

Ford
Madox
Ford
Society

Newsletter 10

1 October 2003

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

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| | |
|---|----|
| • Forthcoming Events | 1 |
| • International Ford Madox Ford Studies | 3 |
| • News and Publications | 3 |
| • Editorial | 8 |
| • Renewal of Subscriptions | 8 |
| • Paul Skinner, 'On Names' | 10 |

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The **Annual General Meeting** of the Society, and the **Ford Madox Ford Lecture** for 2003, will both take place on afternoon of the **4th October 2003** in London. We are very fortunate to have Joseph Wiesenfarth as this year's lecturer. Joe has recently completed a book (to be published soon) on Ford and his personal and artistic involvement with four women. The venue for both the AGM and the Lecture is the **Council Room, King's College London, the Strand, London WC2**. The easiest way to find the room is to go through the revolving doors into the main entrance from the Strand into the Strand Building, and follow the signs. The Council Room is actually in the Main Building, on 'C' floor, which is on the same level as the 2nd floor of the Strand Building.

3.00 Annual General Meeting

5.00 Ford Madox Ford Lecture: Joseph Wiesenfarth:

'Ford Madox Ford, A Womanly Man: Violet Hunt, Jean Rhys, Stella Bowen, Janice Biala'

If you have any items for the agenda of the AGM, please contact our secretary, Heather Beck, on h.beck@mmu.ac.uk

Seminar on Life Writing

Joe Wiesenfarth will also be giving an informal talk on the writing of his book to inaugurate a new series of seminars on Life Writings sponsored by the Department of English at King's College London. This meeting is on Thursday 9th October, from 6.30 to 8.00 p. m., in room 238,

second floor, Strand Building, King's College London. Members of the Society are welcome to attend.

Preliminary Announcement and Call for Papers for a Conference in 2004.

The Conference will probably be held in Manchester in the early summer of 2004. Details will be announced in the next Newsletter. Selected papers will comprise the fifth volume of *International Ford Madox Ford Studies*.

Ford Madox Ford's Englishness

A conflictual idea of Englishness is central to Ford Madox Ford's oeuvre. It is articulated at its most overt, idealised and (ironically) outrageous at the beginning of *Parade's End*:

The two young men – they were of the English public official class – sat in the perfectly appointed railway carriage.... Their class administered the world, not merely the newly created Imperial Department of Statistics under Sir Reginald Ingleby. If they saw policemen misbehave, railway porters lack civility, an insufficiency of street lamps, defects in public services or in foreign countries, they saw to it, either with nonchalant Balliol voices, or with letters to the *Times*.... Or they wrote...articles taking under their care, manners, the Arts, diplomacy, inter-Imperial trade, or the personal reputations of deceased statesmen and men of letters.

Of course, Ford's pursuit of the English was by no means always so focused on the young, male ruling class. From pre-Raphaelite salons to the Tommies' Great War trenches, from Holbein and Henry VIII to Lloyd George and D. H. Lawrence, from Edward Ashburnham to Sylvia Tietjens and Valentine Wannop, from the soul of London to the heart of the country, or from Katherine Howard to Captain MacKechnie – Ford's Englishness comprehends a variety of historical characters, place-myths, personalities, classes and imaginary characters. The son of an immigrant father himself – and someone who would enlist in the British Army against his paternal Vaterland – Ford would develop a lifelong fascination with the Englishness of English life not unlike that of a later writer of Germanic stock, (Sir) John Betjeman(n). It is this fascination, as expressed in Ford's fairy-stories, editorship of the *English Review*, poems, novels, essays and regional studies which the projected book will explore, stressing its rootedness in contemporary social realities yet concentrating on the literary constructedness of Ford's England and his moral ambivalence towards the historical reality.

The project conveniently coincides with a recent, post-Devolution interest in a surviving or re-consolidated Englishness, and its relation to 'Britain' in the third millennium. 'Whither England?', as it might have been phrased in 1905, is a topic of much media and critical debate one hundred years on. In the last few years there have been many books on the topic, including John Lucas's *England and Englishness* (1991), Linda Colley's *Britons* (1992), Bill Bryson's *Notes From A small Island* (1995), David Cannadine's *History in Our Time* (1998), Jeremy Paxman's *The English* (1998), Norman Davies's *The Isles: A History* (1999), Michael Wood's *In Search of England* (1999) and Simon Schama's *A History of Britain* (Vol. I, 2000). Great Britain may have lost an Empire and a defined world-role, but it is rediscovering an English heritage and – from the ubiquitous Garden Centre to far-flung environmental projects – fashioned a 'virtual' Englishness as remaining green and pleasant land. This project has been aided by the 'New British Social Geography', flourishing throughout the 1990s, where place-myth, communitarianism, conservation, urban renewal and the general cultural meaning of 'habitus' has been a central preoccupation. Such developments have had their more populist manifestations in TV gardening and historical programmes, in surveys and newspaper articles about English nationality, in the multicultural emphasis in, for instance, *The New British Poetry* (1988) and *The New Poetry* (1993) or the extension of social realism into poly-ethnic fictions like Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (2000). The recent reinvention of Englishness as locality,

