

Ford Madox Ford Society

Newsletter 12

26 June 2006

Honorary Members: Julian Barnes, Bernard Bergonzi, A. S. Byatt, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Samuel Hynes, Alan Judd, Sir Frank Kermode, John Lamb, Sylvère Monod, Sergio Perosa, Ruth Rendell, Michael Schmidt, The Hon. Oliver Soskice, John Sutherland, Gore Vidal.

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• New of Recent Activities	1
• Publications	3
• Ford in the Media	4
• Conference Announcements and Calls for Papers	4
• Further Conference Announcements and Call for Papers	6
• International Ford Madox Ford Studies	7
• Renewal of Subscriptions	7
• Contributions	10

NEWS OF RECENT ACTIVITIES

The Society's conference on 'Ford Madox Ford, Englishness, and Modernism' was held on the 17th and 18th December 2004, in the striking Georgian classical revival building of the Friends Meeting House, 6 Mount St, Manchester M2. The conference was expertly organized by Jenny Plastow, with help from Dennis Brown and Mick Brookes.

Philip Davis opened with an impassioned keynote lecture presenting the idea of the 'saving remnant' as a model for how to think of Englishness as something more vital than commodified 'Heritage' or an insular nostalgic fantasy; as instead a taking of the present to task for failing the past, in order to be able to imagine a better future. He argued for Ford's place in a line of such thinking stretching from the Old Testament to D. H. Lawrence, via Shakespeare, Burke, Arnold and Dickens. Andrzej Gasiorek's plenary lecture the following morning gave an innovative reading of *The Soul of London* in the context of late Victorian and Edwardian debates and fictions about immigration. Nick Hubble also argued for the sociological insight of *The Soul of London* in particular. Several papers concentrated on *The Good Soldier*. Nobuyoshi Ota spoke of Englishness and globalization in the novel's presentation of 'Anglo-American Rapprochement'. Austin Riede contrasted Dowell's and Florence's loquacity with the Ashburnhams' taciturnity, suggesting a

'Talking Cure for Englishness'. And Christine Berberich read the novel as 'A Modernist Elegy for the Gentleman'. Other papers ranged widely across Ford's oeuvre. Ralph Parfect discussed *Romance* and *The Fifth Queen* in terms of the Adventure Story Tradition. Donald MacKenzie also considered *The Fifth Queen*, arguing that Ford studiously avoided the historical myth-making exemplified by Scott. Jason Harding considered 'The Englishness of *The English Review*'. Anurag Jain looked at the pressures placed upon Ford's idea of Englishness during the First World War, while he was writing books of propaganda. Peter Easingwood showed how Ford's Modernism involved a rejection of a specifically English form of literary conventionality.

The remaining papers considered Ford's postwar prose. Jörg Rademacher analysed passages from Joachim Utz's recent German translations of *Some Do Not . . .* and *No More Parades* to consider how translation can find equivalents for Ford's evocation of Englishness. Robert McDonough read the late novels *The Rash Act* and *Henry for Hugh* in terms of an 'Escape from Englishness'. Chris MacGowan traced Ford's weaving of motifs of English feudalism in his depiction of the American South in *Great Trade Route*.

Bookstalls were provided by Carcanet and Forest Books. There was an excellent Conference dinner at the Beluga Restaurant on the Friday. On Saturday, after the Conference, Jörg Rademacher performed an intriguing piece for voice and taped music tracing the overlapping Anglo-German leanings of fellow-Modernists Ford and Joyce. Participants also enjoyed the racy pre-Christmas atmosphere on the streets of Manchester, as well as the rather louche hotel several participants stayed in. Attendance was good – about fifty people were present – and was characteristically international. It was also pleasing to see that graduate students and young scholars were attending and contributing, several new to the Society's activities.

Most of the papers, plus four additional essays by Dennis Brown, Jenny Plastow, Karen McDermott and Sara Haslam, will be published in volume 5 of *International Ford Madox Ford Studies* – see p. 7 below.

