

# The Routledge Research Companion to Ford Madox Ford



Edited by Sara Haslam, Laura Colombino and Seamus O'Malley

# THE ROUTLEDGE RESEARCH COMPANION TO FORD MADOX FORD

Taking account of Ford Madox Ford's entire literary output, this companion brings together prominent Ford specialists to offer an overview of existing Ford scholarship and to suggest new directions in Ford studies. Readers of the companion are equipped and encouraged to re-approach *The Good Soldier* and *Parade's End*, Ford's best-known fiction, as well as his lesser-known works. *The Routledge Research Companion to Ford Madox Ford* is split into five parts, exploring the scholarly foundations of Ford Madox Ford studies, Ford's literary identity, Ford and place, specific case studies, and themes and critical approaches. Within these five parts, the contributors cover areas relevant to Ford's fiction, nonfiction and poetry, including reception history, life-writing, literary histories, gender, and comedy. *The Routledge Research Companion to Ford Madox Ford* is an invaluable resource for students and scholars of Ford Studies, modernism, and the literary world that Ford helped shape in the early years of the twentieth century.

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THE ROUTLEDGE RESEARCH  
COMPANION TO FORD  
MADDOX FORD

*Edited by Sara Haslam, Laura Colombino and  
Seamus O'Malley*

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# INTRODUCTION

## Ford studies in the twenty-first century: bibliography, criticism, and the gaps on the map

*Sara Haslam*

The aim of this volume is to support the work of current and future generations of scholars by producing an essential *Companion* to survey, review and extend the critical bibliography related to Ford Madox Ford (1873–1939). Ford has long featured in textbooks, literary criticism, period surveys, and monographs, particularly as creator, in his best-known novel *The Good Soldier* (1915), of the quintessentially modernist unreliable narrator John Dowell. For example, Mark Schorer's collection, *Modern British Fiction: Essays in Criticism* (1961), extended and solidified the work he had done on Ford in the fifties and included an essay on 'The Good Soldier and Form' by Richard Cassell. But the years since the publication in 1996 of Max Saunders' essential two-volume biography of Ford, *A Dual Life*, have witnessed a refreshed and more particular attention to a writer who was exceptional in the range of his connections, his literary endeavours, and his publications. The series *International Ford Madox Ford Studies*, published annually since 2002, provides multiple examples of this attention, with volumes devoted to particular themes, issues, or texts, all contextualised in broad terms. Volume 4, for example, *Ford Madox Ford and the City*, explores Ford's representations of real and ideal cities; Volume 6, *Ford Madox Ford's Literary Contacts*, addresses Ford's creative friendships, his most influential reading, and his literary successors; while Volume 13, *Ford Madox Ford's Parade's End: The First World War, Culture and Modernity*, includes work ranging from the soundscape and psycho-geography of Ford's literary war, to Ford and Wyndham Lewis. In 2016, Volume 15 appeared—and the series is now morphing into a journal format. It represents a comprehensive collection of scholarship of both the broad and focused kind, and its illuminating and ground-breaking research is cited regularly throughout this volume. How did Ford studies arrive at this point? What scholarly routes were forged over the last century, and why? How have these critical discussions shaped the existing body of work on Ford? These questions are addressed in this introductory chapter, at the same time as

my overview of Ford's career and reference to key unpublished materials proposes a new conceptual framework for the field.

Ford was an editor, literary mentor, cultural commentator, poet, essayist, and critic as well as a novelist. His cultural reach in the west across the turn of the twentieth century was extraordinary. It spanned, for example, release of *The Queen Who Flew* (1894), a fairy-tale displaying his psycho-literary allegiance to the Pre-Raphaelite world of his grandfather;<sup>1</sup> publication of *The Cinque Ports* (1900), an historical record of the south coast, written while he was steeped in the area's history and tradition; volumes of positively-reviewed art criticism and poetry; writing of war-time propaganda commissioned by C. F. G. Masterman; the first appearance of what became *The Good Soldier* in Wyndham Lewis and Ezra Pound's futurist *Blast*; publication of a series of war novels; and his cultivation of networks of artists in London and Paris as an editor, and in New York as a successful and well-known writer in the 1920s and 30s. Throughout, he worked with and on behalf of aspiring writers, figures as diverse as Joseph Conrad, Jean Rhys, and Ezra Pound. Pulitzer Prize-winner Eudora Welty (1909–2001) captured what she said she knew was 'typical' in 'how [Ford] tried his best to find a publisher for my book of stories all that last year of his life' (Welty 1941: xvii; Harvey 1962: 231).

Many of the critical stories that have resulted—stories about genre, period, influence, and where greatness truly lies—are now visible enough to be assessed both in depth and comparatively. Chapter 2 of this volume, 'Reception', is structured with reference to Ford's relationships with his best-known contemporaries, Henry James, H. G. Wells, and Conrad amongst them; and Ford's modernist aesthetic offers a rich history of comparative analysis to the researcher, as Chapter 9 shows. Chapter 23 reveals the extent of Ford's creative debt to the visual world, as traced in the criticism. This introductory chapter provides a framework for engaging with the volume as a whole in its analysis of the major critical stories and themes as they emerged in the first serious collection of work on Ford, David Dow Harvey's *Bibliography of Works and Criticism*, published in 1962. This was where Ford studies began. The ideas that Harvey captured—ideas about Ford's literary character, his combination of Edwardian and modern credentials, and his influence on twentieth-century literature—are at the root of the critical stories that the *Companion* seeks to tell, through its reference to work published across the globe and up to 2017. Here, I discuss the bibliographical visibility of those critical stories about Ford, and map them according to areas of greater or lesser density. The peaks shift and develop over time and are different in nature: *The Good Soldier* generated one peak in critical attention in 1915 and quite another on republication in 1951, whereas Conrad's death in the mid-twenties provoked personal hostilities that removed focus from the question of art altogether for a while. This chapter also identifies and assesses the reasons for the gaps between the peaks, and explains some key absences: the critical stories that might have emerged if Ford's work had experienced a different publication history, for example, or if more of it had found its way into print.

The chapters that follow narrow the focus, offering detailed engagement with their individual topics by both drilling down into the research history and bringing it up to date. Books on Ford (who was christened Ford Hermann Hueffer) have proliferated since Harvey published, and the critical stories have increased in complexity.

The tight and specific focus of each chapter enables proper attention to this process. Each chapter also suggests avenues that are intended as profitable for future researchers on Ford, modernism, and the broader developments of modern literature.

## Scope

When I was first contacted by a publisher looking to commission a *Research Companion* to Ford, the idea was to produce a volume concentrating on Ford's war writing.<sup>2</sup> The First World War anniversaries were approaching, and Carcanet Press had recently released the first critical editions of *Some Do Not... No More Parades, A Man Could Stand Up*— and *Last Post*, the four novels that became known as *Parade's End*. (This 'exciting event' was advertised by, among others, A. S. Byatt in the *Times Literary Supplement* on 2 December 2011.) The BBC/HBO adaptation of *Parade's End*, scripted by Tom Stoppard, was in preparation. Confirming the commissioning editor's sixth sense about the likely impact of all this on Ford studies, when *Parade's End* was transmitted in the U.K. in August–September, 2012 and the U.S. in February 2013, it generated a notable amount of review comment, and ensured that *The Good Soldier* (1915) had a challenger for the title of Ford's most famous book—though sales of *The Good Soldier* were also bolstered by *Parade's End's* appearance on TV.<sup>3</sup> Two documentary films, a 'Culture Show Special' on Ford, and 'The World of *Parade's End*', were broadcast in the same period on BBC2, and Rupert Edwards's Culture Show gained an audience of 535,000.<sup>4</sup>

Saunders' widely cited collection of Ford's *War Prose* (1999), containing unpublished material in the main, had already helped to provide much of the necessary academic context for reading *Parade's End*. More recently, two volumes of text-focused criticism, one concentrating on biography and history, and the other on psychology, have added valuable material to the tetralogy's bibliography (Chantler and Hawkes 2015, 2016). But Ford didn't publish *Some Do Not... Volume 1 of Parade's End*, until 1924, 32 years after his first novel appeared. The need to understand as fully as possible the emergence of this climactic post-war work seemed to be a crucial consideration regarding the tetralogy, as was its relationship to *The Good Soldier*. To do so, contextualized attention to his earlier writing, and to critical responses to it, was necessary. In addition, I argued in support of my broader concept for the *Companion*, Ford's comparative silence in print in the immediate post-war period becomes apparent only when one compares it with what, and how much, he wrote before it (a process with implications for the critical approach to other soldier-writers 'blocked' until the mid- to late-1920s).

Simultaneous discussions were also taking place about a *Complete Works* project with Oxford University Press, so that Ford's available titles would at some point be joined by other examples of his work, difficult to come by for years. These discussions provided additional impetus to broaden the scope. *The Good Soldier, Parade's End, The Fifth Queen* trilogy, volumes of his poetry, memoir, and war writing, all currently in print, generate a great deal of comment in the criticism, but it is wonderful to anticipate what scholars will make of the artistically riotous *Mister Bosphorus and the Muses* (1923), for example, or the progressive gender politics of *Women and Men* (published as separate essays in 1918 and in book form in 1923).

I was delighted when Seamus O'Malley and Laura Colombino, two highly respected Fordian scholars, agreed to join me on the project, and our final proposal reflected this broader vision. Contributors to the volume therefore extend their analysis and comment to works that feature less in the criticism and are only currently available in copyright libraries: before too long readers and researchers will find these texts more easily in print or in digital form.<sup>5</sup>

The *Research Companion* is organised so that consideration of Ford's first influences, biographical and artistic, opens an early section. Both the nature and effect of the motive force exerted on Ford by his maternal grandfather are now visible in the bibliography, but Harvey had very little to say about this more recent critical trend. (The British historical painter Ford Madox Brown, who acted as Dante Gabriel Rossetti's artistic mentor, took Ford in after the death of his father in 1890.) The 'Literary Identity' section also comprises accounts of Ford's connection with France, his writing of biography and memoir (a biography of Madox Brown was one of his earliest works), his collaboration with Conrad, the development of his style, his work as an editor, his representation of war and history, and his relationship to what is now known as modernism. The chapters in the first, 'Introductory', section, address criticism of Ford's letters, his reception, and the editing of his work, and offer a book history-derived analysis of his career as a writer. Later sections address 'Ford and Place' (city and country); offer 'Case Studies' of key works and Ford's critical writing and poetry; and consider further themes that an overview of his life's work suggests: 'Ford and Gender', 'Ford, Vision, and Media', and 'Ford and Comedy'. The balance in the chapters' narratives between review and research potential is determined by the amount of work that exists on each given topic. For example, 'Ford and War' provides fewer openings for exploring new avenues than 'Ford and Comedy'.

