers, were either written anonymously or by well-known writers such as Meade. Typically, they were structured as first-hand investigations of women's colleges, and often under the conceit of the writer touring unseen through the college grounds and rooms, silently observing and reporting all he or she witnessed. Like other "sensational" journalism of the era, the unwritten or subtly acknowledged justification for these pieces was exposure for the sake of the reading public's titillation and curiosity.

[52] Mitchell notes that "[t]he word girl became dramatically visible about 1880," when advice manuals, periodicals, magazines, books, and book series all began to direct their literature to a specific market of girls and include "girl" in their titles (6, 9). For Mitchell, girlhood was "not merely a transitional stage to hurry through" but a time of value in itself (9).

[53] Bogen's studies of women's college fiction focus mainly on texts from the interwar period of the 1920s and '30s. Cambridge would not grant degrees to women until 1948.

[54] Although these women's college reports, interviews, and tours appeared in the popular periodical literature of the day and were thus accessible to a wide readership, the pieces were often aimed at both young girls and women.

[55] Of Marshall Proctor observes: "even when the authoress knew something of university life, and perhaps participated in it, her participation was remote and different from that of men; and her portrayal of it had a corresponding air of fantasy quite out of keeping with both the facts and better informed novels" (137).

[56] See *Her Oxford* (2008).

[57] With the exception of Girton's "two-room plan," which assigned students a little study and a bedroom attached (Zimmern 435), all other Oxbridge women's colleges provided their students with only one room, which they had to convert throughout the day from sitting room to bedroom (see the later section on "optical elisions"). Male college servants, responsible for fetching food or drink, wake-up calls, and carrying luggage (among other tasks), were called "scouts" at Oxford and "gyps" at Cambridge. With respect to food and drink, the women's colleges typically served very plain and humble English fare, with only water, tea, coffee, and cocoa to drink. Woolf's narrator (in *A Room of One's Own*) experiences this, memorably, while a guest at "Fernham": her supper is a "homely trinity" of beef, greens, and potatoes, followed by prunes and custard for dessert (22). Compared with the extravagant feast and wine of the men's colleges, she notes somewhat resentfully that "[t]he lamp in the spine does not light on beef and prunes" (Woolf 23).

[58] In *A Sweet Girl Graduate*, St. Benet's is described as a snug collection of three halls, each of which "stood in its own grounds and was more or less a complete home in itself" (Meade 14). On women's college mistresses as house-mothers: in Meade's novel, the VP Miss Heath advises Maggie to marry Hammond at the end of the novel, and considers herself to be acting "as the young girl's mother" (293).

[59] From a critical standpoint, Proctor's prejudice is proof of this.

[60] Mitchell uses as an example Meade's novel *A Sister of the Red Cross* (1900), which features two promising New Women, a professional nurse and a news correspondent stationed in South Africa, who are regrettably overshadowed by the attention given to a third character, whom Mitchell calls "a spoiled twit" of a girl eager to be married (20). Mitchell concludes that it "almost seems that Meade is afraid of what she starts to do" (20), with her "feminist intent

compromised […] by the emotional pull of traditional conventions, by her unthinking echo of gender, class, and imperial stereotypes" and by the compromising power of "old feelings" (22).

[61] McClellan conjectures that the author's lack of support was due to her struggling economic situation (her family lost their savings in the Australian stock market), the alleged claim that her own daughter suffered a breakdown at Newnham, and an unwillingness to battle the heavy prejudices against the idea of an Oxbridge woman when her life and living was on the line (332). Marshall began writing at age 53 (after the death of her husband) in order to support her five children (McClellan 332).

[62] For a critical study on Victorian cultural longing for lost girlhood, a longing that still comes at the expense of female maturity and growth, see Catherine Robson's *Men in Wonderland: The Lost Girlhood of the Victorian Gentleman* (2001). In particular, Robson considers male authors' idealized constructs of girlhood in relation to the "myth of feminized origin" and the idea that girls function as a locus of longing for men's own lost selves (3).

[63] See n. 46. *Atalanta* magazine (1887-98) frequently featured essays and stories about the Oxbridge women's colleges (Mitchell 11).

[64] Clutter is key to the homely charm of the women's college room as a nod to the Victorian parlour, a "material artefact" of Victorian domesticity according to Thad Logan, and, of all the rooms in the Victorian household, the one that most articulates "home" in its profusion of things both functional (lamps, tables, chairs, footstools, clocks, hearthware) and ornamental (antimacassars, mats, pincushions, figurines, flowers, vases, books, engravings, photographs, fans, etc.) (Logan xiii, 23, 105). The degree of clutter (often collectively known as "Victoriana" (Logan 108)) distinguishes the Victorian parlour from its historical predecessors and links it to a broader "Victorian panoply of things" within a burgeoning industrial, technological, and

capitalist society (Logan 7, 26). Decorative excess is evidenced at the start of Tennyson's *The Princess* when the narrator is given a tour of Sir Walter Vivian's grand Grecian house: "And on the tables every clime and age / Jumbled together; celts and calumets, Claymore and snow-shoe, toys in lava, fans / Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries, / Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere, / The cursed Malayan crease, and battle-clubs / From the isles of palm; and higher on the walls, / Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk and deer, / His own forefathers' arms and armor hung." (Prologue. 16-24). The description ends with an emphasis on masculine decoration in order to stamp the house as one of generational patriarchal power before the narrative delves into the tale of an experiment of matriarchal power.

[65] Hamlett cites Gissing's *The Odd Women* (1893) as a prime example (163).

[66] If the idea of "cramming" is familiar in Victorian varsity vernacular—filling the mind to the brim with knowledge (often ill-advisedly, in anxiety-ridden preparation for exams)—it is also useful for describing the fixation with domestic clutter in women's college literature, filling college rooms with the stuff of home to the point of comfort or excess.

[67] The cocoa party, the ceremony of drink so identifiably a part of the women's colleges, was, from a social standpoint, equivalent to the wine parties of male undergraduates (often featured in boys' varsity literature). Girton began the tradition of hosting fellow collegians in one's room for late night cocoa (usually after 10pm), but its popularity soon spread to all women's colleges. It became so ubiquitous in women's college life that to invite someone "to cocoa" was a perfectly understood verbal construction (as when Priscilla is asked by Maggie, "will you cocoa with me to-night at half-past ten?" (Meade 26)).

[68] Also meant to mock and mimic the alliteration of her name, Priscilla Penywern Peel, the nickname is bestowed after Priscilla falls victim to the St. Benet's college practice of inundating

unsuspecting freshers with impromptu callers on their first night (in the chapter called "An Unwilling 'At Home'"). Although she is given some warning of the room invasion, she is nonetheless ill at ease over the inferiority of her room. Vickery notes that playing hostess to friends "paying calls" is a common trope in women's varsity novels, as is the trope of the fresher of humble means intimidated by the beautifully decorated and cozy rooms of the wealthier students. See Alice Stronach's *A Newnham Friendship* (1901) (Vickery 76).

[69] This alliterative term ("cozy contrivances") comes courtesy of an Elizabeth Wordsworth quote, to be introduced shortly.

[70] Beginning at mid-century, the rapidly expanding middle class had more and more money to spend on the home (the Great Exhibition of 1851 cemented the Victorians' cultural interest in commodities on display) (Hamlett 2). Students at Oxbridge's women's colleges were almost entirely middle class, unlike the men's colleges which had a healthy balance of aristocratic and middle-class students.

[71] See "Of Other Spaces."

[72] See *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (1993).

[73] Thad Logan suggests that the ideal of coziness was a sought-after, yet often incidental, feature of the cluttered Victorian parlour, with its multiplicity of fabrics and upholsteries and its snug collection of homely things. She quotes Susan Kyle Leopold's observation that "the ideal Victorian home tended to boast a parlour that see-sawed clumsily between homely comfort and happy grandeur: its thickly upholstered chairs with well-padded backs, cosy fringed footstools and sumptuously curtained windows topped with swagged velvets, […] increased the feeling of a protected, womblike enclosure" (qtd in Logan 11).

[74] Although the college room and its environs radiate warmth, both Meade's and Marshall's novels suggest that the college women are often and at times need to be somewhat hard-hearted and cold in order to be taken seriously. After Lucy Rae complains of a "chilling reception" at Newnham, for example, Capability Stubbs responds bluntly: "You've come to the wrong place if you expect any warmth at Newnham, or sympathy either" (Marshall 52).

[75] Meade describes the fictive St. Benet's as a college that "obstructed the gaze of the curious" who "got no peep" of its interiors "unless the high gates happened to be open" (*Sweet Girl* 13). Similarly, in Tennyson's "The Princess," Lilia boasts provocatively of her imagined women's university that "I would make it death / For any male thing but to peep at us" (Prologue. 150-151).

[76] Batson states that the student letters anticipate Woolf's work by fifty years (38). Eleanor Lodge, who attended Lady Margaret Hall in 1890, wrote: "The very fact of having a room of one's own, a place where one not only could work, but was expected to work, the possibility of independence, of arranging one's time for oneself, of getting up and going to bed according to one's own ideas and not those of others, made each day an adventure and a joy" (qtd. in Mitchell 55). Similarly, Girton student Helena Swanwick observed: "To have a study of my own and to be told that, if I chose to put 'Engaged' on my door, no one would so much as know was so great a privilege as to hinder me from sleep. I did not know till then how much I had suffered from the incessant interruptions of my home life" (qtd.in Hamlett 158).

[77] Where there is domestic description, that is. In her larger work on the Victorian parlour, Logan observes an odd scarcity of "virtual parlours" in Victorian novels (202). She concludes that novelists manifested a "near-invisibility of any contemporary style that is really pervasive and successfully hegemonic" (Logan 206). The fact that domestic detail *is* evident in women's

varsity fiction would suggest that this condition is satisfied by the idea of a women's college, setting the traditional Victorian home at a discernable distance. Indeed, as this dissertation has demonstrated repeatedly, nostalgia depends upon a sense of loss or threatened loss, and there is no greater distance than that measured by loss.

[78] Logan identifies three conventions of domestic description in Victorian novels—scarcity, excess, and coziness—each of which reflects the relationship between self and world to varying degrees (207-08): while scarcity and excess denote their equivalents in terms of psychic, emotional, or economic identity, coziness encodes a metonymic intimacy between space and character such that cozy spaces "fully, openly, and transparently express the tastes and desires of their inhabitants" (212-13).

[79] Logan dubs the era's most prominent novelist, Dickens, the "chronicler of coziness par excellence," arguing that his characters create and inhabit "bowers of domestic bliss that perfectly [embody] their idiosyncrasies" (213, 217).

[80] Marx's theory of "commodity fetishism": "The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof" in Capital, Vol 1, Sect. 4. For Marx a commodity is a "mysterious thing"; it becomes a fetish when it is severed from its use value and becomes an object of exchange value (42).

[81] The etymological roots of "fetish," from the Latin *facticius* ("artificial") and *facere* ("to make") supports the idea of the fetishized object or space as something powerfully affecting but nonetheless artificially constructed, thus underscoring the cozy college room as a constructed or manipulated idea.

[82] Cambridge's Tripos exams had to be written and passed before a student could obtain a bachelor's degree. Female students were permitted to write them but, since degrees were out of the question, they received no formal ranking, and their exam results were merely for college

honour. Fawcett, a Newnham scholar, became the first woman to obtain the top score in the Maths Tripos in 1890, placing "Above the Senior Wrangler," words as momentous as they were nonsensical in a literal sense. Fawcett was not given the official title of the best—since women's exams weren't officially ranked, and their names simply read aloud as "between" or "bracketed with" the male scholars—but she was nonetheless publicly celebrated for achieving better than the best (Mitchell 45-46). Other pioneering test writers include: Charlotte Angas Scott, an important trailblazer at Girton, and the first woman to write the Math Tripos (she placed 8th); Oxford's Annie Rogers, who placed in the First Class of Junior candidates in 1871 after sitting the Senior Examination (Brittain 18); and Agnata Ramsay of Girton, who achieved a first class in classics in 1887.

[83] Warmth is also a key aspect to the depiction of Maggie's cozy room, and a key component in Maggie's appeal for Priscilla, whose person and room are usually a bit chilly. Directly upon entering Maggie's rooms, Priscilla feels a "pink colour mounting into her cheeks" (Meade 35).

[84] A classical play by Aeschylus (*c*.430 BCE). In Meade's novel the title is written in its Latin form, *Prometheus Vinctus*, because Maggie, a classical scholar, is able and required to read classical languages (68). The English translation is inserted here, with some liberty, to align with this chapter's thematic emphasis on all things "bound." In the classical myth, Prometheus' binding and containment are punishment for his hubris. One might apply this motif to the Victorian female scholar in varsity literature, who is similarly punished and reduced for her scholastic ambitions.

[85] First published on 10 June 1890 in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, it was then reprinted in the *New York Times* on 24 June 1890.

[86] Fawcett's exam results were read out on 7 June 1890. Her victory was hailed by her fellow collegians as "the triumph of the corset" ("Hail the triumph of the corset, Hail the fair Philippa Fawcett") a rhyme they wrote as part of her celebration. Although one is used to celebrate and the other to exclude, one cannot help but note a similarity to Ruskin's aforementioned metonymic epithet "bonnets," both reducing female students to articles of clothing.

[87] These photos, taken shortly after Fawcett's exam successes in 1891, have no original source information but copies of both are kept at the Newnham archives. The window photograph is extracted from Fawcett's mother's (Millicent Fawcett) book *What I Remember*. The reading photograph is from the *ODNB* entry, which mentions the Newnham archives as the source copy. The photos appear to have been taken on the same day in 1891 (the dress, hair, and vase in the window are the same).

[88] Staging authenticity in the college room was first discussed in Chapter One, in reference to representations of the authentic Oxbridge room for touristic consumption. In this discussion, the room is staged to represent the home. In both, however, the "true" functional identity of the college room, as one of rowdy play for boys and one of serious work for girls, is masked.

[89] See Hamlett for more on the configuration of the Victorian home.

[90] In *Sweet Girl* the optical elision of Priscilla's room is made clear as well: "In one corner of the room was a little bed, made to look like a sofa by day, with a Liberty cretonne covering. A curtain of the same shut away the wardrobe and washing apparatus. Just under one of the bay windows stood a writing-table, so contrived as to form a writing-table, and a bookcase at the top, and a chest of drawers to hold linen below" (Meade 29). Lucy's room in Marshall's novel contains "a couch that served for a bed", bureau, table and chairs, a "thinly-disguised washstand

with imperfect crockery" and a "chintz curtain drawn across a corner of the room for hanging gowns," which was supposed to pass for a wardrobe (note the dual purpose again) (1: 48).

[91] Beginning in the 1860s, inspired by the sumptuous displays at the Great Exhibition (Logan 188), Victorian tastes turned to Eastern countries; Chinese, Egyptian, Middle Eastern, and Japanese styles were all popular additions to an eclectic mix of home décor. As Logan asserts, these appropriated styles and "othered" objects were an important addition to the Victorian imperialist project, and contributed to the "subversive power" of the foreign to undermine the appeal of the domestic (184, 195, 198). As this varsity anecdote suggests, Japanese style in pattern (of bamboo, birds, fish, blossoms, fans etc.), object (lanterns, trays, sashes), and design (blue and white china) was especially popular (see also Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado* (1885)). In a letter to Barbara Bodichon, Emily Davies reveals that Girton's early interior included Japanese curtains (qtd. in Vickery 17).

[92] Maria, nicknamed "Capability Stubbs" for her stalwart dedication to academic work, is an example of the pervasive cultural belief (and varsity novel trope) that scholarship and study serve to diminish a woman's beauty and/or health, inadvertently reaffirming the appeal of the domestic woman of less taxing accomplishments. The homely female scholar trope is alive and well throughout Marshall's novel, beginning with Lucy's first college visitor, "[a] girl who looked as if she had shrunk—as if she had once been round, and plump, and bright-eyed, and soft-cheeked, and red-lipped as a girl ought to be at twenty. She was none of these things now. […] She looked exactly like a girl who had used up all her brains" (1:58). Later, Lucy's college tutor surmises that she has deteriorated since entering Newnham: "It is astonishing how girls' lips tighten after six months in a women's college. Perhaps this is due to their difficulties with mathematics, and to the anxiety that ethics and Latin prose give them, to say nothing of modern languages and

natural science" (Marshall 2: 85). Even Tennyson's Princess Ida, described as "inexorable" with "no tenderness," an "axelike edge unturnable" is depicted as taking on a harsh unappealing demeanour once she has founded her university (2. 85-87, 5. 504-05). Mitchell argues that the "caricature of educated woman as physically unappealing was a code for their lack of interest in men" and "a screen for men's fear that they could not win women who had other alternatives" (Mitchell 64). Mitchell argues that this caricature and its underlying idea "was probably the most powerful prejudice against women's education" spurred by what she calls "spinster-phobia" (65).

[93] In Eleanor Field's exposé of women's college life for American readers, she notes: "One very characteristic article of furniture in every Newnham room is the oak bureau – "burry" – which besides serving as a writing table possesses the most astonishing capacity for receiving anything and everything" (Field 290).

[94] See *Home Matters* (2001). Rubenstein's text is a larger exploration of what "home" means in women's fiction, and how nostalgia or longing for home functions as a kind of revision or repairing of the past and one's relationship to spaces of both individual and cultural importance.

[95] An early hint of Pamela's ineptitude in varsity homemaking and hosting is her carelessness with the making and offering of tea. Lucy takes tea only once from Pamela, only to discover that it tastes of tooth-powder. The narrator explains that Pamela had packed her tea and her tooth-powder in the same tin when she first came to Newnham, and that the two had become regrettably mixed. The ever-practical scholar deems it "would not have been political economy to have thrown it away," so she continues to serve the unfortunate concoction to her guests (Marshall 1: 205).

[96] See *Sesame and Lilies*.

[97] As was seen in the Philippa Fawcett exposé. Another example is "Mrs Henry Sidgwick: Principal, Newnham College": the interviewer reports that "books were scattered everywhere in abundance, but there were plenty of feminine ornaments and knick-knacks which showed me that the Principal of Newnham College delighted to surround herself with all the pretty luxuries of life" (757).

[98] More on this in Part Two.

[99] It is also suggested that his senses of discomfort, unworthiness, and frustration with "Nature" are heightened by the fact that Pamela and he are not just siblings, but twins.

[100] It is appropriate for Annabel's identity that her decorations are from nature, for Logan observes that domestic items from the natural world were linked for the Victorians to a "profound nostalgia for a perceived loss of the rural past" (Logan 143). There was still a lingering Romantic sensibility (which found its articulation perfectly in the art and *objets d'art* of the Victorians) for the superiority of the natural world over the world of culture (Logan 158).

[101] Although Chapter One considered it in the context of delinquent markings, the idea of nostalgic varsity graffiti, the grafting upon the university of student presence and ownership, is applicable once again.

[102] *Sesame and Lilies*, p. 78

[103] "Rustication" was for a long while the term used for temporary expulsion from Oxford or Cambridge following delinquent or inappropriate academic behaviour. The term originates from the Latin "rus," meaning countryside; the rusticated student is being sent back to his family in the country. Today, the term "suspension" is preferred, and does not necessarily indicate delinquent behaviour.

[104] See *Kindred Nature* (1998), in which Barbara Gates discusses the persistent cultural attitude that identified women with nature in the Victorian and Edwardian eras, which led to their voices being dismissed in scientific discussions of nature.

[105] From *Sesame and Lilies*, in which Ruskin sets women and their queenly power within a garden. In addition to comparing women to fawns in their learning capacity, he also makes a comparison to flowers: "you may chisel a boy into shape, as you would a rock, or hammer him into it, if he be of a better kind, as you would a piece of bronze. But you cannot hammer a girl into anything. She grows as a flower does" (Ruskin 83).

[106] The idea of the bookless wilds as a nostalgic, humble space in counter-distinction to the modern university was a broader cultural interest for the Victorians and a popular idea in works outside of the varsity genre. See Anthony Trollope's *Barchester Towers* (1857), Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* (1895), and Matthew Arnold's "The Scholar-Gipsy" (1853). Arnold's poem especially trades on this dichotomy: the poem's subject roams the fields outside the university musing on its pastoral quiet and the legendary history of the "lost Scholar" while his eye "travels down to Oxford's towers" and takes in the "line of festal light in Christ-Church hall" (ll 60-61, 128-130). The bookless wilds in this poem are haunted by the scholar-gipsy in much the same way that Annabel Lee's room is haunted, both shrines to lost scholars, both spaces set apart from the ancient university but still well within the shadow/light of its influence and whose charm is indebted to its imposing presence.

[107] As mentioned in the Introduction, nostalgia was born in the university, first defined in a 1688 dissertation by medical student Johannes Hofer at the University of Basel, Switzerland, a study of Swiss mercenaries and students pining for home.

[108] The Latin *alma mater* translates to "nurturing mother."

[109] The disturbance that Lucy brings to the Master's house is emphasized literally; her stomping and pacing around St. Benedict's college and the Master's residence are understood to disturb its very foundations: "It was an unusual sound, that rapid pacing to and fro of impatient feet, in that scholarly room. […] The floor creaked audibly beneath Lucy's rapid, impatient steps; the old boards that had echoed to the slow tread of scholars for so many, many years, shook and trembled—actually trembled—beneath the light impatient footsteps of Cousin Dick's little daughter" (Marshall 1:22).

[110] Until the mid-nineteenth century, university wives were rarely seen at Oxbridge, which had strict rules of celibacy for their fellows and dons. Heads of houses (the Master would be considered one) and professors were the first to be able to have their wives living with them, beginning with the Royal Commission in 1852.

[111] She is the wife of the Master's brother.

[112] The visual clarity of the Master's memory of her is such that he remembers her fondly "carrying her butter and eggs to market" and recalls perfectly the "very spot" of her stall in the corner of the old butter market (Marshall 1: 77-78).

[113] Home-focussed nostalgia is often classed as anti-feminist. Rubenstein notes that because women have typically associated the space with domestic obligation and confinement, "the construction of home as an oppressive rather than a nostalgic space […] underlies the modern feminist movement" (2). More succinctly, she states "'Homesickness,' stripped of its nostalgic associations, became synonymous with 'sick of home.'" (Rubenstein 2).

[114] Underscoring the distinction between the two women, Marshall has Lucy announce her desire to enrol in a women's college as she is hemming a white frill next to her cousin. The impatience

and restlessness with which she undertakes and then eventually abandons her task is in stark contrast to Mary's staid contentment (Marshall 1: 20-21).

[115] The cottage's rusticity is emphasized by its surrounding natural environment: it is located at the top of high cliffs overlooking the sea, surrounded by a "green sward" (Meade 9).

[116] Priscilla's departure from home is described very differently than a male scholar's, not just a momentous transition but also a painful and unnatural kind of extraction: "She had made a very firm niche for herself in Aunt Raby's old cottage, and the dislodgment therefrom caused her for the time such mental disquiet and so many nervous and queer sensations that her pain was often acute and her sense of awkwardness considerable" (Meade 56).

[117] 6. 283-84

[118] Women were not taken seriously as classical scholars at Oxbridge and elsewhere. Yopie Prins analyzes the relationship between Victorian women and the study of Greek language and literature, and how women read and translated works of Greek tragedy. Despite contributing to their culture's idealization of Hellenism, Victorian women were ignored as legitimate classicists. The usefulness of classics at Oxbridge in a new age was being debated at precisely the time women were admitted to the universities, many of whom saw classical studies as a doorway into academic legitimacy, even if it was beginning to show signs of age.

[119] Both patron saints of the universities are women: Frideswide (Oxford) and Etheldreda (Cambridge).

[120] Titled "A Woman's College," the exposé was originally published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

[121] Although not to the same extent, even early twentieth-century women's college novels had prejudice and resistance coursing through them. See "Resistance: Women at Oxbridge" in Janice Rossen's *The University in Modern Fiction*.

Chapter Four

Jude's Jerusalem: Tragedy and Tradition

Preface

More than twenty years after Thomas Hardy wrote of the unfulfilled longing of a working-class man "who could not go to Oxford,"[1] journalist and author Harold Begbie[2] set out on a tour of industrial England to ensure that the similar longings of those struggling in a new century would not die, similarly, in obscurity. As the first world war ground to a halt, Begbie published the interviews and stories he had collected under the title *Living Water: Being Chapters from the Romance of the Poor Student* (1918), a tribute to academic "craving"[3] far removed from the eye and embrace of Oxbridge.