Max Saunders

France, no longer Ford's 'belle dame sans merci'?

In November 2001, Julian Barnes gave a lecture at the Sorbonne on his novel: *Flaubert's Parrot* which had been set on the curriculum of the Agrégation. He mentioned Ford, another admirer of Flaubert, as his other master and realised that his name did not ring a bell even among such a well-read audience as that attending his lecture. And Julian Barnes was heard. In 2005 and again this year, *The Good Soldier* (in the Norton edition) was put on the reading list for the exam. Ford was back in France to the delight of many teachers and their students. The general reading public will have to wait. There have been two translations, both out of print and the publisher has decided not to reprint it.

Last summer, I asked Martin Stannard whether he would come over to Angers and give a lecture on *The Good Soldier*. He accepted immediately and the journée d'études with members of the universities of Nantes, Poitiers, Le Mans, St Etienne, Paris and of course Angers, whose privileged students did not have to buy themselves a train ticket, duly took place on January 20 of this year. A good hundred students attended Professor Stannard's talk, their Norton *Good Soldier* in hand. The lecture was called: "What did Dowell Know? *The Good Soldier* and its narrator."

Then, four papers were given by Joëlle Harel (University of Paris XII) on “Money in *The Good Soldier*”, by Béatrice Bijon (University of Saint Etienne): “The Passion of the Signifier in *The Good Soldier*”, Bénédicte Chorier-Fryd on “The Hatred of The Adder – some religious signifiers in *The Good Soldier*” and Georges Letissier on : “Logocentric Delusion vs. Textual Dissimination in *The Good Soldier*”.

I must add that one student – no doubt swept off her feet by the first scholar she had seen in the flesh – plucked up her courage to ask Professor Stannard for his autograph on her book. I had to tell her that he had taken French leave (which, as everybody knows, we call ‘filer à l’anglaise’). Unfortunately, Professor Stannard was on the TGV back to Paris, where, the following day, at the invitation of Professor Gallix, he repeated his lecture at the Sorbonne. Although it was a Saturday morning, the amphitheatre was full.

PS: Swift progress of Ford reported in France

In June 2005, when I gave the bibliographical presentation on *The Good Soldier* to the colleagues who were going to teach it, hardly anyone had read it; indeed only a few had heard of Ford, and if so, it had generally been in connection with Conrad. Now, some of the same colleagues stand firm. At the Sorbonne in January, those that came to hear Martin Stannard found it hard to understand why they had never heard of Ford and said that they would not 'let go of him'. They also reported that a few 'agrégatifs' had decided to write their PhD dissertation on Ford. So there will be a school of young and hopefully eager French Fordians.

Dominique Lemarchal

PUBLICATIONS

François Gallix, *The good soldier/Ford Madox Ford*; introduction de Max Saunders, préface de Julian Barnes / Ellipses, 2005 / Capes-Agreg anglais

Dominique Lemarchal, *The Good Soldier de Ford Madox Ford* / Ellipses, 2005. Première leçon sur.

Jörg W. Rademacher and Christian Steinhagen, *Gelehrtes Münster und rundum* (Berlin: Verlag Jena 1800, 2005), includes Ford and Violet Hunt among the 88 writers, philosophers and theologians associated with the city.

Paul Skinner comments on news of another important recent book about Ford:

Joseph Wiesenfarth, *Ford Madox Ford and the Regiment of Women: Violet Hunt, Jean Rhys, Stella Bowen, Janice Biala*, the University of Wisconsin Press (2005). ISBN 0-299-21090-1 Cloth \$34.95 Available in the UK and Continental Europe through Eurospan and via your local bookshop (support your local bookshop!) 30 colour plates ranging from reminder to revelation (not least the dust jackets designed by Stella Bowen and others of her paintings, particularly the self-portraits). Acknowledgements (xi-xvi); Introduction, five chapters and conclusion, notes and index (3-217). This is not a review, so I'll just say that, keenly anticipated for quite some time, this book was well worth the wait and will go on to a lot of very selective short lists of books about Ford.