### Harvey's bibliography

Much of the survey work in the chapters which follow originates in David Dow Harvey's *Bibliography of Works and Criticism*. (Harvey in turn acknowledged his indebtedness to fellow American Edward Naumberg's 1948 Ford 'check-list'; Harvey 1962: vii.) The biographers who have published since also express their gratitude to Harvey, who catalogued extant and newly discovered work on Ford in six sections:

- A. Books (including Collaborations and Pamphlets)
- B. Contributions to Books by Other Writers (including Translations by Ford)
- C. Manuscripts, Letters, Miscellanea
- D. Contributions to Periodicals
- E. Periodical Articles about Ford
- F. Books Significantly Mentioning Ford

There are 610 pages of entries in total. Section A is longer than one might imagine (85 pages), as Ford published around 80 books. The generic pattern these books describe through time can be both varied and complex, offering a challenge to any critical

story-teller, even over a limited number of years. The lovely *Rossetti: A Critical Essay on His Art* (1902) (which was sensibly advertised by Duckworth with a backward-looking glance at the author's Pre-Raphaelite credentials) is swiftly followed by *Romance* (1903; a collaboration with Conrad), a volume of poems (*The Face of the Night*, 1904), and the proto-modernist cultural survey *The Soul of London* (1905), before Ford returns to art criticism in *Hans Holbein the Younger* (also 1905). Another extraordinary sequence emerged in the mid-30s: *The Rash Act*, the first of a linked pair of novels about the economic crash set in the U.S., and *It Was the Nightingale*, one of Ford's most important and most quoted books (a memoir of the war years), were both published in 1933, followed by the second novel about the crash (*Henry for Hugh*; 1934), and an illustrated chronicle of life and travel in southern France (*Provence*; 1935). Ford often produced similar series of richly divergent sorts of books, looking for very different readerships. Later bibliographies record no undiscovered published books—more of a possibility than one might imagine, considering that he wrote under pseudonyms as well as various versions of his given name<sup>6</sup>—but they do add considerably to Harvey's section (D), detailing Ford's contribution to periodicals, as the chapter on reception records here.

Harvey remains a fundamental resource, but he missed some key references. My focus in this chapter is not on the detail of what he tells us about reception—that is the task of the later chapter—but on what this foundational text provided in its accounts of that reception to its future critical readers in terms of establishing coherence and giving shape to a burgeoning field. Nearly all the critical stories that emerge in this *Companion* found either a beginning, or a thread to develop or complicate, in Harvey's work. But I also use Harvey to imagine other shapes and tones in Ford studies, meaning that his Bibliography functions as a creative as well as a reference tool in the rest of this chapter.

What Harvey reveals about periodical criticism of Ford (section E) focuses at the outset on reviews. It is notable that the first ten entries—all reviews—cover little more than a year, from October 1891, when Ford was 17, to November 1892, and relate to three different books. The section as a whole (entries 1–1053 over 208 pages) is made up mostly of reviews or articles, or notes on the issue of a particular volume of the *English Review*. A frustrated Hugh Walpole asked as early as 1929 'why doesn't someone write a proper critical article on Ford Madox Ford?' Though Graham Hicks questioned in a six-page piece in the *Bookman* why Ford was being 'ignored by the literary historians'—could it have been for reasons related to the complexity of his *oeuvre*?—Walpole had to be patient for some years to come (Harvey 1962: 384, 389; Ludwig 1965: 190, 195). From 1939 to 1941, periodical comment consisted of obituaries, or literary spats over memories of Ford or the facts of his life. In 1948, Ford's reputation started to gain literary weight and momentum, as a result of Penguin reprints of *The Good Soldier* and the war tetralogy. The Princeton University Library Chronicle issue on Ford provided further, American, stimulus to the bibliography: Schorer's piece published there became the preface to the 1951 edition of *The Good Soldier*, which generated a significantly different critical story from the first edition.

Hugh Kenner and Arthur Mizener, both important figures in Ford's critical life, appeared first in these years, spurred by the appearance of *Parade's End*. This was the

first time the novels were collected, under what was, almost, Ford's chosen title (he suggested it without the apostrophe); the volume was published by Knopf in 1950 (Ludwig 1965: 197). There was talk of a Ford 'revival', in America at least, at this time (Harvey 1962: 447–8; and see Hammond's chapter in this volume). Frank MacShane, who completed his doctoral dissertation on Ford in 1955, also began to publish on him at the time, writing about Ford's 1920s Paris magazine, the *transatlantic review*, in 1960 in the *London Magazine*. He wrote about the Edwardian, London-based *English Review* in 1961. For reasons we shall come back to, it might be considered something of a surprise that MacShane edited a Ford volume in the *Critical Heritage* series just over a decade later, when 38 other volumes in that series were either out or planned.

Non-review critical focus in this section of Harvey falls on *The Good Soldier and Parade's End*, with W.H. Auden, for example, amplifying a 1961 book society choice of *Parade's End* with an essay arguing that Ford was making it clear in these novels that 'World War I was a retribution visited upon Western Europe for the sins and omissions of its ruling class, for which not only they, but the innocent conscripted millions on both sides must suffer' (Harvey 1962: 467). The key characteristic of the critical conversation in the collated texts towards the end of Harvey's time-frame is a widening of subject matter, leading ultimately to broader consideration of Ford's contribution to letters. MacShane argued in the *South Atlantic Quarterly* in 1961 that the *English Review* was the gateway for contemporary literature (Harvey 1962: 470). Textual history and manuscript revision also receive attention, and Richard Cassell's essay in *Modern Philology* (LIX, Nov. 1961, 114–21) wrestles with questions of Ford's editing practice and draws attention to what was a lesser-known novel, *Ladies Whose Bright Eyes*, a time-travel romance published in 1911 and again, revised, in 1935 (Harvey 1962: 472). As the section comes to a close there is a flurry of minor bibliographical study as well as attention to Cassell's book on Ford. Edward Crankshaw's review of the *Bodley Head Ford Madox Ford*, published in the *Observer* on 17 June 1962, praises it along with the recent republications of John Cowper Powys and Italo Svevo and offers the trio's intense (though very different) originality as a reason for their comparative neglect to date. It is a delight, then, to find *Zeppelin Nights* the subject of the final entry, a book that Ford first published with Violet Hunt in 1916, and whose 'variety and suppleness' are admired by Richard Foster in his foreword to 'Stories from *Zeppelin Nights*' (Harvey 1962: 483).

Section F of Harvey, 'Books Significantly Mentioning Ford', is much shorter, numbering 250 titles, and is organised alphabetically by author's surname rather than chronologically. It does not have a book-length critical study to report until 1961, when Richard Cassell's *Ford Madox Ford: A Study of his Novels* was published. Prior to that event, the most dramatic highpoints in this section's bibliographical map are produced by the spikes of animosity and/or memoir in books by Violet Hunt, with whom Ford had a relationship in the early years of the twentieth century, or by Jessie Conrad, in the mid- to late-1920s, by which point there had still been no 'proper critical article' on his work. Conrad's death in 1924 provoked literary debates about the respective shares of Ford and Conrad in their jointly-authored works (and Ford's own book about him, *A Personal Remembrance*, came out that year too). These debates

featured in a range of contemporary texts, such as Jean-Aubry's *Joseph Conrad: Life and Letters* (1927). A couple of years later the catalogue of the George T. Keating collection brought this debate more clearly into focus because of the amount of relevant published and pre-publication manuscript material it contained. Crankshaw's study of Conrad, *Joseph Conrad: Some Aspects of the Art of the Novel*, published in London in 1936, addressed their relationship in a generous spirit, emphasising the art to which they were both in service, but it was published in a context still lively with Jessie Conrad's *Joseph Conrad and His Circle*, which appeared in 1935 and provided, Ford's bibliographer asserts, a 'history of the aggravations caused by Ford's disruption of domestic order in the Conrad household, more antagonistic toward Ford than anything she had previously published' (Harvey 1962: 502). This 'history', and the antagonism, seem entrenched in this section of the bibliography, both reflecting and helping to embed them in the next generation of scholars. Appropriately enough, they receive significant treatment in the 'Reception' chapter in this volume.

When Jocelyn Baines produced *Joseph Conrad: A Critical Biography*, in 1959, a more nuanced, detailed account of the Ford/Conrad relationship began to take shape. He established the line that meeting Ford was the most important event in Conrad's literary career, and it is a line that has challenged the 'hostility' peddlers ever since. Saunders says something very similar about Ford's meeting with Conrad in *A Dual Life*.<sup>7</sup> A trilogy of books by Sisley Huddleston at this time offers an alternative to the Conradian focus: they re-locate Ford to France, treating him in the context of Parisian bohemianism, as does Samuel Putnam in 1947 (Harvey 1962: 534, 189 and see below).

Stella Bowen's memoir, *Drawn From Life: Reminiscences*, was published in the U.K. two years after Ford's death, and its rounded, rather than pointed, agenda set it apart from the personal books by Hunt and Jessie Conrad. (The Australian painter Bowen and Ford were together for ten years after the war and had a daughter, Julia.) More significant in terms of his academic reputation was the 'Homage' published in the States in 1942 following a memorial symposium held at Olivet College. Key names appear there, acknowledging Ford's influence on Caroline Gordon, Katherine Anne Porter, and Edward Naumburg, for example. Naumburg would produce his 'check-list' on Ford six years later. One of the 'clarifications' of Harvey that Saunders offers in his later bibliography relates to Ford's career as a short-story writer, and Porter, like Welty, states clearly her indebtedness to Ford.

