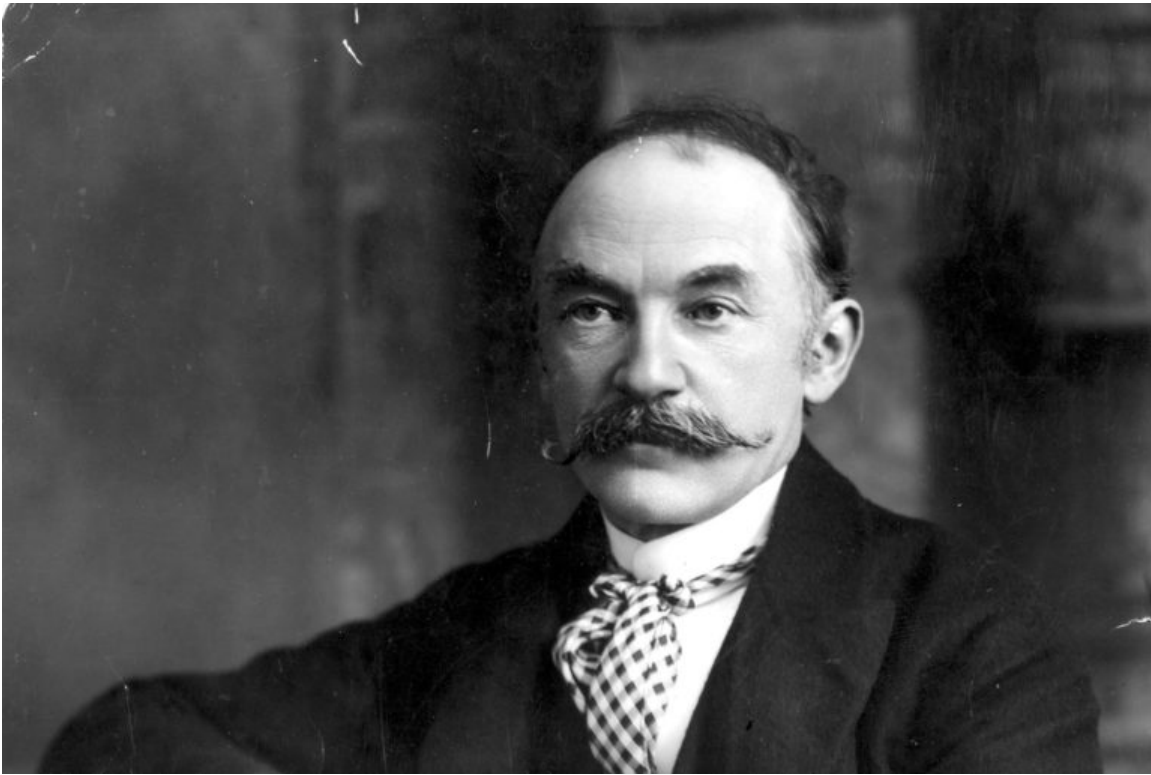


Thomas Hardy



Thomas Hardy was born in Dorset County, England, where he studied architecture, but he later quit to pursue a literary career. In order to gain financial stability, Hardy first published novels, including such classics as *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. Once he was well known and well off financially, he returned to poetry, his first love. Hardy's dark, bleak verse was at odds with his Victorian contemporaries who tended to present more optimistic perspectives on life.