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# The Case of the Missing Cromwell: Ford Madox Ford, Art, Life and Letters in 1899

Sara Haslam

## Introduction

Arthur Mizener's biography of Ford Madox Ford, *The Saddest Story*, was published in 1971, a driving force of second-wave critical attention to Ford and his work.<sup>1</sup> The significance of Mizener's contribution to Ford studies is acknowledged in the introduction to the definitive life of Ford – Max Saunders credits him alongside David Harvey's 'pioneering' 1962 bibliography in *A Dual Life*.<sup>2</sup> However, Mizener's account of Ford's writing life also set a small but lively hare running that has not stopped since:

Conrad was hard at work [in 1899] on *Lord Jim* and Ford had—thanks to Edward Garnett—now found a publisher to commission 'my colossal book on the Cinque Ports' and had carried a plan for a novel about Oliver Cromwell far enough to sell the idea to a publisher.<sup>3</sup>

There is a lot going on in this biographical sentence, which links the account of Ford's and Conrad's work on *Romance* in the spring of that year to Ford's labours on what would become *The Inheritors* – significant activity with demonstrable results, in which Cromwell certainly played a bit part.<sup>4</sup> However, it is Mizener's attribution to Ford of a novel about Cromwell, a provocative one to those working currently on *The Complete Works of Ford Madox Ford*, which constitutes that hare. The source of Mizener's authoritatively expressed reference would be highly prized by any biographer: it was the diary kept across 1899 by a closely involved contemporary witness, Ford's wife, Elsie Martindale Hueffer.<sup>5</sup>

Mizener is the only one of Ford's biographers to date who has had access to Elsie's diary. Later writers who address the idea of a Cromwell novel cite him.<sup>6</sup> Douglas Goldring, on the other hand, made no mention of it in his biographical account, *The Last Pre-Raphaelite*, published in 1948.<sup>7</sup> The lack of supporting textual evidence does not of course invalidate a claim as to the novel's existence. New material occasionally surfaces from any writing life, especially one as chaotic as Ford's; or—unlikely though this may be given his publications by 1899—Ford could have sold the idea alone and stopped there.<sup>8</sup> And the novel's apparent subject, due in part to the influence of his painter grandfather on his career, would surprise no-one who knows Ford's writing well.<sup>9</sup> Before too many more years had passed, Ford's reputation would be boosted significantly by the appearance of *The Fifth Queen* trilogy (1906-08), historical fiction based on the Tudor period.

And yet I hope to demonstrate in what follows that Mizener's hare was in fact released because of a misreading of Elsie's text. This was not the Cromwell anyone should have been looking for. The number and range of nods to 'Old Noll' at this point in Ford's life do make this a more than usually complicated issue (even the Hueffer dog bore his name), and if I'm right about the misreading, it would be

understandable perhaps for other reasons as well. The year in question was a particularly heady one in Ford's writing life: he'd met Conrad the September before. He was desperate to secure income for his writing, as was usually the case, writing furiously and often unsuccessfully when it came to securing publication. But I have gone back to Elsie's diary, now more widely available to researchers along with others of her books and papers, to explore in more detail the case of the missing Cromwell.<sup>10</sup> Further light can be shed on the mystery thanks to current work on Ford's unpublished letters. 'There is an abominable muddle about my Cromwell', is how one notably frustrated 1899 example begins.<sup>11</sup> Indeed.

### **The diarist: Elsie Martindale Hueffer**

IMAGE REDACTED

**Fig. 1 Catherine Hueffer (née Madox Brown), portrait of 'Elsie Madox Hueffer' (1895), known by Elsie's descendants as 'The Wedding Ring'. Permission courtesy of Mary Waugh.<sup>12</sup>**

Elizabeth ('Elsie') Martindale, known mainly to scholars of the period as the first and only legally recognised wife of the writer Ford Madox Ford, was born on 3 October 1876. She was the third child of Dr William Martindale, a pharmacist, and Mariah Hannah Martindale.<sup>13</sup> The family business was on New Cavendish Street, London, and the Martindales lived on Devonshire Street, which adjoins Harley Street. Elsie, along with her older sister Mary, attended the Praetoria House school, founded as a kindergarten in Marylebone by Dr and Mrs Praetorius in 1881. When the couple moved the school to Folkestone two years later, they turned it into one for boarders and the girls and their younger brother Leonard went too. The Praetoriuses, innovators influenced by the German educational reformer Friedrich Froebel, were friends of

both Ford's maternal grandfather, Ford Madox Brown, and the Martindale family. Biographical accounts suggest that Brown's grandson Ford joined their school as a boarder, but it is more likely he attended in London first, moving south when it relocated.<sup>14</sup> French and German speaking, outdoor play and sports were key features of the educational context for Ford and Elsie. They played chess together in the evenings and, before long, they were considered a couple by their friends: Elsie was nicknamed the 'captain's wife' (Goldring, 33).