A review can be found at:

<http://www.madison.com/archives/read.php?ref=tct:2005:12:01:536557:SAVVY>

and another will appear soon in the journal *Biography*.

FORD IN THE MEDIA

Following the success of Drusilla Modjeska's book about Stella Bowen and Grace Cossington Smith, *Stravinsky's Lunch*, there was a recent production of an Australian opera about Stella Bowen and her relationship with Ford, called 'The Portrait'. The libretto and music are by Becky Llewellyn. It was commissioned and is performed by a national touring opera company called Co-Opera, lasts about two hours and uses projections of some of Bowen's best-known paintings. It started in Adelaide and toured Australia in the autumn. The production has a website: <http://www.theportrait.com.au/> and there's a review of it by Christopher Wainwright at: www.stateart.com.au/sota/reviews/default.asp?fid=3984

John Simon wrote in the *Wall St Journal* on *The Good Soldier* as a book which conveys 'the tragicomic sense of life':

This novel is about the fraught relationship of two friendly couples, one American, one British, as told by the American husband, who can be both keen observer and untrustworthy narrator and who worships the friend who cuckolds him. *The Good Soldier* is a profoundly ironic novel, as comic as it is sad, with its characters caught in what is equally a funhouse of distorting mirrors and a maze of painful ambiguities--even absurdities--from which there is no satisfactory exit. The novel offers a sardonic view of romance and forces one to rethink whether ignorance is indeed bliss--and reach a funny-sad conclusion. Ford is one of the major neglected English writers, in need of rediscovery. From this short novel, one might well proceed to his monumental and epochal *Parade's End*, four interrelated short novels in whose 1950 Knopf reprint I am proud to have been instrumental.

Opinion Journal, from the *Wall St Journal* Editorial Page, 3 December 2005

<http://www.opinionjournal.com/weekend/fivebest/?id=110007635>

Jane Smiley contributed an excerpt from her book *13 Ways of Looking at the Novel* (London: Faber, 2006) to the *Guardian* Review (27 May 2006) on *The Good Soldier*. 'that it is a masterpiece, almost a perfect novel, comes as a repeated surprise even to readers who have read it before', she writes. She gives an intriguing summary, and comments that 'Ford's greatest gamble is in the naïveté of the narrator (Dowell)'; and that Ford's style 'makes great use of paradox'. The excerpt can be read at: <http://books.guardian.co.uk/departments/generalfiction/story/0,,1784041,00.html>

In the *Guardian* Review for 17th June A. S. Byatt picked Ford for Summer re-reading.

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CALLS FOR PAPERS AND ESSAYS

Ford Madox Ford's Significance in Literary and Cultural History

The Society has been planning a major combination of events and publications taking place over the next few years. Contributions are invited on a broad range of topics concerning Ford's relation to other writers and cultural movements. The Ford Society will be staging a series of interrelated conferences from 2006 to 2008, and producing associated volumes of *International Ford Madox Ford Studies* (IFMFS) between 2007 and 2010, all concerned with aspects of Ford's engagements

with specific writers, media, or with cultural transformations. Together they will provide a substantial and concerted reevaluation of Ford's significance in literary and cultural history. The following paragraphs indicate the three main emphases, and how the publications are expected to relate to the conferences.

**Conference on 'Ford Madox Ford: Literary Networks and Cultural Transitions'
(Birmingham and Midlands Institute, Birmingham, September 14-16, 2006)
Ford Madox Ford Lecture to be given by Zinovy Zinik**

Proposals are invited for 20-minute papers or for panels (with three participants) on Ford's work as a novelist, poet, essayist, propagandist, critic, biographer, travel writer, historian, or raconteur. The emphasis of the conference is on Ford as a transitional figure spanning various cultural phases from Victorian Pre-Raphaelitism, through Impressionism and early Modernism, to post-WWI Paris and the USA. Possible themes and topics include the visual arts, music, biographical contacts, literary influence, canonicity and tradition, modernity, the public sphere, cultural exchange/conflict, exile, World War One, Edwardianism, Modernism, regionalism, identity, and sexual politics. The conference could also include work on Ford's contributions to periodicals edited by other people (though papers on Ford as an editor should be offered for the 2008 conference described below) and work on Ford's engagement (whether literary or biographical) with specific writers.