New Directions, the publisher of the series in which this Homage appeared, published Pound, whose *Polite Essays* (1937), made a notable though brief intervention in the critical record. Pound dates the 'revolution of the word' to 1908 in London, with Ford as instigator in his radical-editor role, a line that is similar to the one Edgar Jepson takes in his discussion of 1908 in *Memories of an Edwardian* (Harvey 1962: 574, 540). Douglas Goldring produced a raft of books during the 1930s and 40s, including the first detailed biographical treatments of Ford in *South Lodge: Reminiscences of Violet Hunt, Ford Madox Ford, and the English Review Circle* (1943) and *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: The Life and Writing of Ford Madox Ford* (1948). As his titles suggest, Goldring's focus is also the Edwardian years, and earlier, from the perspective of his

role as Ford's sub-editor on the review. At this time there was still also significant critical momentum behind the American/French story, however, in books such as Putnam's in 1947 (*Paris Was Our Mistress: Stories of a Lost and Found Generation*), in which Ford's attraction for Americans, especially 'Midwesterners', whether in Chicago or Paris, was discussed. The release of Pound's and James Joyce's *Letters* (in 1950 and 1957 respectively) also drew attention to Ford's editorial skills in Paris and his influence on American poetry.

### **Bibliographical visibility: the peaks in Harvey's map**

In 1929, Walpole had asked where the proper critical writing was on Ford. Forty years later there was clearly a body of work, but overall a conspicuous lack of coherence to its shape and substance. The peaks in the critical map, however, are clear and the associated bibliographical stories are visible. Harvey's account shows how well the 'English Review Ford' has emerged; 'American Ford' has critical mass, as does the Ford who edited in Paris in the 20s. The Ford who lived a chaotic and sometimes fraught domestic existence and fell out dramatically with his close friends and collaborators, and the increasingly influential author of *The Good Soldier* and *Parade's End* have also been explored in the criticism, and they all feature in this volume. But the relationships between the peaks, and the nature of what happens between them, are harder to chart using Harvey. Identifying the reasons for these characteristic elements of Ford's somewhat fragmented bibliographical map poses less of a challenge, even before the first detailed biographical studies appear. Ford's generic promiscuity, already touched upon, is relevant here, of course. The Routledge line on this promiscuity in the *Critical Heritage* volume in 1972 was that 'Ford suffered greatly from the indifference of the critics of his time' because those critics 'liked categories' and 'did not know whether to call this versatile man a poet, novelist, biographer, topographer, art historian, or writer of fairy stories' (publicity text on the dust-jacket). Well, as Harvey had shown, they still reviewed him, calling him one or more of those things as they did so, but it can be hard to make such a story flow. For critics who disliked what they read, it was, perhaps, rather tempting to ensure that it did not. Hueffer 'is a poet; and for that reason we regret that he should have plunged into the politics of the country', said the *Academy* review of *The Heart of the Country* in 1906 (Harvey 1962: 289), suggesting that Ford was competing against himself when he switched from publishing poetry to cultural criticism, and strait-jacketing him simultaneously. (What if reviews of *Ulysses* had begun with the assertion that Joyce 'is a short-story writer'—or a poet/dramatist for that matter?)

Ford's position in literary history as a 'misfit modern' can be read similarly (Hawkes 2012). He was older than his fellow modernist writers by about a decade and yet displayed a similar propensity for questioning and de-stabilising narrative coherence, most remarkably in *The Good Soldier*. Apparently, he banished narrative coherence from the tale of his career as well. He could not help being nearly 40 as his 'Great Auk's Egg' was gestating within him, a work that would range him again alongside 'les jeunes' he had assumed were all set to replace him. The extent of his interests also

challenged that coherence, however (Ford's books do indeed 'swarm with writers', known and read; Skinner 2007: 17); but economics played a part since he also largely wrote out of desperation for money. The absence of coherence definitely affected the activity of the critical story-teller, whose first duties were to promote, to review and/or to 'place' him. Morton Zabel talked of the complexity of the 'case' when Ford's 'file of eighty books and massive journalism are tackled' in a review in *Nation* in 1949. He listed and summarised the categories of Ford's output, but I quote him here for his view of the effect ten years after Ford's death:

[n]ovels, verse, essays, criticism, memoirs, biographies, travels, histories, sociology, they range from pot-boiling meretriciousness to distinction, the incessant outpourings of a polygraph who apparently wrote something every day of his life from fifteen to sixty-six. Criticism has hardly begun to make something of this vast bulk of print.

(MacShane 1972: 248)

It is not surprising that criticism could not get a handle on him. Later in this chapter I suggest opportunities for story-making, for finding the figures in the carpet that the critics missed.

Crankshaw argued in an important review in 1948 that *The Good Soldier* and *Parade's End* startled the critics as 'evident masterpieces' that were unexpected and could not 'easily be placed'. He was drawing attention to the importance of 'story' to reviewers, and thus to the development of Ford's reputation. But he also emphasises the relationship between Ford's output and historical event, using a striking form of words to express how the war changed Ford's writing. The successful Edwardian writer had gone off to war and had 'never, apparently, come back' (MacShane 1972: 234). When the war began, Ford was working on *The Good Soldier*, and the Wall Street Crash came swiftly after the appearance of the last volume of *Parade's End* (Crankshaw focuses instead on the fact that readers were 'not yet prepared' to read about the war when *Some Do Not...* was published in 1924). Ford's career may have looked disjointed, but it is also true that these major works need analysing in the light of political, cultural, and economic upheavals that affected not only likely subject matter, but also reading practices, publishing decisions and the possibilities open to artists for curating and developing a reputation.

Critics wrote about both key texts (each of which is a Case Study in this volume), of course, although it took time for them to achieve canonical, or quasi-canonical status. Those who tackled *The Good Soldier* in 1915 mainly did so outraged by its immorality, or insensitive timing. (The Norton Critical Edition of the novel provides a good selection of reviews; see Ford 2012: 233–53.) However, Schorer also lamented critics' early inability to read Dowell as a 'dramatized point of view' of the kind explored by Henry James over the previous 25 years; the war seemed to have changed the way in which irony was received (Harvey 1972: 590). Meanwhile, the economic crash meant that the critical momentum created by *Parade's End* towards the end of the 1920s did not culminate in a planned collected edition. It did lead to the worst

poverty Ford had faced in a life that was no stranger to money difficulties (Saunders 1996 (II): 362–7). The impact of his death just before the outbreak of the Second World War on the development of the bibliography is harder to judge (although he did receive attention in the press at this time as discussed above). Later critical interest was certainly spurred by the multi-national strands to his story, in terms of both his heritage and his nomadism; each determined peaks of their own.

One might also interpret the peaks with regard to ‘greatness’. When an author produces as much as Ford did there is a necessary concentration of critical focus; as the ‘Reception’ chapter here also argues, many reviewers were explicit about their identification of greatness in Ford. Graham Greene was straightforward about it in his selection processes for the *Bodley Head Ford Madox Ford* of 1962:

I have chosen for the present selection his finest novel—and perhaps one of the finest novels of our century—*The Good Soldier*, passages from his volumes of reminiscence [...] a few poems, and his historical trilogy *The Fifth Queen* which has never before been published in one volume.

He calls the trilogy a ‘magnificent bravura piece’ and asks rhetorically, ‘[h]as a novel ever before been lit as carefully as a stage production?’ (Ford 1962: 7, 10).

Greatness shifts, however, also problematising the critical story. The Tietjens books, which, Greene initially claims, though ‘remarkable’, ‘do not stand up to the erosion of time so satisfactorily as *The Good Soldier*’, come to form a third and fourth volume for the Bodley Head. (*Last Post* was dramatically cut from the republished version.) Greene repeated the concept of ‘erosion’ in the introduction to Volume 3, this time suggesting that it could be reversed. Only a year after Volume 1 appeared, he believed *Parade’s End* was firmly on the high and solid ground unaffected by time’s ‘dreary work’, along with *The Good Soldier* and *The Fifth Queen* (Ford 1963: 5). Perhaps the revised view was prompted in part by the *Times Literary Supplement*, also busy fixing greatness:

The *Bodley Head Ford Madox Ford* is a good start towards preserving what is permanently valuable from the seventy-odd books Ford wrote [...]. Two further volumes should be added to make this edition include all the best of Ford: *Parade’s End*, and a careful selection of his writing on the craft of fiction.

(Harvey: 1962: 482)

The *TLS* specification leaves a huge number of Ford’s texts languishing, awaiting possible ‘negative erosion’, some of which does transpire later in the century, particularly with regard to the travel writing and semi-autobiographical fiction.

## Ford’s map

Ford himself accepted principles of selection. However much he craved the collected edition that emerged as a real possibility at key points in his career, he rarely showed

hesitation in identifying his best work. He wrote an autobiographical text in the early 1930s, as *It Was the Nightingale* was in preparation. It remains unpublished and in the Cornell archives, but is reproduced here as an important example of Ford's reflective processes with regard to his 'canon':

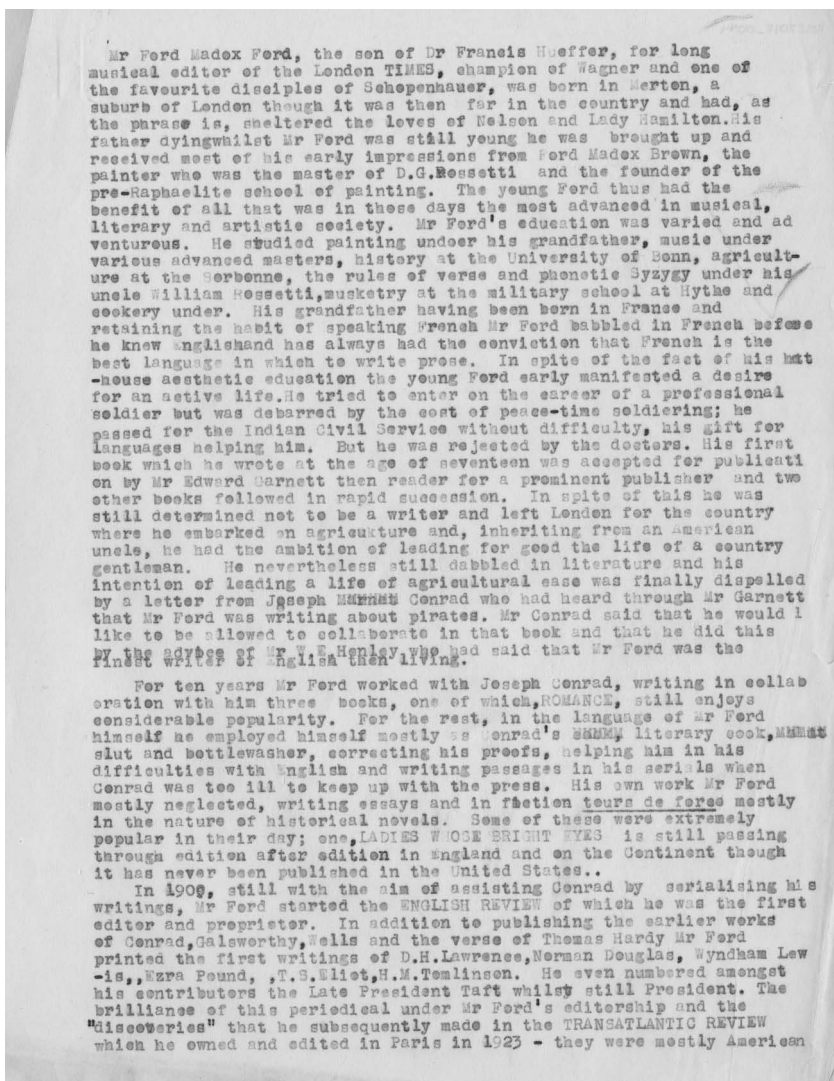


Figure 1.1 Unpublished autobiographical text by Ford

Images by permission of David Higham Associates Limited on behalf of the Estate of Ford Madox Ford. Ford Madox Ford collection, #4605. Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library 2.16.