The "poor student" interviewed in the collection's first chapter, a Gloucestershire bootmaker's son named Reuben George (1864-1936),[4] recalled his "yearning for education" beginning during his early years working as a boy—cleaning boots, selling newspapers, and delivering meat on Saturdays[5] — and then continuing in the years he worked for the Gloucester Waggon Works as a young man (Begbie 25).[6] "I seemed to know by instinct that my brain wanted feeding" he said, and, while he revealed that he was able to curb this craving somewhat by scraping together enough money to purchase a small library of second-hand books, he made it clear that he would have been helpless without some intervention: "I couldn't have found my way alone. I should have got lost in the wilderness, or stuck in a bog, if it hadn't been for the University Extension Lectures. Those lectures were the beginning of a new life" (Begbie 25-26). Thus, the "romance" of this struggling student had a hero in the University Extension Movement,

which, as one of its key publications touted, sought to provide "the gist of a liberal education" to working men and women "within easy reach of their own doors" ("Farewell Words").[7]

However inadequate the patronizing gift of a "gist" might sound to a critic of today, for George it is instead the idea of university education at one's doorstep that leaves something to be desired. For, while the establishment of an extension centre in his town gives George a "new life," the "golden year" of that new life (Begbie 27), the happy ending of his story as Begbie presents it, does not come until many years later, when he is given the opportunity to visit the source from which all extension centres are fed: the university itself. In 1907, accompanied by members of the Workers' Educational Association, George attends Oxford's Summer Meeting, an annual ten-day gala of lectures and events for extension students scheduled during the otherwise closed summer term, and it is here that George finds the cure for his craving: "Oxford! Shall I ever forget my feelings when I got among those old colleges and breathed that air into my very soul? Oxford is the greatest spiritual experience of my life" (Begbie 27). Concluding his apostrophic outburst is this more sober declaration: "Every year since then, never missing it once, I've taken my wife and children either to Oxford or to Cambridge. I go there to keep my soul alive" (Begbie 27). If George's effusive reaction to Oxford struck Begbie's readers with the realization that the "poor" student's soul yearns with far greater intensity than his brain, it must also strike the reader of this dissertation with the familiar Arnoldian idea of the ancient university as a site of respiration and inspiration, a site that arouses its reverent subjects by breathing its influence upon them.[8] For this chapter, however, most significant is George's insistence that pilgrimage is necessary for the fulfillment of his academic soul: that Begbie's poor student, like Hardy's, must "go to" the ancient academic centre, suggests that something is lost when higher education is accessed remotely. Indeed, as the University Extension Movement

set about establishing its many education centres, closing the distance between student and university, it was simultaneously re-establishing the idea of the one true centre and redefining its distance, traversable by the soul, in nostalgic terms.

Contextual Introduction: Extension, Tension, and Nostalgic Reinvention

The final engine of the Victorian knowledge industry that this project brings to bear on the idea of a university in the Victorian cultural imagination is the University Extension Movement. In this chapter I explore the cultural confrontation between the Extension Movement's idea of university education extended to all and traditional Oxbridge's age-old idea of one centre of learning for the select few, arguing for the emergence of a nostalgic discourse at this point of confrontation which reinvents Oxbridge as a lost centre worthy of pilgrimage. As with previous chapters, this strand of nostalgia will be analyzed through a critical pairing of university texts: Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* (1895), classified here as an anti-varsity novel, will be studied alongside various Summer Meeting accounts, key components of the Extension Movement Press, both of which sit at the critical nexus of extension and exclusion. But first, a brief consideration of what led to the Summer Meetings and how they facilitated a role for tradition in a movement for change, reinventing Oxbridge as a destination of desire for the working-class student.

In this brief introduction to the University Extension Movement I shall follow the lead of Cambridge don and extension lecturer Richard G. Moulton,[9] who opened his 1890 public address to the American Society for the Extension of University Teaching with the following: "Mr. Provost, Ladies and Gentlemen: I am invited to lay before you the facts of the University Extension Movement in England. Only side by side with the facts, I want to put also the ideas of the movement; because facts are only useful in so far as they illustrate ideas. The facts are simply

the body; the idea of a movement is its animating soul" ("Address" 1).[10] In like fashion, I will present in this introduction the ideas of the movement first and foremost, and the facts only insofar as they serve to flesh them out. First is the idea of inclusion, the animating force that the movement was proudest to acknowledge. At mid-century, Oxbridge was far removed from the realities of the rising middle class and especially of the working class.[11] Rather, as Alexandra Lawrie observes, it "existed in a romantically distorted form in the popular imagination, as an idyllic way of life that would remain perpetually unattainable for the majority of citizens" (56). The aim of the University Extension Movement, then, was to make the unattainable attainable by bringing university lectures to England's diverse provincial centres for those men and women who could not afford to abandon their daily duties for the privileged life of a full-time student. The first stirrings of the movement began in 1850 with Oxford philosophy professor William Sewell (called the "father of Oxford extension" (Goldman 18)), who asked this provocative question in his pamphlet *Suggestions for the Extension of the University*: "Though it may be impossible to bring the masses requiring education to the University, may it not be possible to carry the University to them?" (1).[12] Sewell suggested expanding the university's influence to "embrace the whole kingdom" (1), initiating an important conversation at Oxford about how best to include the working classes, a conversation in which certain prominent dons took part over the next two decades. Balliol's Benjamin Jowett, for instance, who would join Goldwin Smith and Mark Pattison on an exploratory extension committee in 1865 (Goldman 21),[13] was especially attentive to the rumours that extension might address the inequities of college expense. "This place is all in a stir about University Extension and probably something will be done," he wrote in a letter to his mother, adding "it is certainly a great grievance that a young man has to pay about £ 200 a year for six months in the year" (qtd in Goldman 20).[14] Yes, the conversation had

begun at Oxford at mid-century, but it was Cambridge that would push the movement forward decades later, and, rather fortuitously for this dissertation's chronology, the spark of inspiration came from the adjacent movement for the higher education of women.[15]

James Stuart (1843-1913), a young fellow of Trinity College and frequent lecturer at Girton and Newnham, discovered an interest in lectures among working-class men while he was lecturing for the North of England Council for Promoting the Higher Education of Women in 1867, prompting him to launch a Cambridge campaign for extramural lectures (Goldman 14). Stuart had great praise for his university's recent admission of non-collegiate students, "a great step towards rendering our Universities more accessible to all classes," but he argued that this kind of accessibility was still only feasible for those students who could "procure some years of continuous leisure" ("A Letter" 1). Stuart's tireless advocacy[16] led to the establishment of Cambridge's experimental "Local Lecture" series in the autumn of 1873, which enabled working-class men and women from Nottingham, Leicester, Sheffield, and Derby to attend lectures on physical science, political economy, or English literature without leaving their towns and without disrupting the routines of their lives (Goldman 15; Ward 285). In 1878, Oxford followed suit, launching its own local lecture series around the country, and opening its first extension centre at Reading in 1892. Reading's principal H. J. Mackinder, along with Oxford's committee secretary of local lectures Michael Sadler,[17] with whom he wrote the preeminent survey on university extension,[18] called it "the university of the toiling millions" (35), pointing to the remarkable diversity of the lecture audiences which included teachers, tradesmen, clerks, shopkeepers, ship-builders, artisans, manufacturers, labourers, etc.[19] And women: in 1889 Sadler estimated that women formed two-thirds of the student population at Oxford's extension lectures (87), proving that the women's colleges (tucked away in their remote, "cozy" corners of the

country) were not accessible or acceptable for a large swath of the nation's patriarchally-burdened women, and especially working women, who nonetheless yearned for access to higher education.[20]

So, the answer to Sewell's mid-century question was resoundingly affirmative: the university could indeed, in some form, be carried to the masses. And with this image comes the second important idea animating the University Extension Movement: movement. Indeed, that this was a movement about movement was established clearly in James Stuart's earliest vision (as with Jowett's concern, described in its early gestation to his mother) for a "peripatetic university" where professors and other lecturers would "circulate" among the larger towns of England (qtd in Welch 25). This rhetoric of mobility would continue as university extension gained momentum, with Moulton calling it an "itinerant teaching organization" (*The University Extension Movement* 4) and with the *Pall Mall Gazette* publicizing it in an 1890 article titled "A University on Wheels."[21] The *Gazette* might more aptly have described a university "on the rails," however, given that university extension, like university tourism, was, as Lawrence Goldman insists, so crucially linked to the railway age,[22] dispatching its lecturers with expediency and frequency "from one extension centre to another on a weekly or fortnightly circuit, a train timetable in every pocket" (63).[23] Oxford's Extension Office even had a "travelling library" of boxed books transported by train to extension centres around the country to accompany every course (Goldman 63, Mackinder and Sadler 9).[24] Yes, the idea of a university on the move, expanding outward, was an important correlative idea to inclusion because it bolstered well the ancient universities' bid for a place in a Victorian society of industry and progress.

But the universities had always traded on tradition, and the University Extension Movement was bound to be animated by this as well. And just as it was for university tourism, the civic colleges, and the women's colleges, tradition was to be the fuel for tension. As Alexandra Lawrie observes, traditionalists resisted the democratizing efforts of the extension movement over concerns that it "might threaten the elitism" of Oxbridge (79); some, like Tory journalist and proud Cantabrigian Charles Whibley, expressed these concerns unabashedly: "why should our Universities exist," he asked, "if the unlettered are given their share in the privileges and patronage of learning?" (qtd. in Lawrie 79). More often than not, however, resistance was not so outrageously vocalized, but rather imbedded strategically in the rhetoric of acceptance and in the literature that sought to promote it. In the press, and especially in the *Oxford University Extension Gazette*, one of the two dominant periodicals dedicated to university extension,[25] resistance was most often exhibited in the persistent theme of working-class struggle: the romanticized idea of the working-class extension student who tries desperately to make good use of the university's charitable outreach, but whose dogged attempts only serve to make the university seem more exclusive and elusive than ever. A good example of this pervasive theme is an article the *Gazette* ran in May 1893 to give an idea "of some of the difficulties that have to be overcome by a working man who is anxious to participate in the educational opportunities so liberally offered by the University Extension authorities" (111).[26] Among others, it features the following firsthand account:

> In addition to the heavy work that falls on the shoulders of a Secretary of a large committee, I had to write a paper once a fortnight – no light undertaking for a busy man mixed up in religious, social, and political work. My reading was done at odd intervals, when I could snatch a few moments from the drudgery of a work-a-day life; principally I

> admit at meal-times, and when I ought to have been in bed. At our house, unfortunately, we have no sitting-room, only one room downstairs, which answers for a shop, sitting-room, and kitchen. It is rather trying, when you are struggling to put your thoughts on paper, to have your train of ideas upset by a running fire of conversation carried on by the other inmates of the house, or by a request to get up and serve a customer with a pennyworth of sweets. I found it hard to lose myself in the sixteenth century, while I was being so constantly reminded of the prosaic side of the nineteenth. ("University Extension Lectures and Working Men" 111)

Like an exposé on the squalor and sin of a slum neighbourhood, "saved" by some philanthropic benefactor (common in Victorian literature of all kinds), this woeful testimonial of frustrated academic ambition against the "drudgery of a work-a-day life" indulges similarly in the acculturated instincts of recognized difference, and protected privilege.

In fact, the extension press indulged most often in a strategic marriage of the two ideas just discussed. Joining movement and working-class struggle, they regularly dramatized the saga of the extension student's difficult journey to the local extension centres. Richard Moulton included, in his 1885 book on the extension movement, for instance, a letter from the *Newcastle Chronicle* attesting to the fact that several working persons in their district "go a distance of six miles in order to hear the lectures" (*The University Extension Movement* 19), a feat trumped by the schoolmaster hyped on the front page of the May 1894 *Gazette*, who reportedly walked 120 miles during the winter in order to attend astronomy lectures on the Isle of Wight.[27] It was not only the great distances that these tales romanticized, but also the hardships faced along the way: a popular example, told more than once in the extension press,[28] is the story of two pitman brothers whose five mile journeys to and from a lecture centre were plagued with obstacles.

"They were able to get in by train," reports Robert Davies Roberts, Secretary for both the Cambridge and London Local Lectures Syndicates, "but the return service was inconvenient, and they were compelled to walk home. They did this for three months on dark nights, over wretchedly bad roads, and in all kinds of weather. On one occasion they returned in a severe storm, when the roads were so flooded that they lost their way, and got up to their waists in water" (qtd in Welch 129).[29] Given the prevalence of stories like this, I begin this chapter's argument, and establish one of its key themes, by noting that one of the most significant ideas embedded in the extension movement is that of the perilous pilgrimage. It presents yet another version of the martyr-scholar (a figure of concern throughout this dissertation), not necessarily one who dies, but rather one who cannot reach the university without great difficulty and sacrifice. Indeed, pilgrimage is key to the discourse of exclusion infiltrating the extension movement from within, because the gap between where the university extended and where the working-class student could reach was still the familiar gap of privilege.[30]

That the local extension *centres* were presented as the destinations of these perilous pilgrimages, as centres of difficult access, leads to an important discussion on centrality. This chapter's thematic focus on the pilgrimage must include great attention to the idea of "the centre," because the pilgrim is only a nomad without a centre to summon her, and without nostalgia to render that centre an intangible site of lost pasts and restless souls. In theorizing "the centre" for this chapter's purposes, it is helpful to turn to the writings of Mircea Eliade,[31] historian of religions, which, despite their ethnographic datedness, provide a useful framework for understanding how centrality connects to sacredness and nostalgic desire.[32] Eliade argues that, in religious and "mythical geography," centres are sacred spaces cut off from the "profane" spaces that surround them, and allow for the connection of earth and heaven ("Symbolism" 39;

"Sacred Places" 368-73). Sacred centres include, of course, churches, temples, palaces, and cities; but also, more humbly, houses, which separate the sacred (or that which is deemed sacred) from the external profane in like fashion.[33] To this list must be added the sacred centre of the university, an idealized place of knowledge and honour imaginatively separated from the "bookless wilds,"[34] and especially the idealized centre of Oxford, whose "dreaming spires"[35] epitomize in the English cultural and literary imagination the transient earth-heaven divide. John Henry Newman certainly supported this association with centrality and holy *sitedness*, identifying universities among the great centres or "shrines of refinement and good taste" to which one must travel (10), and invoking, for added emphasis, the romantic idea of "yon pilgrim student" of ancient Greece bound for the original Groves of Academe, the Academy at Athens, "where he might take his fill of gazing on those emblems and coruscations of invisible unoriginated perfection" and "[learn] at once what a real University must be" (22).[36] For Newman, "excellence implies a centre" (16). For Eliade, the university, and all other sacred centres, "stand in the selfsame place: the centre of the universe" ("Sacred Places" 379).

But, Eliade identifies a key divergence in how these centres of the universe are understood, as places of either easy or difficult access: "We observe that one group of traditions attests the desire of man to find himself at the Centre *without any effort*, whilst another group insists upon the *difficulty*, and consequently upon the *merit*, of being able to enter into it" ("Symbolism" 55).[37] So, on the one hand is the idea that the journey to a sacred centre must be an arduous one (as is life's journey to the kingdom of heaven in western Christianity); on the other is the idea that easy access must be encouraged through the replication of holy centres in churches and homes: "The way which leads to the 'Centre' is sown with obstacles, and yet every city, every temple, every dwelling-place is *already* at the Centre of the Universe" (Eliade,

"Symbolism" 54). Eliade identifies the more prevalent tradition to be the one that calls for centres of easy access, the one that urges people and faith-groups to erect centres all around them to stand in as "easy substitutes" for more sanctified originals (i.e. churches for kingdoms of heaven), and argues, importantly, that this prevalence attests to a "nostalgia for Paradise" in the human condition ("Sacred Places" 383; "Symbolism" 55). This "nostalgia for Paradise" is pivotal, I would argue, to understanding how the extension movement could create "centres" with enough sacredness to warrant the perilous pilgrimage motif running rampant across extension literature: as extensions of Oxbridge, they were connected to the original academic paradise, borrowing something of its lustre, and urging longing on its behalf. The extension movement's spokespersons were keen to keep this connection in students' minds, as exemplified in John Morley's[38] evocative address to London extension students in 1887:

> It is true that we cannot bring to London with this movement the indefinable charm that haunts the grey and venerable quadrangles of Oxford and Cambridge. We cannot take you into the stately halls, the silent and venerable libraries, the solemn chapels, the studious old-world gardens. We cannot surround you with all those elevated memorials and sanctifying associations of scholars and poets, of saints and sages, that march in glorious procession through the ages, and make of Oxford and Cambridge a dream of music for the inward ear, and of delight for the contemplative eye. We cannot bring all that to you; but I hope, and I believe, it is the object of those who are more intimately connected with the society than I have been, that every partaker of the benefits of this society will feel himself and herself in living connection with those two famous centres, and feel conscious of the links that bind the modern to the older England. (qtd in Roberts 88-89)

With its “indefinable charm” and “sanctifying associations,” Morley’s nostalgic tribute to Oxbridge in absentia invokes the ideas of Arnold and Newman to enticing effect, but the word of greatest significance, appearing four times, is the one that emphasizes distance and exclusion, making satisfaction with a substitute depend upon longing for an original that “cannot” be accessed.

The university centre of effortless access may have been the founding motivation of the extension movement, but my argument for this chapter depends upon the observation that the less prevalent tradition identified by Eliade, espousing a centre of difficult access and uncommon merit, would become one of its most pervasive and strategic ideas. And it was an idea animated by a nostalgia for paradise that could not be completely satisfied with substitutes or replicas. For, in truth, resistance to the extension movement was not just about resisting the democratization of higher education, but also about resisting the decentralization of higher education. With the developing significance and power of new centres comes the fear of losing Oxbridge as the one true centre. Stuart Marriott attests that, despite much altruistic rhetoric, this self-interest on the part of Oxbridge and its supporters, “the determination of Oxford and Cambridge to preserve their own dominating position,” was indeed one of the great political concerns of the extension movement (5).[39] But out of this tension came nostalgic reinvention. It was at Oxford, where the traditionalists were always far more rigid and protective than at Cambridge,[40] that the solution for maintaining the university’s centrality was devised: if the ancient universities are in danger of becoming lost centres, let us enshrine them as such once again; let us reinvent them as the ultimate Mecca to visit, the ultimate Paradise to yearn for. In short, let us rebrand them sites of pilgrimage. This was the beginning of the Summer Meetings.

So entrenched was the trope of the student's pilgrimage in the extension movement press and its foundational literature that it became the key method of re-establishing Oxbridge as the centre of centres in the age of extension. Beginning at Oxford in the summer of 1888[41] and then alternating summers with Cambridge beginning in 1893, the Summer Meetings invited extension students to journey from their local hubs of work and education to the universities for ten days of lectures,[42] sightseeing,[43] and college residence.[44] And many students happily obeyed the summons to visit these historic academic centres: nearly nine hundred attended Oxford's inaugural meeting in 1888, which, according to one reporter, was "more thickly crowded with events than the Eights week or Commemoration,"[45] and over a thousand arrived the following year. By the fifth meeting extension students were making the journey from as far away as Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, and America.[46] Of course, extension movement delegates made sure that a university pilgrimage was not only for the financially solvent, offering scholarships to those carpenters, clerks, weavers, and dockhands who could not afford to attend on their own.[47] These brief facts give an idea of the success and draw of the Summer Meetings, but, statistics and facts aside, I am primarily interested in the textual output of the meetings: in the accounts of the workers who attended them appearing in various publications, and most frequently in the *Oxford University Extension Gazette,* which saw fit to publish a series of "Impressions" of the Summer Meetings composed by different members of the working class in lieu of formal reports.[48]

Broadly, these Summer Meeting accounts are significant because they contribute to a discourse of university nostalgia alongside the varsity novels and all of the varsity texts that this dissertation has explored. Specifically, in presenting Oxford and Cambridge as sites of pilgrimage, they contribute to the emergence of a nostalgia for Oxbridge centrality and

supremacy that is as much a product of the extension movement as it is a counterargument to it. Again, this is a polyvalent nostalgia in that it simultaneously and strategically fortifies both the movement and resistance to it, celebrating university extension education by "bringing the Universities face to face with their distant sons and daughters…giving a reality to the relationship which cannot fail to be a source of inspiration and strength" (Roberts 89), while also undercutting the movement by reinforcing Oxbridge's centrality, exclusivity, and intangible distance. In addition, this nostalgia further destabilizes the extension movement by recasting its students. With Oxbridge imagined a lost centre of pilgrimage, extension students necessarily become pilgrims, whose primary purpose is not their longing for education but rather their longing for a holy site, whose primary value lies not in their book-learned literacy (so often deemed incompatible with their class), but rather in their nostalgic literacy (which the voice of privilege deems a credit to their class). As well, with Oxbridge a reinscribed centre, extension students become *eccentric* scholars, whose off-centre positions are integral to the reification of the centre around which they orbit, to which they travel, and from which they return without ever managing to penetrate.

Textual Introduction: Hardy's Varsity Novel Extensions

In 1888, Thomas Hardy wrote of his ideas for the story of a young man "who could not go to Oxford" (qtd. in Memel 66). But, as readers know well, the young man at the heart of what would ultimately become the writer's final novel,[49] does indeed "go to" Oxford. The tension of the novel, and its tragedy, lies in the discrepancy between the literal and figurative understanding of the phrase, between going and belonging. The desire to visit Oxford, to go there even if going would never equal belonging, was the very desire that infiltrated the extension movement and launched the summer meetings. In this second introductory section I shall situate Hardy's *Jude*

the Obscure (1895), first, within the ideological frame of the extension movement, demonstrating its discursive compatibility with the summer meeting accounts, and second, in relation to the varsity novel genre, justifying its inclusion in this dissertation.

Hardy's novel engages with the ideas of the extension movement (and with the nostalgic idea of the university that emerges in consequence) in many ways, the most notable of which is its attention to the sharp divide between working-class and university lives. The narrative is keenly attuned to the tensions between academic ambition and working-class realities, and to the "poor student's" struggle to bridge the two. Jude Fawley is introduced to the reader as an eleven-year-old boy who must attend night school because he works during the day, and later becomes a young man whose classics reading (self-disciplined, and sustained only by the merest hope of eventual university belonging) must be done at odd intervals between and sometimes during his trips peddling his aunt's baked goods (Hardy 10, 31-33).[50] Additionally, in acknowledging Jude's difficulty balancing study with the "drudgery of workaday life," the narrative nods to the patronizing notions of struggle and sacrifice so easily aroused in a society accustomed to considering the self-improving work of the poor from the lofty and distant height of ease. Jude's awkward studying atop his aunt's bakery cart, for instance, the reins held over one arm and a dictionary precariously strapped to his knee, is viewed in this way; he is able to manage in a "purblind stumbling way" states the narrator, "and with an expenditure of labour that would have made a tender-hearted pedagogue shed tears" (Hardy 32). This is the same patronizingly sentimental attitude with which an established Oxbridge academic would be expected to read of an extension student's struggles to write his fortnightly paper in the darkening hours of his shop or of another's perilous, weather-beaten journey to a local lecture.[51] It is also important to note that the extension press's tales of working-class struggle are indebted to the ironic allure of merit

struggling in obscurity, a key theme (and title idea) in Hardy's novel.[52] The extension movement was motivated by the thought that "[i]n all our towns and rural districts there are men and women living obscure lives, eager for knowledge" but with "very meagre facilities" and no university recognition (Roberts 4).[53] Although the intent was to unearth these real-life Judes, extension delegates were also keen to encourage a certain acceptance for obscurity and anonymity among their students rather than an expectation for acknowledgement or recorded achievement. For instance, in a speech to a gathering of Summer Meeting students in 1889, recorded in an extension student's Summer Meeting account,[54] an extension delegate opined that "the names of the highest cultivation are to be found not only in examination lists, but in the hidden record of forgotten lives." Indeed, the class privilege that separates "hidden record" from recorded achievement is remarkably exposed in the extension press, and it is a privilege that Hardy's novel highlights clearly through Jude's resentful recording of his self-taught learning on college walls and in drunken bar speeches.

Jude the Obscure also engages with the idea of movement, and specifically with the idea of the itinerant or pilgrim scholar. As noted previously, the extension movement launched a mass migration of teachers and students, extending outward from the university centre to lecture, undertaking long journeys to extension centres to learn, and embarking upon summer pilgrimages to Oxbridge to lionize. In keeping with this theme, Hardy's novel opens with a teacher, Richard Phillotson, leaving the lands of the rural working class, "bound for" the university town of Christminster with his "box of books" in tow (9, 10).[55] Phillotson's journey to the university is then mirrored by his journey home towards the end of the novel, which is marked with the disillusionment that comes of a pilgrimage unfulfilled.[56] Another travelling educator in the novel is Dr. Vilbert, the "itinerant quack-doctor" whose presence in the narrative

points to the vulnerability of the "rustic population" to corrupt educators (Hardy 26), a belief that bolstered the determination of the more charitably-minded university extension delegates to minister properly to the education of the country's "toiling millions." But, of course, the novel's most obvious nod to the itinerant scholar is the title character himself. Even before setting foot in Christminster, Jude begins his studies by setting out on Sunday "pilgrimages" to all the churches within walking distance of his home in order to decipher their Latin inscriptions (Hardy 34). Then comes his momentous pilgrimage to the university town itself, a journey he makes more than once in the course of the novel, first by foot and later by train, all with varying degrees of hope and disappointment. In fact, more than Phillotson's university pilgrimage there and back again, Jude's comprises a meandering, circuitous route—as he enters, exits, circles, and re-enters Christminster by way of its adjacent towns (Marygreen, Aldbrickham, Melchester, Shaston etc.)—in such a way that constructs the university as a fixed centre of external movement and internal desire,[57] the very same construction supported by the Summer Meetings.