Volume 7 of IFMFS on the theme of *Ford Madox Ford and Cultural Transitions*, to be edited by Andrzej Gasiorek, will appear in 2008. Papers from the conference will be considered for inclusion in the volume.

There is now a conference web-site, available on www.english.bham.ac.uk/fordmadoxford2006 For further information or to offer a paper or essay please contact Andrzej Gasiorek at A.B.P.Gasiorek@bham.ac.uk or Daniel Moore at DTMoore72665937@aol.com. The deadline has been extended to 14 July.

Call for essays for the volume *Ford Madox Ford's Literary Contacts*.

Vol. 6 of International Ford Madox Ford Studies, to be edited by Paul Skinner, will be a varied volume, making room both for biographical contacts and literary 'influences' (understood as including figures influencing Ford, and those influenced by him). It is based on the premise that 'major' writers don't just build on the work of other 'major' writers, that 'influence' (positive or negative) sometimes comes from the peripheral characters and that, for instance, the major modernists often took off from less well-known or less-successful artists, either reaching beyond or over them, even frankly stealing things that hadn't been made the most of. Ford's relations with writers such as James, Conrad, Crane, Violet Hunt, Pound, and Rhys have been well-studied. Rather than sustained revaluations of such contacts, this volume aims to cover the less obvious but nonetheless revealing figures; but it is also open to briefer contributions shedding new light on even these familiar friendships. Contributions need not all be on prose, nor all on the twentieth century. Work on Ford's influence on later writers is also welcome. Papers given at the 2006 Birmingham conference may be submitted for inclusion. Briefer pieces (say 1 or 2 pages) are also welcome, from writers who prefer other forms than academic papers, or who have salient observations that might not warrant full-dress treatment.

A long list of possible figures for inclusion is posted on the Society's website. The editor would particularly welcome contributions on the following:

Aldington, Bunting, Coppard, Cunninghame Graham, H. D., T. S. Eliot, Flint, Hewlett, Kipling, Mina Loy, McAlmon, Patmore, May Sinclair, Gilbert White, Rebecca West, John Gould Fletcher, both Garnetts (Constance and Edward, but perhaps David too), Gaudier, Goldring, Masterman, Read and Ruskin

If you would like to contribute to *Ford Madox Ford's Literary Contacts* please contact Paul Skinner: paul@pgskinner.wanadoo.co.uk by 1 September at the latest.

Conference on 'Ford Madox Ford as Editor': (Durham, 2008)

In order to celebrate the centenary of the founding of the *English Review* this conference will seek to re-examine Ford's impact as editor. The conference will focus specifically on contextualizing Ford's role on the *English Review* and the *transatlantic review* in the light of his editorial principles and his collaboration with many important writers of the age. The conference will explore Ford's associations with cosmopolitan and expatriate coteries in the service of building avant-garde networks. The conference particularly encourages re-assessments of Ford's editorial influence on his collaborators: Conrad, Wells, Henry James, Hardy, Bennett, Galsworthy, Pound, Lewis and Lawrence on the *English Review* and Joyce, Hemingway, Stein, Rhys, Williams and E. E. Cummings on the *transatlantic review*. The conference also encourages papers examining the cross-cultural dimensions of Ford's editorship, in terms of literary translation (for example, Constance Garnett's Russian translations), modernist internationalism and expatriate communities.