In the approach to a text that is as dedicated as *It Was the Nightingale* to rebirth (primarily what Ford calls in this memoir the 'staging of a literary come-back' after the war), he works up a short narrative that reads, above all, like a draft obituary. But the point is that it provides a self-generated summary of his career, highlighting certain critical stories and texts—in the main those that are familiar from most treatments in Harvey's bibliographical record. He is establishing his own 'peaks', as well as, more interestingly still, narrating the journeys toward and between them. The idea of

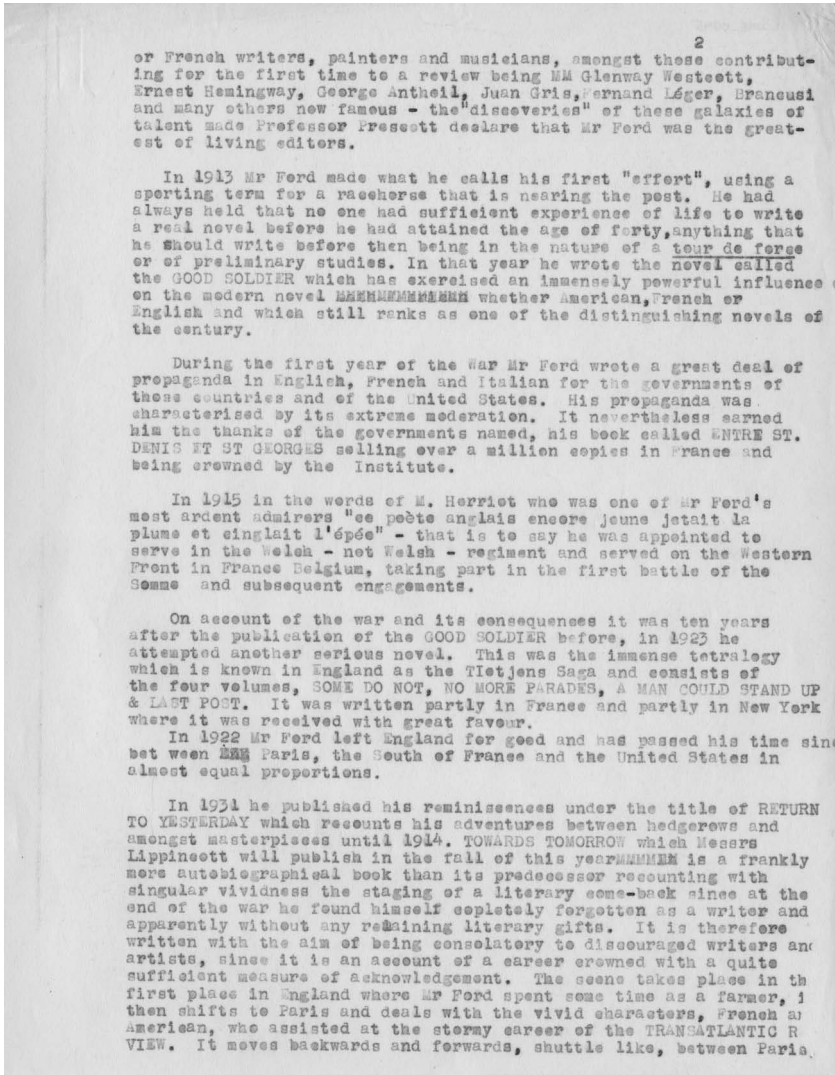


Figure I.1 Continued

collaboration with Conrad, for example, is what breaks his determination *not* to be a writer, despite the early successes he had enjoyed. Once they are working together his own work is 'mostly neglected'. In a similarly human vein, his influence as an editor is stressed: it is the promoting the works of others that he is proud of. *The Good Soldier* is noted as his first real 'effort' but the comment relays firstly its influence and secondly its singularity. This is the essential Ford at work, prioritising collaboration, working on a shared vision, shaping the development of his art rather than resting on any laurels.

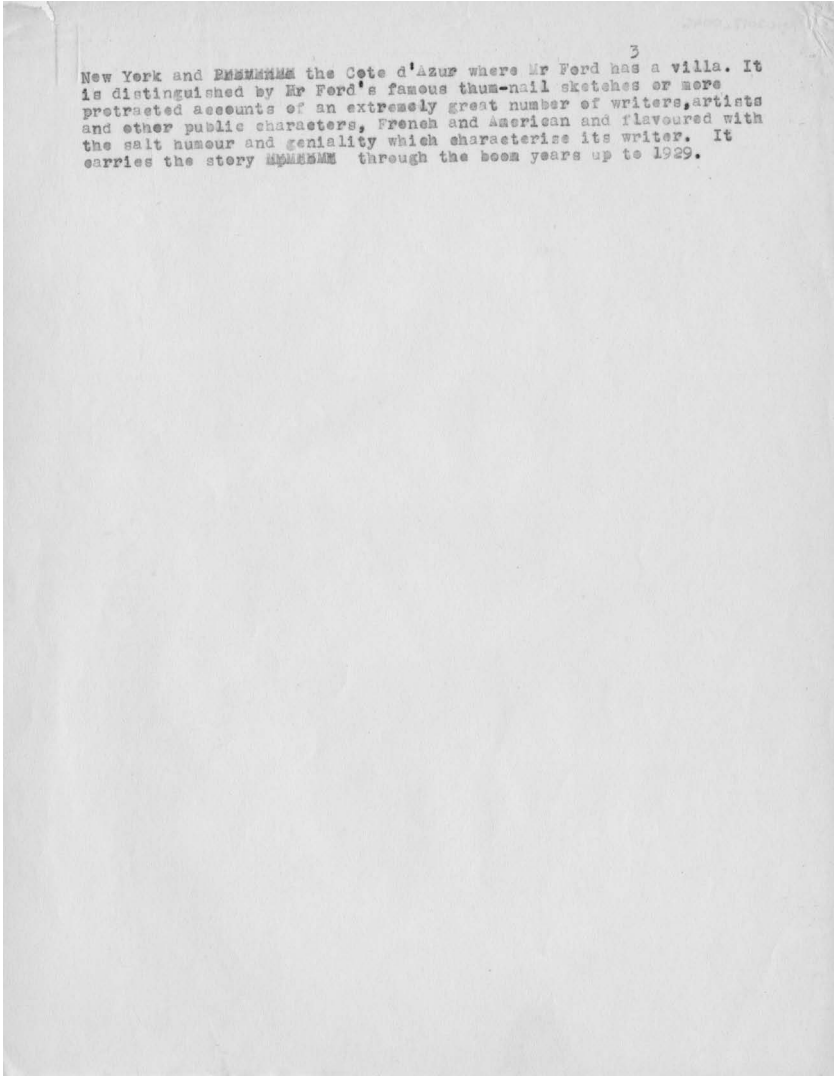


Figure I.1 Continued

His concern for his ‘cumulative activity’ and its ‘contribution to literature generally’ is how the *Encyclopaedia of World Literature in the Twentieth Century* summarises this ‘complete man of letters’ in his approach to his career (Serafin 1999: 130).

The texts that Ford foregrounds are *The Good Soldier, Parade’s End* and a couple of the memoirs—as well as, less predictably perhaps, his propaganda and *Ladies Whose Bright Eyes. The Fifth Queen* is not selected for emphasis in this version of his own critical map (it was also absent from a list he drew up for his agent Ralph Pinker for a proposed collected edition in 1929 (Saunders 1996 (II): 362)). Equally surprising is the omission of his poetry. Harriet Monroe and Pound, among others, formed the critical opposition to erosion in this respect, as Ashley Chantler’s chapter in this volume points out.

In the same text Ford draws attention to another important factor when reading these peaks: geography. His post-war literary re-birth is clearly located in France and New York, as is *Parade’s End’s* reception, by which time Ford had ‘left England for good’. The significance of his incessant movement (he had passed his time since 1922 ‘between Paris, the South of France and the United States’), and the movement of the criticism behind him, is clearly discernible in the critical record. The American Ford, or the Parisian Ford, might be all that can receive treatment in anything less than a book-length study, unless perhaps the book is concerned with American literary life in Paris. This movement was creative to him, inspirational, regenerative. But it is tempting to suggest that some of the gaps in the critical story are accompanied by the sound of a reputation being stretched as far as it can before disappearing into the Atlantic (or the Channel) with a splash. Robert Lowell wrote in 1966 that ‘when I knew Ford in America, he was out of cash, out of fashion and half out of inspiration, a half-German, half-English exile in love with the French, and able to sell his books only in the United States’ (MacShane 1972: 264). Ford is still thought of as an American author by some. If literary histories are constrained by national borders, Ford’s story poses an even greater challenge than Joyce’s, say, or Pound’s, and one that Harvey’s bibliography cannot surmount.

### **Threads and through-lines: the letters to Elsie**

Before I conclude by addressing more recent bibliographies of Ford, and his archival after-lives, there is a further aspect of his writing that is relevant to the interpretation and development of his bibliography. The prevalent theme of fragmentation that emerges in the discussion of genre, geography and political event is significantly altered when his letters are treated as a prominent part of his output and, as the chapter on his letters in this volume records in more detail, most of Ford’s are still unpublished.