That Hardy's novel engages with various ideas of the extension movement is perhaps not surprising given that it was published[58] in the 1890s at the height of the movement, when, as Stuart Marriott notes, it had "reached its peak of self-confidence" and, with the growing popularity of the Summer Meetings, had "achieved a measure of public visibility" (47, 30). One of the novel's most famous critics, Edmund Gosse (one of many who saw fit to denounce it),[59] certainly had the extension movement on his radar when he wrote his unflattering review of *Jude* in the January 1896 issue of *Cosmopolis*. "Sue and Jude talk a sort of University Extension jargon that breaks the heart," Gosse wrote (280), betraying his allegiance to a traditional, exclusive Oxford, an allegiance he emphasized again sentences later when he asked of Hardy, "[d]oes the novelist really think it was the duty of the heads of houses to whom Jude wrote his

crudely pathetic letters to offer him immediately a fellowship?" (qtd. in Kearney 333).[60] In addition to the novel's publication in the midst of extension momentum, it is also important to note that the narrative takes place on the eve of the extension movement's launch in 1873, at a time when scholars had no choice but to travel physically to the university centre to enjoy its educational privileges, and those "unlettered," outcast by class or gender, had no path to those privileges at all. In a 1926 letter to a friend, Hardy wrote that Christminster "is not meant to be exclusively Oxford, but any old-fashioned University about the date of the story, 1860-1870, before there were such chances for poor men as there are now" (qtd in Dougill 223). The purposeful timing of Jude's academic struggles on the eve of a movement that would have offered such chances, giving him access to university lectures, professors, course books, and a connection, albeit distant, to the historical seat of learning he covets so dearly, is a key note in the novel's tragic lament. Indeed, the novel openly acknowledges the tragedy of missed timing for Jude: in the moment he wonders whether his unrealized university dreams will be fulfilled through his son, for example, because "[t]hey are making it easier for poor students now" (Hardy 278).[61] And, most heartbreakingly, at the moment of his death: "I hear that soon there is going to be a better chance for such helpless students as I was. There are schemes afoot for making the University less exclusive, and extending its influence. I don't know much about it. And it is too late, too late for me! Ah – and for how many worthier ones before me!" (Hardy 399). There is nothing obscure about Jude's reference here; the "scheme" of "extend[ed]" influence is unquestionably the University Extension Movement, and Jude's tragedy is not just that the university ignores him, but that he is one of the many forgotten sons and daughters who reached toward *alma mater* before, and in Jude's unfortunate case *just* before, she saw cause to reach back.[62]

Having established the many ways in which Hardy's novel engages with the university extension movement and thus proves compatible with the Summer Meeting accounts, I will now turn to a consideration of how the novel fits alongside the varsity novel genre. As stated earlier, this chapter identifies *Jude the Obscure* as an *anti*-varsity novel because, while it is Oxbridge-focussed, it does not follow the typical conventions of the Victorian varsity novel genre in the way that Cuthbert Bede's *Verdant Green* series does, for example. In fact, this chapter gestures back to Chapter One's comedic varsity series (just as Chapters Two and Three were aligned) in order to understand more clearly the precise nature of *Jude the Obscure*'s anti-varsity identity and the precise nature of Hardy's critique. To begin, Jude is a tragic counterpoint to Verdant in many ways. Both protagonists are outsiders (and surnamed for the naïveté and folly that alienates them)[63] but Jude is denied the privilege of eventual belonging and the happy ending that are given to the varsity comedy hero, and this spells out his tragedy.[64] Indeed, contrary to the varsity-novel norm, *Jude the Obscure* is not centred on a legitimate Oxbridge student, but rather on a would-be student who pines literally from the outside looking in.[65] Other varsity novels studied so far have touched on Oxbridge's impenetrability/intangibility certainly, and included characters with vacillating feelings of inclusion and exclusion to be sure, but these moments have often only been in the service of nostalgic contemplation; and, importantly, there is nevertheless always enough access to interior space (college rooms etc.) for the fictive university to feel like an intimate and knowable setting for the varsity reader. *Jude the Obscure*, however, is an anti-varsity novel because it is centred on a university that is wholly impenetrable, because it is a narrative of university longing without belonging.[66] In addition to university penetrability and belonging, *Jude* also resists the *bildungsroman* conventions of varsity novels, which

typically depict the university as a place that builds and nurtures character growth and gives new life to the protagonist. Instead, Jude's Christminster is a place of destruction and death.[67]

Finally, and most importantly for this dissertation, *Jude the Obscure* is an anti-varsity novel because of its critique of nostalgia. As I have demonstrated throughout, Victorian varsity novels, in their own particular ways and to their own particular ends, are saturated with nostalgic feeling for an ancient, hallowed Oxbridge. Hardy's novel is no different in this regard. However, recalling Chapter One again, whereas nostalgia is the commodity consumed in Verdant's Varsity, it is the tradition that consumes in Jude's Jerusalem.[68] That is, unlike conventional Victorian varsity novels, which are in earnest about the appeal of Oxbridge nostalgia, Hardy's anti-varsity novel offers a harsh critique of university nostalgia as a destructive force, and especially so when it is internalized by an outsider, or eccentric, scholar. Indeed, through Jude (and Sue Bridehead), Hardy argues very articulately that nostalgia for traditional Oxbridge can lead to tragic ends, and that a nostalgia-fueled pilgrimage can be a journey to ruin in more ways than one.[69] While we have encountered tragic scholars before, throughout Chapters Two and Three, nostalgia has always been the result of their deaths, never the cause. This is where Hardy's novel differs. Thus, in this chapter, mimicking Oxbridge's extension movement outreach, the varsity novel genre must extend outward to include an eccentric participant in Hardy's anti-varsity novel; and it holds true here too that *Jude*'s distance from those comedic and more earnestly nostalgic novels of Victorian varsity fiction serves in many ways to redefine the genre's centre.

Before this contextualizing prelude comes to a close, I offer a brief overview of this chapter's four-section structure. Through a discursive pairing of the Summer Meeting accounts and *Jude the Obscure*, the first two sections examine how this chapter's identified strand of

university nostalgia—for Oxbridge as a lost centre of pilgrimage—manifests. First I consider the university's nostalgic appeal as a sacred centre (a Jerusalem), and second its appeal as a site governed by spirits of prevailing influence (*genius loci*). In sections three and four I focus exclusively on Hardy's novel and the eccentrics that find destruction at the centre, at their pilgrimages' ends. In all four discussions Hardy's critical stance toward university nostalgia and revered centrality shall punctuate my argument, making clear that what "killeth"[70] most decisively in the novel is nostalgia, for while its intent is the spirit of unwavering love, its letter is the law of tradition.

Centrum Universi

A nostalgic discourse that imagines Oxbridge a site of pilgrimage depends upon the idea of sacredness. In this first section, I shall consider how Oxbridge emerges as a sacred centre of the universe in and through the Summer Meeting accounts and Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*, but, ultimately, one whose holy transcendence devalues other sites of effort and activity. First, however, as I begin to analyze the alignment of Oxbridge with a pilgrimage site, it is pertinent to revisit the idea of the heterotopia; the idea, spanning this dissertation, of fictive Victorian Oxbridge as heterotopic space in the Foucauldian sense. Throughout, I have considered how different angles of fictive Oxbridge's heterotopic identity add meaning to each chapter's argument. This discussion continues the last chapter's exploration of the idea that heterotopias exist in a relational network to other sites, but, as Foucault clarifies, in such a way that disrupts the relational connection so that the sites represented within them are simultaneously contested or inverted (24). Chapter Three discussed the "cluster of relations" that link home and university and considered how women's varsity fiction imagines the university as containing the home for female students, so that the idea of the home is inverted, becoming a site that is as much

contained as it contains. This chapter considers the connections and disruptions between a university and a site of pilgrimage. First of all, a pilgrimage site is a heterotopia in its own right, even before it is aligned with the university. It has relational connections to other sites—sites of worship, historical monument, tourism, and cemeteries, for example—but within this network of connections, the pilgrimage site inverts the identities of these other sites: the site of worship is for human achievement and martyrdom; the site of historical monument is valued for the building's decay and destruction by time; the tourist site is a destination for the journey of the soul; the cemetery is not a place intended for the dead, but rather one of anomalous death, of death that should not have been. And, when a site of pilgrimage is juxtaposed with a university, this new composite is also a heterotopia, taking on the inversions named above, but also including those representations disrupted by the university identity. Thus, the pilgrimage site's associations with sacrifice, faith, death, and the immortal soul shift to academic sacrifice, knowledge, everlasting youth, and academic legacy.

That Jude recognizes an other-dimensionality to Christminster is made very clear in the novel, for it takes on a holiness in his mind that belies the baser functions of a university town. Indeed, for Jude, Christminster is more than a university, it is a sacred site, and he demonstrates this by approaching it in true pilgrim fashion, on foot, "having always fancied himself arriving thus" (Hardy 77). Even before desire and ambition direct his steps "thither" (where Marygreen's milestone points) (Hardy 73), Jude demonstrates his nostalgic literacy, his ability to ascribe holiness to a site and revere it accordingly. He is barely out of boyhood when he christens Christminster a "heavenly Jerusalem," imagining it longingly from his perch on the rooftop of an old barn (the Brown House), where he later envisions a "halo" hovering over it on the horizon (Hardy 20, 23).[71] The comparison of Oxford/Christminster to the sacred city of Jerusalem

emphasizes the mythic power and allure the university town holds in Hardy's novel;[72] and, importantly, its significance as a pilgrimage site, for "heavenly Jerusalem" is, as Vincent Newey points out, the very appellation that Bunyan's hero uses to describe the Celestial City to which he is drawn in *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678).[73] The comparison to Jerusalem grants the university city a sacred identity, but also, because Jerusalem's allure is dependent on its past, the comparison works as an effective trigger for nostalgic regret. The latter is exemplified wonderfully not only in Jude's longing for the past figures and timeworn traditions of his beloved Christminster, but also in Reverend William Tuckwell's[74] "Walk About Zion" published as part of his *Reminiscences of Oxford* (1900), another late-century text that makes the Oxford-Jerusalem connection.[75] With a reverential yet regret-filled eye, Tuckwell's *flâneur* walks through the streets of Oxford at the century's end lamenting the changes that have occurred since the 1830s, the tram-lines, the new and restored buildings, the "coarse suburban fringe" surrounding the academic centre (244).[76] And although he concludes that the old Zion has disappeared in the rise of a "New Jerusalem" and with it Arnold's charm has "dissolved" (Tuckwell 255, 244), this is clearly a false claim akin to the ironic nostalgia identified in Chapter One (the tourist guidebooks' disparagement of the railway station despite its vitalness as both a vantage point and modern foil for appreciating the university's old-world charm). For, Tuckwell, like Jude, depends upon the vanished aspects of the university town to indulge the nostalgic sentiments of his walk. And both borrow the sacredness of Jerusalem precisely because it encapsulates a half-mythic aura that is impossible to recapture.

When Reuben George asked with apostrophic emphasis whether he would ever be able to forget the feeling of being among Oxford's old colleges, "breath[ing] that air into [his] very soul" (Begbie 27), he was contributing to a popular construct of the ancient universities as spaces

of inspirational and baptismal renewal, typically linked to pilgrimage sites. Both the summer meeting accounts and Hardy's novel also contribute to this construct, for in them Oxford/Christminster is not only sacred in its nominal kinship with Jerusalem, but also in its representation as a source of divine, breathable inspiration. Indeed, these texts literalize the Latin roots of "inspiration" (*inspirare*), meaning to blow into or breathe upon, in order to demonstrate this sacred power, recalling God's breathing of life into the first man in Judeo-Christian biblical scripture and animating his soul thereby (Genesis 2:7). This idea appears quite authoritatively, for example, in a *London Times* article on the second Oxford Summer Meeting (1889) in which the writer argues that a key purpose of the meetings, separate from the local lectures, is for extension students "to breathe the academical and cultured atmosphere of the old University" ("Oxford Extension Summer Meeting" 6). And the students themselves use this same sort of language in the published accounts of their visits: "to many a busy worker" writes 1890 attendee Jessie Douglas Montgomery, "the thought of that home of learning, that place rich in memories and abounding in hopes, will come as a refreshing breath from a higher life, in which he too shared for a time, and of which none can rob him" (4).[77] A student attendee in the summer of 1892 (and author of the first of the *Gazette*'s anonymous "Impressions") observes, "[t]here are few things more exhilarating and delightful than the arrival at Oxford for the Summer Meeting […] we are all throwing off the jaded weary feelings with which most of us come up, we are recovering 'tone,' we are drinking in new ideas and fresh inspiration; in a word, we are happy, and happiness of a pure and high kind is a great Educator" (121).[78] In this passage, academic inspiration has undergone condensation from air to liquid, ingested as regenerative drink rather than breath, but still satisfying a bodily craving for what only the university itself has to offer.

In Hardy's novel, Jude's "Jerusalem" is similarly sanctified as a place of inspirational atmosphere, but one whose influence reaches its aspirant well before he directs his steps "thither." Indeed, unlike the extension students, Jude is convinced he is able to breathe the air of Christminster from far outside the university's walls and, in his young mind, this is a powerful element in its summons. As Jude sits one evening on his usual pining perch, the Brown House roof, his focus suddenly deviates from the misty view of the university town against the "black heavens" to the wind coming from its direction, and he drinks it in with passionate (and sensuous) avidity: "He parted his lips as he faced the north-east, and drew in the wind as if it were a sweet liquor. 'You,' he said, addressing the breeze caressingly, 'were in Christminster city between one and two hours ago, floating along the streets, pulling round the weather-cocks, touching Mr. Phillotson's face, being breathed by him, and now you be here, breathed by me – you, the very same'" (Hardy 23). There are religious undertones here, as Jude drinks the wind almost like a holy elixir or sacrament, which is heightened when the narrator notes that these transcendent ruminations lead to Jude becoming "lost to his bodily situation" (Hardy 23). But certain sexual undertones are here too, with both the university and Phillotson merging to become the object of Jude's desire,[79] connected to him through what Christopher Adamson calls "shared sacramental intimacy" (74-75).[80] The power of Christminster's air to extend its influence beyond its walls is even demonstrated through its attachment to books: when Jude considers asking Phillotson to send him some "old second-hand copies" of the Latin and Greek grammars he believes will prepare him for university acceptance, he is encouraged by the thought that they will have "the charm of being mellowed by the university atmosphere" (Hardy 29). Finally, Hardy emphasizes this conceit of the university's breathable inspiration by linking it to the Christminster-Arabella dichotomy in the novel, by making Arabella an atmosphere of competing

influence after Jude meets her for the first time: "He had just inhaled a single breath from a new atmosphere, which had evidently been hanging round him everywhere he went, for he knew not how long, but had somehow been divided from his actual breathing as by a sheet of glass" (41). Associating Arabella with a new and intoxicating kind of atmosphere highlights the novel's dichotomous construction of Christminster as a life-giving tonic in the novel's opening chapters. The irony is that Christminster becomes as intoxicating and destructive an ether for the impressionable Jude as the rustic belladonna; in the end, when he is left gasping for breath, neither of them is there to revive him, in body or soul.

Because it establishes the university's superiority, one can see how the idea of Oxbridge as a sacred centre in the age of university extension would be a welcome construct for those rigid traditionalists (like Charles Whibley) worried about the increasing influence of other centres. But superiority implies inferiority by comparison, and anyone more inclined to support the inclusive, progressive aims of university extension might see reason to resist a rhetoric that makes Oxbridge an unrivalled centre of the universe. For, one star illuminated too brightly leaves the rest of the universe in darkness. Indeed, this is one important criticism of university nostalgia that Hardy includes in *Jude the Obscure* and which easily applies to the Summer Meeting accounts: reverence for the university as the ultimate sacred centre devalues other centres of education, effort, and labour. First, in the Summer Meeting accounts, the dull, drab, and lacklustre working world becomes a foil for reflecting the superior spiritual appeal of the university. Turning once again to Jessie Douglas Montgomery's account of the 1890 meeting, we see this foil used to highlight Oxford's superior capacity for inspiring appreciation for a place dedicated to education and the past, which is otherwise "impossible for a busy toiler in a manufacturing district, or in a sluggish agricultural neighbourhood to realise" (4). Another

extension student, Rachel Fairbrother, attendee in 1895, participates in the aforementioned inspirational atmosphere construct, recognizing Oxford's "higher atmosphere," but she must add "than that of the workaday world" so as to establish the hierarchy clearly (123). And finally, the account of Charles Rowley of Manchester, which makes nostalgia for a recently departed Summer Meeting at Oxford a literal bright light in the darkness of working-class life: "The men and women of our Ancoats Brotherhood […], hard workers on what I flippantly call the cinder heap, will feel in their more or less grim workshops and offices many a bright, cheery spot as they recall their too brief experiences at the dearest of English cities" (123).[81]

In *Jude the Obscure*, rather than emphasizing university superiority through the use of a "grim" working-class foil, Hardy does so through a momentary decentering and then recentering of the university in Jude's mind. Specifically, the spotlight shifts momentarily from the university to Christminster's working-class locales, from gown to town in other words. Indeed, in Hardy's anti-varsity novel, the town vs. gown rivalry[82] takes place not in the streets but in the mind of the protagonist; however, because it is a mind permeated with academic nostalgia, the competition is decidedly fixed in the university's favour. The first of these decenterings—and the most critical of them since it opens a door to the possibility of another fate for the tragic hero—occurs on Jude's second day in Christminster (after his nostalgic ghost-tour upon arrival, to be discussed in the next section) at the stone yard where he seeks employment. As Jude surveys the workers and their activities he is overtaken by a moment of "true illumination" on the "little centre of regeneration" before him, reflecting that "here in the stone yard was a centre of effort as worthy as that dignified by the name of scholarly study within the noblest of the colleges" (Hardy 84-85). "But," notes the narrator—and here is the unfortunate recentering where Jude's unwavering reverence closes the door on a possible future of acceptance and contentment—"he

lost it under stress of his old idea" (Hardy 85). Jude's "old idea" is his staunch adherence to a tradition that maintains the university's pre-eminence at the centre of Christminster life, and it is this idea that urges him to accept employment here, what he ultimately considers to be a marginal (and subservient) outpost, "as a provisional thing only" (Hardy 85).[83] A similar epiphany of university decentering occurs toward the end of the novel's second part, just as Jude finishes reading the Master of Biblioll's disheartening letter of rejection and class prejudice.[84] In a half-drunk and disillusioned stupor, Jude saunters out into the streets and stops to consider the variety of working people ("shop youths and girls, soldiers, apprentices, boys of eleven smoking cigarettes") milling about the taverns, halls, and shops in the city centre:

> He began to see that the town life was a book of humanity infinitely more palpitating, varied, and compendious than the gown life. These struggling men and women before him were the reality of Christminster, though they knew little of Christ or Minster. That was one of the humours of things. The floating population of students and teachers, who did know both in a way, were not Christminster in a local sense at all. (Hardy 118)[85]

In this moment, the university is once again decentered by a hub of working-class activity, a "book of humanity" that momentarily steals Jude's attention away from what he has been accustomed to study and revere.[86] But, once again, the "old idea" predominates, and the supplanting of gown for town proves to be only a temporary distraction, a passing thought to give the reader a glimpse of the kind of revitalizing insight that comes of a mind unencumbered by tradition, prejudice, and soul-crushing nostalgia. Jude returns to the idea of the university as the centre of the/his universe as soon as he leaves the hub of bustling humanity: on his way home he purposely walks past the closed gates of the college that has just rejected him and reinscribes its authority by chalking "I am not inferior to you" upon its wall (Hardy 118). Following his

recognition of Christminster's working-class significance only moments before, this resentful and aggrieved avowal of his knowledge and worth only serves to recenter power where he has typically located it. And later, when Jude has come to realize fully that the hostility of the centre he has chosen extends beyond the prejudices of one college master, it still retains its power over him:

> I love the place—although I know how it hates all men like me—the so-called Self-taught,—how it scorns our laboured acquisitions, when it should be the first to respect them; how it sneers at our false quantities and mispronunciations, when it should say, I see you want help, my poor friend!...Nevertheless, it is the centre of the universe to me, because of my early dream: and nothing can alter it. (Hardy 320)

Without a doubt, in both the Summer Meeting accounts and Hardy's novel the "workaday world" is rendered inferior by comparison to the sacred centre of Oxbridge. It is a critique this chapter can easily level at the Summer Meeting accounts, and one that Hardy himself, through the university decenterings just discussed, embeds in his novel. It is important to stress, however, that the caution against intense university reverence in Hardy's novel, the suggestion that these momentary "illuminations" point to a path of potentially greater contentment for Jude, should not be aligned with the discriminatory classist urging of the Biblioll Master that the working class stick to their "own sphere"; rather, it is a caution not to allow the reverence of one heavenly sphere to eclipse the worth of another. Hardy's novel does not suggest that its hero ought not aspire to university education and some form of belonging; rather, through these brief moments of illumination, it simply suggests that there are other paths to education just as worthy, other labours just as valuable, and other methods of belonging in the university town just as fulfilling. But, of course, that Jude does not recognize these other paths and pursues his ill-fated dream is

necessary to Hardy's cautionary tale as well, a caution that points as much to the perils of pilgrimage as it does to nostalgia alone. Indeed, Jude's tragedy underscores what Michael A. Di Giovine and David Picard identify as the *seductive* power of pilgrimage to lead individuals astray, "away from the relationships of the social world, towards the object of their devotion" (3). A frequent criticism of the pilgrimage in Judeo-Christian writings, as Di Giovine and Picard note, is its prescription of a false virtue and path to salvation, when in fact practicing the gospel at home and in the local community is far more in line with biblical teaching (3). Jude's dismissal of the many working-class centres of Christminster and stubborn adherence to his "old idea" and his "early dream" (320) suggest that he has been seduced by nostalgic love for the university, and that this seduction has deviated him from paths to more rewarding centres, just as Arabella's seduction deviates him from his academic ambition at the beginning of the novel. And just as extension students (as represented in the extension press) are seduced by their nostalgic instincts into believing that a summer visit to Oxbridge, *the* university centre and thus centre of the universe, is necessary for the regeneration of their knowledge-craving souls.

Genius Loci

A pilgrimage site is not only sacred, it is also a site of ghosts. There is a moment in *Jude the Obscure*, as Jude begins to despair of ever receiving a reply to his letters to the college heads, and begins to realize the extent to which he *has* been seduced by the university's appeal, the "curious and cunning glamour the neighbourhood of the place had exercised over him," that he identifies an important element in his desire for Christminster: "To get there and live there, to move among the churches and halls and become imbued with the *genius loci*, had seemed to his dreaming youth, as the spot shaped its charms to him from its halo on the horizon, the obvious and ideal thing to do" (Hardy 115). Along similar lines, Sir Richard Jebb, Cambridge Professor

of Greek, states that an important element in the appeal of a journey to the Summer Meetings is that, "coming from the busy centres of industry and commerce," extension students "are brought under the subtle influences of that *genius loci* which haunts our venerable seats of learning, and thus form definite local associations with the *Alma Mater* already known to them in the person of her emissaries" (qtd in Marriott, 31). Emerging in both these excerpts is the idea that some degree of acquaintance with the *genius loci* of the university, the spirit(s) of influence connected to its identity and its allure, is a crucial ingredient in the outsider's longing for and enjoyment of the site. To start, it is important to understand the Latin term so that its application in this discussion can be appreciated. Part of classical Roman religion was the belief that certain places (cities, houses, temples, etc.) were occupied and guarded by deities or spirits who had to be appeased. These were the *genii loci*. Over time the notion has lost its reference to a deity or sentient being, and shifted to mean simply the distinct atmosphere of a place.[87] In short, while the literal definition "spirit of place" maintains, the meaning of "spirit" has shifted from anima to aura. This semantic journey from a specific designation to a more general and widely shared sentiment is similar to nostalgia's journey from the specific condition of severe homesickness to a more general cultural longing.

With nostalgia in mind, one cannot forget its role in *genius loci*, for the "spirit of a place" is typically what is longed for in a site and it is often a thing, or person, of the past. This is especially true of pilgrimage sites—like Jerusalem or Canterbury—whose pilgrims are drawn by the power of their pasts (their ideas, their events, and their dead) to linger beyond the veil that separates then from now.[88] Moreover, where *genius loci* and nostalgia are concerned, there is also the possibility of layering the two such that nostalgia is not simply triggered by the spirit of place, but rather *is* the spirit of place. This is the intriguing idea of a Summer Meeting éxposé in

the April 1891 edition of the *Bristol Mercury* which personifies university nostalgia, that "certain indescribable influence derived from the associations connected with its venerable halls and quadrangles," as a restless spirit roaming Oxford during the "idle summer months" and anxious for the return of those human hosts upon whom it can exercise its influence: "this tutelar deity, the *genius loci*, wanders through the solitudes of the grey old colleges, mourning over the new buildings, and feeling time heavy on his hands." The arrival of the extension student provides a solution for this lonely spectre, the writer concludes, enabling "his acquaintance to be cultivated with good success" (5).

In this second section, I will consider how, in addition to sacredness, the discursive construction of Oxbridge as pilgrimage site makes use of the nostalgic appeal of *genius loci*, such that the university becomes a site haunted and ruled by spirits of influence. Both *Jude the Obscure* and the Summer Meeting accounts participate in the nostalgia of *genius loci*, but by harkening back to the term's Roman origins so that Oxbridge's *genius loci* is actual spirit, a shadow of flesh and blood from the past, and not merely spiritual aura.[89] The idea of a university haunted by influential spirits from its past is nothing new, and is certainly not exclusive to Hardy and the extension press. For Charles Lamb, Oxford is made all the more "hallowed" by the ghost of Chaucer and the thought of him dining in Magdalen's immense antique kitchens (11).[90] In his poem "Duns Scotus's Oxford" (1879) Gerard Manley Hopkins invokes the ghost of medieval Scottish friar John Duns Scotus, whose haunting presence enhances Oxford's sanctity for the speaker and revives his soul with every shared breath.[91] Recollecting her "Young Days at Oxford" in 1865, Mary Augusta Ward identifies one of her most "vivid impressions" to be "the great and to me mysterious figure of Newman haunting the streets of Edgbaston" (133).[92] And in Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929), the speaker indulges in a fleeting vision of

classical scholar and anthropologist Jane Harrison, imagining her "phantom" traversing the gardens of Fernham college, enhancing the appeal and authenticity of the fictional stand-in for Newnham and Girton (21).[93] Again, the idea of a university haunted by the spirits of its past, and the idea that these spirits spark nostalgic longing in its visitors, appear throughout Oxbridge-focussed literature and has been acknowledged throughout this dissertation. But the suggestion that a longing for these ghosts emphasizes the visitor's exclusion, or that the *genii loci* guard their site against their devotees, is certainly not commonplace. This is Hardy's critique, as I shall demonstrate, but not before first considering how his pilgrim, and those of the Summer Meetings, invoke their *genii loci*.