A volume of IFMFS is planned for 2010 on the theme of Ford as Editor, or Ford and Literary Magazines, to be edited by Jason Harding. For further information or to offer a paper or essay please contact: jasondh90@hotmail.com

Given that Ford was involved with the visual arts as well throughout his life, discussions of visual culture may be included in the Birmingham or Durham conferences, especially where the literary and visual intersect (as in the case of D. G. Rossetti, or Ford's book on him, or the coverage of visual arts in the *transatlantic*). However, scholars wishing to write exclusively on Ford and the visual are better advised to contribute to the conference planned in Italy in 2007:

FURTHER CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CALL FOR PAPERS

Conference: 'Ford Madox Ford: Visual Arts and Media' Genova (European City of Culture 2004), 17-19 September 2007

Guest speakers: A. S. Byatt and Colm Toibin.

A Symposium planned by the Università degli Studi di Genova (Dipartimento di Lingue e Letterature Straniere Moderne), Università degli Studi di Bologna (Dipartimento di Lingue e Letterature Straniere Moderne) and the Ford Madox Ford Society. This conference will be concerned with Ford's lifelong association with painting along with his interest in a wide range of

other media: sculpture, (urban) architecture, craftwork, furniture, photography and early cinema. But also forms of popular entertainment and technologies of all kinds, provided they are used to illuminate strictly visual issues. The aim is to provide a cultural approach to Ford's concern with the image.

Offers of twenty-minute papers on these topics are invited. The conference will be organised by Laura Colombino, who will edit a collection of essays for volume 8 of IFMFS to appear in 2009. Speakers are not required to focus on Ford alone but are encouraged to broaden their analysis to include other authors in a comparative approach. Since the relationship between painting and *The Good Soldier* has already been widely investigated, contributors will be encouraged to focus as much as possible on other fictional and non-fictional works.

Please send the title and 300 word abstract either by email or mail (email preferred) by 10 March 2007 to:

Dr. Laura Colombino, Università degli Studi di Genova, Facoltà di Lingue e Letterature Straniere, Piazza S. Sabina, 2, 16124 Genova, ITALY. laura.colombino@lingue.unige.it

or

Prof. Max Saunders, Department of English, King's College London, The Strand, London WC2R 2LS. max.saunders@kcl.ac.uk

The Society is also planning conferences in France (in 2009) and Germany (in 2010).

Further information about these and other activities will be posted from time to time on the Ford Madox Ford Society website, at: http://www.rialto.com/fordmadoxford_society/

INTERNATIONAL FORD MADOX FORD STUDIES

The fifth volume of International Ford Madox Ford Studies will be published in the autumn of 2006. It is a substantial (290 pages!) and excellent collection on *Ford Madox Ford and Englishness*, edited by Dennis Brown and Jenny Plastow, and includes papers from the December 2004 Manchester conference, as well as a new poem on Ford by John Mole. The mailing list has to be sent to the publishers in August, so please subscribe to the society now for 2006 (if you haven't already!) to be sure of receiving your copy this year. Remember: these volumes are distributed free to members. For further information about IFMFS please go to:

<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/ip/maxsaunders/Ford/IFMFS.htm>

or

<http://www.rodopi.nl/senj.asp?SerieId=IFMFS>

Please note: back numbers can be bought through the Society at the same price as a full UK subscription.

RENEWALS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you have not yet paid your subscription for 2006, but wish to remain a member and to receive a copy of this year's volume of *International Ford Madox Ford Studies*, please don't delay, and send a cheque for the appropriate rate (details below) to either:

Dr Sara Haslam,

Email: S.J.Haslam@open.ac.uk

Department of Literature,
The Open University,
Walton Hall,
Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA, UK.