Elsie enjoyed painting. She thanked her mother for a 'nice paint-box' in a letter home on 23 June 1889, describing a school trip the previous day to an old farm which she painted and enclosing her attempt. She and Ford, along with all other pupils, also read widely, deeply, and seriously. Later, when Ford had left the school and he and Elsie were courting in earnest, he somewhat pompously assumed the role of Elsie's educator: in a biographical account of a day out in July 1892 he notes that the couple had 'talked of the books that she should read [...] for the more certain opening out of that most beautiful of all flowers, her mind'.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps she accepted his instruction. In their love letters of that period, however, Ford demonstrates his respect for Elsie's skills as a writer and musician (he originally felt himself to be destined for a life in music) and they talk of their shared devotion to an artistic and creative life.<sup>16</sup>

A dramatic 20 months after Ford wrote up the account of the day trip quoted above, the couple eloped. There was a court case as Elsie was under 18 and her parents, having tried repeatedly to separate them, had Elsie made a ward of court. The judge, learning that Ford and Elsie were in fact married, 'quashed the order restricting intercourse' (Saunders 1, 83) and by the summer of 1894, having repelled further legal challenges, they had settled at Bonnington, on the edge of Kent's Romney Marsh, to begin their married life.

Elsie was a valuable and observant diarist. She first kept a diary, so far as records show, across the Easter after their marriage. This is a fragmentary record, covering in its four-and-a-half pages 9 April to 23 April 1895; Easter Sunday fell on the 14th. As well as revealing a serious lack of household funds, it provides evidence of the fact that Elsie was both writing independently for publication, and conceiving of herself as a writer, aged only 18. While the letters between the couple in the early 1890s attest to the fact that, to an extent still to be fully understood, Ford and Elsie were both contributing to the manuscripts that were also passing between them, in 1895 she is writing alone.<sup>17</sup> Elsie was certainly looking for extra income in part. On the bank holiday Monday she expresses the hope that 'Robert [Garnett]<sup>18</sup> or Mrs H [Ford's mother] will relieve us by tomorrow's post', noting a sentence later, 'Just going to commence on "Mary's Grave"' – a story that she had not 'mastered' by the Thursday, though she had written 'Burning the Bush'.<sup>19</sup> Ford's mother, 'Mrs H' as they both called her, had also by then come to the rescue, and sent her and Ford some money.

Elsie's early attempts at publication drew on the rich seam of material offered by their new rural existence – and Ford's closely observed 'peasant biographies' were among the most notable elements of his first 'boomed' success, the *England and the English* trilogy, published 1905-08. Following a garden get together with neighbours including Mrs Mary Walker and Mrs Mary Sprattford, Elsie noted on 19 April 'Since

then I have written “Going Home”. I have now only one more to write before I send them up to Edward [Garnett]. Hope he will approve of them’. (Ford had grown up with the Garnetts – Edward, married to the translator Constance Garnett, was a reader for Fisher, Unwin and had ‘discovered’ Conrad in 1894.) Olive Garnett certainly did approve of Elsie’s stories, and we know from her own diary that Edward respected his sister’s opinion, sharing current manuscripts with her.<sup>20</sup> While visiting Elsie and Ford the previous November, Olive had been asked to read Elsie’s ‘Mrs Larkins’ by the budding author, who had already submitted it without success to the *Yellow Book* and was about to try the *Cornhill*. On the co-writing question, Elsie told Olive at this time that she and Ford had written ‘The Sowing of the Oats’ together – ‘probably a reference’, Saunders has suggested, to ‘The Last Sowing’, an unpublished novel which Olive also records that she read.<sup>21</sup> Olive, visiting again, then, in November 1895, reported wider reading of Elsie’s work, including a story about ‘Mrs Walker’. Her verdict was positive: ‘A lot to read here’; ‘[the stories] are so simply good and true’.<sup>22</sup> Elsie waited 10 years, but a story with the title ‘Going Home’, featuring a Mrs Walker and a Mrs Sprattford, not to mention the locally prized ‘mushroom ketchup’ that is prominent in Ford’s accounts as well, was published in *The Speaker* in July 1905.<sup>23</sup>

In 1899, Elsie formalised her approach to life writing, keeping a diary almost every day in a commercially available bound volume from 14 January 1899 to 6 January 1900 (Fig. 2). In the case of the missing Cromwell it is to this text that we turn, following Mizener’s lead, for the first clues. While the 1899 diary offers welcome detail as to the collaborative work between Ford and Conrad as well as Ford’s own writing in the months after they met – and also the relationships between the two families (Christina Margaret had been born to the Hueffers in 1897 and Elsie fell pregnant with Katharine in 1899) – Elsie seems to have done very little creative writing herself.<sup>24</sup> She is exuberant when Ford sells work and when a necessary house move is confirmed, and she provides detailed comment on both people and place, domestically and further abroad. The Pent, the farmhouse on the Kent Downs which the Hueffers sub-let to the Conrads soon after they met and in which the Conrads lived until 1907, is a frequently shared location in 1899.