Of the many appeals to Oxford's spirits past in the extension press, the most passionate is arguably that appearing in the eighth "Impression" of a Summer Meeting, written by an unnamed Gloucestershire miner following his university pilgrimage in 1891:

> I came to the Oxford Summer Meeting to spy out the land; and here language utterly fails me to describe to you my first emotions, as the glorious old city burst upon my vision, as I walked its beautiful streets and visited its magnificent colleges; and as I thought of the great and noble men who had walked its streets and studied in its halls of learning, it seemed to link me to the great Past, and made such an indelible impression on my mind that I feel it will never be erased. (4)

Significant here is not only the extent to which his unerasable impression of Oxford depends upon his mental summoning of the greats of its past, but also his initial, ironic disclaimer of descriptive inability. I have gestured, throughout this chapter, towards the idea of nostalgic literacy as a skill attached specifically to working-class visitors to Oxbridge, as represented in the Victorian extension press. Here is a perfect example of nostalgic literacy, but, as is typically

also the case, introduced ironically through the conceit of illiteracy and inexpression. In this way, the pilgrim's ability to see and venerate the ghosts of Oxford authenticates the site as a pilgrimage destination, but his self-diagnosed articulatory handicap marks him as one of Whibley's "unlettered" who do not quite belong.[94]

In addition to a vague veneration for the university's "great and noble men," of the kind expressed above, the Summer Meeting accounts also contain specific mentions of the individual scholars whose spirits spark nostalgic desire and a craving for intimate contact. Following the 1892 Summer Meeting at Cambridge, for example, an extension student argues that to "catch" something of the "spirit" of the place "is in itself an education," adding that "[t]o live in the town that was once the home of such men as Newton, Milton, Bacon, Erasmus, Darwin, etc., brings home to one the reality and glory of the mighty past, of which we are the inheritors" (2).[95] In the fourth installment of the "Impressions of a Summer Meeting," written from "A Working Man's View," the writer compiles an even longer list of scholar spirits: "Think of the men made in Oxford. Think of More, of Colet, of Wiclif, of Wesley, of Locke, of Canning, of Peel, of Shaftesbury, of Gladstone, of Ruskin, and of a thousand besides…" (123). The effect of this spiritual proximity, continues the writer, of coming "in touch with the scenes of their early lives," is to make the university all the more "hallowed" (123). Like Mary Augusta Ward, the members of the Ancoats Brotherhood of Manchester recall of their 1890 summer visit to Oxford the resident spirit of John Henry Newman in particular, and tap into the nostalgia that his absence and recent death incur as they trace his spirit—in the church in which he last preached, at Oriel college where he worked—throughout the university.[96] What must strike the reader of all these Summer Meeting accounts is the extent to which a fixation with Oxbridge's ghosts

overshadows any mention of the learning received there. Equally striking is the gratitude these working-class pilgrims extend to the university for the privilege of merely making contact.

In Hardy's novel, Jude's reverential desire for Christminster's *genius loci* is demonstrated through a ghost tour, on the momentous occasion of his first arrival at the city of his dreams. As he passes through the deserted evening streets of the university town, Jude's mind becomes occupied thinking of the "worthies who had spent their youth within these reverend walls, and whose souls had haunted them in their maturer age" (80). He summons to mind a whole host of Christminster's celebrated scholars of the past, all of them actual Oxford scholars (including Ben Jonson, Robert Browning, Robert Peel, Matthew Arnold,[97] and the Tractarian trio of Newman, John Keble, and Edward Pusey to name but a few) here meticulously obscured by descriptor rather than name so as to preserve the thin veil of fiction that the narrative drapes over the ancient university.[98] Jude pays deference to these geniuses of the place by lovingly immersing himself among them, by caressing the walls and structures that contain them (their tombs in other words), by calling forth their voices, by engaging in conversation with them, and by allowing them to haunt his dreams when he returns to his lodgings.

In my ongoing attempts to draw connections to Chapter One, but now with the pilgrimage identity of the university in mind, there are two points worth considering with respect to Jude's ghost tour. First, it is pertinent to note its deserted setting because it returns us to Chapter One's idea of the appeal of touring a deserted university.[99] The appeal this time, however, is not the thrill of touristic trespass, which depends upon the happy acceptance of an outsider's or tourist's identity. Rather, for Jude, it is the appeal of momentarily forcing a sense of belonging by blending into the physical environment of the place, by engaging spiritually with the soul of the place, but all without the reminder of exclusion brought about by the presence of

other people. In other words, for Chapter One's tourist, the enjoyment of deserted space is in the memory of not belonging; for this chapter's pilgrim, enjoyment is in the forgetting. Secondly, in addition to what Jude chooses to see during the course of his tour, one must also note what he chooses *not* to see because this resurfaces another important Chapter One idea: the link between nostalgia and virtuality. Like the nostalgic tourist, Jude wears the glasses of nostalgic sentiment, passing through a kind of virtual Christminster in line with his own desire for the iconic monuments and quintessential aspects of the "ancient kingdom" rather than the idiosyncratic elements of the modern city that do not harmonize with his vision: "he began to be encircled as it were with the breath and sentiment of the venerable city. When he passed objects out of harmony with its general expression he allowed his eyes to slip over them as if he did not see them" (Hardy 79).[100] The key difference is that Jude's virtual university of the past is a space of his own making, not a signposted construct of a guidebook. Jude does not have the guidebook for a companion, nor does he have that crucial foothold in the present that allows the tourist to navigate two spaces at once. This marks the difference between guidebook tourist and pilgrim once again: the former tours the space through the medium of his physical body and its senses, reminded of the commercial reality of the site alongside its history, while the latter's tour is far more solitary, with the site processed through soul alone. Jude's nostalgia entails a kind of disembodiment, for, as I shall detail, in the course of his ghost-tour, he becomes a ghost himself. Indeed, what is ironic about Jude's nostalgic tunnel-vision is that he is precisely one of the idiosyncratic, disharmonious anomalies that he himself would choose not to see. Thus, he is as guilty of obscuring as he is a victim of it.

The idea of Jude as a ghost points to Hardy's critique: intense reverence for *genius loci*, turning heart and eye unwaveringly to the ghosts of a site, only emphasizes exclusion. This is so,

firstly, because it creates a dichotomous divide between the tangible and intangible, between flesh and spirit, which exacerbates the pilgrim-nostalgiac's inability to integrate and find acceptance. This divide was a key note of the press's coverage of the Summer Meetings, as is exemplified by a *London Times* piece in which the extension student is imagined to be haunted by two ghosts—the university's *genius loci* and the absent undergraduate—with the latter's undisputed ownership emphasizing her inability to meaningfully engage with the site. The reporter argues that, without the undergraduate, the university is a "different place": "The students who now fill its halls and gardens cannot feel, as he does, that the whole machinery of the place, from Vice-Chancellor to scout, exists for them alone; nor can they pervade the streets with his nonchalant air of proprietorship. For the time, however, they are in possession; and even in one short fortnight it is possible to imbibe something of the *genius loci.*"[101] The extension student is constructed as an outsider, longing for the ghosts of a site who have something she will never have. Linguistically, this reporter measures the gap of privilege with subtlety, in the distinction between "proprietorship" and "possession" for instance, suggesting that to hold is not to own, and to be there is not to belong. And it is hard to ignore the patronizing reservation present in the idea that, for extension students, a connection with the site's *genius loci* is "possible," but then perhaps only "something" of it. It smacks of the "gist" of a liberal education.

Like the extension student, Jude is subject to the tangible-intangible divide that the idea of *genius loci* promotes, but, contrarily, his outsidership is emphasized in his becoming the intangible. As Hardy presents it, Jude's nostalgic reverence for Christminster's spirits renders him a spirit alongside them, unable to engage with the tangible aspects of the site.[102] As he "serpentine[s] among the shadows" of the dark university alleys and passages at the start of his ghost tour, his own transformation begins to take place:

> Knowing not a human being here, Jude began to be impressed with the isolation of his own personality, as with a self-spectre, the sensation being that of one who walked, but could not make himself seen or heard. He drew his breath pensively, and, seeming thus almost his own ghost, gave his thoughts to the other ghostly presences with which the nooks were haunted. (Hardy 79)

A few pages later, even after his initial tour has ended, Jude remains a ghost, "haunt[ing] the cloisters and quadrangles of the colleges at odd minutes in passing them" and "surprised by the impish echoes of his own footsteps, smart as the blows of a mallet" (Hardy 86). The narrative makes it clear, however, that this prolonged ghostly isolation is tied to Jude's nostalgic tunnel-vision and favouring of the dead and inanimate over the "active life of the place" (Hardy 85). "Although people moved round him he virtually saw none," states the narrator, "[b]ut the saints and prophets in the window-tracery, the paintings in the galleries, the statues, the busts, the gurgoyles, the corbel-heads – these seemed to breathe his atmosphere" (Hardy 85).[103] Hardy's use of the word "virtually" is wonderfully appropriate here, because it once again points to the idea of the virtual university, designed by the nostalgic whims and desires of its visitors. It is Jude's adherence to this virtual 'varsity that contributes to his obscuration.

A second angle to Hardy's critique recognizes that *genii loci* are not only the ghosts but also the guardians of a site; in summoning them a visitor is allowing them to guard the site against him. Thus, reverence for the spiritual "worthies" of a site only serves to promote its exclusivity. Quite obviously, the spirits of scholars past revered by both Jude and the extension students are not of the working class. In summoning them, then, these nostalgic pilgrims contribute to the elitism of Oxbridge and the idea of the university as a space reserved for the upper classes. For a relevant contrast it is worthwhile considering again William Tuckwell's

"Walk About Zion" (1900). Like Jude and the extension student (as represented in the extension press), Tuckwell walks through Oxford with an eye to its past, seeking to resurrect its forgotten figures; or, in the Latin translation he prefers, "formae veneres captare fugaces," to catch the venerable fleeting forms (244). Unlike his fellow nostalgiacs, however, the fleeting forms Tuckwell attempts to capture on his ghost-tour are not only famous scholars like Newman and Arnold, but also the rustic townspeople of Oxford's past, like Mother Jeffs, an aged fruit and tart seller who would sit under the old trees of the Magdalen stables, or James the confectioner who owned one of the shops demolished for the new Schools, or Wood the apothecary whose house on Skimmery Hall Lane would become Spiers's famous souvenir shop in 1835 (where Verdant Green memorably succumbs to a fit of overconsumption) (248).[104] The extent to which Tuckwell's working-class "formae veneres" are in fact *genii loci* is certainly debateable; they are the spirits of a place, but they do not demand appeasement in the way the Roman house gods were believed to have done. The important point here, however, is that Tuckwell allows these seemingly inconsequential spirits of the place to bear influence, to contribute to the identity of Oxford, to its *spirit of place*. Indeed, this is a key distinction: Tuckwell's nostalgia laments the erasure of the working class, while Jude's nostalgia contributes to this erasure.[105] Jude does not "re-people" his university town with those like himself as Tuckwell does (255); his *genius loci* is a class he admires but can never join. Tragically, Jude resurrects spirits that have the power to expel him, as we see during the far more bitter sequel to his ghost-tour at the end of the novel.

Jude's second and final Christminster ghost-tour in the novel's final part highlights the spirit of guarded exclusivity embedded in *genius loci*, and is thus crucial to appreciating Hardy's caution against excessive spiritual reverence. Hardy prefaces this sequel tour with a perilous pilgrimage to the university, as if to mirror, in a far darker reflection, Jude's more hopeful

journey to Christminster earlier in the novel. He is at his moment of deepest despair, having come from his heartbreaking final interview with Sue, as he travels from Marygreen to Christminster, past the familiar Brown House and pointing milestone which are now meaningless relics of former hope. It is a kind of anti-pilgrimage because, rather than revive him, the arduous journey by foot, tram, and train (beset by unrelenting rain) nearly kills him;[106] and at the journey's end there is only Arabella, the opposite of his heart's desire. With the pilgrimage upended in this way, Hardy does the same for the ghost-tour that follows. As Jude walks among the "silent colleges" with Arabella, he is no longer a disembodied spirit but rather a dying body with a "corpse-like face" (Hardy 392). Once again he calls upon the "spirits of the dead" and notes their typical haunts: "The Poet of Liberty used to walk here, and the great Dissector of Melancholy there," he says, indicating Percy Bysshe Shelley and Robert Burton (Hardy 392). He sees Walter Raleigh beckoning to him from a nearby lane, and a whole host of other famous Oxonians including John Wycliffe, William Harvey, Richard Hooker, and the perennial Matthew Arnold (Hardy 392).[107] But, while Jude maintains his power of summoning spirits during this second tour, he cannot summon the same spirit with which he first encountered them. Indeed, the nostalgia now is divided between a yearning for the times of these former scholars and a lament for the more encouraging experience and more hopeful self of his "last walk":

> I seem to see them, and almost hear them rustling. But I don't revere all of them as I did then. I don't believe in half of them. The theologians, the apologists, and their kin the metaphysicians, the high-handed statesmen, and others, no longer interest me. All that has been spoilt for me by the grind of stern reality! (Hardy 392)

Jude now considers his ghost-seeing to be "stupid fancies" (Hardy 392), and this mix of nostalgia and bitterness renders him a rather miserable version of the "intelligent foreigner" discussed in

Chapter Two, he who regards his younger and former self nostalgically from a position of sober maturity.[108] But it is not only a change in his own now-dejected spirit that Jude detects, it is also a change in the spirit of the place. The phantoms haunting the college archways and windows now appear to be laughing at him, yet they "used to look friendly in the old days" (Hardy 392). Even the architecture itself becomes a part of the newly-hostile *genius loci*: as he walks past the colleges, naming them one by one to the disinterested and nostalgically illiterate Arabella,[109] Cardinal College in particular seems to be personified with an indifferent countenance, with "lifted eyebrows, representing the polite surprise of the University at the efforts of such as I" (393).[110] Indeed, in this moment Jude comes to realize and internalize the spirit of exclusion guarding his beloved university. And, by virtue of the diversely mirrored pilgrimages and tours, the message is delivered in conjunction with the memory of his earlier reverence and with the suggestion that this reverence was perhaps misplaced all along.

Filia Eccentrica

In this chapter's final two sections, I shift focus to Hardy's novel alone to consider the idea of eccentricity that centrality imposes, and to consider Hardy's harshest critique of so-called holy centres and nostalgic pilgrimages thereto: the tragedy of eccentrics centred and the destruction that such pilgrimages entail.[111] Through Jude and Sue, Hardy tells two cautionary tales, warning that eccentrics who pull themselves to the centre will either find there further proof that they do not belong, or else find that they have had to sacrifice who they were in order to force it. In either case, the result is self-destruction. Intriguingly, my argument in this chapter, positing Hardy's antipathy to centrality, aligns with J. Hillis Miller's noteworthy observation with respect to Hardy's worldview as it manifests through many of the characters in his novels.[112] Miller observes that Hardy's characters often exhibit a preference for psychological

and spiritual distance from the events of life, or "detachment of consciousness," because too close proximity to an environment, event, or place makes one uncomfortably aware of its "dangerous energy" (9). Jude in particular prefers to exist "on the periphery of life," remaining "quietly watching on the sidelines," and especially so as a young boy (Miller 6). Indeed, as Miller suggests, young Jude's preference for peripherality, what he calls alternately a "refusal of involvement," is typical of the young, insofar as growing up seems to come with the pressure of more immersive involvement (6). Miller identifies a pivotal passage in Hardy's novel that makes this clear (occurring at a moment of self-reflection for adolescent Jude, who has just lost his job in Farmer Troutham's field) and, importantly, it draws on the metaphors of centrality and circularity:

> As you got older, and felt yourself to be at the centre of your time, and not a point in its circumference, as you had felt when you were little, you were seized with a sort of shuddering, [Jude] perceived. All around you there seemed to be something glaring, garish, rattling, and the noises and glares hit upon the little cell called your life, and shook it, and warped it. If he could only prevent himself growing up![113] (Hardy 18)

Miller's use of the terms "peripherality" and "detachment" to describe this aspect of Jude's character is akin to the idea of "eccentricity," but I adopt the latter term because, linguistically, it aligns far better with this chapter's key ideas of centrality and/or centredness. The passage above suggests that growing up is a gradual centring, and that children / youth are inherently eccentrics travelling, willingly or not, towards some metaphoric centre of self as they get older. Of significance is the way that the passage highlights, through young Jude's thoughts, an aversion to this centring: the violent shuddering, glaring, rattling, and warping emphasize the sense of danger and destruction that typify the journey. Indeed, with this passage in mind, which occurs

long before either Jude or Sue realizes the destruction that awaits in their journeys to two different sacred centres at the end of the novel, Hardy's critical stance on eccentricity centred is made clear.[114] The first of Hardy's tragic eccentrics to be examined here is Sue, arguably the more troubling embodiment of eccentricity centred because she, unlike Jude, sits in resistance to the centre for most of the novel, but is ultimately destroyed by its force in the end. Indeed, in Sue's destruction we find Hardy's harshest critique of pilgrimages and revered centres.

Throughout *Jude the Obscure*, both Jude and Sue are eccentric in the most general sense. They are considered odd by those around them: by their great aunt Fawley, who recalls often their peculiarities as children;[115] by Arabella, who studies them as strange samples of their sex;[116] and by the townspeople of Aldbrickham and Christminster and elsewhere, who view their unconventional union and their unconventional family through a lens of immorality.[117] But, I aim to establish their eccentricity in relation to the two dominant centres of power and destruction, longing and aversion, in the novel: the institutions of university and marriage. With respect to the university, Jude's eccentricity is clear and has been explored already in comparing him to his eccentric real-world compatriots, Oxbridge's extension students. Thus, it is enough to reemphasize that, like extension students, he sits off-centre in terms of class, and, as do theirs, his studies take place outside the university. As has also been mentioned, the results of his studies are displayed in off-centre locations; his learning is not given centre-stage at a graduation ceremony, in an examination list, or before the recognition of other scholars, but rather exhibited in obscure taverns and street crowds before rowdy undiscerning audiences,[118] and scrawled on impenetrable college walls. Indeed, because it is central to his character and pivotal to the plot, Jude's eccentricity with respect to the university is, like his titular obscurity, impossible to miss. Yet, the novel urges us to consider Sue an eccentric scholar as well, and to align her with Jude

through the ideas of eccentricity and centre-seeking pilgrimages. Typically, critics consider Sue Bridehead in terms of sexual politics and the "woman question," with her unconventionality analyzed as surface-level, as representative of the New Woman, or as another more compromising type of Victorian feminist.[119] But her identities as eccentric scholar and unconventional woman do overlap, and acknowledging both provides a more comprehensive picture of her sites of resistance and a less reductive analysis of her character. With the ideas of eccentricity and centrality in mind, all her sites of resistance become centres of resistance against which she sits at a purposeful distance.

Sue's identity as a scholar, or her position with respect to the university, is often overlooked, partly because she so often functions as a metaphoric substitute for Christminster in Jude's mind, for they are the twin objects of his desire. Thus, enlarged to be an entity comparable to the university itself, Sue is difficult to see as a figure within it, as a character who engages with it on her own terms. But she does indeed engage with it. In fact, as John Paterson points out, the original manuscript for the novel made Sue's connection with the university far more concrete, for she was originally conceived as an orphan adopted by the provost of a Christminster college (Paterson 87-88).[120] Thus, Sue was originally a daughter of the university occupying that precarious position, common in varsity novels, of the non-student woman awkwardly placed at the centre of university life.[121] As well, in the manuscript, it is to Sue, not Phillotson, that Jude writes for the coveted grammars, underscoring her intimate connection to the university and her role, for Jude, as a purveyor of its powers (Paterson 90). Despite Hardy's severing her university ties in the final draft, however, Sue's character still bears traces of her original incarnation, most obviously in her physical proximity to the university as a Christminster resident. With respect to positionality, if Christminster is a centre of power and

longing in Hardy's novel (as this chapter considers it), then Sue is rendered eccentric by gender in the same way that Jude is by class. She is not a student of the university (it is set before the opening of the women's colleges),[122] but rather self-educates off-centre as Jude does. We learn that she is university educated "by accident," through a former relationship with a Christminster undergraduate who "lent [her] books which [she] should never have got hold of otherwise" (Hardy 147, 148). Thus, just as Jude has his second-hand grammars, Sue has a kind of second-hand university education.

In addition to her off-centre studies, Sue is eccentric by virtue of her unconventional ideas with respect to the university, and specifically because of her penchant for decentering Christminster and its religious significance. Earlier, I discussed Jude's momentary decenterings of Christminster as uncharacteristic deviations from his usual wont to revere the university as the centre of his universe. In Sue's case, her decentering of the university and its Christian identity is not a deviation but rather the norm, and perfectly in keeping with a character who works at a woman-run "ecclesiastical warehouse" where denominational iconography is not separately hierarchized but diversely mixed (Hardy 88), and who takes pleasure in smuggling classical "heathen" statuary into "the most Christian city in the country" (Hardy 94).[123] In an attempt to identify a few key instances of Sue's university decentering, of her inclination to question or deny the university's centrality, one might begin by noting her first meeting with Jude, and her deliberate avoidance of the figurative centre her cousin chooses for their reunion, the Broad Street cross-mark commemorating the Protestant martyrs' death site. The spot, and its nearby Victorian-constructed monument, are central to the Christian identity of Oxford, symbolizing the Anglican-Catholic tensions that have existed in the university town for centuries and especially so in the Victorian era (during the Tractarian Movement and its aftermath of conversions). For

Sue, however, the site is "horrid," "gloomy and inauspicious" (Hardy 100), and is not worth honouring with the solemnity of a reunion. And so, matching belief to action, she moves physically to an off-centre location, across the street from the cross-mark, and urges Jude to join her in this eccentric position.

Sue's decentering of the university is also evidenced in her spoken irreverence, in her outright admission that she has "no respect for Christminster whatever" (Hardy 150) for example, or in her criticizing Jude's "fixed vision" of the university's perfection in conversation with the even more irreverent Arabella: "He still thinks it a great centre of high and fearless thought, instead of what it is, a nest of commonplace schoolmasters whose characteristic is timid obsequiousness to tradition" (Hardy 313). She refers to Jude's belief in the "centre" but then completely disavows it by countering "great" and "high" with "commonplace" and "timid." Another instance of spoken irreverence occurs during an early conversation with Jude, who regrets her decision to leave Christminster following a row with her landlady over her "heathen" statues. "Why must you leave Christminster?" asks Jude, "[h]ow can you do otherwise than cling to a city in whose history such men as Newman, Pusey, Ward, Keble, loom so large!" (Hardy 103). Jude's argument centres the university town based on the renown of its famous scholars (mostly the Tractarian leaders), but Sue's counterargument decenters it by widening the parameters of their influence: "how large do they loom in the history of the world?" she asks, closing with the thought of it being a "funny reason for caring to stay" (Hardy 103). This tactic of parameter widening is frequently employed by Sue throughout the novel, in her decentering of other sites deemed holy such as the Melchester Cathedral and Jerusalem. When Jude suggests a visit to the former, for instance, she insists she would "rather sit in the railway station": "That's the centre of town life now. The Cathedral has had its day!" (Hardy 134-35). She widens the

parameter of urban significance to include and ultimately prioritize the railway. When considering the Jerusalem model on display in Christminster, Sue insists there was "nothing first-rate about the place, or people, after all," disavowing the city's significance when compared to the likes of Athens, Rome, or Alexandria (Hardy 106). She widens the parameters of holy sitedness to include those of pre-Christian significance and, in keeping with her Hellenistic partiality throughout the novel, ultimately shifts significance away from the Hebraistic centre. Given that Jerusalem is Christminster's comparable in the novel, this dismissive decentering feels distinctly like a double hit.

The final indicator of Sue's university eccentricity I wish to consider is her stated practice of biblical reconstruction, a noteworthy demonstration of eccentric scholarship. This information surfaces during the revelatory conversation between Sue and Jude at the latter's Melchester lodgings after Sue has fled the teacher's college and changed into Jude's Sunday clothes. In the course of the conversation, after we learn of her intimate relationship with the aforementioned undergraduate, and her disdain for everything that Christminster stands for, Sue asks Jude whether he will allow her to make him a "*new* New Testament" as she had made for herself while undertaking her second-hand university education courtesy of the undergraduate-lover. She describes how she cut up the epistles and Gospels into "brochures," rearranged them in chronological order, and rebound them, resulting in a text "twice as interesting" and "twice as understandable" as before (Hardy 152). This practice points to Sue's eccentricity because, in literally deconstructing the Bible and rearranging it according to her own preference, she once again displays her lack of reverence for ancient centres, here the textual centre of Christianity. A more conventional scholar, like Jude (who is reverent enough to sense the "sacrilege" in Sue's admission), adjusts his learning to the text, which remains fixed. He learns to rein himself in to

that fixed centre. An eccentric scholar adjusts the text to her own learning and interests, reining *it* in and bringing it closer to her off-centre position. This is, in fact, the critical tension and question sparked by the extension movement: do you travel to the centre in order to learn, or do you bring the learning to you and construct a new centre?