Tel. 01 908 652 472
Fax 01 908 653 750

Or (if in US\$) to:

Prof. Joseph Wiesenfarth,
Department of English,
University of Wisconsin-Madison,
Helen C. White Hall,
600 North Park Street,
Madison, WI 53706-1475, USA

You may print and send the form below to either of the above addresses:

Ford Madox Ford Society Membership Form	
First Name _____	Last Name _____
Category: Individual <input type="checkbox"/>	Concessions <input type="checkbox"/>
Member Organisations <input type="checkbox"/>	Others <input type="checkbox"/>
Academic institution _____	
Address _____	

Telephone _____	Fax _____
E-Mail _____	
Total Membership Fee Enclosed _____	
Date _____	Signature _____

As explained in previous newsletters, we urge members based in the UK to pay by standing order. This lessens the administrative burden on the Society's officers, and is very easy to set up; all you have to do is to contact your bank and ask that the appropriate amount is paid annually in January to the following account, until further notice:

The Ford Madox Ford Society
HSBC, St. Clement Danes
194 Strand, London WC2R 1DX
Sort Code: 40-06-29 Account no. 21391100

Rates:

Pounds sterling: Individuals: £12; Concessions £6; Member Organisations £17.50

US Dollars: Any category: \$25

**Euros: Individuals: 17 Euros; Concessions 8.5 Euros;
Member Organisations 25 Euros**

Payments in Europe

Please send subscriptions in Euros to:

Dr. Jörg W. Rademacher wegen Ford Madox Ford Society
Account no. 83144500 at Volksbank Münster, Germany
IBAN DE61 4016 0050 0083 1445 00
BIC GENODEM1MSC

To be paid at the start of each year, preferably by standing order.

* * *

If you received this newsletter by mail, but now have an e-mail address, could you please send a message to that effect to: max.saunders@kcl.ac.uk

Any material or ideas for the Ford Madox Ford Society web page or this newsletter would certainly be appreciated. Please note that our intention is to include a list of publications on Ford by Society members. Any information you can provide would be most welcome. Please send this to:

Michela A. Calderaro, Via Amba Aradam, 12, 30173 Mestre-Venice, Italy
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Deadline for Submission of Material for the Newsletter

Summer issue: 30 April
Winter issue: 10 October

This issue of the Newsletter edited by Max Saunders

Ford Madox Ford Society website, at: http://www.rialto.com/fordmadoxford_society/

CONTRIBUTIONS

The editor is grateful to Ashley Chantler for the following three contributions. Readers are invited to submit queries, observations, speculations, trouvailles, etc. pertaining to Ford for inclusion in future issues of the Newsletter.

Another Crux in *The Good Soldier*

In a section describing how Leonora ‘contrived never to let [Edward and Nancy] be alone together, except in broad daylight, in very crowded places’, Dowell says that ‘Florence made the girl go to bed at ten, unreasonable though that seemed to Nancy’ (Norton Critical Edition, p. 89). This is clearly ‘wrong’, in the sense that it was surely Leonora, as the guardian of Nancy and the person who was contriving ‘never to let’ Nancy and Edward ‘be alone together’, who made Nancy ‘go to bed at ten’. It is, however, not necessarily an error on Ford’s part. Ford may have consciously intended that Dowell get the names mixed up. If the novel is considered as a whole, Dowell often makes mistakes. As he says at one point: ‘looking over what I have written, I see that I have unintentionally misled you’ (p. 63). What cannot be argued is that Ford *definitely* intended Dowell to confuse the names. Perhaps Ford ‘unintentionally misled’ us. It is possible to construct convincing arguments for both theories, but that is all they can ever be. Like Dowell, readers and textual editors can never know for certain what other people intend their actions to mean; and perhaps neither did they.

Query

In his letter to John Galsworthy (October 1900), Ford wrote: ‘In the first place what I am striving to get at is: The ultimate reasons of the futile earth / And crawling swarms of men...’ (Richard Ludwig, ed., *Letters*, p. 11).

Do you know the source of the quotation (if it is a quotation)? If so, please let me know.

Hoult’s Hunt

After a recent letter I had published in the *Guardian* (3 June 2006) about a photo of Ford and Violet Hunt, I received a catalogue from Persephone Books (London) advertising a novel by Norah Hoult. *There Were No Windows* (1944) is based ‘on the last years of the writer Violet Hunt, a once-glamorous woman living in Kensington who is now losing her memory’. Julia Briggs (De Montfort University) has written a preface.

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