IMAGE REDACTED

**Fig. 2 Elsie's 1899 diary, week of 11 June. Permission courtesy of Charles and Gillian Lamb.**

Elsie's detail includes, for example, that Conrad was 'depressed' on 6 December, while Jessie had a 'bad headache'. Conrad was 'very bad with gout' on 28 March. Across the year, there was much health-related misery on the Hueffer side. 'Mrs H' arrived on 17 February to help look after what was a sick family. She stayed a week. Elsie left to recover fully while Catherine tended in the main to Christina – until the point when Ford wrote with worrying enough news about their daughter to bring her back home. Though she did travel to the Pent without Ford in 1899, on this occasion, sick herself, Elsie went elsewhere to get well.<sup>25</sup> Later in the year, though, Elsie was preoccupied by her possible pregnancy. On 20 September, she told her sister Mary the news. 'She very surprised [sic].'

Even if her fiction writing had had to be put on hold, Elsie's reading receives occasional mention in the diary (the novels *No. 5 John Street*; *Moonlight*; *Evan Harrington*; *Nicholas Nickleby* are all cited),<sup>26</sup> and her artistic ability does find an outlet in 1899 – an easier one than fiction writing to work into family life. One of the happiest entries, that of 12 June, describes her singing 'some of F's songs' when the Conrads were there (see Fig. 2; also note Elsie's record of Ford beginning work on the Rye chapter of *Cinque Ports*, as well as Borys, the Conrads' son, failing to appreciate Cromwell the dog and thereby upsetting Christina). Elsie sang 'magnificently' according to Olive Garnett.<sup>27</sup> She had also been practising from time to time the songs bought on a London trip in early February, when she had enjoyed *Tristan and Isolde*

with Mary ('Lucile Hill [the American-born soprano] splendid in the Liebestod'), and Burne Jones and Rembrandt exhibitions.<sup>28</sup> Singing was perhaps enough of an outlet to preserve Elsie's artistic integrity, and therefore aid such domestic harmony as was experienced by the couple that year.

Marital quarrelling is more a matter of record in Elsie's diary and is sometimes protracted. Notably, on more than one occasion the pattern of poor relations looks as though it is broken by some good news related to Ford's writing. Across three days in January 1899 the entry is identical: 'Rain – Quarrelled' until on the 19<sup>th</sup> there is news and activity related to *Cinque Ports* – they still argue, late in the day according to the entry, but they also 'made it up'. In May they quarrelled on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, according to her record, while on the 17<sup>th</sup> they hear that Blackwoods has accepted Ford's *Cinque Ports* book. 'Hurrah', she notes. Elsie demonstrates both pride and some vicarious pleasure in Ford's successes and deserves credit for her part in managing the home (she made a lot of clothes that year). She managed Ford too, perhaps to the degree that his writing, and in turn their living, was made more possible.<sup>29</sup> She was not doing Ford's typing though, even after the household's first machine arrived on 14 April that year, but was sending his manuscripts to a 'Miss Smith', and recording receipt of the results.<sup>30</sup> (What Elsie does not record in the diary, possibly because she wasn't aware of it, is that Ford recruited Olive Garnett as a research assistant, aided by the ticket for the British Library Olive's father obtained for her that July. Olive 'copied all day', apparently for free.<sup>31</sup>)

The gender politics of Elsie's account are clearly revealed through assessment of their comparative individual labour at this time, but they also inflect almost everything else, even access to golf courses: 'Drove down to Camber, & found no playing for ladies. Returned disgusted & went blackberrying', Elsie noted on 23 September.<sup>32</sup> Christina did not sleep much in these months, and Elsie often mentions her resultant exhaustion, and the sickness that came with her second pregnancy. Related issues, including gender-derived expectations of significance, may help to explain why, even when the diary could be consulted by a biographer, it seems to have been passed over rather hurriedly. Mizener does reference Elsie's writing, but then there is that hare.<sup>33</sup>

Elsie first mentions 'the Cromwell' on 16 February 1899. A letter has come about it from 'Rathbone'. There is no further detail but this first reference introduces a figure who proves essential to unravelling the mystery.

### **'The Cromwell': key players**

Harold Rathbone (1858-1929) was an artist member of a prominent Liverpool family.<sup>34</sup> Inspired by the Arts & Crafts Movement, he founded the Della Robbia Pottery, a ceramics factory, in Birkenhead in 1894. As a developing artist, however, he had been a pupil of Ford Madox Brown and was an expert on his work. The same year he launched the pottery, he had secured at the May sale of Madox Brown's effects a series of his original cartoons and had a selection of them reproduced.<sup>35</sup> Early in 1897 he held an exhibition of his pottery featuring designs by Madox Brown. Olive Garnett was there, along with her brother Robert, and she notes that 'Ford gave us tea' (Johnson 1993, 84).