Sue's eccentricity with respect to marriage, the other central institution in the novel, is equally important to the narrative. Again, the university and marriage are considered in this chapter to be the centres of power and influence around which both Jude and Sue orbit. In discussing Sue's unconventionality with respect to marriage, I am in well-trod critical territory, but an emphasis here on centrality, eccentricity, and pilgrimage should open up a new pathway of thought. For Sue, it is the traditional institution of marriage that launches her perilous pilgrimage, in the same way that the university launches Jude's. Throughout the novel, it is quite obvious that, for Sue, the institution of marriage is something to be considered from a critical distance. Dismissing it as a "sordid contract"[124] where the bride is given away "like a she-ass or she-goat,"[125] her assessment of marriage and its traditions is very much the antithesis of the typical Victorian embrace of it as the moral and cultural centre of society (Hardy 209, 170). She even recognizes this eccentricity as a key component in her character, and something that distinguishes her from Jude. When she first learns of Jude's broken marriage to Arabella, she marvels that "such a religious man" like her cousin could live so sacrilegiously, adding for comparative emphasis that it would have been unremarkable in her character because she, unlike he, does not view marriage as a sacrament (Hardy 166).

Related to her unconventional views of marriage, Sue's eccentricity is also demonstrated in her aversion to Phillotson. Rather than orbit happily around the conjugal centre that is the husband, as a Victorian "angel in the house" is taught she ought to do,[126] Sue has a "physical

objection" to her husband, and deems it a "torture" and "repugnance" to be near him (Hardy 210, 212).[127] This decentering from her husband begins in sentiment only, but then moves to physical distancing: Sue resists the marital bedroom (building herself an impromptu nest in the closet downstairs), pleads with Phillotson to be allowed to "live in [his] house in a separate way," and even requests to live entirely apart from him (Hardy 225, 221). Despite Phillotson's leniency with respect to Sue's drifting off-centre, his acceptance of her leaving his house and living with Jude, the eccentricity of his wife, "one of the oddest creatures" he has ever met he says, is not lost on him (Hardy 229). In fact, it is cause for much confusion and angst. On the night he discovers her in the closet under the stairs instead of in their bed, for instance, his exasperation bears the defeated tenor of someone trying to convince a wayward planet to return to orbit: "I hate such eccentricities, Sue. There's no order or regularity in your sentiments!" (Hardy 221).[128] Importantly, if Phillotson is the voice of personal concern and exasperation, the measure of Sue's eccentricity on an individual level, it is his confidante Gillingham who acts as the voice of social alarm, calculating the ramifications of Sue's eccentricity on a much larger scale. Gillingham warns that Phillotson's indulgence of Sue's desire for separation, for a marriage without intimate proximity or a recognized masculine centre, could lead to a wider-scale decentering of the family, considered for many to be the sacred centre of Victorian society. "[I]f people did as you want to do, there'd be a general domestic disintegration," he argues, "[t]he family would no longer be the social unit" (Hardy 231). And while Phillotson counters with the liberal suggestion, albeit tentatively delivered, that the family could still function with a different centre ("I don't see why the woman and the children should not be the unit without the man"), Gillingham's utter shock at this suggestion of a matriarchal recentering reinforces the traditional centre that he, the novel's severest spokesman for patriarchal power, is there to protect (Hardy 232).

The significance of Sue's eccentricity in *Jude the Obscure* extends beyond the importance one would normally attach to the presence of a New Woman (even an unconventional one, if such a redundant designation can be made without betraying the meaning of the term) in a Victorian novel. Many scholars, including J. Hillis Miller and Patricia Ingham,[129] have noted the symmetries that exist in Hardy's novels, but I would argue that an important one, thus far overlooked, is the parallel of Jude and Sue as eccentrics who embark upon destructive pilgrimages. I would like to emphasize the significant contribution of Sue's eccentricity to the symmetrical and critical identities of *Jude the Obscure*. The tragic pilgrimages of Jude and Sue—the one to an academic centre that resists him, the other to a domestic centre she vehemently resists—are *both* vital to the critique of revered centres (and the pilgrimages they inspire) embedded in Hardy's novel. With Sue's eccentricity as regards marriage already established, we now join her on her path of self-destruction, her regrettable centering following the death of her children.

The shock and guilt Sue bears after her children are discovered dead knocks her out of her eccentric position and sends her spiralling to the centre of conformity and tradition. Much to Jude's vexation, her new mantras of "[w]e must conform" and "we must submit" are spurred by her newfound compulsion to follow the letter of religious doctrine and return to her first husband, now believed to be her only true husband (Hardy 342). She tells Jude that they ought to be sacrificing themselves on the altar of duty (Hardy 344), and *her* sacrificial altar is the traditional marriage (of intimate cohabitation) with Phillotson which she resisted so vehemently before. Indeed, Phillotson becomes Sue's newly recognized centre, which she feels she must return to in order to make amends, in the same way she returns to the church a penitent.[130] Thus, in the final part of the novel, after Jude's university pilgrimage has long been tainted by rejection

and disappointment, Hardy presents the reader with another troubling journey, Sue's pilgrimage of penance back to her husband's house, both of which point unflinchingly to the destruction that revered tradition can cause.[131] That this is indeed a pilgrimage for Sue is proven, first of all, by the details provided on the various stages of her journey: she takes a train from Christminster to Alfredston, then tram and small carriage through the smaller rural villages, and finally opts to travel the last half-mile to Marygreen on foot. The second indication is Sue's insistence on making the journey herself, rather than having Phillotson take her, which he offers to do: "It had been her request to Phillotson that he should not meet her. She wished, she said, to come to him voluntarily, to his very house and hearthstone" (Hardy 362). These lines demonstrate the symbolic significance of the hearth as a sacred centre of Victorian domestic life, the site to which Victorian women in particular were meant to be drawn;[132] the fact that Sue wants to undertake the journey there on her own underscores the significance of her pilgrimage as a journey of self-directed domestic improvement. It is also important that she, like Jude on the road to Christminster, opts to travel the last half-mile on foot because foot travel, traditionally a pilgrim's preference, highlights the body's own agency in completing the journey. Finally, Sue's journey to Phillotson's house bears unmistakable resemblance to a pilgrimage because her motivation, penance, aligns with one of the typical motivations for pilgrims travelling to holy centres: that is, alongside nostalgic yearning, enlightenment, and spiritual renewal, pilgrimages often function as journeys of self-scourging on the way to self-improvement.[133]

But Sue's pilgrimage of penance does not end after she arrives at Phillotson's "hearthstone" and receives the forgiveness she desires. Its second phase occurs after Jude's fatal final visit,[134] full of passionate declarations and embraces, sparks a newfound sense of guilt in Sue and a compulsion to exact penance by doing "the ultimate thing" (Hardy 394). Which is to

say that Sue has determined to rein herself in even further, and force herself to make the difficult passage to Phillotson's bedroom, another matrimonial centre of duty for the conventional Victorian wife. In this even more disturbing demonstration of Sue's regrettable centering, she travels solemnly to the door of Phillotson's bedroom and begs entry and benediction from her now priest-husband (Hardy 296). Confessing her sins and vowing rectification on the Bible, she seeks entrance to a centre from which she innately recoils. Thus, here we have another perversion of the traditionally life-affirming pilgrimage, another perilous pilgrimage.[135] In Sue's pilgrimage of penance Hardy presents his harshest criticism of revered centres and their supposed power, through journeys of the soul and the eventual union of pilgrim with destination, to effect improvement in their reverent subject. Sue's newly-realized reverence for the traditional institution of marriage, and her pilgrimage to its symbolic altar, completely destroys her character, creating a weak-minded disciple of conformity where once there was a determined eccentric, a tragic transformation registered through Jude's desperate heartbreak, the widow Edlin's sorrowful bewilderment, and Arabella's indifferent yet shrewd observation.

On the subject of Arabella, it is pertinent, in closing off this section, to touch briefly on the novel's other eccentric daughter because, in her, Hardy presents a counter-argument to Sue (and Jude) and a role-model for (Darwinian) survival in a world of destructive tradition. Penny Boumelha observes, quite rightly, that Arabella's path bears striking similarities to that of Sue: "her rejection of one husband and finding of another, her (temporary) sublimation of her sexuality into religiosity, her loss of her child, and her eventual return to her first husband" (151).[136] In addition, with her overtly sexual impulses, her non-maternal nature, her lack of empathy, her flouting of morality, and her powers of manipulation, she sits very much in an eccentric position with respect to the stereotypical ideals of Victorian femininity, as does Sue.

But while Sue self-destructs by forcing herself in earnest to a centre she abhors, out of fear of judgement, damnation, and eternal self-loathing, there is no such destruction for Arabella and no such fear. Arabella survives because she is never in earnest about her occasional journeys to the centre; her occasional stints of acting the domestic wife, the damsel in distress who needs protecting (or marrying), the pious evangelical, or even the mourning mother, are in fact merely charades executed for reasons of self-interest. Indeed, along with her nostalgic illiteracy (discussed earlier),[137] another of Arabella's saving graces is her self-centredness: though she pretends to acknowledge other centres, the only true centre she honours is herself, and this is how she survives.[138] Thus, through Arabella, Hardy would seem to argue that, for the sake of self-preservation, eccentrics who make the journey to the centre ought to do so with a certain dose of skepticism and irreverence, or "ironic detachment" as Vincent Newey calls it,[139] and with the understanding that ideas, traditions, and spirits never trump the desires, needs, and realities of flesh and blood.

Terrae Filius

In this final section, I turn from eccentric daughters to the titular eccentric son of Hardy's final novel. Like Sue, Jude is destroyed the closer he journeys to his sacred centre, the university, and thus, like her, he exemplifies Hardy's caution over the destructive possibility of centres rendered too powerful by nostalgic reverence and indulged tradition, and the tragedy of this destruction on outsiders or eccentrics. In talking of Jude's destruction at the end of his centre-seeking pilgrimage, a keen reader might note that Jude's death occurs when he is living in Christminster, but, more accurately, when he is "nearer to the centre of the city" than he has ever lived before, in the second-floor lodgings he shares (miserably) with his newly-remarried first bride Arabella (Hardy 384). This detail, purposely placed by Hardy to be sure, contributes to the

thematic connection of centres and destruction in the novel, without question; but my analysis is not concerned with Jude's actual death at the actual centre of Christminster because, in fact, the city's geographical / spatial centre is not the paradise that Jude yearns for. No, from the beginning, the centre that Jude seeks is not an actual centre but a figurative one: he yearns to get as close as possible to the state of academic belonging and connection—that mental space of "proprietorship"[140]—that only the university's students, its legitimate sons, can access. Actually, the filial metaphor is apt here because it is the very metaphor Jude adopts to express his university ambition. "Yes, Christminster shall be my Alma Mater; and I'll be her beloved son, in whom she shall be well pleased," he says early on in the novel, when the promise of this familial reunion seems all but realized (Hardy 38).[141] If Jude's centre is a figurative one, as I contend, then his destruction must be as well, upon (virtually) reaching it. This discussion is focussed on what I argue is the moment of Jude's closest proximity to his sacred centre, his attendance at the old university's "Remembrance Day" ceremony, and his speech act of self-destruction while there.

At the beginning of the novel's sixth and final part, we find Jude newly arrived in Christminster once again, having timed this journey (this time, with Sue and family in tow) so as "to be there by a particular day": "Remembrance Day" (Hardy 320).[142] This particular day, a veiled nod to Oxford's own Commemoration Day, is marked by an open-air procession of robed academics, an influx of visitors and street crowds, a momentous Latin-orated degree ceremony (known as the *Encaenia* ceremony at Oxford), and a general air of festive early-summer gaiety. It is the old university's annual fête, and its most exhibitionistic honouring of ritualistic tradition. This annual deviation from the everyday offers Jude the opportunity to get as close as possible to his desired university centre because it is a time when academics emerge from within their

cloistered colleges and are put on display. It is a time when the veil between academic insider and dreaming outsider is made transparent. Yes, standing up close to the procession of newly-minted Doctors and Heads of Houses as they enter the Sheldonian Theatre is the moment of Jude's nearest proximity to the centre of his universe; however, it is also the moment he realizes he will never reach it absolutely, for the cruelty of the celebratory day for him is the realization that the proximity the day offers is an illusion. The narrative illustrates this most effectively with the analogous illusion of telescopic proximity, such that the "red and black gowned forms" are described as "passing across the field of Jude's vision like inaccessible planets across an object glass" (Hardy 328). Similar to this "object glass" are the equally illusive open windows of the theatre, teasing Jude with only the muffled sounds of the ceremony within, a few sonorous snatches of indecipherable Latin. These illusive glasses, in addition to the far blunter indicators of inaccessibility, the street barriers behind which Jude and the spectating crowd are held, trigger, arguably, Jude's most succinct lament in the novel: "I'm an outsider to the end of my days!" (Hardy 328). Indeed, the closer Jude gets to his centre, to this parade of privilege and tradition, and the ceremonial adoption of *alma mater*'s newly-decorated sons, what he sees most clearly is that the spectator's participation is simply to reinscribe the boundaries of his own nonbelonging.[143]

Jude's prioritization of the Remembrance Day procession at the expense of other concerns contributes to his destruction from a basic plot perspective—he ignores the rain which causes the illness from which he dies, and he ignores his family's lodging crisis which leads to his children's death and later Sue's spiritual one[144]—but it is the self-castigating speech he delivers while there, instigated by the cheeky questioning of his former masonry colleagues on the "great things" to which his ambitions have led (Hardy 325), that accomplishes his self-

destruction most pointedly. There is a specific historico-cultural lens through which I shall examine Jude's speech, however, and that is through the long-since extinct Oxford figure of the *Terrae Filius*. Analyzing Jude and his Remembrance Day speech as a tragic nod to the *Terrae Filius* and his speech, an erstwhile fixture of Oxford's *Encaenia* ceremony, adds heightened meaning to Jude's self-destruction, adds another angle to the "Victorian success ethic" discussed in Chapter Two,[145] and, most importantly, provides important insight on the connection between criticism and nostalgia. But first, a brief overview of the *Terrae Filius*, a university eccentric from Oxford's past, before considering Jude's reincarnation of him.

With its pomp and circumstance, its robes and ritual, the *Encaenia* ceremony in seventeenth-century Oxford would have appeared very similar to that of Victorian Oxford, and to that of today, apart, that is, from the satirical speech of a disguised troublemaker, roasting the dons and noted guests in attendance and criticizing the host university mercilessly. The *Terrae Filius*, Latin for "son of the earth," was indeed a peculiarity of early modern Oxford, a sanctioned lord of misrule or jester (as Kristine Haugen compares him) appointed by the university proctors[146] to add a dose of raucous entertainment to the ceremony's otherwise solemn proceedings (2).[147] The role and intent of the *Terrae Filius* is endlessly debatable.[148] At face value he was there to hold the university and its dignitaries to account, to temper power with criticism on a public stage. But then, the university's power was also reemphasized through the *Terrae Filius*, who was regularly reprimanded and forced to make public apologies following his speech, and sometimes, if his criticisms were deemed too harsh, even expelled.[149] In any case, whatever function *alma mater* intended her "son of the earth" to fulfill, he was not destined to last. Perhaps because the speech too often went too far in its attack, or perhaps because over a century's worth of criticism was deemed long enough, Oxford terminated the ritual at the turn of

the eighteenth century. The *Terrae Filius* was driven off, his satirical speeches forced to find an audience through underground publications[150] vehemently disavowed by Oxford and its proudest sons,[151] and the *Encaenia* became henceforward solely about celebrating the university and its honorees.

As a university outcast, Jude is easily aligned with the *Terrae Filius*; both are obscured individuals positioned on the outside looking in. Although played by a university insider, the construct of the *Terrae Filius* was that of an anonymous university interloper, one who appeared only when the university was open to strangers (Commemoration week), and who resisted the *status quo* in his university attack.[152] Indeed, even before he was banished, the forced apologies and frequent expulsions that so often followed his speeches painted the figure a kind of academic outlaw. The outsiderhood embedded in the *Terrae Filius'*s name also links him to Jude: "son of the earth" suggests a working-class identity, like Jude's, someone who cannot devote time solely to the "higher labours" of the mind and who certainly does not have the good fortune of doing so within the "heavenly Jerusalem" of an elite university (Hardy 131, 20). The filial metaphor is significant here too: as Kristine Haugen points out, the Latin meaning for "son of the earth" was one whose parents were unknown (2), making him very distinctly, like Jude, *not* one of *alma mater*'s "beloved son[s]" (Hardy 38).[153] A final angle of the *Terrae Filius'*s outsider status worth mentioning here, with Jude in mind, is his role, through his speech, as a "malevolent tour guide" (Haugen 14). Haugen makes this apt comparison because the figure acts as a "mediator between the donnish world inside the university" and the "spectators imported from elsewhere," sometimes even structuring his speech as a narrated tour as he passes from one subject of ridicule to another (15). This is a caveat to the *Terrae Filius*'s outsider classification, for a tour guide possesses a certain degree of liminality, and must be insider enough to possess the knowledge of

the site and its residents that he exposes. There is a subtle liminality to Jude as well, and something of the tour guide in him, for he too is knowledgeable about the university that rejects him, and mediates between it and the historically- and nostalgically-illiterate townspeople who do not understand or appreciate its traditions. We see him enact this role multiple times throughout the novel: correcting the assumptions of the Marygreen villagers that Christminster is not merely a place of "crumbling buildings" but a "unique centre of thought and religion" (Hardy 112); reciting the Latin Articles of the Creed "for the edification of the company" in a tavern (Hardy 121); leading a disinterested Arabella through his aforementioned ghost-tour at the end of the novel; and, importantly, giving an impromptu lecture to the large gathered crowd at the Remembrance Day celebration. Indeed, just prior to launching his *Terrae Filius* speech, Jude is called upon to explain the Latin inscription on a college wall to the "idle crowd" awaiting the procession, and then goes on to "criticize some details of masonry in other college fronts about the city" with a level of enthusiasm that makes his audience wonder at his superior knowledge and passion (Hardy 325). This moment elevates Jude to a level of public visibility in Christminster that has heretofore been denied the obscure scholar, and sets the stage for his self-destructive speech. He morphs into the *Terrae Filius* in this moment, an outcast who temporarily steals the spotlight.

If the critical *Terrae Filius* speech was "a ritual inversion of more customary academic practices" (Haugen 2), an upending of the university's otherwise (self)-congratulatory tenor on its most festive day, then Jude's speech accomplishes yet another inversion by making himself the primary critical target. There are a few vague insinuations of social critique in his speech, when he observes that "there is something wrong somewhere in our social formulas," or when he comments on a horse being beaten outside the theatre and questions how such a thing can occur

"in the most religious and educational city in the world" (Hardy 327, 328), but, for the most part, self-castigation is the primary work of Hardy's *Terrae Filius*.[154] Jude begins his speech by defending his ambitions against the jibes of his former colleagues,[155] but then moves swiftly to an onslaught of self-destruction as he considers how he must look in the crowd's eyes: "You may ridicule me—I am quite willing that you should—I am a fit subject, no doubt" (Hardy 326). Shortly after opening with this bitter invitation to ridicule, Jude takes aim at his own convictions, stripping himself down to an unrecognizable shell of his former self:

> what I appear, a sick and poor man, is not the worst of me. I am in a chaos of principles—groping in the dark—acting by instinct and not after example. Eight or nine years ago when I came here first, I had a neat stock of fixed opinions, but they dropped away one by one; and the further I get the less sure I am. I doubt if I have anything more for mypresent rule of life than following inclinations which do me and nobody else any harm, and actually give pleasure to those I love best. (Hardy 327)[156]

Complementing the novel's perverted, perilous pilgrimages, as well as its tragic tone, Hardy's *Terrae Filius* not only enacts a ceremony of self-criticism here but also one of anti-graduation[157] such that the spectators are asked not to applaud the accumulation and strengthening of opinion, character, and insight that is typical of a graduate or *Encaenia* honoree, but rather to marvel at the spectacle of one whose convictions have degenerated and whose mind has become weaker since his university arrival.

Jude's most damning self-criticism in his speech, however, is effected through yet another inversion, borrowing and twisting the idea of the Commemoration as a celebration of success. "I may do some good before I am dead," he says, "be a sort of success as a frightful example of what not to do" (Hardy 326-27). It is only one line, but the irony in it hits a

profoundly tragic note, as Jude exhibits yet another version of the anti-graduate, whose spectacular failure is as noteworthy as are the successes of those being celebrated on this special day. Elizabeth Langland notes that, for Jude, this is an important moment of reauthorizing Christminster as a site to "define the meaning of his life" and give it "the tragic cast he favors" (59). Langland argues that part of this reauthorization of the university town is the recalibration of Jude's failure: "If, as Sue says, Christminster is only a 'nest of commonplace schoolmasters,' then Jude's life is a relative success" (59).[158] Which is to say that, in failure, he can claim some place of belonging, for, if we recall, Matthew Arnold observed Oxford to be "the home of lost causes."[159] I agree with Langland's reading, but I would add that Jude uses Christminster's ceremony not only as a site to frame his failures, but also as a site to mark his act of (verbal) self-destruction. Moreover, Langland's observation about the recalibration of Jude's failure, and Jude's words themselves about being a "sort of success" for demonstrating "what not to do," lead back to an important idea from Chapter Two, the rewriting of failure as success in the face of the "Victorian success ethic," which would see the dreadful possibility of a scholar not graduating as worse than death.[160] The discussion in that chapter considered how comedic varsity novels typically recalibrate the idea of success so that rowdy, playful, and even failed or expelled students are celebrated, so that failure can be celebrated where life and wistful nostalgia are the consolation prizes. Jude too makes his failure his success, but his is a far more tragic realignment, with the ruin of his ambitions and later his life the instructive cautionary tale.

In closing this section, it is important to consider why the *Terrae Filius* is symbolically significant to *Jude the Obscure*, and especially to its critical position as explored throughout this chapter. When Jude has finished with his *Terrae Filius* speech in the Christminster streets, he swears an end to his yearning for the university, his nostalgia for a paradise that has been

anything but: “I’ll never care any more about the infernal place, upon my soul I won’t!” (Hardy 329). But, the ironic message embedded within this emphatic statement, this oath intended to accomplish the destruction of his nostalgic soul,[161] is that Jude’s critical attitude (toward himself as a failed student, and toward the university as a social centre that seems to relish in his failure) is fueled by the passion of his nostalgic yearning. His critical eye is clear because he *has* cared so fervently about the university and continues to do so. Similarly, the *Terrae Filius*’s function is to criticize the university rather than praise it; but there is nevertheless a strong sense of nostalgia underpinning his criticisms, a sense of indignation over the present corruptions of a university that, in the past, was worth the veneration of its most ardent admirers. Thus, both Hardy’s working-class outcast and Oxford’s ceremonial outcast prove that nostalgia and criticism are not antithetical: they are intimately related and are most often mingled in the voice of the outsider. This insight can be effectively extended to Hardy’s novel more broadly. Like other more typical varsity novels, it is filled with nostalgia for an ancient university, filtered through the desperate yearning of an eccentric scholar. But, as I have demonstrated throughout this chapter, it is also a novel keen to critique the dangers of unchecked nostalgia and unwavering reverence for traditional centres. Thus, Hardy’s anti-varsity novel lies in the turmoil-filled space between nostalgia and criticism, at the crossroads between the easy culturally-cleared path to a revered university, and the far harder journey to a centre of reckoning.

A Twenty-First Century Extension

More than a century and a quarter after William Sewell asked whether it would be possible “to carry the University” to the masses (1), and Oxbridge traditionalists responded by asking (with prejudice) whether the University *should* be carried to the masses, these questions have risen to the fore of academic debate once again. The trigger for university extension this

time is not a method for democratization but rather a response to a pandemic, and the solution not the mass migration of scholars but rather the digital extension of the university into students' homes. In this new experiment with university extension, where no one, privileged or otherwise, could "go to" the university, it is not surprising that the dusty and well-worn rhetorics of authenticity and nostalgia emerged. Is remote university education *authentic* university education? Are not remote students, and especially those "entering" university for the first time, missing out on a more authentic "university experience"?[162] Is there not something irreplaceable, and something to be longed for, about being on campus that cannot extend beyond it? But critical responses to the voices of tradition also emerged, noting the potential danger in a nostalgia that prioritizes the past over improvisation, innovation, and inclusivity. The danger of a nostalgia that prioritizes the university as a site rather than its function as a disseminator of higher education against all odds.[163] The similarities between nostalgic discourses over a century apart is indeed a remarkable note upon which to end this chapter. But so too is the discourse surrounding those supposed pandemic victims of varsity first-years who were imagined to be infected with an acute case of Jude's particular nostalgic ailment, pining for the idea of a university they had never known. They did not share his tragedy however, for even if these digital eccentrics of the university felt they too had to struggle for the love of their distant *alma mater*, they could nevertheless claim the "proprietorship" Jude did not realize was out of his reach until he was too far in and out of time.

Notes

[1] This detail is quoted in Memel, 66.

[2] Edward Harold Begbie (1871-1929), known professionally as Harold Begbie, was an Anglican journalist and author in diverse genres including Christian children's literature, satire, and science fiction. He wrote for the *Daily Chronicle* and the *Globe*.

[3] This emphatic noun comes from the *Spectator's* review of Begbie's book, an excerpt of which is included on the dust-jacket of a subsequent printing. The reviewer praises: "A remarkable book which deserves serious consideration. It is made up of true stories gathered in the course of a recent tour throughout industrial England to illustrate the intelligent working-man's craving for education, in the widest sense."

[4] After leaving Gloucester, George moved to Swindon where he served on numerous committees and later became mayor (1921-2). Today, Reuben George Centre and Hall, in Swindon, are named after him. George's chapter in Begbie's collection is titled "The Saint Maker," which, as the chapter reveals, is the nickname bestowed upon George by Thomas Hughes's daughter (23). No reason is given for the nickname, nor any detail on how Reuben George and Thomas Hughes were connected.

[5] In addition to these jobs, he also identifies himself as the "errand boy for the district," adding that "[a]nybody could buy me for tuppence or threepence" (Begbie 24).