heritage, community, history and environment appears quite fully in tune with Ford's textual emphases – from the Sussex Cinque Ports to Yorkshire's Groby Great Tree. The book would seek to foster a reciprocal 'dialogue' between contemporary perceptions and Fordian ideals and critique of an English society and culture.

Ford Madox Ford's Englishness will aim to cover the main span of the author's writing career, stressing Ford's construction of Englishness in various genres and including contributions from both established and aspiring Ford scholars. Although Ford's unique personal placement within the English scene will be acknowledged, the emphasis of the volume will be literary-critical rather than biographical. It is hoped there will be substantial chapters on, especially, the Tudor era, agrarian and city place-myths, religion and politics, England and the 'Other', Pre-Raphaelitism, the Edwardian moment and the Great War. Emphasis will be placed on the literary techniques used to represent Englishness within a 'British' English tradition. It is envisaged that there will be some ten chapters of approximately 7,000 words each, with an Introduction – resulting in a book of about 80,000 words. The model will be scholarly but accessible criticism, with a minimum of 'theory', except that pertaining to the formation of nationality. So far there are accepted chapter plans for Ford's autobiographical writings, the *Fifth Queen* trilogy and his 'Pre-Raphaelitism'. Prospective offerings should include a brief chapter-plan and a short CV. All proposals should include a SAE, two copies of the material sent and be posted to Prof Dennis Brown, Dept of Humanities, University of Hertfordshire, Watford Campus, Wall Hall, Aldenham, HERTS WD2 8AT, UK. All proposals will be welcome and treated with sympathetic attention. The deadline for completed scripts will be September 2004.

Dennis Brown and Jenny Plastow

INTERNATIONAL FORD MADOX FORD STUDIES

The second volume, *Ford Madox Ford's Modernity*, edited by Robert Hampson and Max Saunders, is currently in press, and will be distributed to paid-up members later this year. It explores the relation between modern writing and modern experience. It examines how his prose registers the impact on society and the arts of new technologies, such as railways and telephones. It demonstrates how Ford's writing reflects, and elaborates, new conceptions of subjectivity, gender, nation and empire. And it establishes his contribution to the growing sense of crisis in the fields of history, epistemology, and representation. It includes a foreword by Sir Frank Kermode, and essays by twenty leading Ford scholars on a wide range of his fiction and criticism, giving particular attention to *The Good Soldier* and to his responses to modern war.

NEWS AND PUBLICATIONS

Report on the Ford Madox Ford Conference in Madison, Wisconsin:

"History and Representation in Ford Madox Ford's Writings", 20-22 September 2002.

It was a long journey - though nowhere near as long for me as for the resourceful Jason Harding, who seemed to have travelled halfway around the world and was preparing to do the same again in the reverse direction. And I have relatively few memories of the material details much beloved by travel writers: some fine buildings, a dizzying number of fraternity houses and a population seeming to consist almost entirely of students plus a few grandmothers also wearing football shirts after the big game; walking early in the morning beside Lake Mendota with its complement of thirteen ducks always in evidence on the grass near the tiny shingle beach; the Hooper Sailing Club, a pleasing if slightly inaccurate tribute - and, of course, Nick's bar (a word to the wise). The overwhelming impression was of the hospitality, the careful preparations, the

great pains that had been taken to ensure that everyone attending the conference was comfortable, well-fed and well-watered and made welcome. I certainly felt at ease and thoroughly well cared for from the moment I arrived. The whole affair was an extraordinary testament to Joe Wiesenfarth and his legion of helpers, and the University authorities, to all of whom we owe great thanks for their unstinting generosity. Joe and Louise were dispensing hospitality before the conference was even under way. Alas, I was sitting with a dry throat on the coach from Chicago while ice clinked in tall glasses thirty miles ahead of me.