Among those that remain unpublished are letters that provide the most illuminating linking thread or through-line in a consideration of Ford’s career. An edition of Ford’s letters which is more representative of his life and expression is urgently needed to facilitate the work of Fordian researchers in this respect. The one general edition currently available (Ludwig: 1965) begins with three letters to the publisher’s reader, Edward Garnett, in the 1890s. It includes no examples of the letters he wrote to his

wife Elsie, whom he married in 1894, and with whom he worked, read, and wrote, especially in the early years of their marriage. His early letters to her, personal and emotionally over-wrought though they sometimes were, carry much evidence of his artistic development and focus, and of his life as a father to Christina and Katharine, his first two daughters, as well as demonstrating how attentive he was to notions of a broadly artistic life. The fact that no subsequent editor has included letters to Elsie (Sondra Stang's *Reader* included 60 unpublished letters, but none to her) has meant that the context of his writing life is missing a rich vein of understanding—which cannot yet be rectified in the bibliography.

The lack of any published examples of his letters to Christina and Katharine when they were small and the resultant gap in the record as to Ford's identity as a father is also significant, and is addressed here in Chapter 1. The full extent of his connections with other writers—from James, Conrad, and Wells in the earlier examples, to Jean Rhys, Ernest Hemingway, and Gertrude Stein later on—will also be revealed in a complete edition of his letters. However, the early letters to Elsie are most important when forming an overview of his career. Considering them helps to make sense of the critical map because of the career-long thread they provide, regarding collaboration in particular, and, in a different way, because of the context they create for considering the range and reach of his literary output.

In the autobiographical unpublished text reproduced here, the most impressive line for this reader relates Ford's recollection of his determination not to be a writer despite an early book deal. Equally striking is Ford's declaration that the prospect of collaboration was *the* critical factor in his professional leap into words. The spirit of collaboration, imbibed in his grandfather's studio, was almost as old as he was: breadth of vision, the freedom to work alongside fellow artists, and to move with and support a new and different current, were fundamental to his conception of himself as someone who would follow a creative path, and produce one. Writing was about community to Ford, and about humanity; it was a way of expressing his general enthusiasm for the artistic life. Writing was a contribution to a long-running conversation, as well as an explicit commitment to that artistic life—which could easily have taken other forms—and did before he settled to the pen. Writing was also forced on him by the need to make money to support a growing family once Christina and Katharine were born but, prior to that, it was an overflow of personality, proof of belief in what he would later call a republic of letters. Garnett gossiping to Conrad about Ford and pirates brought the collaborators together, Ford says, for ten writing years: a triangulated conversational spark strong enough to call him into words and make him stay there. Even more than the literary partnership with Conrad, so powerfully recorded in his memoir about him (and the subject of Gene M. Moore's chapter in this volume), the early letters from Ford to Elsie illustrate the degree to which his writing was inseparable from his lived experience, or, to put it another way, the degree to which that sense of lived experience depended on its being represented and shared in words, the genre of which was almost immaterial.

Later on, his collaborative drive played out in his support of other writers, younger writers. Pound felt its full and generous force. Ford invested both time

and extraordinary amounts of energy in others' projects and in their battles, triangulating the conversation once again. It was collaboration in adversity that was both his earliest experience of writing and his earliest experience of fighting to be free to write; he was certainly on most familiar ground when in its recognised environment. This essential creative (sometimes combative) and editorial conversation developed along with his career, but was always present to some degree or other. And so Stang's conclusion to the collection of unpublished letters in her *Reader* does make perfect sense. It also takes us full circle to where this discussion began. Four letters to Eudora Welty from New York bring the *Reader* to a close. In the first, Ford was responding to Katherine Anne Porter's recommendation of Welty's short stories. In the second he expressed his admiration and offered his help. In the third he suggested a publisher. In the fourth he gave her the bad news and suggested a shift to the novel form, thereby bypassing the 'public distaste' for the short story. He sent her his European address, and closed 'hoping so much that you will have good luck with Knopf' (Stang 1987: 510–12). He died a month later in France. What I am suggesting, therefore, is that anyone who looks for the through-lines in Ford in anything as obvious as genre, or national tradition, is simply missing the point.

### Later bibliographies—evidence of closing the gaps?

Ford's bibliography was not significantly developed until Saunders published 'Ford Madox Ford: Further Bibliographies' in *English Literature in Transition* in 2000, work which, he explained, 'clarifies and revises the picture of Ford's career presented by Harvey, rather than transforming it' (Saunders 2000: 132). Saunders was able to take advantage of the assembly of the Ford collection at the Carl A. Kroch Library, at Cornell, a body of work he describes as 'uncovered' even if it was not yet in print. As he notes (134, n. 2), the special Ford issue of *Antaeus*, edited by Sondra J. Stang in 1986, included some bibliographical work, by Linda Tamkin and Rita Malencyk, covering the years 1962–1985.<sup>8</sup> Michael Longrie contributed a short bibliography to *Contemporary Literature*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 'Ford Madox Ford and the Arts', edited by Joseph Wiesenfarth and published in 1989. Longrie's 'Dissertations' section, an addition to Harvey's structure, listed only 12 theses with significant reference to Ford and all but one were written in the United States. One of the most significant elements of Saunders' *ELT* bibliography is its evidence of the dissertation 'boom'. He lists 144 (with around 110 produced in the U.S. or Canada): a clear sign of Ford's increasingly central presence on university syllabi. Many of the authors would go on to produce the books listed in the adjacent section.

Caroline Gordon's brief but significant book on Ford, *A Good Soldier* (1963), followed swiftly on the heels of Paul L. Wiley's *Novelist of Three Worlds* (1962). The University of California, Gordon's publisher, backed another publication immediately, by Richard Lid (*Ford Madox Ford: The Essence of His Art*). The books devoted to Ford are starting to gather momentum, the bibliography shows, and all are

American. MacShane's *Life and Works* led up to Mizener's biography, published in 1971. MacShane continued Harvey's work compiling the critical record in his *Critical Heritage* in 1972; there were three further American books in the seventies, including the first by Sondra J. Stang (*Ford Madox Ford*, 1977). Group portraits became more popular in the 80s, in books by Nicholas Delbanco and Paul Armstrong, and this institutes a brief trend in approaching Ford as a collaborator, either with Conrad, or in more general, discursive terms. The letters that appeared in 1965 (Ludwig), and 1982 (Lindberg-Seyersted's *Pound/Ford* included some complete letters) supported further biographical treatment, by Thomas Moser (1980) and Alan Judd (1990). Not long after, we see the first work by the most significant Ford scholar of the twentieth century. Saunders edited an issue of *Agenda* (Winter 1989/Spring 1990) devoted to Ford—and gradually thereafter elaborated a critical story rooted on the U.K. side of the Atlantic until the series he inaugurated, *International Ford Madox Ford Studies*, formed what Ford might have recognized as a suitably international forum, a veritable republic of the field.

More recently, Saunders has been compiling a new bibliography of Ford and has uncovered a number of items missed by Harvey, as the 'Reception' chapter here details. The story has become much more varied since 2000, and the bibliography on the Ford Madox Ford Society website ([www.fordmadoxfordsociety.org/](http://www.fordmadoxfordsociety.org/)), indicates the variety and span of current reception and criticism of his work.

This *Research Companion* is published at a time when Ford's place in the history of twentieth-century literature is more secure than ever before. And yet, as this chapter has shown and as the chapters which follow display in a range of different ways, there are many more critical stories to find, and tell. Stories about gender and collaboration, for example, or publishing history, or the comedy of *The Good Soldier*, or the extent of Ford's literary networks, or his letters, or the postmodernist qualities of his writing, will all help to generate twenty-first century research on Ford Madox Ford. The creative conception of a trans-national, trans-generic and collaborative Republic of Letters—the truest Fordian story—operates at a meta-level throughout.

### Ford in the archives

Each of the chapters in the *Companion* note the publication history of the key texts they cite. The 'Editing Ford' chapter gives an overview of the print life of Ford's texts and provides details about the projected *Complete Works* project. Researchers working on Ford will probably already know that his manuscripts and papers no longer in private hands are mainly held in American libraries. The largest single collection is in the Carl A. Kroch Library's Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections at Cornell. There, in 37.8 linear feet of shelving, are autograph manuscripts, correspondence, typescripts, bound manuscripts, photographs, and clippings. (All the manuscript images in this volume were taken in the Cornell archives.) This impressive collection was assembled from 1964 onward with what Cornell calls the 'encouragement and assistance of Prof. Arthur Mizener'. The Biala papers were

placed on loan there while he was working on his biography in the 1960s, and were bought in 1973. Papers belonging to Julia Madox Loewe, Ford and Stella's daughter, were acquired in 1964 (although Ford's and Bowen's correspondence was a later purchase); papers belonging to Katharine Hueffer Lamb were purchased in 1980; and papers belonging to Ford's grandson, Julian Loewe, were purchased in 1988, the catalogues states, 'with funds provided by Jon Lindseth, members of the Cornell University Library Associates, and other donors'.<sup>9</sup> The other significant collection of materials for those working on Ford, the Violet Hunt papers, had been purchased by Cornell in 1961.

Mizener acknowledges Edward Naumburg, a 'fellow Princetonian', in his biography, along with the papers in his possession at that time: 'the best private collection of Ford materials' (xi). The 'Naumburg Collection of Ford Madox Ford' is now part of the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library, and contains some important letters, a few manuscripts and typescripts, and samples of proofs for the *transatlantic review*. Along with the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University, which holds, for example, nine folders of correspondence with Conrad (1898–1924), this represents the other significant collection of Ford and will be of most interest to the researcher. Those based on the U.K. side of the Atlantic will also find relevant material in the House of Lords record office. The Stow Hill papers there, so named for Ford's sister's family (Juliet married David Soskice in 1902—their son Frank became Home Secretary, and later Lord Stow Hill), contain Madox Brown and Hueffer family papers, and include letters from Ford to his mother and some of his early manuscripts in both poetry and prose. (The House of Lords Record Office Review of the Year 1996, published online, notes the loan of manuscripts that year to the Ford exhibition at Senate House, London.)

The available critical editions of Ford's work, as well the biographies, between them provide comprehensive accounts of how Ford managed the writing process, including the production and storage of drafts.

### **This volume**

The earliest conversations about the *Research Companion* were conducted between universities in Milton Keynes, London, and Amsterdam, and I am grateful to Max Saunders and Gene M. Moore for their comments and suggestions.