Perhaps it was on this occasion that either Ford or Elsie conceived a plan that led to the letter they received, I believe from Harold Rathbone, in 1899. Robert had had, after all, a long-standing role as the Hueffers' fixer, or 'homme d'affaires'.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, Elsie's next diary reference to 'Cromwell' is when she hears from Robert – who also knew Rathbone – 'about' him on 12 July.<sup>37</sup> What might Rathbone and Robert Garnett have been jointly trying to 'fix', using their combination of professional expertise, and how?

My initial answer to the 'how' element of this question (the 'what' being as it usually was: lack of funds) came as a result of focus on the Pent. After the plan had been hatched to sub-let their home to the Conrads, ostensibly to provide Conrad both with more workspace and a better climate for his gout (though Goldring writes that 'Elsie found [it] lonely and depressing when left there alone' (64) and her 1899 diary makes it plain how forceful she could be in her opinions about their accommodation and what should be done about it) Conrad wrote to Ford that the 'time approaches for me to step in amongst your relics'.<sup>38</sup> We can turn to Jessie Conrad's written account, published in 1935, for further detail. Jessie describes in *Joseph Conrad and his Circle* some of the 'really fine' Hueffer possessions at the Pent: 'there was a writing desk that had once belonged to Christina Rossetti, a big table designed by William Morris, and a picture cupboard belonging, or having belonged, to Ford Madox Brown. There were also hanging above the couch in the front room a death mask of Dante G. Rossetti and one of Oliver Cromwell, gruesome relics that held for me a good deal of awe'.<sup>39</sup>

Ford does not include a Cromwell mask in Appendix B, 'A list of Madox Brown's more important works', in his biography of his grandfather, but a '[Head of D.G.R.]' is there (*Ford Madox Brown*, 434) and is listed as owned at that point by Robert Garnett. In November 1894, six months after the sale of Brown's effects, Ford's brother Oliver had 'appeared' at the Garnetts to take away Robert's cast of D.G.R.'s head, shortly before Ford and Elsie were in town to negotiate with publishers about the planned life of Brown.<sup>40</sup> Ford does make mention of a 'life mask of Oliver Cromwell' in the main text of the biography – citing it as a 'guide' for Madox Brown in his work on his famous 1877 painting, 'Cromwell, Protector of the Vaudois' (312 n.). Mary Bennett in turn cites this note in her *Catalogue Raisonné* of Madox Brown's works (278), though given it is described as 'huge' this example may not have been created or owned by Brown.

Returning to Elsie's 1899 diary provides a strong indication that this thinking is moving at least in the right direction and that a Brown work, perhaps a mask hanging on the walls of the Pent as Jessie described it, was the subject of Rathbone's and Garnett's 'fixing', providing an opportunity to bring much needed income to the Hueffers that year ahead of Katharine's birth.

### **Art and Life**

Elsie talks most frequently about the 'Cromwell' in October, as Mizener spotted, though in close reference to the Fine Art Society, an important detail which he apparently overlooked. 'F. went to London about Cromwell. Fine Art Soc. offer 175' (11 Oct), Elsie tells us.<sup>41</sup> 'F. returned ... Has sold Cromwell' (12 Oct). Although Elsie



is concerned about the lack of further news on 28 October ('nothing from the Fine Art people'), on 18 November she was able to celebrate: 'money arrived from the Fine Art Society'.<sup>42</sup> There was a notable outcome for Elsie personally: 'F presented me with £25. I now possess a banking account'. She wrote her first cheque four days later, to Liberty's, for fabric for clothes.

Mizener's hare assumes its proper shape: Brown art with a Cromwell theme that was sold in 1899; but a death mask, perhaps not. It is Ford's unpublished letters (both incoming and outgoing) that provide the final pieces of evidence in the case of the missing Cromwell, and I return in conclusion to where I began, with the 1899 letter from a frustrated Ford.

Ford was writing about his 'abominable muddle' to Joseph Pennell (1857-1926), the American etcher, artist and major illustrator of books and magazines who settled in London in the 1880s. (Pennell and his wife Elizabeth met Ford Madox Brown at an 'at home' of the Robinson family in 1884, along with William and Lucy Rossetti.<sup>43</sup>) Max Saunders' recent discovery that one of Pennell's replies in this exchange with Ford had been misattributed to Arnold Bennett in Cornell's catalogue means that the epistolary conversation between the two men has become more fully visible. This particular reply is critical firstly in the case of the missing Cromwell because it provides evidence that Brown did indeed make a Cromwell death mask, whether or not it is featured in Ford's inventory – or Mary Bennett's. In a postscript to the letter's main subject, Pennell writes: 'I will send you a print of the S. K. M. mask that you may see it is the same as yours'.<sup>44</sup> The Victoria and Albert Museum was called the South Kensington Museum until 1899, and it holds in its collections an unattributed nineteenth century 'Mask of Cromwell'.<sup>45</sup>