[6] George worked for the Gloucester Waggon Works company from sixteen to twenty-three years of age, during which time he claims he lost a few fingers (Begbie 25).

[7] This article appears in the *Gazette's* final issue (Sept. 1895).

[8] One might recall Arnold's lines about Oxford "whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age" ("Preface," *Essays in Criticism*, xviii).

[9] Richard Green Moulton (1849-1924), English professor, author, and lawyer, was educated at the universities of London and Cambridge, and later received a degree from the University of Pennsylvania. He also taught literary theory and interpretation at the University of Chicago.

[10] This line points to the tendency for religious discourse in extension movement rhetoric, and especially the pervasive metaphor of mission work whereby lecturers were imagined to be "educational missionaries" and lecture audiences their diverse congregations (Goldman 64, Roberts 46, Moulton "Address" 10). Strategic use of the pilgrimage to re-centralize Oxbridge (via the Summer Meetings) is another instance of this religious discourse.

[11] John Dougill notes that the increasing homogeneity of the university population began in the eighteenth century. Whereas the medieval university was more open, the modern university became more like a private club. In the nineteenth century the university was especially structured and hierarchical; an undergrad's status was determined by the gown he wore, the fees he paid, the privileges he enjoyed (Dougill 71). Dougill provides these statistics: percentage of poor students in 1557 = 55%; in 1711 = 27%; in 1800 = 11% (71).

[12] Mackinder and Sadler mention the same idea in different words: "The fundamental idea and object of University Extension is to bring the University to the people when the people cannot come to the University" (*University Extension: Has It a Future?* 2-3).

[13] Goldwin Smith (1823-1910), Fellow of University College, Oxford, also served as Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford (1858-66). Mark Pattison (1813-84), respected academic and rector of Lincoln College, Oxford, was well known for being critical of the "cram" system privileging Moderations and Greats examinations.

[14] Another contribution to the cause of the poor student was Jowett's partnership with fellow Balliol don T. H. Green (1836-82) in establishing Balliol Hall in 1868, a hostel for poorer

students with free tuition and lodging (Goldman 21). Green and his wife, Charlotte Symonds Green, were educational philanthropists and campaigned for women's higher education at Oxford.

[15] The extension movement fell in line with the larger nineteenth-century cultural trend of expanding education to ages, sexes, and classes typically unreached. Some important developments include: the Quakers' Adult School Movement; women's colleges and community lectures; the civic colleges; the Education Act of 1870, mandating elementary education for children, middle-class standard testing, and the establishment of the Local Examinations Committee; mechanics' institutes; working men's colleges; and the 1852 Oxford University Commission, which opened Oxford to all religious denominations (except Roman Catholics, who were not admitted until 1871) and encouraged merit-based scholarships.

[16] Stuart's works: "On the Work of the Universities in Higher Education" in *Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science 1871*; "Letter on University Extension Addressed to the Resident Members of the University of Cambridge" (1871).

[17] Michael Sadler was secretary of the Oxford Extension Delegacy from 1885-95, which transformed in 1892 from a Standing Committee into the formal Delegacy for the Extension of Teaching Beyond the Limits of the University. Sadler was also instrumental in reforming secondary education in England, promoting the famous conference in Oxford in October 1893 to assess the future of secondary education, which stimulated the appointment of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education, and later laid down the principles for the 1902 Education Act (Goldman 65). After leaving the Delegacy in 1895, Sadler became Director of Special Inquiries and Reports in the Board of Education, during which time he pioneered important

research for education in Britain, making him (as Goldman attests) "the pre-eminent British educationalist of the period" (66).

[18] *University Extension: Has It A Future?* (1890).

[19] As Goldman notes, there was rapid growth in Oxford extension attendees: in 1885–6 Michael Sadler estimated student lecture attendance to be six thousand; three years later it was more than thirteen thousand; by 1890–91, Oxford extension was reaching more than twenty thousand students (Goldman 61-62). Goldman notes that, while the movement focussed on attracting the working class, only about one quarter of extension students in the '80s and '90s were of the working class. Sadler made special efforts in 1893 and onward to fix this and be more attentive to working-class needs (the cost of courses was obviously an issue), but local lecture organizing committees tended to be middle-class and this often alienated working-class students (Goldman 80).

[20] Female extension lecturers were active in London starting in 1885 and on the Cambridge circuit in 1893. Some notable names include Ellen McArthur, the Girton history lecturer who joined the circuit officially on 4 Nov. 1893, and Maude Royden, the first woman to deliver an extension lecture (on "Shakespeare's Women") at an Oxford centre, in 1904 (Goldman 90).

[21] The article is from the 6 Aug. 1890 issue, p. 1.

[22] "The University Extension system, as we now understand it, depends on our railway system. It would be impossible for it to work without our modern service of quick and frequent trains" (Mackinder and Sadler 53).

[23] Mackinder and Sadler stressed that the ideal extension lecturer was someone "strong enough to bear considerable fatigue" because of the arduous journeying required. This led the writers to conclude that, while they may do the work admirably, women would not be suited to this career

(Mackinder and Sadler 87). Many female lecturers, however, joined the Cambridge circuit starting in 1893 (see n. 21) and thrived without resistance, given how popular the lectures were among women (Welch 123). Mackinder and Sadler also argued that the ideal lecturer must possess "University distinction" and, despite specialized knowledge, "he must be capable of taking an outside view of his subject" in order to reach his students (87-8).

[24] "In the case of the Oxford lectures a 'travelling library' accompanies every course. It consists of a strong box containing about twenty or thirty of the books recommended by the lecturer. These books are either lent in rotation to the students or deposited in some accessible room for reference" (Mackinder and Sadler 9).

[25] The other rival periodical was the *University Extension Journal* (sponsored by the London Society). The competition and, at times, hostile rivalry between Oxford and the other players in the extension movement played out in what Marriott terms the "Paper Warfare" of the extension press wherein the two dominant extension periodicals vied to be the "mouthpiece of the movement" (53, 54). *The University Extension Journal* (launched in February 1890) was intended to be the only periodical for the movement; before Sadler, head of Oxford extension, agreed to publish in it, however, he insisted on the conditions that each institution have equal share of print space and editorial control. Both Cambridge and London disagreed with these terms, which prompted Oxford to launch a paper of its own (Marriott 53-54). The *Oxford University Extension Gazette* (launched in August 1890 with a special issue on the Summer Meeting of that year) sought to rival the universality of the *UEJ*'s title by subtitling its publication "A monthly record and magazine designed to further the aims of University Extension in England and Wales" (Marriott 54). The four-year rivalry between the periodicals lasted until 1894, when a unified Extension Committee was formed, with its own publication, a

reformed *University Extension Journal* merging the two rival periodicals. The inauguration of this new journal (with its first issue on 1 Oct. 1895) was couched in the language of resurrection: "From the ashes of the existing Gazette and the existing Journal there will arise in October a new Journal designed to further the aims of the University Extension movement in England as a whole" (*Gazette's* final issue, Sept.1895, iss.60, p.120). In 1904 the journal was renamed simply *University Extension* (Marriott 69).

[26] "University Extension Lectures and Working Men."

[27] "A schoolmaster, attending a course in the Isle of Wight, has walked 120 miles during this winter in order to avail himself of Dr. Fison's instruction in Astronomy" (*Gazette*, May 1894, issue 44, p. 89).

[28] In addition to Roberts's report, this tale was repeated in Oscar Browning's "The University Extension Movement at Cambridge" (*Science*, 1887).

[29] Recognizing the hardships of commute for the pilgrim-student, Roberts notes that Prof. Garnett of the Durham College of Science suggested that all railway companies agree to issue cheap return tickets after 5 pm to any student desiring to attend lectures in neighbouring towns (118).

[30] In his study of the pilgrimage motif in post-Reformation literature, Philip Edwards observes the layered meanings of "pilgrim" and its Latin precursor "peregrinus," which encompasses not only the idea of travelling to a holy shrine, but also that of exile or alienation. The latter is an Old Testament idea denoting the exile of the Jews who were also simultaneously longing for the Promised Land, a return to Jerusalem (Edwards 6-7). Exile and alienation are also key to Jude Fawley's embodiment of the pilgrim.

[31] Mircea Eliade (1907-86) was a Romanian historian of religions, writer, philosopher, and professor at the University of Chicago.

[32] Eliade's writings provide a useful framework and vocabulary for understanding the significance of centrality to sacred spaces and humanity's draw towards it. His texts are also, unfortunately, hampered by a xenophobic and at times racist bent commonly found in early to mid-twentieth century ethnographic studies, one that leans on designations of primitivity and hierarchical ideas of civilizations based on a Eurocentric view of progress.

[33] This is especially so from a middle- and upper-class Victorian standpoint, which would posit the sacredness of the family, marriage, and domesticity as compared with the public worlds of work, commerce, and government, and the lifestyles of the young and unmarried.

[34] These lines come from Tennyson's *The Princess: A Medley* (1847).

[35] See Matthew Arnold's "Thyrsis," in *New Poems* (London: 1867).

[36] See Newman's *Rise and Progress of Universities* (1872), in which he argues for the importance of the university as a single site, separate from sites of living and working. Carol T. Christ notes that Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* is a "rebuttal to the democratic project on which Newman and many of his contemporaries embarked, of extending higher education to those who had been denied it" (293). She argues that Jude's tragedy is an example of the kind Newman fought to prevent. As I point out in this chapter, however, in promoting the idea of a university as a fixed site, Newman is not a champion for outsiders like Jude. Instead, he undercuts the democratic initiative of the extension movement by suggesting that true university education can only be obtained at renowned and fixed centres, when students make the journey elsewhere to study rather than incorporate higher education in the routine of their working lives.

[37] In line with the previous comments on Eliade's writings (n. 32), it is important to recognize the totalizing notion of sacred centres as centres of the universe, which not only buys into assumptions of cultural sacredness and hierarchized structures, but also warps the landscape of cultural development and diversity. I do not employ Eliade's "centre of the universe" analysis without recognizing its problematic assumptions. It is useful to this chapter in its link to nostalgia, but also, importantly, because Jude subscribes to the ideas of a centre of the universe and a nostalgia for paradise. An objection to these ideas, I argue, is imbedded in Hardy's novel. Another point of contention is the sexist and decidedly old-fashioned subject choice ("the desire of man" etc.) Eliade adopts in his prose.

[38] John Morley (1838-1923), also known as the Viscount Morley of Blackburn, was editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* from 1880-83 and afterwards was elected an MP for the Liberal party. He was also Chief Secretary for Ireland (1886, 1892-95), Secretary of State for India (1905-10, 1911), and Chancellor of the Victoria University of Manchester (1908-23), resigning just before his death.

[39] Stuart Marriott's argument on the extension movement is unlike other studies of it (and adult education more generally), which often consider it a kind of "missionary" movement. Marriott considers the strategic self-interest that underpins Oxbridge's extension endeavours, noting "one must give due weight to the pursuit of self-interest, even if it did take place within a genuine commitment to social service" (29).

[40] It is important to stress Oxford's more conservative approach, its desire to preserve the centrality and power of the university, because this chapter focusses on Oxford as the dominant institution of tension where extension is concerned and thus as the institution that has the most interest in a nostalgia that preserves its power. In efforts to preserve their centrality, Jowett and

other Oxford dons sought to build institutions in the provinces, endow them, and affiliate them with the central university. In Cambridge, a much more limited conception of 'university extension' meant simply bringing lectures to local centres rather than opening Cambridge-affiliated institutions. The Cambridge method was more popular and doable given the expense of Jowett's scheme to establish a federation of Oxford colleges nationwide.

[41] James Stuart gave the inaugural address at the first Oxford Summer Meeting in 1888, and then again at the second in 1889 (Welch 22-23).

[42] Some famous lectures at the Cambridge Summer Meetings include: Millicent Fawcett on the "Social Progress of Women" in 1893, John Burns on industrial relations in 1906, G. P. Bailey on the "Principles of Aerial Navigation" in 1912 (Welch 117). Some examples of Summer Meeting courses offered at the 1891 Oxford event include: Oxford's Mackinder on "The Frank Empire"; Oxford's Rev. W. Hudson Shaw on "Medieval Venice"; Oxford's J. Churton Collins on "Chaucer"; Cambridge's Moulton on "Medieval Allegory"; Oxford's Sadler on "Master and Man in the Middle Ages"; Arthur Sidgwick on "Homer"; Oxford's E. K. Chambers on "Homer's Odyssey"; Cambridge's Jane Harrison on "The Parthenon"; Oxford's A. H. Green on "Geology" (Mackinder and Sadler, ed.3, 78-81). Walter Pater famously lectured at the 1892 Oxford Summer Meeting on Leonardo daVinci, a lecture which was supposed to have been on Raphael. Pater was unable to finish the Raphael lecture in time for the event so he pivoted to Leonardo and completed the Raphael lecture for publication in the *Fortnightly Review* in October of that year.

[43] Summer Meeting attendees were often viewed as visitors akin to tourists; organizers provided various excursions to museums and libraries, college tours, etc. (Welch 117). Emphasizing the extent to which Summer Meeting extensioners straddled the fence between tourist and student, the July 1891 issue of the *Gazette* (10th issue) contains an advertisement on the inside cover for

Alden's Oxford Guide: "All Visitors to the Summer Meeting of 1891 Should Provide Themselves with the latest and best Handbook to the University and City." Also, Murray's published a series of University Extension Manuals for extension students, purchasable at Oxford during the summer term, focussed on literature, science, philosophy, history, art, which were advertised in the *Gazette*. This is an important intertextual detail for this dissertation, and method of bringing all chapters together. Tourists were the focus in Chapter One, students proper in Chapters Two and Three, and now I am considering those who are hybrids of the two.

[44] Students visiting Oxford took lodgings in the city or secured accommodation in Keble College and the three new women's colleges, Somerville, Lady Margaret Hall and St Hugh's (this was deemed appropriate given that more than half of the meeting's attendees were women) (Goldman 92-3).

[45] See "University Extension Summer Meeting," *Oxford Magazine*, 17 Oct. 1888. Commemoration week is Oxford's annual year-end celebration, celebrating graduates and honorary degree recipients. The week is filled with various social events and attracts numerous visitors. Eights week is Oxford's four-day intercollegiate competition of rowing "bump-races." It takes place in May and attracts many visitors keen to cheer on the various colleges' crews.

[46] This report is from "Oxford University Extension," *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 6 Aug. 1892. The report on the fifth summer meeting reveals that more than 1250 students attended. Summer Meetings became popular events worldwide (in Scotland, America, Sweden, etc.). The October 1893 issue (37th) of the *Gazette* details in length the Summer Meetings at Philadelphia, USA, and Uppsala, Sweden.

[47] These were in fact the actual professions of the extensioners awarded during the first round of scholarships according to Mackinder and Sadler (32). Scholarship qualification depended on lecture attendance during the winter term and ranking in an essay competition.

[48] "In place of a more formal report of the Summer Meeting we have thought it best to print in this number accounts of the impressions of different students. Our readers will thus be able to see how far the meeting has interested men and women coming from very different parts of the country and occupying very different stations in life." ("Notes on the Work," *Oxford University Extension Gazette*, no .1, Oct. 1890, p.2). The titles of the eight parts are as follows: "I: From An Old Friend"; "II: By a Teacher in an Elementary School, holding a County Council Exhibition (Joseph Parry)"; "III: By An American Visitor"; "IV: A Working Man's View"; "V: Our Oxford Pastoral (By Charles Rowley of Manchester)"; "VI: By A Workman (John U. Barrow)"; "VII: By A Lecturer"; "VIII: By a Gloucestershire Miner."

[49] To clarify, *Jude* was Hardy's last written and serialized novel, but not his last novel published in book form, which was *The Well-Beloved* (1897).

[50] Even at Christminster Jude is keenly aware that necessity separates him from the university's fortunate sons: he is compelled "to smother high thinkings under immediate needs," to focus on the "actual" rather than the "phantasmal," and to seek "manual work" instead of relying on intellectual work (Hardy 83). His dual labours at Christminster are such that he must read most of the night after working all day (Hardy 87); the narrative emphasizes the various difficulties of studying in his one-room apartment (rigging up a curtain and thick blinds, obtaining pens and paper, and buying himself a book or two by sacrificing a fire).

[51] This patronizing notion of sacrifice is emphasized at the end of the novel with Jude's pathetic dust-covered books: "the old, superseded, Delphin editions of Virgil and Homer, and the dog-

eared Greek Testament on the neighbouring shelf, and the few other volumes of the sort that he had not parted with, roughened with stone-dust where he had been in the habit of catching them up for a few minutes between his labours" (Hardy 407). The books symbolize the working scholar's dogged efforts at self-improvement, which are destined to only ever be a self-recognizing accomplishment. They symbolize the obscurity of his mental labours.

[52] Many critics agree that Hardy's title was inspired by a line in Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (1751): "Let not Ambition mock their useful toil, / Their homely joys, and destiny obscure; / Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile / The short and simple annals of the poor."

[53] Robert Davies Roberts (1851-1911), University of London graduate and then student of Cambridge, became a Fellow of University College, London. In 1881 he was appointed organizing secretary for the Cambridge Syndicate of Local Lectures (working with James Stuart) and from 1886-1904 was Secretary to the London Society for the Extension of University Teaching. Roberts was also the editor for the *University Extension Journal*. According to Edwin Welch, Roberts is second only to James Stuart in significance to the extension movement (102).

[54] The writer of this account quotes a speech from the secretary to the extension students gathered: "The self-sacrifice of a desired study is often a nobler education than the study itself, and the names of the highest cultivation are to be found not only in examination lists, but in the hidden record of forgotten lives." The speaker concluded, "It is to such as these that the Extension scheme comes as a peculiar blessing" ("The Summer Meeting at Oxford: By An Extension Student," *The Girls' Own Paper*, 12 Oct. 1889, p. 10). The idea promoted here is that extension students must be content with anonymity and obscurity rather than harbour expectations for acclaim and recognition.

[55] Recalling the "travelling library" of extension courses. Also, Phillotson adheres to the significance of proximity to the university centre, to the appeal of being on-site; he states that his "dream" is to "live at Christminster, or near it," what he alternately calls being "at headquarters," because he believes that "being on the spot will afford [him] a better chance" at fulfilling his academic ambitions (Hardy 10).

[56] Phillotson's academic failure complements Jude's in the novel, the former's linked to the disappointment of the circular tour, travelling to the university and ending up back where he began. Harkening back to the tourism focus of Chapter One, the circular tour was an early precursor to the prepackaged tour, launched by Victorian tourism pioneer Thomas Cook (1808-92).

[57] Michael Millgate notes the persistence of movement from place to place in the novel, how it is "full of arrivals and departures" (14-15), and even equates these movements to the pilgrimage, noting that the "featureless towns and villages of North Wessex" through which the nomadic Jude and Sue travel serve "as Bunyanesque testing-places of the soul" (15).

[58] *Jude the Obscure* was first published serially in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, from December 1894 to November 1895. In November 1895 it was published as a complete novel.

[59] His review of *Jude* notwithstanding, Gosse was otherwise known to be a great friend of Hardy's.

[60] Anthony Kearney goes further to suggest that Gosse read *Jude* very deliberately through a biased anti-extension lens, because of a certain resentment he harboured for one of the movement's leading promotional figures, extension lecturer John Churton Collins (who had reviewed Gosse's 1886 *From Shakespeare to Pope* very harshly) (Kearney 333). Kearney's argument is that, bolstered by his university belonging and his "resentment against all things

vaguely Collinsian," Gosse "read into Sue's and Jude's diatribes against Christminster meanings which strictly related to events outside the novel" (334). In this chapter, I contend that the extension movement is embedded in Hardy's novel far more intentionally, and does not require a grudge against an extension lecturer to detect.

[61] Dennis Taylor, editor of the Penguin edition of *Jude the Obscure*, notes that this is a reference to the extension movement, which was well underway. The novel addresses the other method of entry for poorer students, scholarships, but makes it clear that even this is outside of Jude's reach since he cannot afford a coach to help him prepare for scholarship exams (Hardy 115). One might recall (from Chapter Two) that Osborne (the martyr-scholar in Adams's *Wilton of Cuthbert's*) was on scholarship, but he was of the lower middle class rather than the working class.

[62] Hardy's novel played some part in the growing inclusivity of the university: Dougill notes that, in a postscript to the preface of the novel's 1912 edition, Hardy mentioned the suggestion of giving Ruskin College (founded in 1899 for working men) the name of "College of Jude the Obscure" (Dougill 224).

[63] Verdant's surname is Green; Jude's is Fawley.

[64] In this chapter, "tragedy" is used in the classical Aristotelian sense, the key features of which include: the downfall of a noble or admirable protagonist; the protagonist's hamartia (flaw/error); anagnorisis, the protagonist's recognition of his/her misfortune; peripeteia, the reversal of fortunes; and the cathartic purging of pity and fear. This chapter, as with Chapter One, is not focussed on genre analysis; however, Hardy is known to have modelled his novels on the genre of classical tragedy, and his critique of nostalgia, tradition, and centredness (which I identify in *Jude the Obscure*) is achieved through the caution of Jude's flaw (blind reverence) and downfall

(failed ambition and death), as well as the emotional effects of cruel fate, wasted potential, and pity, all central to the genre.

[65] Zoe Hope Bulaitis calls Hardy's novel "anti-academic fiction" because "the protagonist never achieves entry into the scholarly community" (153). Generally, Bulaitis prefers the term academic fiction/novels over varsity novels, but her assessment of Hardy's novel with respect to academic belonging is, for all intents and purposes, the same as this chapter's.

[66] The university is so distant and unlived-in in Hardy's novel that Janice Rossen suggests it foreshadows the campus novel of the twentieth century, in which the university exerts its power predominantly as a symbol (21). I will touch on this idea some more in the conclusion, with *Zuleika Dobson* in mind.

[67] John Dougill notes the "undercutting" of the *bildungsroman* convention. He also notes that Christminster is a Jerusalem because it calls for martyrdom (219, 216).

[68] One can easily align the tourists of Chapter One with the extensioners of this chapter as parallel university outsiders expected to feel nostalgic sentiment for Oxbridge and recognize the appeal of the university as an exclusive knowledge community. Both are products of movements (tourism and extension) that court the nostalgia of exclusivity even as their foundational tenets (their *raisons d'etre*) suggest the opposite.

[69] In *Pilgrimage and Literary Tradition* (2005), Philip Edwards posits the association of pilgrimage with destruction or doom in post-medieval literature. He points to Ophelia's likening of a seemingly mad Hamlet to a dead pilgrim (in one of her rambling songs) as a "turning point" in the literary pilgrimage motif, adding a "new definition" to the idea of pilgrimage (Edwards 2, 40). In her mad ravings, Ophelia's believes that Hamlet has become attached to some quest or purpose that excludes her, and with this belief comes her premonition of doom for him. Thus, for

Shakespeare, pilgrimage is tied to the tragic hero and his unfulfilled aims (Edwards 66). Focussing on Hardy's novel specifically, Norman Vance touches on the idea of a pilgrimage to destruction in his discussion of Hardy's "ironic reworking" of the pilgrimage motif in *Jude the Obscure*, linking it to his fascination with Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* as a boy (123-24). Vance notes that Jude's Christminster at first sight "recalls the celestial city" in Bunyan's work, but qualifies this comparison with the observation that "Jude's journey is a kind of inverted or frustrated *Pilgrim's Progress* ending not with the celestial city but with despair" (122). In Hardy's novel, the "coherence of pilgrimage narrative […] is allowed to break down into fragmentary allusion" (Vance 122). Vincent Newey also analyses Hardy's use of Bunyan in the context of the Victorian writer's renunciation of conventional religion. Like Vance, Newey considers how the pilgrimage motif in particular is given a "sardonic twist" in *Jude the Obscure*, such that it appears "almost a parody of Christian's pilgrimage" ("Bunyan and the Victorians" 586). Newey also suggests that "insofar as *Jude* reiterates Bunyan's design it does so in fundamentally opposite terms […] Christian is of the chosen, the destined insider, Jude is of the abandoned, the destined outsider" ("Disinherited Pilgrim" 60). Barry Qualls considers the ways in which Victorian novels by the likes of Charlotte Brontë, Dickens, and Eliot presented their readers with a double plot by aligning protagonists' journeys allegorically with the idea of the spiritual pilgrimage of life, which progresses, with satisfaction, to a kind of supernatural end. Thus, the Victorian novel as "book of life" (189). But, as Qualls observes, Hardy's novels are very different: "[a]lthough he structures his fiction around pilgrimages, it is simply to parody the effort: paradises await no one, only more intense awarenesses of hell and cataclysm" (182). Of Jude, Qualls observes that "his journey, ending at the Christminster that had been his youthful dream, mocks all idea of progress" (192).

[70] This is a reference to the novel's introductory epigraph, "The letter killeth." The phrase appears in Corinthians 2: 3-6: "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (*KJV*).

[71] The sacredness of Christminster is emphasized by its description in the novel, as it appears like a glorious vision through parted clouds: "Some way within the limits of the stretch of landscape, points of light like the topaz gleamed. The air increased in transparency with the lapse of minutes, till the topaz points showed themselves to be the vanes, windows, wet roof slates, and other shining spots upon the spires, domes, freestone-work, and varied outlines that were faintly revealed. It was Christminster, unquestionably; either directly seen, or mirage in the peculiar atmosphere" (Hardy 21). Later, Jude also likens Christminster to Eden when he observes, "The tree of knowledge grows there" (Hardy 25). There is also a connection to the extension movement in Jude's comparison when he adds that it is "a place that teachers of men spring from and go to" (Hardy 26).

