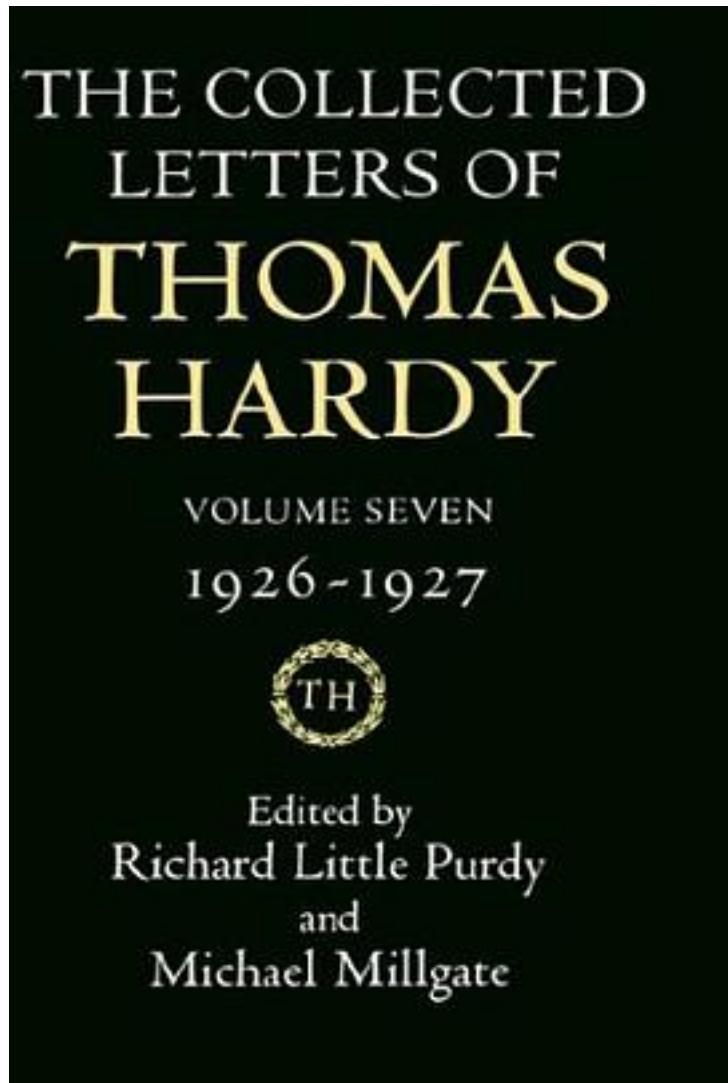


# The Collected Letters of Thomas Hardy



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The opening section of this seventh and final volume of the definitive edition of Thomas Hardy's letters covers the period from January 1926 to December 1927: his last letter, to Edmund Gosse, was written on Christmas Day 1927 and he died seventeen days later, on 11 January 1928. Although few of his long-standing personal correspondences were actively kept up during these last two years of his life, Hardy maintained (especially when writing to Sir Frederick Macmillan) a lively and practical interest in all aspects of his work and career; he also responded, usually with a courteous refusal, to the many requests and enquiries that his fame inevitably attracted. The second section is devoted to letters which became available too late for publication in their correct chronological sequence in earlier volumes of the edition; those now added date mostly from the nineteenth century, and include a series of letters to officials of the Duchy of Cornwall about the purchase of land on which Max Gate was built, as well as numerous individual letters of considerable interest and importance. This volume contains more than 350 letters, the great majority of them previously unpublished, which are supplemented, as before, by scrupulous annotation and extensive cross-referencing; by a chronology covering the whole of Hardy's career; and by an index of recipients of the letters included. As the concluding volume, however, it also incorporates an extensive General Index covering the texts and annotations of the entire edition.

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