Secondly, and more significantly, Pennell's letter encourages more detailed study of all Brown's works with a Cromwell focus and their provenance, indicating as it does the existence of a significant Brown work – and a painting in fact rather than a mask – being in Ford's possession at that time. In the exchange between Ford and Pennell, which I'll be dating in volume 1 of the *Collected Letters of Ford Madox Ford* to the summer/early autumn of 1899, and which had begun much more calmly, it is clear that Ford is seeking to lend Pennell a Madox Brown painting. This activity was time critical. Ford will have wanted to get the work to Pennell in time for a piece he was illustrating: a series commissioned by the *Century* in 1899 called 'Oliver Cromwell', written by John Morley.<sup>46</sup> The 'abominable muddle' occurred when the lent work went missing in transit – somewhere between, Ford thinks, the National Gallery, Pennell's house and Macmillan's, who published *Century*. Thankfully, for many reasons, it turned up. John Morley's 'Oliver Cromwell', 'With pictures by, or after, Samuel Cooper, Joseph Pennell, Ernest Haskell, Van Dyck, Ford Madox Brown...' was published in the November 1899 issue of the *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*.<sup>47</sup>

Begun in 1853, 'Cromwell on his Farm, St Ives, 1630', as one of Brown's two finished paintings to feature Cromwell became known, was commissioned by William Brockbank in 1873, the year, coincidentally, of Ford's birth.<sup>48</sup> Brockbank sold it at Christie's in 1897, Bennett states in the painting's Provenance (261), and it was, she says, 'with F. M. Hueffer' in 1897 and 1898.<sup>49</sup> (The credits in the *Century* piece support her assertion. Above the caption the following text appears: 'Painted by Ford

Madox Brown. Photographed from the original by Frederick Hollyer. Owned by Ford Madox Hueffer.<sup>50</sup>) Bennett's financial record tracing does not extend to include the Hueffers, but it is nonetheless very helpful. The work was purchased by W. H. Lever, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Leverhulme, in October 1899, in a deal brokered by the Fine Art Society. Bennett cites in evidence an invoice to W. H. Lever dated 16 October 1899, four days after Elsie tells us that Ford had 'sold' the Cromwell. Ford received £175 for the painting. The Fine Art Society invoice is for £210, indicating the Society's £35 commission for the deal, or their mark-up. The money arrived with the Hueffers on Saturday 18 November.

Probably the Hueffers did not leave this particular relic behind at the Pent when they moved out in October 1898. It seems certain that Jessie would have mentioned its presence on the walls if they had done. Wherever it was hung or stored, they parted with it the following autumn, and for a healthy sum. The Hueffers needed good news that October. Writing on *The Inheritors* was not going well, though Elsie's diary records a change in tone on this front and restoration of good relations with the Conrads the following month. The Hueffer family drove over together to the Pent on 14 November and she writes that 'they were very pleased to see us I think'. Ford visited twice more in November, the second time with Christina (and perhaps Cromwell the dog). Elsie's diary concludes on Epiphany 1900: 'Getting a bit straighter. Put up curtains. Ethel, X [Christina] & Tommy [the pony] went out in the afternoon.'

### Acknowledgements

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### Archival sources

- Elsie Martindale ALS to Mariah Martindale, 23 June 1889; Lamb family archive
- Elsie Hueffer 1895 and 1899 diaries; Lamb family archive
- Ford Madox Ford Collection, Carl A. Kroch Library, Rare and Manuscript Collections #4605, University of Cornell, Ithaca

### Notes

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<sup>1</sup> The first wave was characterised by publications such as the April 1948 issue of the Princeton University Library Chronicle (entry E911 in David Dow Harvey's *Ford Madox Ford 1873 to 1939: a Bibliography of Works and Criticism*, Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962) – and then *Parade's End*, published in one-volume form for the first time by Knopf in 1950. For recent work on Ford's reception see Sara Haslam, 'Ford studies in the twenty-first century: bibliography, criticism and the gaps

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on the map’, ‘Introduction’ to Haslam, Laura Colombino and Seamus O’Malley (eds), *The Routledge Research Companion to Ford Madox Ford* (London and New York: Routledge, 2019), 1-22; and Carolyn Steffens and Joseph Wiesenfarth, ‘Ford’s Reception History’, 39-60, in the same volume.

<sup>2</sup> Max Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), I, vii.

<sup>3</sup> Arthur Mizener, *The Saddest Story: a Biography of Ford Madox Ford* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 1985), 50-51.