There were twenty-five papers and my report of them can't avoid being highly subjective and selective. On Friday, the two panels were 'Ford's Romances' and 'Ford's Other Muses'; Saturday offered 'Historical Ford', 'Political Ford' and 'Autobiographical Ford'; and Sunday boasted 'Contexts for *Parade's End* and 'Ford's War and Peace'. These give, I hope, a hint of the range of the papers given.

The four plenary sessions featured Mary Gordon, Nicholas Delbanco (on *The March of Literature*), Alan Judd and, opening the conference, Patrick Parrinder (on Ford and the spirit of Edwardian England). I think that Alan Judd's stands out most for me, not least because I had cunningly reread *The Devil's Own Work* on the flight from England. The other papers were as listed on the programme publicized in the weeks leading up to the conference, with a few inevitable but usually minor changes in subject. The overall standard was, I think, was very high and I'm already looking forward to reading at leisure several of those papers, heard and appreciated but imperfectly recalled. A remarkable number of Ford's themes, contexts and individual *books* were discussed, alluded to and set in comparison with other British, European and American writers. The following brief survey is, I stress again, firmly influenced by personal bias, incompetent note-taking and an erratic memory - apologies to those whom I haven't squeezed in.

Jason Harding's paper on *The Fifth Queen*, among its other pleasures, used extracts from the novel very effectively, and Robert McDonough was both interesting and *funny* on *Mister Bosphorus and the Muses*, a hitherto neglected work. (A few other rarely visible Ford works had an airing: Dominique Lemarchal touching on *The Cinque Ports* and *Ancient Lights*, for instance, and Sara Haslam addressing Ford's 'self-construction' in *The Rash Act* and *Henry for Hugh*). Mary Gordon spoke on Ford's legacy in the writings of four American women writers and was engagingly frank about her Ford 'obsession'. Elena Lamberti overcame the disaster of the airline temporarily mislaying some of her elegant clothes in a vanished suitcase to deliver a very successful paper on Ford and 'objective truth', and Angus Wrenn was his customary entertaining self on Holbein, history and Henry James. I recall Anthony Monta's piece on Ford in the context of 'National Efficiency' partly because that dismal phrase didn't exactly arouse my expectations but, nevertheless, I enjoyed it. Alan Judd's talk I already had high hopes for, which were triumphantly exceeded. Max Saunders on Ford's *Critical Essays*, skilfully put paid to any lingering doubts that Ford can be truly funny. (The unashamed hedonist has to report that one of the enduring memories was furnished in the course of that evening: dinner in the company of Mary Gordon, Lorrie Moore and Nicholas Delbanco.) On Sunday, I thought Ken Loosli's paper on Sylvia Tietjens and the Lilith myth very interesting and well done. Vita Fortunati's comparative piece on the impact of War on Ford, Hemingway, and Remarque was notable; and Jonathan Boulter's 'Trauma and History in Ford's *No Enemy*' was one of the very best, for me. At the last gasp, Andrzej Gasiorek, keeping one eye on the clock and the other on his paper - something of a feat in itself - maintained an impressive *sang-froid* as the tables and chairs were (not quite literally) stacked around him.

All in all, this was a memorable and thoroughly successful event. The setting and the facilities, including our accommodation at the Lowell Center, could hardly have been bettered. The company was excellent and quite a few exchanges were continued, by email, across thousands of miles, in the ensuing weeks and months. Food, wine, books, conversation: these are familiar

elements in the Fordian ideogram. I'm very glad they are and surely everybody present was similarly glad.

Paul Skinner

New Honorary Members

A warm welcome to our two new Honorary Members: the poet Hans Magnus Enzensberger, and the critic Sylvère Monod.

Parade's End on Radio

BBC Radio 3 broadcast a version of *Parade's End*, dramatized by Robert Forrester, on 18 May 2003, starring Tom Goodman-Hill, Ruth Gemmell and Katherine Igoe. It was reviewed in the *Times Literary Supplement* by Paul Bailey (20 June 2003, p. 21), who said the dramatization 'made one understand why it deserves to endure'. Would anyone like to review the production for a future issue of the Newsletter?

A Rare Sighting of Ford on the London Stage!

After Mrs Rochester, a powerful play about Jean Rhys, written and directed by Polly Teale for the acclaimed Shared Experience company, includes Ford as a character. He is played with authority and panache by Simon Thorp. The play opened at the Lyric, Hammersmith from 22 April – 10 May 2003, and has transferred to the Duke of York's Theatre, St Martin's Lane, until 1 November. Diana Quick stars as Jean Rhys when older; Madeleine Potter plays the younger Rhys. They are not only often together on stage, but also joined by the character of Bertha Rochester from Rhys's novel *Wide Sargasso Sea*.