The editorial team triangulated the project more dramatically—and in keeping with the geography of Ford's own literary identity—between the U.K., the U.S., and continental Europe. Ford's 'republic' is, of course, wider-reaching still. (Post Brexit this fact seems worth emphasising.) Contributors to the volume are drawn from Australia, France, Italy, the Netherlands, North America, and the U.K. I have learned that in 2015 multiple digital versions of my 2002 monograph on Ford were downloaded in India, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, and Singapore, and, as I write, the Ford Society is in touch with a PhD student in China beginning work on Ford. Laura, Seamus and I wish her luck, and look forward to news of her progress.

## Notes

- 1 This story has been re-published in a collection of Victorian fairy tales edited by Michael Newton (Newton 2015). Ford is described on the dust-jacket as an ‘author central to the nineteenth-century canon’.
- 2 Ann Donohue, at Ashgate, was the original commissioning editor. The project became a Routledge Research Companion during production.
- 3 The Wordsworth Classics edition of the novel (2010) had sold 4,200 copies by June 2011; the figure was 12,001 in October 2012 and the title was on the publisher’s ‘Top 10 Best-sellers’ list.
- 4 ‘The World of *Parade’s End*’ transmitted on 24 August 2012, and the ‘*Culture Show*’ on 1 September.
- 5 See eBooks@Adelaide where many of Ford’s books, especially the earlier ones, are currently available in full-colour facsimiles.
- 6 Ford published under the names Ford H. Madox Hueffer and Ford Madox Hueffer before he changed his name to Ford in 1919. Pseudonyms include Hermann Ritter, Fenil Haig and Daniel Chaucer (see Saunders (1996: I. 63) for a full list).
- 7 ‘It was to prove the crucial event in both men’s literary lives’ (Saunders 1996: I. 00).
- 8 Philip Ruthen’s 20-page ‘partially annotated bibliography of Ford Madox Ford, 1970–1988’, originally completed as part of an MA at the University of Warwick and intended to demonstrate interest in Ford since Tamkin’s work, became available in 2017 as a Kindle E-Edition by PalmidiPress.
- 9 See the Cornell catalogue entry at <https://newcatalog.library.cornell.edu/catalog/2094827>

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- (2010 [1924]) *Some Do Not...*, Max Saunders (ed.), Manchester: Carcanet.
- (2011 [1925]) *No More Parades*, Joseph Wiesenfarth (ed.), Manchester: Carcanet.
- (2011 [1926]) *A Man Could Stand Up*—, Sara Haslam (ed.), Manchester: Carcanet.
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Chronological list of Ford’s books (place of publication is London unless otherwise stated; U.S. editions are cited when they are first/only publications or are differently titled):

- The Brown Owl* (T. Fisher Unwin, 1891)  
*The Feather* (T. Fisher Unwin, 1892)  
*The Shifting of the Fire* (T. Fisher Unwin, 1892)  
*The Questions at the Well* (Digby, Long, 1893)

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- The Queen Who Flew* (Bliss, Sands & Foster, 1894)  
*Ford Madox Brown* (Longmans, Green, 1896)  
*The Cinque Ports* (Blackwood and Sons, 1900)  
*Poems for Pictures* (John MacQueen, 1900)  
*The Inheritors*, with Joseph Conrad (William Heinemann, 1901)  
*Rossetti* (Duckworth, 1905)  
*Romance*, with Joseph Conrad (Smith Elder, 1903)  
*The Face of the Night* (John MacQueen, 1904)  
*The Soul of London* (Alston Rivers, 1905)  
*The Benefactor* (Brown, Langham, 1905)  
*Hans Holbein* (Duckworth, 1905)  
*The Fifth Queen* (Alston Rivers, 1906)  
*The Heart of the Country* (Alston Rivers, 1906)  
*From Inland and Other Poems* (Alston Rivers, 1907)  
*The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood* (Duckworth, 1907)  
*Privy Seal* (Alston Rivers, 1907)  
*England and the English*—the one-volume edition of *The Soul of London, The Heart of the Country and the Spirit of the People* (New York: McClure, Phillips, 1907)  
*An English Girl* (Methuen, 1907)  
*The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood* (Duckworth, 1907)  
*The Fifth Queen Crowned* (Eveleigh Nash, 1908)  
*Mr. Apollo* (Methuen, 1908)  
*The 'Half Moon'* (Eveleigh Nash, 1908)  
*A Call* (Chatto & Windus, 1910)  
*The Portrait* (Methuen, 1910)  
*Ancient Lights and Certain New Reflections* (Chapman and Hall, 1911); American first edition  
*Memories and Impressions: A Study in Atmospheres* (Harper & Brothers, 1911)  
*Ladies Whose Bright Eyes* (Constable, 1911)  
*The Critical Attitude* (Duckworth, 1911)  
*High Germany* (Duckworth, 1912)  
*The Young Lovell* (Chatto & Windus, 1913)  
*This Monstrous Regiment of Women* (suffragette pamphlet, no publisher stated, 1913)  
*Mr. Fleight* (Howard Latimer, 1913)  
*Henry James* (Martin Secker, [1914] though dated '1913')  
*The Good Soldier* (John Lane, 1915)  
*When Blood is Their Argument* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1915)  
*Between St. Dennis and St. George* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1915)  
*Zeppelin Nights*, with Violet Hunt (John Lane, 1915)  
*Thus to Revisit* (Chapman & Hall, 1921)  
*The Marsden Case* (Duckworth, 1923)  
*Women & Men* (Paris: Three Mountain Press, 1923)  
*Mister Bosphorus and the Muses* (Duckworth, 1924)  
*Some Do Not...* (Duckworth, 1924)  
*The Nature of a Crime*, with Joseph Conrad (Duckworth, 1924)  
*Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance* (Duckworth, 1924)  
*No More Parades* (Duckworth, 1925)  
*A Mirror to France* (Duckworth, 1926)  
*A Man Could Stand Up*—(Duckworth, 1926)  
*New York is Not America* (Duckworth, 1927)  
*New York Essays* (New York: William Edwin Rudge, 1927)  
*Last Post* (Duckworth, 1928)  
*A Little Less Than Gods* (Duckworth, 1928)

*The English Novel* (Constable, 1930)  
*No Enemy* (New York: Macaulay, 1929)  
*Return to Yesterday* (Victor Gollancz, 1931)  
*When the Wicked Man* (Jonathan Cape, 1932)  
*The Rash Act* (Jonathan Cape, 1933)  
*It Was the Nightingale* (William Heinemann, 1934)  
*Henry for Hugh* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1934)  
*Provence* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1935)  
*Vive le Roy* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1936)  
*Collected Poems* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1936)  
*Great Trade Route* (George Allen & Unwin, 1937)  
*Portraits from Life* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1937); U.K. first edition *Mightier Than the Sword* (George Allen & Unwin, 1938)  
*The March of Literature* (George Allen & Unwin, 1939)

*International Ford Madox Ford Studies* volumes (published by Rodopi until 2013, and by Brill thereafter):

*Ford Madox Ford: A Reappraisal*, Vol. 1, eds Robert Hampson and Tony Davenport (2002)  
*Ford Madox Ford's Modernity*, Vol. 2, eds Robert Hampson and Max Saunders (2003)  
*History and Representation in Ford Madox Ford's Writings*, Vol. 3, ed. Joseph Wiesenfarth (2004)  
*Ford Madox Ford and the City*, Vol. 4, ed. Sara Haslam (2005)  
*Ford Madox Ford and Englishness*, Vol. 5, eds Dennis Brown and Jenny Plastow (2006)  
*Ford Madox Ford's Literary Contacts*, Vol. 6, ed. Paul Skinner (2007)  
*Ford Madox Ford: Literary Networks and Cultural Transformations*, Vol. 7, eds Andrzej Gasiorek and Daniel Moore (2008)  
*Ford Madox Ford and Visual Culture*, Vol. 8, ed. Laura Colombino (2009)  
*Ford Madox Ford, Modernist Magazines and Editing*, Vol. 9, ed. Jason Harding (2010)  
*Ford Madox Ford, France and Provence*, Vol. 10, eds Dominique Lemarchal and Claire Davison-Pégon (2011)  
*Ford Madox Ford and America*, Vol. 11, eds Sara Haslam and Seamus O'Malley (2012)  
*The Edwardian Ford Madox Ford*, Vol. 12, eds Laura Colombino and Max Saunders (2013)  
*Ford Madox Ford's Parade's End: The First World War, Culture, and Modernity*, Vol. 13, eds Ashley Chantler and Rob Hawkes (2014)  
*Ford Madox Ford's The Good Soldier: Centenary Essays*, Vol. 14, eds Max Saunders and Sara Haslam (2015)  
*Ford Madox Ford's Cosmopolis: Psycho-geography, Flânerie and the Cultures of Paris*, Vol. 15, eds Alexandra Becquet and Claire Davison (2016)

## PART I

# Scholarly foundations



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# 1

# FORD'S LETTERS

*Sara Haslam and Max Saunders*

## **Introduction**

Ford's letters are undoubtedly the single element of his oeuvre most in need of editorial attention. This is not only because the volume of his selected letters, edited by Richard Ludwig, appeared more than 50 years ago and reproduces just over one tenth of the correspondence now available to view in research libraries across the U.S. and U.K. It is also because, in the absence of diaries or journals, Ford's letters offer the most complete picture of his everyday life and experience, of his comparative physical and emotional well-being and that of his close relationships, and of his reading, writing, and networking habits from early in his extraordinary life to its end. Stella Bowen thought Ford seemed to have had multiple lives by the time she met him in 1918, because of what he had done, written, and lived through, but also because of the deep literary relationships he cultivated, each of which transformed the development of his creative energies, and in turn that of twentieth-century literature. Those relationships are made manifest across series of letters of which several still remain largely unpublished. Furthermore, Ford's prolific letters to Elsie, with whom he eloped in 1894, remain unrepresented in any collection. An equally significant gap in the scholarly record relates to his written communications to his first two daughters, Christina and Katharine. This chapter begins the work of closing these gaps.

The chapter initially sets out where Ford's letters can currently be found in print. Although Ludwig's remains the sole volume dedicated to Ford's epistolary output, there are several others that collect examples of both sides of a significant literary relationship (Ford's with Ezra Pound, for example), or a romantic one (with Stella Bowen or Janice Biala). Furthermore, edited collections of letters by prominent figures to whom Ford wrote frequently provide evidence of more of his letters to them, and their substance, than are currently in print. Joseph Conrad is a particular case in point.