<sup>4</sup> *Romance* was not published until 1903 and at this early stage was titled *Seraphina*; chapter 1 of Ford’s memoir of Conrad provides a striking account of the older novelist’s first encounter with Ford’s manuscript, which Ford read to him (*Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance*, London: Duckworth, 1924). *The Inheritors: An Extravagant Story*, the ‘first fruit’ of Ford’s and Conrad’s collaboration and on which work began in 1899, was published by William Heinemann in 1901 (*The Inheritors: An Extravagant Story*, ed. David Seed, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999, ix). Would-be novelist Arthur Etchingham Granger, narrator of what Saunders terms ‘this curious hybrid work’ (I, 118) confesses to an obsession with ‘the Lord Oliver’ and that he had, a ‘great many years before [...] set about one of those glorious novels that one plans – a splendid thing with Old Noll as the hero or the heavy father’ (*The Inheritors*, 51-52). Instead, Granger sets about collaborating on a *Life of Cromwell* at the suggestion of its beleaguered author, Churchill (54). Early in his introduction to *The Inheritors: An Extravagant Story / The Nature of a Crime*, published in 2022 in the *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Joseph Conrad*, Jeremy Hawthorn notes that ‘Ford was responsible for the lion’s share of both works’ (xliv).

<sup>5</sup> A note on names: Ford Madox Ford (1873-1939) was both baptised and began publishing as Ford Hermann Hueffer. He formally assumed the middle name ‘Madox’ in 1915 (though all three Hueffer children used it in the same way informally as a sign of their love of their grandfather, Ford Madox Brown), and the surname Ford in 1919. His published works are listed under the surname Ford, but Hueffer is often used in this piece due to the context.

<sup>6</sup> Examples occur in Alan Judd’s biography, *Ford Madox Ford* (London: Flamingo, 1991, 69), Saunders’ biography (I, 117), and in Hawthorn’s edition of *The Inheritors* (xlviii).

<sup>7</sup> Douglas Goldring, *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: a Record of the Life and Writings of Ford Madox Ford* (London: Macdonald, 1948); hereafter Goldring.

<sup>8</sup> Ford’s record wasn’t slight by any means, especially as he was 25 at the time, but it only included one novel. *The Shifting of the Fire* had been published by T. Fisher Unwin in 1892; then there were fairy tales, stories, a collection of poetry and a biography of his grandfather, Ford Madox Brown – all published under various names: Ford H. Madox Hueffer (*The Brown Owl*, *The Feather*), H. Ford Hueffer (*The Shifting of the Fire*), the pseudonym ‘Fenil Haig’ (*The Questions at the Well*), the misprinted ‘Ford Huffer’ (*The Queen Who Flew*) and Ford M. Hueffer (*Ford Madox Brown*). See Harvey’s *Bibliography* and Max Saunders’ ‘Ford Madox Ford: Further Bibliographies’, *ELT* 43: 2 (2000), 131-205.

<sup>9</sup> Ford Madox Brown (1821-1893), Ford’s maternal grandfather and ‘elder statesman of the Pre-Raphaelite movement’, repeatedly represented English historical figures in his work, including Cromwell. See Newman and Watkinson’s *Ford Madox Brown and the Pre-Raphaelite Circle* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1991)—the quotation above is taken from the back cover of their biography—and Mary Bennett, *Ford*

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*Madox Brown: A Catalogue Raisonné* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), Volume 1. On Brown's influence on Ford's life and development as an artist, both before and after his father's early death in 1889, see, for example, Saunders I, 23-29. Editors of *The Inheritors* have noted Brown's stylistic influence (Seed xiii; Hawthorn lxiii), and Hawthorn expands the discussion to consider other real-life models for the novel's characters (lviii-lxii). As noted above, Ford published a biography, *Ford Madox Brown: A Record of his Life and Work*, in 1896.

<sup>10</sup> Elsie's papers and letters are mainly held in the family archive of Charles and Gillian Lamb, descendants of Ford and Elsie's younger daughter Katharine, in Dublin.

<sup>11</sup> Ford Madox Ford, unpublished letter (n.d. but 1899) to Joseph Pennell (1857-1926), the American etcher, artist and illustrator.

<sup>12</sup> Grateful acknowledgement is offered to Mary Waugh, Elsie and Ford's granddaughter, for permission to reproduce this portrait of Elsie, which was hung as part of an exhibition celebrating the work of Ford Madox Brown's two painter daughters, '[Uncommon power](#)': Lucy and Catherine Madox Brown, at the Watts Gallery, Surrey, UK in 2021-22. In Elsie's novel *Margaret Hever*, one of the many autobiographical elements includes a portrait painted of Margaret by a female relative, featuring a prominent 'gold chain': Elizabeth Martindale, *Margaret Hever* (London: Duckworth, 1909), 100.

<sup>13</sup> Martindale launched his celebrated and still standard reference work, the *Extra Pharmacopoeia of Unofficial Drugs and Chemical and Pharmaceutical Preparations*, in 1883.

<sup>14</sup> Goldring (31-32) and Saunders (I, 33) note that schooldays began in the autumn of 1881, when Ford was 7. Praetoria House was founded in 1881 and moved to Folkestone in 1884, according to the architects' plans for a rebuilt school under a new owner in 1904 [https://www.ribapix.com/design-for-the-new-school-at-praetoria-house-folkestone\\_riba21123#](https://www.ribapix.com/design-for-the-new-school-at-praetoria-house-folkestone_riba21123#)

<sup>15</sup> Francis Hueffer, Ford's father and music critic of *The Times*, died suddenly in 1889. Ford, and later his younger brother Oliver, left Folkestone for financial reasons and went to University College School in London. Ford Madox Ford Collection, #4605 / 2.10. Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

<sup>16</sup> Nathan Waddell offers excellent summary and analysis of both the related biographical narrative and scholarship on this subject in 'Ford, Family, and Music', in Haslam et al., *Routledge Research Companion*, 79-93.