Ignominy

Terry Eagleton, reviewing Derwent May's *Critical Times: The History of The Times Literary Supplement* (Harper Collins, 2001) in the Times Higher Education Supplement (30 November 2001) mentions *The Good Soldier* as one of the TLS's 'ignominious misses' – books unappreciated by the paper. As always, Ford is in good company, with: James's *The Ambassadors*, Lawrence's *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, Eliot's *Prufrock* volume, and Elias Canetti's *Auto-da-Fé*.

Recent Books

Congratulations to Jörg Rademacher for the volume he edited, *Modernism and the Individual Talent. Re-Canonizing Ford Madox Ford (Hueffer)* (Münster – Hamburg – London: Lit, 2002), which has been warmly received. The Belfast writer and critic Danny Morrison has said of it:

Modernism and the Individual Talent "is written in memory of Ford but, appositely, is also dedicated to the late W. G. Sebald: the former described as a 'European writer', the latter as a 'writer of Europe'. It is a subtle distinction which echoes Ford's own observations that despite the 'eternal principles for all the arts' the application of those principles are 'eternally changing, or eternally revolving.' For sure, it is the application of those principles which gives life to literature and gives challenge to the critic whose work is never done. These essays, most of which began life as contributions to symposia on Ford, and aimed at correcting the neglected influences of the German side to his character, are not just for devotees of Ford but capture the exciting times of the Modernist movement in which he lived and moved and significantly helped mould."

Roger Poole comments: "*Modernism and the Individual Talent* is indeed a success on a scale which I had not expected. [Rademacher has] done more to establish a base for the history, historiography, Reception Theory and general *Quellenforschung*, than any comparable collection

known to me. In particular, [Rademacher's] own essay blazes the trail for a lot more work according the same lines, as does [his] insistence throughout that we should regard Ford as a *European* writer."

Copies can be ordered from lit@lit-verlag.de at a cost of 25,90.
ISBN 3-8258-4311-4. 224 pp.

Congratulations also to Laura Colombino, whose *Ford Madox Ford: Visione/visualita e scrittura* has just been published (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2003).

And last but by no means least, double congratulations to Sara Haslam, on the publication of her excellent book *Fragmenting Modernism: Ford Madox Ford, the Novel and the Great War* (Manchester University Press, 2002); and on the birth of her daughter Maisie!

Ford is featured in the British Museum as one of the authors who worked in the Reading Room there. Visitors to the refurbished central court and Reading Room will see several of his books on display. As many members will be aware, the narrator of J. M. Coetzee's novel *Youth* (London: Secker & Warburg, 2002), works in the British Museum in the 1950s while researching a thesis on Ford. The editor is grateful to Ann-Marie Vinde for noting the following references to Ford in the book:

pp. 53-54:

... but the truth is he is not clever enough to go on with mathematics. Literature may not be as noble as mathematics, but at least there is nothing about literature that intimidates him. As for the topic of his research, he toys with the idea of proposing the *Cantos* of Ezra Pound, but in the end goes for the novels of Ford Madox Ford. To read Ford one does at least not need to know Chinese.

Ford, born Hueffer, grandson of the painter Ford Madox Brown, published his first book in 1891 at the age of eighteen. From then on, until his death in 1939, he earned his bread solely by literary pursuits. Pound called him the greatest prose stylist of his day and excoriated the English public for ignoring him. He himself has thus far read five of Ford's novels – *The Good Soldier* and the four books constituting *Parade's End* – and is convinced that Pound is right. He is dazzled by the complicated, staggered chronology of Ford's plots, by the cunning with which a note, casually struck and artlessly repeated, will stand revealed, chapters later, as a major motif. He is moved too by the love between Christopher Tietjens and the much younger Valentine Wannop, a love which Tietjens abstains from consummating, despite Valentine's readiness, because (says Tietjens) a fellow doesn't go about deflowering virgins. Tietjens's ethos of laconic common decency seems to him wholly admirable, the quintessence of Englishness.

If Ford could write five such masterpieces, he tells himself, surely there must be further masterworks, as yet unrecognized, among the sprawling and only just catalogued corpus of his writings, masterworks that he can help bring to light. He embarks at once on a reading of the Ford oeuvre, spending entire Saturdays in the Reading Room of the British Museum, as well as the two evenings a week when the Reading Room stays open late. Though the early works turn out to be disappointing, he presses on, excusing Ford because he must still have been learning his craft.