Biographies of Ford sometimes quote extensively from his letters, and occasionally provide whole texts. This chapter offers an account of all of these sources, as well as providing researchers with information about both the archival and private/personal collections of Ford's letters that are known to exist. Following discussion of notable gaps in the scholarly record as to Ford's epistolary relationships, the chapter's final aim is to indicate related and additional areas that will be profitable for future researchers to explore, as well as to provide an indication of the direction of travel in the project to publish more of Ford's letters in critically edited form.

### **Published collections and library collections**

These are listed below, and then considered in more detail. The discussion provides an overview of the correspondents, dates and places involved, the kind of subject matter covered and the contribution each new collection has made to Ford scholarship. What are the letters that Ford scholars know well? Where do they feature in biographical and critical accounts? What unpublished gems remain? Such questions are addressed in what follows.

#### ***Published collections***

- Richard M. Ludwig, ed. (1965), *Letters of Ford Madox Ford*, Princeton University Press, 335 pp.
- Brita Lindberg-Seyersted, ed. (1982), *Pound/Ford: The Story of a Literary Friendship*, Faber, 222 pp.
- Sondra Stang, ed. (1986), *The Ford Madox Ford Reader*, Carcanet, 515 pp.
- Sondra J. Stang and Karen Cochran, eds (1992), *The Correspondence of Ford Madox Ford and Stella Bowen*, Indiana University Press, 479 pp.
- Brita Lindberg-Seyersted, ed. (1999), *A Literary Friendship: Correspondence Between Caroline Gordon and Ford Madox Ford*, University of Tennessee Press, 116 pp.
- Janis and Richard Londrville, eds (1990), 'A Portrait of Ford Madox Ford: Unpublished Letters from the Ford-Foster Friendship', *English Literature in Transition* 33:2, 180–207.
- Janis and Richard Londrville, eds (2001), *Dear Yeats, Dear Pound, Dear Ford: Jeanne Robert Foster and Her Circle of Friends*, Syracuse University Press, 288 pp.
- Paul A. Bartlett (1941), 'Letters of Ford Madox Ford', *SRL*, 24.

#### ***Biographical accounts of Ford***

The full-length biographies of Ford all quote from Ford's letters, as do others' memoirs.

#### ***Other writers' letters***

*The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, ed. Laurence Davies et al., 9 volumes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983–2007). This series includes the largest number

of letters from another major writer to Ford (apart from those in *Pound/Ford*, above), reflecting Ford's decade of close friendship and collaboration with Conrad. Douglas Goldring's *The Last Pre-Raphaelite* (1948), has a chapter titled 'Letters from Henry James' which includes examples of James's letters to Ford and his wife Elsie.

### ***Published collections***

#### *Letters of Ford Madox Ford* (1965)

In his introduction to the volume, Ludwig admits that only a 'skeletal biography' is provided by his letters and that the 'lacunae' are 'numerous and patent' (viii). The letters Ludwig has reproduced nonetheless provide an important introduction to major Fordian themes and relationships in each of the volume's three sections. These cover all of his professional life, starting from after his dramatic elopement and marriage, but are heavily weighted towards his last decade (inevitably so, when so many of the earlier letters were still in private hands, and when Ludwig had to rely on Ford's carbon copies of letters then in Janice Biala's possession). Part I ('1894–1918 London, Kent, the War') may not begin with Ford's earliest known letter, sent at the age of nine to his grandfather Ford Madox Brown in 1883, but it reveals the slow construction of an Edwardian author communicating with fellow writers (John Galsworthy and H.G. Wells, for example), agents and publishers. It also includes many familiar letters written to Conrad, and Lucy and C.F.G. Masterman during the First World War. In Part II ('1919–1928 Sussex, Paris, New York') the frame of geographical reference stretches more widely. Ford left England and edited the *transatlantic review* in Paris in this period. His first prize was awarded, by the American *Poetry* magazine, in 1921. Part III, the longest section of the volume ('1929–1939 New York, Toulon, Olivet') begins with a July letter to literary agent Bernice Baumgarten, and charts the effect of the Wall Street Crash on a career that had reached its apex in New York in the years when *Parade's End* was published (1924–1928). Never-realised plans for a Collected Edition, for which Ford fervently hoped, still feature implicitly as well as explicitly across these letters to publishers, agents and fellow writers. His evident frustrations—'What has happened to WHEN THE WICKED MAN?' he asked T.R. Smith at Horace Liveright in March 1931 (199)—do not erode his life-long desire to support others' careers. Many of these letters relate to the *Testimonial* to Pound Ford assembled in the early 30s, to herald publication of the *Cantos*. Two letters to Julie, Ford's third daughter, are included in this final section of the edition. As a final note on this collection, scholars are also directed to Stang's more accurate transcription of some important letters, including war-time ones to Conrad (1981: 170–8).

#### *Pound/Ford: The Story of a Literary Friendship* (1982)

This detailed account of a 'literary friendship' covers the period from 1909 to 1938 and includes extracts from many letters, including the 'earliest extant', from Pound

to Ford in November, 1909. Next to Conrad, Pound was Ford's longest and most significant literary friend, and yet the researcher armed only with Ludwig's selection of his letters would have no idea of the importance of these two men in Ford's life. Lindberg-Seyersted's essential companion volume includes reviews as well as letters, which between them reconstruct the relationship between these two central conspirators in the 'revolution of literary modernism' (Saunders 1996: I. 77); the reviews often read more like letters communicating directly and immediately between the writers (in the *Piccadilly Review*, for example, in 1919: see Lindberg-Seyersted 29–30). Their joint and individual strategies with publishers and editors feature throughout the volume and are well-demonstrated in the exchange with F.S. Flint in 1921 over the idea to produce a joint 'Flint-Pound-Ford' statement on Imagisme (50). 'Contacts', as the chapters are called, do not refer only to those between Pound and Ford, but also to those between them and whomever else is the object of their request, current strategy, or ire. Ford's letters amply reveal the range of his literary connections and the amount of energy he devoted to shaping the course of literature in the pre-war world in particular.

Ford reviewed Pound, edited him, supported his career when he could, asked him for money when his bank account was foundering, regaled him with tales of woe (he cut the top off his thumb in November 1932 and told Pound all about it—he was working on the Testimonial pamphlet at the same time) for thirty years. In 1938 these letters show he was lobbying to create a position for Pound at Olivet College, and, in a poignant act considering his early and highly influential review, also seeking permission to quote extensively from *Cathay* in *The March of Literature*.

#### *The Ford Madox Ford Reader* (1986)

This introductory selection of Ford's writing included 60 previously unpublished letters (465–512). None is to Pound (the volume appeared only four years after *Pound/Ford*), but his women correspondents are more prominently represented here than in Ludwig's selection. The first four are examples of Ford's early letters to Olive Garnett—an important figure in Ford's twenties—and in the first two he offers some detailed comments on her current work in manuscript, including the suggestion to 'go cold-bloodedly thro' the m.s. and erase the definitely erotic expressions' because 'they jar a little' (467). The collection includes the full text of an often-quoted letter to John Lane, the publisher of *The Good Soldier*, in which Ford describes the novel as a 'serious analysis of the polygamous desires that underlie all men' (477). Examples from the 1920s to his agent W.A. Bradley provide a more complete account of the publication history of *Parade's End*, and a 1935 letter to a book columnist on the *New York Herald-Tribune* describes Ford's current reading in formidable detail (500–1).

#### *The Correspondence of Ford Madox Ford and Stella Bowen* (1992)

Stang's interest in Ford's writing and career was revealed once more in her editing of a volume of letters that has come to be held in great affection by scholars. Ford and

Bowen first met in 1917, and the couple set up home together in the Sussex countryside after Ford left the army in 1919. (The letters betray the emotional complexities of this apparently simple act in their treatment of Ford's relationship with Violet Hunt, whom he had abandoned for Stella.) The volume includes letters between the couple, and between Ford and their daughter Julie, up until the month before he died. The intense domesticity of which Ford was capable is evident in many of these letters, as is his propensity to become embroiled in complex and painful affairs. By the end of 1927, Ford and Bowen were separating and, although they still wrote to one another with some affection, subsequent letters had mainly to do with business arrangements and financial matters, as well as parenting Julie. The friendship that grew between Bowen and Janice Biala, Ford's last partner, is also revealed in this collection. The two women wrote to one another in the 30s, and continued to do so after Ford died. This collection of letters was the first to dedicate space to Ford's personal life, but because of Bowen's artistic life as a painter, and the creative networks that consumed them both, the boundaries between public and private are blurred in a way that is peculiar to Ford.

*A Literary Friendship: Correspondence Between Caroline Gordon and Ford Madox Ford* (1999)

Lindberg-Seyersted edited a second collection of Ford's letters at a time when all but one of the letters between Ford and the American novelist Caroline Gordon were still unpublished. The letters cover the period from 1930 to 1939, and provide detailed evidence of one of the most significant examples of literary mentorship of Ford's career. Gordon began work as Ford's secretary in 1926 in Greenwich Village, New York City. By 1929, she was trying to find a publisher for her own writing, and Ford's commentary on her work created the necessary turning point (xviii). These letters provide a valuable addition to the record for this reason, and for the way they re-create the 'American Ford', a writer who was embedded in and contributing to American culture for much of the second half of his life. (See Meghan Hammond's chapter in this volume.)

*Janis and Richard Londraville, 'A Portrait of Ford Madox Ford: Unpublished Letters from the Ford-Foster Friendship'* (1990)

In this article, published in *English Literature in Transition, 1880–1920*, Janis and Richard Londraville included transcripts of the 14 known letters from Ford to Jeanne Foster, the American assistant to the lawyer and patron of the arts John Quinn, who was financing Ford's *transatlantic review*. The Londravilles also quote extensively from these letters in Chapter 11 of their book *Dear Yeats, Dear Pound, Dear Ford: Jeanne Robert Foster and Her Circle of Friends* (2001: 172–87).

*Paul A. Bartlett, 'Letters of Ford Madox Ford'* (1941)

Paul Alexander Bartlett's article, 'Letters of Ford Madox Ford', quotes from a substantial collection of letters by Ford and his brother Oliver, lent to the University of

Virginia Library by Gerard Tetley (a nephew of Ford's sister-in-law). The library still has microfilm copies, but returned the originals to their owner.