<sup>17</sup> See Haslam, 'The Other in Ford's Making: Elsie, fiction and collaboration' in Isabelle Brasme (ed.), *Homo Duplex: Ford Madox Ford's Experience and Aesthetics of Alterity* (Montpellier: Presses Universitaires de la Méditerranée, 2020), 21-41. This earlier activity also formed one basis for their frantic appeal to Elsie's parents not to separate them during their courtship. Ford had, somewhat optimistically it turned out, reported to Elsie after an intervention by Madox Brown that her father 'had not the slightest idea of separating us' because he 'had not known we were working together': ALS Ford to Elsie, dated 2 May 1893 (Cornell #4605/33.08).

<sup>18</sup> A solicitor and, along with siblings Olive and Edward (who feature in the following section), a long-standing family friend.

<sup>19</sup> Possibly reconceived as 'The Burning of the Barn', which survives in manuscript form (14pp) and was written when the couple were living or staying at the Pent - where they moved in October 1896. 'The Burning of the Barn' was published by the *Daily News* on 26 November 1908.

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<sup>20</sup> She describes reading ‘some MSS’ while staying with Edward and Constance in 1890 (Johnson 1989: 53).

<sup>21</sup> Olive recorded this in her diary for 20 November: *Olive and Stepniak: The Bloomsbury Diary of Olive Garnett 1893-1895*, ed. Barry C. Johnson (London: Bartlett’s Press, 1993), 135. Saunders’ comment is taken from a further bibliographical study, as yet unpublished. The majority of ‘The Last Sowing’ manuscript held in the Ford collection at Cornell is in Elsie’s hand (pp. 4-251), while the remainder is in Ford’s (pp. 252-342) and the early leaves are missing.

<sup>22</sup> Johnson, *Olive and Stepniak*, 223-224.

<sup>23</sup> *The Speaker*, 12 (22 July 1905), 390. Mary Walker supported many areas of the couple’s domestic life. Elsie’s later diary records her doing the washing (Elsie notes ‘she earned her dinner well’, 4 April), bringing vegetables, cooking dinner, shopping with Elsie, helping Elsie to bake in the brick oven - leading on a later occasion to the joint production of 12 loaves and 2 cakes in one day (28 April). In early November, Mrs Walker ‘guessed’ the news of her pregnancy. ‘Meary Walker’, as Ford calls her, is one of the most powerfully drawn characters in his published work (Saunders I, 93-94).

<sup>24</sup> For more detail on what the diary offers as to both sole and collaborative writerly activity, see Haslam, ‘The Hueffers and the Conrads in 1899’, *The Conradian*, vol. 47 no. 1 (Spring 2022), 66-75. Paul Skinner’s Review of the Cambridge edition of *The Inheritors / The Nature of a Crime* is in the same issue, 103-112.

<sup>25</sup> ‘Went to Lucy’s by Oxted’, Elsie writes on 20 February, suggesting it is Lucy Cowlshaw she stays with. The architect William Harrison (‘Harry’) Cowlshaw was born at Limpsfield, where the Hueffers were now living, in 1869. He designed their cottage and also the Cearne, the nearby home of Edward and Constance Garnett, and was now living with his wife Lucy (née Garnett, sister to Edward and Olive) at Kiln Farm. Ford had published a piece, ‘The Work of William Harrison Cowleshaw’ in *The Artist* in September 1897. Fanny and Sergey Stepniak had also lived close by since 1895, and Fanny becomes a close friend to Elsie over the course of 1899.

<sup>26</sup> She recorded reading *No. 5 John Street* (1899), by Richard Whiteing, on Saturday 22 April; *Moonlight* (1898), by Mary E. Mann, on Monday 15 May (‘[...] in the afternoon. Sent with an extraordinary inscription from Robert [?Garnett]’); *Evan Harrington* (1861), by George Meredith, on Tuesday 23 May (on 26 May – ‘finished Evan H., to my distress’); and noted that she ‘Finished Nicholas Nickleby’ on Thursday 12 October.

<sup>27</sup> Johnson, *Olive and Stepniak*, 91.

<sup>28</sup> The trip took place over the weekend of 3 February. ‘Up late’, she wrote on 5 February. ‘Attacked Tristan without much result’.

<sup>29</sup> Arthur Mizener describes Elsie as ‘extremely orderly’ (*Saddest Story*, 34). No one ever said that about Ford. Edward Garnett made an explicitly gendered related observation, as well as insulting Ford. According to his sister, he ‘amused’ them all ‘incessantly’ in 1894 in his ‘mock reverence for Elsie’s masculine powers’ while treating Ford ‘like a well-meaning baby’ (Johnson, *Olive and Stepniak*, 133).