One Saturday he falls into conversation with the reader at the next desk, and they have tea together in the Museum tearoom. Her name is Anna; she is Polish by origin and still has a faint accent. She works as a researcher, she tells him; visits to the Reading Room are part of her job. She is at present exploring materials for a life of John Speke, discoverer of the source of the Nile. For his part, he tells her about Ford and Ford's collaboration with Joseph Conrad. ...

As they speak he wonders: Is it an omen that in the Reading Room of the British Museum he, a student of F.M. Ford, should meet a countrywoman of Conrad's? Is Anna his Destined One? ...

p. 112:

WITH FREEDOM TO do as he pleases, he has soon read to the end the sprawling corpus of Ford's writings. The time is nigh for him to deliver his judgment. What will he say? In the sciences one is permitted to report negative results, failures to confirm hypotheses. How about the arts? If he has nothing new to say about Ford, would the correct, the honourable action be to confess he has made a mistake, resign his studentship, return his bursary; or, in the place of a thesis, would it be permissible to turn in a report on what a let-down his subject has been, how disappointed he is in his hero?

Briefcase in hand, he strolls out of the British Museum and joins the crowd passing down Great Russell Street: thousands of souls, not one of whom cares a fig what he thinks of Ford Madox Ford or anything else. ...

p. 113:

Not knowing what, if anything, he wants to say about Ford, he lies abed later and later in the mornings. When finally he sits down at his desk he is unable to concentrate. ...

pp. 135-136:

The question is, is Ford Madox Ford, on whom he is lavishing so much time, an authentic master? Pound promoted Ford as the sole heir in England of Henry James and Flaubert. But would Pound have been so sure of himself had he read the whole Ford oeuvre? If Ford was such a fine writer, why, mixed in with his five good novels, is there so much rubbish?

Though he is supposed to be writing about Ford's fiction, he finds Ford's minor novels less interesting than his books about France. To Ford there can be no greater happiness than to pass one's days by the side of a good woman in a sunlit house in the south of France, with an olive tree at the back door and a good *vin de pays* in the cellar. Provence, says Ford, is the cradle of all that is gracious and lyrical and humane in European civilization; as for the women of Provence, with their fiery temperament and their aquiline good looks they put the women of the north to shame.

Is Ford to be believed? Will he himself ever see Provence? Will the fiery Provencal women pay any attention to him, with his notable lack of fire?

Ford says that the civilization of Provence owes its lightness and grace to a diet of fish and olive oil and garlic. In his new lodgings in Highgate, out of deference to Ford, he buys fish fingers instead of sausages, fries them in olive oil instead of butter, sprinkles garlic salt over them.

The thesis he is writing will have nothing new to say about Ford, that has become clear. Yet he does not want to abandon it. Giving up undertakings is his father's way. He is not going to be like his father. So he commences the task of reducing his hundreds of pages of notes in tiny handwriting to a web of connected prose. ...

p. 155:

Why did people not tell him Beckett wrote novels? How could he have imagined he wanted to write in the manner of Ford when Beckett was around all the time? In Ford there has always been an element of the stuffed shirt that he has disliked but has been hesitant to acknowledge, something to do with the value Ford placed on knowing where in the West End to buy the best motoring gloves or how to tell a Médoc from a Beaune; whereas Beckett is classless, or outside class, as he himself would prefer to be.

* * *

p. 160:

He has his books and his projects (the Ford thesis, now nearing completion, the dismantling of logic) for the empty evenings, cricket at midday, and, every second week, a spell at the Royal Hotel with the luxury of nights alone with Atlas, the most redoubtable computer in the world. Could a bachelor's life, if it has to be a bachelor's life, be any better?

EDITORIAL

Since the publication of Julian Barnes's letter about visiting Ford's grave, I'm glad to report that Roger Davies has written to say that he too has been, and done some further essential cleaning and maintenance work. He has also kindly supplied photographs of the Hotel Le Cheval Blanc in Honfleur where Ford stayed during his last illness, and of the Clinique St François where he died. These photographs, together with Julian Barnes's of Ford's grave, will be added the society's website soon.

I'm also very grateful to Paul Skinner and Ann-Marie Vinde for providing material for this issue.