[72] Jude's desire to reach Christminster can also be read as a spiritual desire to return home. Pilgrimages to holy sites often suggest the overlaying of their sites with a heavenly home. Jane Thomas considers the idea of home as a nostalgic place of desire and identifies in Jude and Sue a "modern rootlessness and homelessness, as they strive against the odds to develop new ways of dwelling and being in structures that long predate them" (17). Both characters seek homes in institutions that predate them (academia and marriage) but can never settle because neither conforms to the ideal or allowable tenant of these institutional homes. Thomas notes: "[Hardy's] texts repeatedly feature homes imperfectly realised, lost or demolished on a whim; […] whose walls press down upon their inhabitants with the weight of history and custom" (36).

[73] See "The Disinherited Pilgrim" (59). In addition to borrowing this line, Hardy's poetry demonstrates an interest in pilgrimage as well: his series "Poems of Pilgrimage" in *Poems of the Past and the Present* (1901) are ruminations on different historical sites such as the Vatican and Cestius' Pyramid in Rome, Lausanne, Fiesole, and Genoa.

[74] Rev. William Tuckwell (1829-1919) was an Anglican clergyman and Christian socialist. He attended New College, Oxford, and became the college's Warden in 1864. He is most famous for having written *Reminiscences of Oxford* (1919), which memorializes and renders nostalgic Oxford in the 1830s. The text is a classic example of appropriated nostalgia, or, more benignly, cultural nostalgia, because Tuckwell was too young to know Oxford personally during this decade. Tuckwell's Oxford is that of the 1840s and 1850s.

[75] Zion, the ancient Hebrew name for Jerusalem, is often used synonymously with "Jerusalem" in the Hebrew Bible.

[76] Tuckwell's nostalgic tour through Oxford is akin to Jude's nighttime stroll through Christminster upon arrival. This connection will be revisited in the next section.

[77] Montgomery (1851-1918) was a secretary for the Exeter Centre and an important suffragette activist in the Exeter area. Her "Impression" of the meeting is titled: "The Summer Meeting at Oxford: By One of the Secretaries of the Exeter Centre," *Oxford University Extension Gazette*, Oct. 1890.

[78] This "Impression" is titled: "From an Old Friend." Mortimer Proctor also notes the "belief in the efficacy of the university atmosphere itself as an educating force," what he identifies as part of the "cult of Oxford" often figuring in university fiction (154). For Proctor, however, this atmosphere comprises traditions, culture, extracurricular activities etc.; he does not observe the spiritual idea of Oxford air as regenerative in the way that I do.

[79] John Eade and Michael J. Sallnow identify three different modalities through which sacredness is localized at a pilgrimage site: place-centred sacredness, person-centred sacredness, and text-centred sacredness (8). In this moment of Hardy's novel, there is a distinct layering of place-centred and person-centred sacredness about Christminster, as Phillotson's person takes on a certain holiness and contributes to the site's allure in Jude's mind. Further supporting the idea of Christminster as a holy site, Mary C. Davidow reads in Jude's and Phillotson's early exchanges something reminiscent of "a typical master-disciple relationship" (29). Thus, when the master embarks upon the holiest of academic pilgrimages, the disciple is soon to follow.

[80] Adamson compares Hardy's novel to Gerard Manley Hopkins's sonnet, "Duns Scotus's Oxford," both of which present Oxford "as a conduit to great authors of the past" (73). Employing a typical medieval conceit, the "shared sacramental intimacy" Adamson identifies is carried on the wind (74-75), such that "the lover gains intimacy with the beloved through mutually shared breath," replacing erotic desire with nostalgic (Adamson 75). In Hopkins's poem the air of Oxford "mediates" successfully between the speaker and Scotus, but in Hardy's novel the air as vehicle of intimacy (between Jude and Phillotson or Jude and Christminster) is illusory and the object of desire remains inaccessible (Adamson 77, 79).

[81] Charles Rowley's piece is the fifth "Impression," titled "Our Oxford Pastoral: By Charles Rowley of Manchester."

[82] In previous chapters I have discussed the typical varsity novel event of the town vs. gown skirmish, a planned event of hand-to-hand combat between certain university undergraduates and townsfolk. The annual event is a real Oxford tradition featured in varsity fiction for plot intrigue and often as a method of testing the mettle of the varsity hero.

[83] In terms of classical tragedy, this is Jude's flaw: his blind reverence for the university, and his stubborn resistance to seeing any lasting value outside of traditional academia.

[84] The Master writes: "judging from your description of yourself as a working-man, I venture to think that you will have a much better chance of success in life by remaining in your own sphere and sticking to your trade than by adopting any other course" (Hardy 117).

[85] Terry Eagleton examines these illuminations of Jude, these Christminster de-centrings, from a Marxist perspective: Jude is ignorant of the "true relations between labour and culture" in the university town, conceiving them as "simple opposites" (65); he is unaware that his "labour-power is exploited literally to prop up the structures which exclude him" (65). Certainly, Jude is ignorant of these exploitative power relations, but I disagree with the idea that Jude sees these centres as "simple opposites." Jude understands a relational connection where nostalgia is concerned: that only one can exist as a centre of longing, that he must discard the idea of a working-class centre in order for the old idea, the traditional academic centre to thrive.

[86] A similar comment is made of the tavern wherein he recites the Creed in the third part of the novel. He calls it "one of the great palpitating centres of Christminster life" (Hardy 178). This makes it not only a centre but also a beating heart, just as he earlier sought out the "heart of the place" with map in hand on the moonless night of his first arrival in the university town (Hardy 78-79).

[87] In his famous "Epistle" to the Earl of Burlington (1731), Alexander Pope advises his honourable addressee to "consult the genius of the place" in conceiving the gardens and landscapes of his estate, to adhere more closely to the designs of nature than the opulence of aristocratic taste. In this instance the *genius loci* is a deity of nature that needs no assistance from the hand of culture (35).

[88] To clarify, the power of these pasts is constructed by institution and discourse. Also, more so than a regular tourist site, which triggers a similar nostalgia for the past in its visitors (see Chapter One again), the pilgrimage site invokes a desire for a spiritual experience in its visitors, a meaningful connection to the site's past that is typically meant to effect change in the pilgrim and/or in her life.

[89] Recalling Roberta Rubenstein's definition of nostalgia as a "haunted longing" because it depends upon the "presence of absence," one should not be surprised to find a nostalgic discourse depend once again upon a fixation with ghosts (*Home Matters* 5).

[90] In "Oxford in the Vacation" (1823).

[91] Once again, the idea of breathing inspiration. See n.81 on the "shared sacramental intimacy" between Hopkins's speaker and Scotus, the Scottish Franciscan theologian who was active in Oxford around 1300. The lines about breathing the air of the absent figure are:

"Yet ah! this air I gather and I release / He lived on; these weeds and waters, these walls are what / He haunted who of all men most sways my spirits to peace;" (9-11).

[92] In *A Writer's Recollections* (1918). Although Edgbaston is actually a suburb of Birmingham (where Newman established the Oratory in 1849), Ward's vision of Newman there is summoned at Oxford.

[93] Woolf's summoning of Harrison is not solely personal indulgence, but also part of her text's feminist project of constructing a counter-canon of female authors and intellectuals to rival the male canon already enshrined at Oxbridge.

[94] Referencing Charles Whibley's earlier line: "why should our Universities exist if the unlettered are given their share in the privileges and patronage of learning?" (qtd. in Lawrie 79).

[95] "Cambridge University Extension Summer Meeting," *Essex Standard*, 24 Sept. 1892, p. 2.

[96] "Working Men at the Summer Meeting: An Account of the Visit of a Party of the Ancoats (Manchester) Brotherhood to Oxford" (Written by Themselves), *Gazette*, Oct.1890.

[97] Arnold is one of the ghosts who continues to haunt Jude, even in his sleep. Arnold's presence in Jude's phantom parade of university "worthies" is appropriate given that Jude is the named epitome of the lost causes that Arnold attributes to Oxford. Also, of course, Jude fully subscribes to the nostalgia (the "ineffable charms," etc.) that Arnold inscribes upon the university.

[98] For instance, Jonson is called the "eulogist of Shakespeare"; Browning is "the poet, the last of the optimists"; Peel is the "Corn Law convert"; Newman, Keble, and Pusey are "the well-known three, the enthusiast, the poet, and the formularist" respectively (Hardy 80-81).

[99] The deserted atmosphere also contributes to the tour's gothic identity. Jude's tour draws very obviously on gothic tropes: the frightening idea of "mournful souls" haunting crumbling gothic architecture; the decay of the "decrepit and superseded chambers" (Hardy 80, 79). As Jude runs his fingers along the contours of the mouldings and carvings of the walls and doorways, and as he discovers "obscure alleys…whose very existence seemed to be forgotten" (79), Hardy makes it clear that the university's timeworn architecture is a key element in this ghost-tour (79).

[100] In Foucauldian terms, one might say that Jude's nostalgic blindness makes a utopia of the university town, an "unreal space," or, a site "with no real place" ("Other Spaces" 24). In allowing his vision to perfect the university, he is effectively de-situating it. Rather, as I have argued throughout this dissertation, the university (and especially the fictive Oxbridge) is a heterotopia, a real place, but one in which numerous other sites are represented and juxtaposed. Recalling Chapter One's idea of Oxford representing a tourist site, or the idea of it as a playground for delinquent pursuits in Chapter Two, I would argue that these are examples of "other spaces" within Christminster that Jude would choose not to see.

[101] "The Summer Meeting of University Extension Students," *The London Times*, 5 Aug. 1899, p. 9.

[102] Interestingly, Hardy also positions Jude on the tangible side of the divide earlier in the novel before he arrives in Christminster. Longing for Christminster, Jude imagines undergraduates/university residents as mere "souls": "He could not go far wrong in following his uncle's footsteps, and engaging himself awhile with the carcases that contained the scholar souls" (Hardy 35). Here he is not intangible spirit, but rather, in his association with the carcases that house the scholars, he is linked to tangible flesh. Moreover, in its association with the body, "carcases" sits in opposition to mind/soul, emphasizing the classist notion that the working class are associated only with physical and not mental labours.

[103] The narrator closes this point with a comment on Jude's nostalgic literacy: "Like all new comers to a spot on which the past is deeply graven he heard that past announcing itself with an emphasis altogether unsuspected by, and even incredible to, the habitual residents" (Hardy 85).

[104] Other rustics resurrected in Tuckwell's ghost-tour: Mother George, who would, "on payment of a shilling, thread a needle without spectacles"; Mother Goose the flower-seller; Nell Batchelor the pie-woman; Mr. Bishop, the "obsequious manager" of the erstwhile Angel Hotel (247). For a more focussed study of street sellers and their evocation of urban nostalgia see Tina Choi, "Lost Labor: Street Cries and the Representation of Urban Nostalgia" (2021).

[105] Jude does recognize Christminster's absent masons/builders during his tour, as he caresses the college walls, but the nostalgia associated with them is more for the authenticity they created rather than the authenticity that their presence engendered.

[106] Indeed, Jude admits that the trip has had a suicidal aim, to reach Sue and kill himself all in one journey.

[107] These are references to Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822), influential Romantic poet, and Robert Burton (1577-1640), English author of *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621). Shelley, a student of University College, Oxford, was expelled in 1811, one year after enrolling, for publishing incendiary religious and political material. Burton was a student of Brasenose College and later Christ Church. Walter Raleigh (1552-1618), a statesman, soldier, and seaman under Elizabeth I, is well known for his role in defeating the Spanish Armada in 1588. John Wycliffe (*c*.1330-84) was a fourteenth-century Catholic clergyman, philosopher, theologian, and Oxford professor. He is famous for his role in translating the Vulgate Bible into vernacular English, and also for his early-Protestant promotion of scriptural over papal authority, for which he was posthumously denounced a heretic. William Harvey (1578-1657) was a physician famous for discovering the circulation of the blood. Richard Hooker (1554-1600), a priest in the Church of England and influential theologian, was educated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where he later became a Fellow. Hooker is most famous for *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Politie* (1594), a critical response to Puritanism.

[108] As discussed in Chapter Two, the sensation of being an "intelligent foreigner" combines familiarity and distance. The term comes from an 1871 *London Society* article that describes a Cambridge graduate touring his *alma mater* as an older man and marvelling at the peculiar sensation of analyzing one's younger self "in memory, curiously and minutely, as some strange being" (40). As discussed, Thomas Hughes's Tom Brown feels this sensation acutely.

[109] This is yet another key difference from Jude's previous ghost-tour (and from those of the Summer Meeting attendees, and those of the university tourists discussed in Chapter One): he is playing tour-guide to another person (Arabella), but one who cares nothing for the education he is sharing. Arabella's nostalgic illiteracy renders her unmoved by the spirits of the past: "I don't

want to hear about ’em! They bore me…What do I care about folk dead and gone?” (Hardy 392). Thus, Jude is excluded not only through the exclusive *genius loci*, the spirit of place, but also through Arabella, who in this moment (and elsewhere) represents the spirit of the time. Just as Jude’s love of gothic medievalism keeps him out of touch with his society (Hardy 85), next to the practical and irreverent Arabella, his nostalgic tendency, his appreciation for ghosts, makes him appear out of touch with the modern world. The novel continues to support this suggestion by increasing Arabella’s presence and prominence: by demonstrating the ease with which she manipulates the world around her to her advantage; by making Christminster a playground for her irreverence; by granting her the last word.

[110] The “spirit” of exclusion is personified in architecture at other key moments in the novel, including when Jude wakes up in the cold light of day following his ghost-tour and realizes that he must find work or starve: “the colleges had treacherously changed their sympathetic countenances: some were stern; some had put on the look of family vaults above ground; something barbaric loomed in the masonries of all” (Hardy 83). Also, when he tries to get closer to the Remembrance Day procession, the hostility of the architecture is felt again: “the quaint and frost-eaten stone busts encircling the building looked with pallid grimness on the proceedings, and in particular at the bedraggled Jude, Sue, and their children, as at ludicrous persons who had no business there” (Hardy 328).

[111] One might say that *Jude the Obscure* presents two tragic protagonists in Jude and Sue. Their nobility, as Hardy defines it, is linked to their eccentricity; their exceptional abilities of insight, empathy, and critical thinking, position them as outsiders in the cruel world of selfish conformity and tradition that Hardy places them.

[112] See *Thomas Hardy: Distance and Desire* (1970).

[113] Recalling Chapter Two, one cannot help but hear echoes of Barrie's Peter Pan here as well.

[114] Miller actually identifies another theme through which Hardy's caution/antipathy toward centring is explored in *Jude*: the dissatisfaction that follows the consummation of love. Notes Miller: "Sexual union is the goal of desire for most of Hardy's lovers…it remains the silent and unspoken center of his love stories" (176). He continues: "When proximity becomes at last 'contact,' the lover is returned almost instantaneously to his dissatisfaction, his indifference, his boredom. With contact love dies" (Miller 176).

[115] Describing her nephew and niece to her friend, she says they are both "crazy for books" and believes wholeheartedly that they have inherited the curse of their parents when it comes to love and marriage (Hardy 13). Aunt Fawley reminisces most often about Sue's peculiarities however, calling her a "pert little thing" with "tight-strained nerves" (Hardy 110). She recalls her wading into ponds with petticoats above her head, and being an "odd little maid" at school (Hardy 111). Both of them, she says, had the childhood trick of "seeming to see things in the air" (Hardy 112).

[116] The most obvious instance of this is her close study of them at the Great Wessex agricultural show, where she follows them around clandestinely and attempts to read their body language for signs of their affection and marital status.

[117] For example, when they are working on the ten commandments in a local church and sense judgement from the vicar, warden, and cleaner because of the unconfirmed status of their union, or else when they are denied lodging due to Sue's pregnancy. Importantly, Sue is also eccentric in terms of gender conformity: a key scene emphasizing this is the one where she temporarily dons Jude's clothes after fleeing the teacher's college, and Jude is discomfited by her "curious unconsciousness of gender" (Hardy 149).

[118] Referring to the scene in which he delivers the Articles of the Creed (in Latin) in a tavern before an audience of working-class patrons (Hardy 120), after which he feels shame for "saying holy things in disreputable quarters" (Hardy 123). He also displays his learning for the Latin-illiterate Remembrance Day crowds at the end of the novel, translating the script on nearby colleges for their amusement.

[119] For example, see Kathleen Blake's "Sue Bridehead, 'The Woman of the Feminist Movement,'" T. R. Wright's "Sue Bridehead: a New Woman," Rosemary Morgan's *Women and Sexuality in the Novels of Thomas Hardy*, or Penny Boumelha's influential *Thomas Hardy and Women: Sexual Ideology and Narrative Form*. Most critics are concerned with unpacking Sue's inconsistency and why she does not seem to fit the feminist role she seemingly is meant to fulfil. Elizabeth Langland attributes this inconsistency to Hardy's ill-conceived plan for the character, which very quickly exceeds the functional roles the narrator sets for her in Jude's story. Mary Jacobus asks most concisely what all of these analyses seem to be exploring in their consideration of Sue the New Woman: "What did Hardy mean by her, and what in the end did he create?" (304). The critics agree that Sue's sexual revolt is the key to both her identity and her position of resistance against patriarchal and institutional convention; Jacobus emphasizes that it is this revolt at which one must locate the complement of Jude's tragedy (305). This chapter widens the grounds of her resistance in an attempt to align her tragic journey with Jude's, beyond a complementary relationship.

[120] Paterson notes that Sue's good fortune to be adopted by a college head becomes a point of envious comparison between the two cousins. While the final version of the novel has Aunt Drusilla scolding Jude for not having gone "off with that schoolmaster of thine to Christminster or somewhere!" in the manuscript the scolding was very different: "Jack, Jack, why don't you go

and get the Head of a College to adopt ’ee, as your cousin has done” (Jude’s name in the manuscript was Jack) (qtd in Paterson, 93).

[121] Examples include Lucy Rae in Marshall’s *The Master of St. Benedict’s* (see Chapter Three) or Zuleika Dobson in Beerbohm’s novel of the same name.

[122] As Hardy confirmed, the novel is set somewhere between 1860 and 1870. The first university women’s college was Cambridge’s Girton College, which opened in 1869. After Girton came Cambridge’s Newnham (1871) and Oxford’s Somerville (1879).

[123] Eccentricity is even emphasized in the method by which Sue smuggles her “heathen load”: she is described as entering “by an obscure street running parallel to the main one, and round a corner to the side door of the establishment to which she was attached” (Hardy 94). Parallel roads and side doors give the impression that Sue is purposely avoiding the centre.

[124] This line occurs after Aunt Drusilla’s death, as Jude and Sue converse over a cup of tea in their late aunt’s Marygreen house. The line is part of a longer hypothetical question Sue poses to Jude, in an attempt to convey the unhappiness she feels in the early days of her marriage to Phillotson: “Is it wrong, Jude,” she asks, “for a husband or wife to tell a third person that they are unhappy in their marriage? If a marriage ceremony is a religious thing, it is possibly wrong; but if it is only a sordid contract, based on material convenience in householding, rating, and taxing, and the inheritance of land and money by children, making it necessary that the male parent should be known – which it seems to be – why surely a person may say, even proclaim upon the housetops, that it hurts and grieves him or her?” (Hardy 209).

[125] Sue makes this comparison in the letter to Jude in which she asks if he will give her away during her wedding to Phillotson.

[126] In Sarah Stickney Ellis's *The Wives of England* (1843), the author espouses the important aspects of wives' duties in the domestic sphere. Their role is to "make [the] husband happy, to raise his character, to give dignity to his house, and to train up his children in the path of wisdom" (Ellis 54). Throughout the text, a wife's duty is understood to be in service of husband and home, and she a selfless orbiter of these centres and manager of their needs.

[127] For a consideration of Sue as a sexually frustrated woman, unfulfilled and unseen by both her partners, and not an asexual or sexless being, see Rosemary Morgan.

[128] According to Sarah Stickney Ellis: "It is unquestionably the best policy … for a bride to be in all things the opposite of eccentric. Her character, if she have any, will develop itself in time; and nothing can be gained, though much may be lost, by exhibiting its peculiarities before they are likely to be candidly judged or rightly understood" (3).

[129] Miller notes this in *Thomas Hardy: Distance and Desire* (208). Ingham discusses the symmetry in *Jude the Obscure* in the Introduction to the Oxford edition (2002).

[130] Symbolizing this new discipline is the image of Sue lying prostrate before the St. Silas cross, where Jude discovers her (Hardy 349). Manya Lempert notes that, as a tragic protagonist in the classical sense, Sue is a particularly Christian model who recognizes and internalizes that moral depravity is to blame for her fate and not the typical Aristotelian ignorant misstep (40). As Lempert summarizes: "Sue moralizes her own fate" (85).

[131] This study is not concerned with unearthing or analyzing the reasons why Sue ultimately decides to centre herself after such long avoidance of centrality. Jane Thomas argues it is her alienation and homelessness that drives her back to conventional, restrictive practices (39). Penny Boumelha argues that sexuality is the "destructive, divisive force" that disrupts the eccentric path of her intellectual education (147). I am primarily concerned with the fact that Sue

does force herself to the centre, and considering what this means for the novel and how it (along with Jude's centring) contributes to Hardy's critique. If, however, a conjecture were to be made in line with this chapter's analysis, it might be that Sue's self-destruction, through a forced centring, is spurred by an internalization of perceived judgement toward the eccentric that she feels following the deaths of her children.

[132] One might recall the words of Tennyson's Princess Ida (in *The Princess*) who is compelled, reluctantly, to "scatter" her besieged female scholars "each to her proper hearth" when the men come calling (Tennyson 6: 283-284). The expectation that women were meant to be situated in the house is voiced in the novel by Gillingham, who advises Phillotson to get his wayward wife "housed again" (Hardy 366).

[133] Sue's self-scourging language includes a desire to "mortify the flesh," and prick herself with needles to "bleed out the badness" in her (Hardy 344-45). Also, for her return to Phillotson, she purposely packs her "coarse calico" nightgown to wear, what the widow Edlin refers to as the "very sackcloth o' Scripture," as a version of hair shirt for maximizing self-punishment (Hardy 364).

[134] This is the perilous pilgrimage Jude undertakes to see her, discussed earlier.

[135] On the topic of a perversion of tradition and form, Patrick O'Malley argues that Sue's "self-immersion" into convention and "enslavement to forms" (482) is a particularly Hardyian twist on the "horror" of gothic sexual perversion in the Radcliffean sense: "It is not transgression of conventional sexual mores that Hardy locates at the center of his construction of perversion, but conformity to them" (650). In other words, "whereas for Radcliffe, the horror lies in the renunciation of heterosexual courtship and marriage represented by the convent, Jude locates it in conventional married life itself" (O'Malley 651). Related to this, Hardy not only twists the

paradigmatic gothic trope that makes conventional marriage the antithesis (rather than the centre) of horrific perversion, but, as Norman Vance notes, he also twists the literary pilgrimage motif which typically has the momentous journey lead to the fulfillment of marriage. This is the case in *Pilgrim's Progress* and in Victorian novels that make use of the pilgrimage motif, such as Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. As Vance observes, Hardy inverts the tradition through Sue ("Thomas Hardy: The Church or Christianity," 123).

[136] See *Thomas Hardy and Women: Sexual Ideology and Narrative Form* (1982).

[137] As Shannon L. Rogers succinctly notes: "In the Wessex of Hardy's novels, a nostalgic longing for a glorious past is a destructive urge that prevents characters from adjusting to the present and, therefore, from evolving to meet the demands of the future" (298). Rogers argues that "it is characters like Arabella Donn—who neither ache from the pains of progress nor long for the past but accept the changing world on its own terms—who are the most successful" (299).

[138] Rosemary Morgan also discusses the appealing resiliency and self-possession of Arabella, and especially her "total lack of self-deception and pretension" (103). Particularly eye-opening is Morgan's analysis of Arabella's role in relation to Sue, as an astute and unprejudiced interpreter of her character, and especially her sexual frustrations.

[139] In discussing how Hardy's various works engage with Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Newey notes that Jude's flaw, the very opposite of Bunyan's Christian, is his outright belief in the vision of the Celestial City and its promise, his treating it too seriously, without a healthy dose of "ironic detachment" ("Bunyan and the Victorians" 586).

[140] See previous mention of the *London Times* piece; n. 102.

[141] Jude says this at the pivotal moment in the novel that his university dream is about to be sidelined by Arabella. Directly after uttering these words he is hit by the pig's flesh she tosses at him.

[142] This is to be understood as another pilgrimage, emphasized in Sue's referring to Christminster as "Jerusalem" when mentioning to Jude that she spotted Phillotson in the crowd and assumes he has "come up to Jerusalem to see the festival like the rest of us" (Hardy 329).

[143] Janice Rossen notes that, for Jude, proximity reinforces his separation (11).

[144] Michael Millgate mentions these cause-and-effect correlations as well (12).

[145] See Sheldon Rothblatt (185).

[146] It was typically a Master of Arts who was designated for the role.

[147] Haugen argues that the *Terrae Filius's* insults "produced an imaginary Oxford which was at once normative for real behaviour and, by definition, never in harmony with real behaviour" (4-5). His speech is an act of "imagining Oxford by negation" (Haugen 5).

[148] Haugen considers the conundrum of the figure as follows: "Should we think of his performances as institutional self-mockery, ritualized inversion, the pre-emptive public admission of collective moral guilt, or something else?" (2)

[149] Dougill notes that the 1658 *Terrae Filius* was made to apologize publicly on his knees before university officials (306). Haugen notes that 1669's *Terrae Filius*, Master of Arts Henry Gerard, was expelled after his performance (1).