<sup>30</sup> On 1 February and 7 February, for example.

<sup>31</sup> Richard Garnett, Olive’s father, was keeper of printed books at the British Museum and the family had accommodation on site. Barry C. Johnson, *The Diaries and Letters of Olive Garnett: An English Girl in Old Russia 1896-1897 and in England 1897-1958* (Padstow, Cornwall: Tabb House, 2019), 148. Helen Chambers shows the extent of Olive’s assistance in Ford’s *Cinque Ports* project in ‘Ford’s Reading VI:

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Researching his “foul and filthy” book’, *Last Post* 6 & 7 (Spring & Autumn 2021), 70-82.

<sup>32</sup> It is hard not to see in this some precursor of the suffragette Valentine Wannop’s politicised invasion of the golf course in Ford’s *Some Do Not...*, volume one of *Parade’s End* (1924-28). On domestic/gender politics, Ford seemed to have been a much more engaged parent than many men of his era, as I have argued elsewhere (Haslam 2020: see note 16).

<sup>33</sup> *Stories from de Maupassant*, Elsie’s translation of nine stories, was published by Duckworth in 1903. For more on Elsie and Conrad, see Helen Chambers, *Conrad’s Reading: Space, Time, Networks* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 190-197.

<sup>34</sup> I was an undergraduate at the University of Liverpool and my university halls bore their name.

<sup>35</sup> This is advertised in the back of Ford’s biography of Madox Brown. Ford also notes that Rathbone was studied for the head of John of Gaunt in Brown’s famous painting, ‘Wycliffe on his Trial’ (1885), and one of only two personal testimonies he publishes in Appendix A of *Ford Madox Brown* is by Rathbone – an extract from a letter in which he describes ‘adopting Madox Brown as my master’ (374, 428).

<sup>36</sup> This description is Douglas Goldring’s (*Last Pre-Raphaelite*, 73). In an unpublished letter dated 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1899 Ford wrote to Elsie as follows: ‘Robert has settled that loan [...] so if you like to send the bills down to me [...] I shall pay everything we owe in Hythe tomorrow’ (Cornell #4605 / 34.006).

<sup>37</sup> Olive tells us Rathbone came to breakfast with Robert soon after the Hueffer court case had played out, in June 1894 (Johnson, *Olive and Stepniak*, 94).

<sup>38</sup> *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad. Volume 2: 1898-1902*, edited by Frederick R. Karl and Laurence Davies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 110.

<sup>39</sup> Jessie Conrad, *Joseph Conrad and his Circle* (London: Jarrolds, 1935), 66.

<sup>40</sup> Olive’s diary (Johnson *Olive and Stepniak*, 128).

<sup>41</sup> Ford received an advance of £150 for *Ford Madox Brown*, a ‘handsome’ sum for an advance in those days, Goldring notes (60).

<sup>42</sup> There is an archive at the Fine Art Society. Though it has been thoroughly checked, no formal record of this aspect of the sale remains. My thanks to Associate Director Patrick Duffy for his assistance in this matter.

<sup>43</sup> Elizabeth Robins Pennell, *Joseph Pennell: Life and Letters* vol. 1 (Boston, MA: Little Brown, 1919), 117.

<sup>44</sup> Cornell #4605 / 44.082 – letter misattributed to Arnold Bennett in the archive.

<sup>45</sup> <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O308988/mask-of-cromwell/>.

<sup>46</sup> His wife recalled in her book that ‘for the Cromwell, most of the architecture and landscape he did himself. He unearthed engraved portraits long lying forgotten in the Bodleian, discovered rare miniatures in private collections, followed the trail of previous documents presented by Cromwell lovers’ (*Joseph Pennell*, 337). Readers can judge the results for themselves

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112001985834&seq=28&q1=Morley>  
Grateful thanks to the editor for identifying this link.

<sup>47</sup> Vol. LIX, No. 1, 3-23. Brown’s painting is on p. 14 captioned ‘Oliver Cromwell on his Farm at St Ives’.

<sup>48</sup> The original ‘design for a projected painting’, as Mary Bennett calls it (176), was titled ‘St Ives, A. D. 1636’. It was only formally taken up, and as a separate work, when commissioned in 1873 by Brockbank. The early design was given to John P. Seddon in 1856/57. Bennett’s *Catalogue* provides details of the several other studies,

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sketches or duplicates of Madox Brown's Cromwell works. Ford discusses Madox Brown's first trip to St Ives in 1856 to 'see Cromwell localities' (*Ford Madox Brown*, 126).

<sup>49</sup> A Garnett family purchase possibly released the painting back to Ford, Bennett's notes suggest. Robert Garnett had bought the head of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, we know.

<sup>50</sup> Hollyer was a well-known photographer of Pre-Raphaelite figures and works <https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/frederick-hollyer-life-and-work>.