Max Saunders

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

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

Michela A. Calderaro, Via Amba Aradam, 12, 30173 Mestre-Venice, Italy
Tel: 39-041-534-7801, Fax: 39-041-534-7807, Email: michela.calderaro@scfor.univ.trieste.it

RENEWALS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you have not yet paid your subscription for 2003, but wish to remain a member and to receive a copy of this year's volume of *International Ford Madox Ford Studies*, please don't delay, and send a cheque for the appropriate rate (details below) to either:

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

Email: S.J.Haslam@open.ac.uk
Tel. 01 908 652 472
Fax 01 908 653 750

Or (if in US\$) to:

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

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

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| Category: | Individual <input type="checkbox"/> | Concessions <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Member Organisations <input type="checkbox"/> | Others <input type="checkbox"/> | |
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| It is a great help to the Society if members pay via a standing order at the beginning of each year. | | | |
| Paid by standing order <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Total Membership Fee Enclosed <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Date _____ | | Signature _____ | |

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

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

Rates:

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

US Dollars: Any category: \$25

Glancing through the index of Robert Ferguson's new biography of T. E. Hulme, I find that damned name again. It's not, by the way, obsessive, this habit of mine, of turning to the indexes of new books (or, indeed, old ones) and looking up 'Ford, Ford Madox' or 'Hueffer, Ford Madox: see 'Ford'. No more than an idiosyncrasy, one shared, I'm sure, by many readers and admirers of Ford. We all have ways of getting our bearings in a new book, in those moments when we're standing by shelf or display table, idly turning pages. The title, the subject, the author, for sure, but other, sometimes less tangible things. I weigh the book in my hand as physical object, the heft of it, the jacket design, the quality of paper, of print; sometimes—yes—I sniff it. I look at the publisher and, certainly, I look at the index. The pleasure principle bulks large. If it's a book purporting to be about modernist literature yet has far more pages given to 'Foucault' or 'Zizek' or 'Lacan' than to Pound, Yeats or Joyce, I return it sternly to its place. If it includes names which don't occur too often, say F.S. Flint or Holbrook Jackson or Mary Butts, I retain it a little longer. And yes, I look for 'Ford'. I look for 'Ford' and, more often than not, wonder *why so many people cannot spell 'Madox'*. They can spell Akhmatova and Huysmans and O'Faolain and even Hueffer but 'Madox' defeats them. Indexers, editors (the few who still exist and actually edit in these straitened times), proof-readers and typesetters, all suffer from this problem, from broadsheet reviews to the indexes of scholarly books (*The Cambridge Companion to Henry James*, David Ellis's *D.H. Lawrence: Dying Game 1922-1930* and no, it's not just Cambridge University Press but these two came first to hand). Yet my copy of *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* lists no 'Madox'. My (much more thumbed) *Penguin Companion to Literature: 1* lists no 'Madox'. And, while Brenda Maddox has achieved a certain celebrity for her biographies of Nora Joyce and the D.H. Lawrences, I don't think she can be the colossal 'Madox' who bestrides the mental landscapes of so many literary professionals. I can only assume that while some names scream 'Difficult!' and hold the wary eye and mind, Madox is one name we can all spell quite easily, and, consequently, don't. Ford's grandfather, I should add, is more kindly treated: yet, surely, it's the 'Ford Madox' that makes his name memorable, not the 'Brown'. Presumably, these erratic wordsmiths make no connection between the two Ford Madoxes ('Look - this writer bloke's name is almost the same as the painter's') and, not having heard of the writer, charitably give him an extra 'd' to save confusion.

They lack, of course—and probably thankfully—the inventiveness which Ezra Pound could bring to such occasions as a letter or even, sometimes, a brief reference: Fordissimus, my deah ole Freiherr von Bluggerwitzkoff, late baron of the Sunk Ports etc., my deah ole Freiherr von Grumpus ZU und VON Bieberstein, Reverend father in gawd, carissime mihi mentor, Reverend F, dear Hesiod, dear Gruberroruntopus, chere Vielle Feve, Abba, my father, Forty Mad-Dogs Hueffer, madOX. And yes, on reflection, I think 'madOX' is the one to cultivate if people really can't get his name right. Punctuation not quite there but *the spelling is right*.

The other way is to make him better known. So, to all those who labour in this particular vineyard: keep it up. The books, the essays, the reviews; the conversations, the brief or lengthy references, even the jokes. Of course, there may always be a resurgence of interest in the work of Elizabeth Madox Roberts, whom Ford himself admired. Then people across this country, working on indexes, can say: 'Look, this writer bloke's middle name is almost the same as that American woman.' Or he may become 'Ford Roberts Ford'. Still, it all helps. Doesn't it?

Paul Skinner