### ***Biographical accounts of Ford***

Ford's letters have been mentioned and cited far more in published biographies and memoirs than in the critical essays and books on his work. *The Flurried Years* (1926), Violet Hunt's memoir of her liaison with Ford, contains extensive and unreliable excerpts from Ford's letters to her while he was living in Germany in 1910. Her typed transcriptions were auctioned by Christie's in November 1995, and were bought by Cornell. These appear to be the source of the quotations, but the originals have disappeared. Hunt is known to have been a compulsive reviser of her own diary, and may well have edited Ford's words, and perhaps covered their tracks by destroying the originals.

Douglas Goldring's biography of Ford, *The Last Pre-Raphaelite*, was published in 1948. He quotes extensively from letters to Ford from Joseph Conrad (from G. Jean-Aubry's early two-volume edition), and also from W.H. Hudson and Henry James. Some of James's letters mention Ford's to James. The book, as the title suggests, concentrates on the early part of Ford's life and career, and is of only limited use to the researcher looking for evidence of Ford's life in letters.

Mizener's biography of Ford, *The Saddest Story* (1971), uses extracts from letters to tell the tale of Ford and Elsie's elopement in 1894, though the most substantial extract is from Ford to Mrs Martindale, Elsie's mother (19). Long extracts from letters between Conrad, Ford, and Edward Garnett illustrate the writers' collaboration after 1898, and its difficulties and demise, and Mizener includes a nice example of one of Ford's letters to Elsie, written from Lamb House, James's home at Rye (64). Overall, the volume provides a wide range of extracts from correspondence with significant figures in Ford's life.

Alan Judd's highly readable biography, *Ford Madox Ford* (1990), while a similar length to Mizener's, tends to quote Ford's works, including memoirs, rather than his letters. Judd is also more interested in representing the man and his work than in passing judgement on his subject, which was a weakness of Mizener's book—and an influential aspect of this significant biographical treatment of the writer. After the publication of his own book Judd was contacted by a young man wondering if it was too late to interest him in 63 love-letters, telegrams, postcards, and notes that Ford had written to his grandmother, Elizabeth Cheatham. This was a woman then unknown to Ford's biographers. Judd was able to tell their story in a 'Postscript' appended to the U.S. edition of his book (1994: 450–4), thus filling in a year of Ford's biography otherwise sketchily known.

Saunders' two-volume *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life* (1996) quotes more extensively than any previous biography from Ford's literary and personal correspondence: letters to his partners, Elsie Martindale (to whom some 260 letters have survived), Stella Bowen (another 260 letters), and Violet Hunt (nearly 50), and also those to others with whom he was particularly close, such as Olive Garnett (24), and Elizabeth Cheatham.

### **Other writers' letters**

Along with Pound, Conrad was the most significant literary relationship of Ford's life. Ludwig reproduces only five of the many letters, notes, and telegrams that Ford wrote to him during the 20 years they knew each other. Unfortunately, Conrad tended not to keep incoming correspondence, so the surviving letters to him from Ford are mostly from Conrad's last year, 1924, when Ford was editing the *transatlantic review* and republishing their collaborative novella *The Nature of a Crime*. While generous extracts from letters from both sides are provided in biographical accounts, as noted above, this relationship is important enough to researchers to provide further pointers here; careful scrutiny of Conrad's *Collected Letters* (along with Ford's memoir *Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance*) reveals the daily detail and the densely textured nature of Ford's relationship with Conrad. By the time of Conrad's second letter to Ford, their lives were already knitting together: Conrad asked Ford to 'drop him a line' about their rental arrangements (Davies et al. 1986: 94). In responding to him Conrad often refers either explicitly or implicitly to the content of Ford's letters. Over the next four years the letters show the two men discovering the range of each other's emotional existence, expressing frustration, jealousy, empathy, affection, loss, admiration, love, at the same time as they are learning how to write.

It is easy to forget the regularity and frequency of the nineteenth-century English post, which did a great deal to weld and seal their relationship (Golden 2009). '[O]ur letters always cross', Conrad exclaimed in 1902, while on an earlier occasion he noted the precise time he imagined Ford would be receiving his letter (Davies et al. 1986: 414, 99). The letters reveal the keenly felt nature of the work, and its embeddedness both in their affection and their day-to-day existence. 'I miss collaboration in the most ridiculous manner', Conrad wrote in April 1902, adding that 'I have a great need to get in touch with you again' (Davies et al. 1986: 408, 428). The rise and fall of their relationship are visible in Conrad's *Collected Letters*, sometimes in notable ways: Conrad apparently writes very little in reply to Ford's letters about the sounds of war in 1916 and Ford laments soon afterwards as he informs him of his wounding and recovery in the Red Cross hospital at Rouen that 'it must be all of five months since I heard from you' (Ludwig 1965: 78). (Conrad replies to this, and is worried about the 'grievous news' of Ford's gassing, Davies et al. 1996: 635.) The most important contribution of Conrad's letters to Fordian scholarship, aside from details about the work they produced and published, is what they reveal of the intensity and the absolutist claims of the apprenticeship they served together, as husbands, fathers and friends, as well as writers. ('Dearest Ford, How are you? Have you slept?', Davies et al. 1988: 31.) Their feelings were vividly present, in lives that were chaotically demanding and often traumatic as well. 'The effect of your letter quite staggered me', Conrad wrote to Ford on hearing of the death of Elsie's father in suspicious circumstances in February 1902 (Davies et al. 1986: 378). Along with their enthusiasms, jealousies, and irritations, these texts reveal how they are working under great discipline as well, scrutinizing themselves and each other as part of the

‘modern method’—which represented how they sought to render the world anew in their prose.

Most of Ford’s letters, apart from those to members of his family, were to people in the literary world. Through his friendships and editorial activities he corresponded with most of the major writers of the age, and in particular Henry James, John Galsworthy, H.G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, D.H. Lawrence, Wyndham Lewis, Gertrude Stein, Ernest Hemingway, Theodore Dreiser, and Katherine Anne Porter. Other important letters to friends include those to the publisher’s reader and critic Edward Garnett, and to his sister Olive Garnett; Edgar Jepson; Lucy Masterman (the wife of Ford’s Cabinet Minister and friend C.F.G. Masterman) and to his literary agent—especially J.B. Pinker, who represented many of the best modern writers in the early years of the century (such as James, Conrad, and Bennett), and William Bradley, who represented Ford when he was in Paris in the 1920s. There are 135 surviving letters to Pinker and his sons, and 58 to Bradley. Extensive correspondence with Ford’s publishers has also survived, especially Stanley Unwin of Allen & Unwin, and with Oxford University Press, in the 1930s, and with Duckworth in the 1920s. Though such letters mainly concern contracts and payments, they often provide invaluable insights into his work and telling glimpses of his life and humour—as when he teases Pinker: ‘You never seem to reply with any enthusiasm to my offers of farm produce. Why is this?’ (Ludwig 1965: 131–2).

Where there are substantial caches of letters to specific correspondents they are mentioned in the notes on individual library holdings below. But apart from the Conrad, Pound, and Gordon published correspondences, and the other runs already mentioned, Ford’s epistolary production is characterised by an enormous range of correspondents who receive a smallish number of letters each.

### ***Library collections of Ford’s letters***

This section represents an update to what Harvey (1962) reports on the library holdings. Details are given where there are especially significant collections or runs of letters.

- Cornell: The most substantial collection of Ford papers, essentially combining collections of his manuscripts and correspondence from four major sources, corresponding to Ford’s relationships with Elsie Martindale, Violet Hunt, Stella Bowen, and Janice Biala, plus a number of other additional sources. The papers originally belonging to Martindale, Bowen, and Biala ended up at Cornell as a result of Mizener’s research: he was a Professor there, got to know two of Ford’s daughters, and his partner Biala, and convinced them of the advantage of bringing the material together. Cornell acquired its extensive Hunt collection later.
- Princeton: Another major Ford collection, based on that of Edward Naumburg Jr., and including a number of important letters to other well-known writers.
- Yale: Important holdings of Ford’s letters here include his correspondence with Conrad in the 1920s.

- Illinois: The major relevant holding here is Ford's correspondence with H.G. Wells.
- Northwestern: Olive Garnett's papers are held here, including her diaries (which include and describe letters from Ford), and the surviving letters from him.
- UCLA: Contains substantial correspondence between Ford or Stella Bowen and Harold Monroe, the editor of the Poetry Bookshop and Ford's occasional publisher, who lent them his villa on Cap Ferrat in 1922–23.
- Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas
- Washington University, St Louis
- The British Library
- New York Public Library
- Huntington Library
- University of Virginia
- House of Lords Record Office: Ford's sister Juliet Hueffer married the Russian émigré David Soskice. Their son, Frank Soskice, became Labour Home Secretary and eventually Lord Stow Hill. The Stow Hill papers at the HLRO include correspondence from several members of the family, including Ford's letters to his mother, Catherine Hueffer.

### **Prominent holes in the record**

Ford's letters to Elsie, as yet uncollected, provide a 'thread or through-line' in the overview of Ford's career. His first letters to her are important, the Introduction here argues, partly because they reveal the extent to which adversity was his creativity's crucible, and to which, in turn, writing was the only antidote. These letters illustrate how Ford's writing came out of intense emotional struggle. It was his means both of communicating with his lover and articulating a way of evading the forces that seemed to be massed against them: to find agency and identity in prose. This was as true for his manuscripts—passed between him and Elsie and jointly worked-on—as it was for their letters.

Ford and Elsie exchanged fiction as part of the same conversation that took place in their letters: 'I can think of nothing & no one else—save you and work my mind has no occupation—and it is well', Ford wrote to her on 3 June 1893 (33.017 Cornell). Manuscripts were posted, commented on and developed as part of the intrigue and then soon the suffering they were experiencing as separated lovers, and Ford repeatedly mentions the concept of the 'plot' in personal as well as professional terms. Across the span of their relationship, life is seen to provide 'copy' in jocular ('the idea of being beset by maiden ladies fills me with joy; I trust you'll make copy out of them' 34.010; early 1902) and serious terms. A letter from Boppard in August 1904 wants Elsie to be cheered up by the fact that he has already 'got a lot of materials for copy' while he is being treated for his nervous breakdown (34.032).