[150] Nicholas Amherst (1697-1742), a former *Terrae Filius* expelled in 1719, issued a bi-weekly, fifty-two issue broadside called *Terrae Filius* (1721) after the *Terrae Filius* practice was abandoned. It was also a merciless attack on the university. A collection was later published as *Terrae Filius: or The Secret History of the University of Oxford* (1726), with a frontispiece

engraving by English artist and satirist William Hogarth (1697-1764). Amherst is also the author of a satirical verse called "Strephon's Revenge" (1718), in which he describes Oxford in decay.

[151] Courtier and writer John Evelyn (1620-1706) was one such son. He is known to have criticized Henry Gerard's *Terrae Filius* speech in 1669, calling it "shamefull entertainment" and a "tedious, abusive, sarcastical rhapsodie, much unbecoming the gravity of the Universitie." He petitioned for the practice to be "suppress'd" (qtd in Dougill 76).

[152] Despite being an outsider, the *Terrae Filius'*s criticisms were aimed at those powerful academics who could most easily claim insider status. As Haugen puts it, "to be insulted by the *filius* was a consummate sign of insiderhood" (7).

[153] The idea that the *Terrae Filius* is a kind of orphan also links him to Jude, who is in fact an orphan.

[154] Vincent Newey considers this Commemoration speech in the context of Bunyan's influence. This key moment of defeat, he argues, is akin to those in *Pilgrim's Progress,* which are typically moments for taking stock and succumbing to God's ultimate plan. But, Hardy's parodic warping of Bunyan's model is such that Jude's moment of defeat (unlike those of Christian) offers no "assurance of an overarching order in the affairs of men" ("Bunyan and the Victorians" 587).

[155] He argues that his failure does not prove his ambitions wrong, for he would have been praised for these same ambitions had he succeeded. He points out to Tinker Taylor and his compatriots that their judgements are based on the "accidental outcomes" of his ambitions, and not on the "essential soundness" of them (Hardy 326).

[156] Philip M. Weinstein argues, with respect to this speech, that it is one example of many in the novel wherein Jude's words are from a "cultural stockpile" of discourse rather than a private

store of innate truths. The speech is riddled with inaccuracies about who he is, and is therefore part of the destructive arsenal he levels at himself (123).

[157] The *Terrae Filius* was historically viewed as a kind of anti-graduate.

[158] Discussed earlier, this line is taken from Sue's conversation with Arabella about Jude's unwavering belief in the university (Hardy 313).

[159] From *Essays in Criticism* (1865). Arnold dubs Oxford the "home of lost causes, and forsaken beliefs, and unpopular names, and impossible loyalties!" On a related note, Jude is also named after St. Jude, the patron saint of lost causes.

[160] From Sheldon Rothblatt (185).

[161] Speech acts are words that accomplish action, such as curses, oaths, apologies, etc. In *How To Do Things With Words*, J. L. Austin coins the term "performative utterances" for those utterances that perform an action, rather than simply describe something (6).

[162] This nebulous and ever-shifting idea of "university experience" and what it means in its most desired form is a frequent topic for university criticism during the pandemic and afterwards. Blake Lee-Whiting and Thomas Bergeron conducted a poll on the subject most recently (in September 2022) to determine what university students, set to return to campus post-pandemic, felt had been missing from their "university experience" thus far. The answers ranged from campus events, to campus social spots, to the university's atmosphere for study.

[163] John Warner is one such critical voice, warning of "The Danger of Nostalgia" in higher education. He notes that "[t]here is nothing wrong with nostalgia as an emotional response to the passage of time…[b]ut nostalgia as an operating ethos for an organization or institution is another matter." He recalls detecting "a certain potentially harmful nostalgia for in-person classes coming out of the pandemic" which prevents positive changes and administering to the

evolving needs of students. His conclusion is that “guarding against nostalgia” is necessary in “all aspects” of higher education.

Conclusion

Reiterations and Revisions

That the Victorians were well-versed in university nostalgia should be an idea now well understood. In their reading, writing, studying, touring, and distant musing, the Victorians were as "steeped in sentiment" as Arnold imagined their beloved Oxford to be, and collectively contributed as much to the "idea of a university" as did Newman, whose troubling yet nonetheless nostalgia-infused memories of his *alma mater,* Oxford, lingered, haunting his vision of the new university before him.[1]

This dissertation has been dedicated to an analysis of the university nostalgia that captured the Victorian cultural imagination so pervasively and persistently, but more specifically to its presence in the Victorian varsity novel. My purpose has been to draw attention to the ways in which these varsity novels contribute, alongside other varsity texts, to a discourse of university nostalgia and, by extension, university power, but specifically in response to certain engines of the Victorian knowledge industry that were believed to confront and question the traditional ideas of a university, and especially those attached to Oxford and Cambridge. Each chapter has focussed on a particular engine of progress—university tourism, the civic college movement, the women's college movement, and the extension movement—and for each I have identified, across a discursive network of relevant varsity texts, a variant of Oxbridge nostalgia strategically positioned as both a force of resistance and participation. Thus, university tourism is confronted with commodified nostalgia, a marketed idea of authenticity and exclusivity that keeps tourists engaged yet distanced. The civic college ethos of work is confronted with a nostalgia for boyhood and play, which repurposes (rather than discards) the work-ethicists' notion of wasted time. The advent of the women's colleges is met with a patriarchal nostalgia for the home and

the homebound woman, with visions of collegial domesticity that both invite and contain the female scholar. Finally, the university extension movement is confronted by a nostalgia for Oxbridge as a revered centre of pilgrimage, a nostalgia that, even as it invites working-class students to feel longingly for this centre and journey to it, simultaneously indulges in the ideas of distance, struggle, and tradition that ultimately exclude them. With this project, then, I have argued, firstly, for the significance of Victorian varsity novels, an overlooked genre of Victorian fiction and an overlooked catalogue of varsity fiction,[2] to the production of university nostalgia. Secondly, I have argued that this nostalgia, multifaceted and diversely deployed, was, in its posture of conflict with the various movements of knowledge progress and expansion, a method of fortifying the "ancient" university's place in a modern and rapidly changing world.

To conclude, I would like to glance briefly at one more varsity novel, Max Beerbohm's *Zuleika Dobson* (1911), a turn-of-the-century varsity novel this time. The novel tells the tale of a young woman and amateur conjurer, Zuleika Dobson, who visits her grandfather, warden of the fictional Judas College, at Oxford. As is typical in varsity novels keen to promote the university as a "boys' own" space, Zuleika's visit causes quite a stir, and her beauty attracts the Duke of Dorset in particular, a gentleman-commoner[3] and junior member of parliament, who decides to prove his love and honour by killing himself for her sake, an act which she wholeheartedly encourages, and which he insists upon doing even after he comes to despise her. Such is the influence of the Duke among his fellow undergraduates, and such the dangerous allure of Zuleika herself (the narrator would have us believe), that soon the entire undergraduate body has determined to join the Duke in his fatal demonstration. At the end of the novel, after the mass suicidal drowning of its undergraduates during one of the critical bump races of eights week, Oxford lies deserted yet complacent; and Zuleika, after some show of remorse, but mostly

regretting that she did not find at Oxford what she had not been able to find elsewhere in her travels, an indifferent lover, sets out happily for Cambridge. While Beerbohm's varsity novel sits just outside the Victorian frame of this dissertation, it nonetheless provides a valuable coda for this project: it synthesizes the nostalgic variants, ideas, and characters discussed throughout these four chapters; it launches the satiric trend of university fiction which took hold in the mid-twentieth century; and finally, informed by its satiric identity, it offers a timely revision of university nostalgia. Furthermore, because Beerbohm began writing the novel at the close of the Victorian era (in 1898), it ushers the varsity reader into a familiar landscape, a fictive Oxford of youthful struggles and escapades, doused in the golden sentiment of nostalgia. Indeed, Beerbohm's novel is a pivotal transitional text between two very different eras, but equally smitten with Oxbridge.

Zuleika Dobson works wonderfully as a novel of synthesis for this dissertation because, to start with, the title character is reminiscent of many varsity characters that figure throughout its four chapters. Zuleika arrives at Oxford with a "library" consisting of only two books, a Bradshaw guide quaintly bound and an ABC railway guide,[4] rendering her, like Verdant Green, a university tourist of sorts, and one who, at the end, is on her way to trespass upon Cambridge in presumably the same careless way. In her relation to a college warden (and thus a daughter of the university), whose visit disturbs the quiet foundation of the male academic stronghold, she resembles Marshall's Lucy Rae (and the manuscript version of Sue Bridehead).[5] Like Hardy's Sue and Arabella Donn, she is depicted as an eccentric woman, whose heartlessness, manipulativeness, unmarried status, and practice of conjuring situate her very far afield from the "angel in the house" ideal. Also, like Hardy's women, she is deemed responsible for the untimely ruin of young scholars. Finally, Zuleika bears further resemblance to Arabella in her nostalgic

illiteracy, evidenced during her entrance to Oxford during which she bestows only a "casual glance" at the imposing "emperor" stone heads outside the Sheldonian Theatre (who, contrastingly, stare quite intensely and menacingly upon her), demonstrating that "[t]he inanimate had little charm for her" in the same way that Arabella cares little for "folk dead and gone" (Beerbohm 10; Hardy 392). Later, she takes, similarly, very little pleasure in the window view from her room at Judas college depicting a beautiful grass-carpeted, cloistered quadrangle below with "walls of rugged grey," a quadrangle the narrator identifies later in the novel as significant for those "versed in the antiquities of Oxford" because it "played its part in the rough-and-tumble of history" (Beerbohm 15, 86). For Zuleika, however, "it was of no more interest than if it had been the rattling court-yard to one of those hotels in which she spent her life." Indeed, while it is typical for a varsity-novel character to marvel longingly at and thus render nostalgic the historic and often iconic views outside his/her college window, Zuleika "heeded it not" (Beerbohm 86).

Character resemblances aside, *Zuleika Dobson* is most significant for its synthesis of all variants of nostalgia discussed throughout this dissertation's four chapters, as well as many of their corresponding ideas. Nostalgia for an authentic, exclusive, traditional Oxford is voiced not only through the narrator, but also through the consciousnesses of the university's various *genii loci*[6] such as the aforementioned "Roman Emperor" heads pedestalled outside the Sheldonian who wince at the changes of their university, and most notably at the intrusion of women.[7] Indeed, following the Victorian women's varsity novels, *Zuleika Dobson* sustains the deep-seated anti-feminism attached to the idea of a university, whereby a woman's presence urges regret, and sits invariably alongside the appealing memory of her absence. Nostalgia for lost youth or boyhood is stoked both in the foreshadowing and in the aftermath of the

undergraduates' collective suicide, along with the associated ideas of waste and martyrdom. Chapter twelve of Beerbohm's novel offers two familiar tropes simultaneously—the nostalgic narrator and the intangible, atmospheric university[8]—as the narrator takes a pause from the varsity plot to indulge in a "revival of memories" of his *alma mater*, and, becoming an incorporeal spirit, "floats" away from the Duke (with whom he has been concerned)[9] and towards the closed gates of his old college where he recalls "so often knocking for admission" (194). Highlighting the importance of delinquency for the nostalgic narrator of varsity fiction (as outlined in Chapter Two), he heads to his old room, now occupied by an "interloper," and then rises upward through the floor of the room above, "through the very carpet that had so often been steeped in wine, and encrusted with smithereens of glass, in the brave old days of a well-remembered occupant," only to find, to his disappointment, that in it now resides two "reading-men"[10] (Beerbohm 195). Continuing with the trope of the vaporous varsity, the narrator then floats outside into the meadows, and begins to contemplate the quintessential vapours emanating from the moist land around the university town, which he maintains form the inspirational, evocative stuff of the "Oxford spirit": "Yes, certainly, it is this mild, miasmal air, not less than the grey beauty and gravity of the buildings, that has helped Oxford to produce, and foster eternally, her peculiar race of artist-scholars, scholar-artists" (Beerbohm 196). "For there is nothing in England to be matched with what lurks in the vapours of these meadows, and in the shadow of these spires—that mysterious, inenubilable spirit, spirit of Oxford," he declares, before rising to the heights of Arnoldian passion: "Oxford! The very sight of the word printed, or sound of it spoken, is fraught for me with most actual magic" (Beerbohm 198). This interlude, the narrator's transcendent Oxford ramble, is also yet another example of the nostalgic varsity tour, which has figured heavily throughout this dissertation. Another is undertaken by the Duke

himself (as with John Osborne and Jude Fawley, at the moment of impending death) as he sets out on a melancholy walk through Oxford on the day of his intended suicide, passing the quadrangle of the Old Schools,[11] bidding farewell to Bishop Heber's tree in Radcliffe Square,[12] and stopping at the Bodleian to "feel for the last time the vague thrill he had always felt at sight of the small and devious portal that had lured […]so many scholars from the ends of the earth, scholars famous and scholars obscure, scholars polyglot and of the most diverse bents, but none of them not stirred in heart somewhat on the found threshold of the treasure-house" (Beerbohm 284). Indeed, even in the midst of satire, with the reader well aware at this point that this touring student is ending his life for a woman he has come to abhor and that Oxford is about to become the site of a farcical martyrdom *en masse*, Beerbohm maintains an earnest tone for his novel's nostalgic university tour, recognizing, perhaps, not only its cultural cachet, but also that poking fun at something, here an idealized Oxbridge, works best when that something is occasionally left untouched, the unhewn stone upon which the satirist works.

Satire is another reason why Beerbohm's novel is important to include here, at the end of a study of Victorian varsity novels, because it heralds the trajectory of university fiction in the twentieth century. "Campus novels" of the twentieth century focus most often on the career academic rather than the student, and satire is the mode typically chosen to highlight what Kenneth Womack calls the "disillusionment" of professional academic life (2), exposing the failings of an institution rife with bureaucratic, social, and financial injustices and hardships.[13] In arguably a metafictional way, one might say that Beerbohm's novel anticipates and satirizes the transition from undergraduate-focussed varsity novels to faculty-focused campus novels of the twentieth century by having Oxford's entire undergraduate cohort kill themselves simultaneously, leaving the university newly-vacated for the dons and wardens who are left to

process the emptiness with equal parts disbelief and disinterest. But, at the turn of the century, the institutional scholar was not yet a fixture of the university, and so what is satirized[14] most evidently in *Zuleika Dobson* is instead what both Proctor and Dougill refer to as the "cult of Oxford,"[15] the appeal generated by the university, not for its academics or curriculum, but for its culture, atmosphere, and traditions, as well as nostalgia, the preferred lens through which this appeal is registered. And, as I have demonstrated throughout this dissertation, the Victorians were crucial contributors to this cult appeal.

This conclusion is not the place to delve thoroughly into the satiric identity of *Zuleika Dobson.* However, satire informs a key passage of nostalgic revision in the novel that is not only relevant to this dissertation in its defamiliarization of the archetypal Arnoldian nostalgic vision of Oxford, but also crucial to repositioning university nostalgia for a new era of varsity novels. Before turning to a close reading of this passage, it is pertinent to consider the extent to which Arnold's famous lines, his nostalgic ode to Oxford in the Preface to his *Essays in Criticism* (1865), had become a definitive way of knowing the "ancient" university, an entrenched cultural artefact instantly familiar and reusable by the time Beerbohm sat down to write his varsity novel. *Zuleika Dobson* opens at the Oxford train station (that familiar point of nostalgic departure for the tourist, discussed in Chapter One) on the day of Zuleika's arrival, but the narrator is not yet taken with her so much as he is with the odd juxtaposition of the "antique" station and the youthful undergraduates milling about its platforms:

> Young and careless, in the glow of the afternoon sunshine, they struck a sharp note of incongruity with the worn boards they stood on, with the fading signals and grey eternal walls of that antique station, which, familiar to them and insignificant, does yet whisper to the tourist the last enchantments of the Middle Age. (Beerbohm 7)

In the very first paragraph of his novel, Beerbohm evokes the familiar idea of university nostalgia by echoing Arnold's famous words, demonstrating his recognition for the kind of language typically used in ushering visitors into a (fictive) university. Indeed, borrowing these lines demonstrates a certain recognition on Beerbohm's part for the ways in which words, like objects, can become commodities for easy consumption. Next to this example I would pair Arnold's recycling of his own lines in his "Emerson" essay from *Discourses in America* (1885), which begins with the speaker reminiscing upon his undergraduate days at Oxford forty years ago, musing on the "voices […] in the air there which haunt my memory still" (138), and includes a few pages later this self-echo: "Somewhere or other I have spoken of those 'last enchantments of the Middle Age' which Oxford sheds around us, and here they were!" (142). In quoting these, his most evocative lines, and, importantly, in detaching them from their original text ("Somewhere or other"), Arnold suggests that they had already at this point risen to become part of something greater than himself, part of a larger discourse of university nostalgia that he could only partially lay claim to, and his usage of them here, as with Beerbohm's, savours of the extraction of essence. Indeed, both writers prove how familiar Oxbridge nostalgia had become at the end of the Victorian era, how easily traversable the path from signifier to signified such that the mere mention of Middle Age enchantments, whispering towers, or "dreaming spires" was deemed enough to trigger nostalgia without needing site or memory to access it.

If both Beerbohm's and Arnold's regurgitation of the latter's evocative "Preface" lines prove the familiarity of university nostalgia as a consumable discourse, as I have argued, then the defamiliarizing work of satire is, as Victor Shklovsky theorizes, all the more necessary to "remove the automatism of perception" and "recover the sensation" of nostalgia (22, 12).[16] Defamiliarization is the practice of making the familiar unfamiliar, and in literature it is the

effect produced when the reader is forced to perceive something familiar or known from a fresh perspective.[17] The key passage of Beerbohm's I shall now examine is one in which familiar Arnoldian nostalgia, and especially the "dreaming spires" that work as its trigger, is deconstructed through defamiliarization and then reconstructed anew, but, making it a perfect final discussion for this dissertation, with the recognition of artifice or invention added into the mix.

The passage in question occurs at the end of chapter twelve, the aforementioned interlude of the nostalgic narrator as he floats through and above a vaporous Oxford like an ethereal spirit. After he has drifted through the "miasmal air" of the meadows, the narrator rises even further upward to a stratum of "drier air" from which he is able to survey Oxford far below, with all its components spread out beneath him, map-like, such that all things representative of Oxford become "tiny symbols" of themselves (Beerbohm 198).[18] From this perspective the infamous and nostalgia-triggering topography of Oxford is rendered unfamiliar:

> There they lay, these multitudinous and disparate quadrangles, all their rivalries merged in the making of a great catholic pattern. And the roofs of the buildings around them seemed level with their lawns. No higher the roofs of the very towers. Up from their tiny segment of the earth's spinning surface they stood negligible beneath infinity. And new, too, quite new, in eternity; transient upstarts. I saw Oxford as a place that had no more past and no more future than a mining-camp. I smiled down. O hoary and unassailable mushroom! (Beerbohm 198-99)

Viewed from far above, the "dappled quads"[19] are denied their individual college identities and associated rivalries; the cloistered walls surrounding them (and those students situated within them) no longer merely contain them but connect them to others in a "pattern" that erases any

illusion of each one's exclusive inside and excluded outside space. Viewed from above rather than below, Oxford's iconic "dreaming spires" are denied their daunting and haunting aspects: they cannot reach the heavens if the viewer is above them, nor can their whispers seem as though coming from a different time. Indeed, time itself is defamiliarized in this passage, with infinity, eternity, past, and future collapsed into meaningless words.[20]

Yes, in this passage, occurring in an untethered chapter mid-novel of no consequence at all to the plot, Beerbohm handily dismantles an iconic trigger for Oxbridge nostalgia, and by extension the sensation itself. But then comes a reconstruction, a revision of nostalgia. After re-assessing Oxford as a place without past or future he continues:

> But if a man carry his sense of proportion far enough, lo! He is back at the point from which he started. He knows that eternity, as conceived by him, is but an instant in eternity, and infinity but a speck in infinity. How should they belittle the things near to him? … Oxford was venerable and magical, after all, and enduring. (Beerbohm 199)

Here, Beerbohm's narrator acknowledges that in assigning words like "infinity," "eternal," or even (I would add) "ancient" to Oxford, one is assigning only the idea attached to the words and not their actual referents, which are inaccessible, incomprehensible, and incompatible with human existence, and as impossible to grasp as time itself. Indeed, these words are all only constructs created to help us give meaning to the world and to its situation in time, in the same way that nostalgia is not an actual ailment but a construct created to identify the pain and wonder of time's passing. These ideas are all inventions as much as Oxbridge is (with thanks to Virginia Woolf again),[21] all fictions masquerading as knowledge,[22] and knowledge masquerading as power. Thus, Oxford is "venerable and magical, after all, and enduring," concludes the narrator, it is worthy of nostalgia, but only if one revises the term to include the elements of invention,

artifice, fiction. Only if one recognizes that the university one longs for is simply the *idea* of a university, subject to the changing courses and discourses of time.

Notes

[1] Arnold's lines are from p.xviii of the "Preface" to his *Essays in Criticism* (1865). John Henry Newman's *The Idea of a University* (1852) was the published version of lectures he delivered in the spring of 1852 for the inauguration of the Dublin Catholic University.

[2] Proctor lauds their "documentary value": "The portrayal they offer of English university life in the nineteenth century is monumental in scope, and it fills out the picture of the universities in a way that no history could possible do, for it has re-created the world of the undergraduate" (189).

[3] As discussed in Chapter Two, a "gentleman-commoner" was an Oxford term designating those students wealthy enough to pay double college fees in exchange for special college privileges and exemptions. The equivalent designation at Cambridge is "fellow-commoner." The character of Drysdale from Hughes's *Tom Brown at Oxford* is a particularly flagrant example of the gentleman-commoner's tendency in varsity fiction for spoiled behaviour and carefree, delinquent pursuits.

[4] As mentioned in Chapter One, Bradshaw was a popular brand of tourist guidebooks and railway tables throughout the Victorian era. The *ABC or Alphabetical Railway Guide* was a monthly railway timetable begun in 1853, which remained popular into the twentieth century.

[5] See Chapter Four, n. 120.

[6] See Chapter Four's section "Genius Loci."

[7] Interestingly, these sculpted busts are not actually of Roman emperors, and are only called the "emperor heads" today because of Beerbohm's novel. Another *genius loci* is the ghost of Humphrey Greddon, founder and president of the Junta club to which the Duke of Dorset belongs.

[8] The former is discussed in Chapter Two, and the latter in Chapters One and Four.

[9] The narrator chooses to leave at this particular moment because of the Duke's depressed and anxious state, having just realized his disdain for Zuleika. She has just doused him with a bucket of water out her bedroom window for declaring that he would rather live for her than die for her.

[10] As discussed in Chapter Two (see n. 79), "reading men" were one of many factions or "sets" into which Oxford and Cambridge youth were organized. In varsity fiction the reading set, studious and antisocial, are often juxtaposed with the rowdy, playful, and sometimes delinquent "fast set."

[11] The Old Schools quadrangle connects the Bodleian with the old schools of theology and philosophy, as well as the museum and music school.

[12] This old horse-chestnut tree was located in the fellows' garden of Exeter College, and drooped substantially into Radcliffe Square. It was felled in 1992. The student rooms of Reginald Heber (1783-1826), an Anglican Bishop, were on the ground floor of Brasenose College, Oxford, right next to the tree in Exeter's garden.

[13] Some well-known campus novels include Mary McCarthy's *The Groves of Academe* (1952), Kingsley Amis's *Lucky Jim* (1954), and David Lodge's Campus Trilogy (1975, 1984, 1988) among others.

[14] Beerbohm's novel is an example of Horatian satire, a lighthearted and tolerant teasing of Oxford nostalgia and its cultish appeal.

[15] See the title of Proctor's chapter nine, and Dougill's chapter five, p.160.

[16] Defamiliarization is, according to Russian formalist Victor Shklovsky (1893-1984), a technique used in art to combat "habitualization" and the "automatism of perception" (12, 22); it "make[s] objects 'unfamiliar'" in order to "impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known" (12).

[17] Bulaitis notes that contemporary university fiction, typically satiric, defamiliarizes university life (115-16). Brian A. Connery stresses that "defamiliarization is essential in producing the cognitive dissonance which underlies satiric attack" (125).

[18] There is a similar interlude in Hughes's *Tom Brown at Oxford* at the start of chapter 17, as the narrator leaves Tom stewing in his own thoughts and entreats the reader to "take a flight with me to other scenes and pastures new" (182). The reader is escorted onto the "story-teller's aerial machine," which rises up from St. Ambrose's quadrangle, "over Oxford city and all its sleeping wisdom and folly, over street and past spire, over Christ Church and the canon's houses, and the fountain in Tom quad; over St. Aldate's and the river, along which the moonbeams lie in a pathway of twinkling silver, over the railway sheds – no, there was then no railway, but only the quiet fields and footpaths of Hincksey hamlet" (Hughes 183). Unlike Beerbohm's, however, Hughes's aerial view of Oxford is only momentary as his intent is to whisk his reader away on a country excursion, and it is not rhetorically manipulated or defamiliarized.

[19] See Merritt Moseley, p.11.

[20] Peter Ackroyd dismantles Oxford's traditional historic appeal in a similar way after complaining that "[t]here is an air of insubstantiality about it all": "the old no longer seems old; it seems fake, or as flimsy as a sepia print. There is a curious tinniness about the 16th century colleges and the 13th century walls—if you tapped them, they would ring. Walking through the streets of Oxford is like taking part in some artificial and over-blown pageant" (16).

[21] Referring, once again, to Woolf's "Oxbridge is an invention" (5) in *A Room of One's Own* (1929).

[22] Ackroyd comes to this same conclusion after his dismantling of the Oxford myth: "Oxford is insubstantial because it lives off myths, it is a clatter of broken images. It exists in lines of nostalgic verse, in portentous odes, in memoirs and slim first novels" (16).

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