

# The Serial Publication in Britain of the Novels of Wilkie Collins

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## ABSTRACT

This paper has two purposes. 1) To present for the first time complete and reliable data on the serialization between 1856 and 1889 of all of Wilkie Collins's nineteen novels published initially in parts in British periodicals, including details of serial divisions where not readily available elsewhere. 2) To offer a brief discussion of the socio-economic and literary implications for Collins's work of the sequence of periodicals in which the serializations appeared, noting four overlapping stages: in weekly family magazines; in monthly literary magazines; in weekly metropolitan newspapers; and syndicated in weekly provincial newspapers.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Wilkie Collins wrote his published novels from the beginning of the 1850s to the late 1880s. Throughout this period the book market was dominated by the 'library edition', that is, the uniform publication of new novels in three volumes at the prohibitive retail price of half a guinea a volume, in small print runs of often less than a thousand, sold overwhelmingly and at a discount to the circulating libraries, principally Mudie's and WH Smith's. If this system guaranteed a small but stable return to conservative publishers at a time of rapid change, and a living to marginal talents, it also severely limited the potential readership and rewards of established writers. Attempts to challenge the economic and ideological control of the circulating libraries over the market for new fiction, though frequent, were unsuccessful until shortly after Collins's death. Thus, to reach beyond the limits of the respectable bourgeois readership offered by the circulating libraries, writers needed to make use of the alternative of publication in parts, or prior serialization in periodicals, or subsequent reprints in cheap single-volume collective editions. The first was the most common solution before the mid-century following Chapman & Hall's spectacular success with Dickens's *Pickwick Papers* in 1836. The last two could be more profitably exploited, usually in combination, after the advances in printing technology of the mid-century and the repeal of the 'taxes on knowledge'--the newspaper tax in 1855 and the paper duty in 1861. In particular, the second half of the century

witnessed an extraordinary growth in all types of journals, many of which provided a ready outlet for all levels of serial fiction.<sup>1</sup>

Nearly all of Collins's full-length novels were issued initially in serial form in a variety of such periodicals, the exceptions being his first three published novels which made their initial appearance in library editions.<sup>2</sup> The record of this prior serial publication has long remained incomplete and/or inaccurate. This is particularly true in the case of Collins's later novels, many of which were first issued serially in provincial newspapers.<sup>3</sup> This was perhaps of no great consequence when attention to Collins's work was limited largely to *The Woman in White* and *The Moonstone*, and perhaps the other major sensation novels of the 1860s; but now that the growth in Victorian Studies and Women's Studies has helped to bring his career as a whole back into perspective, there is urgent need of an complete, accurate and detailed record. The present paper, which is an outgrowth from work on a modern critical edition of one of the later novels *The Evil Genius*,<sup>4</sup> attempts in the following section to provide such a record, with two minor limitations. Firstly, information is restricted to serial publication in Britain, although many of Collins's works were serialized virtually simultaneously in periodicals in North America, notably *Harper's Weekly*, *Harper's New Monthly* and the *Canadian Monthly*. And secondly, details of serials divisions are only provided where not readily available elsewhere. However, the information that is provided is based in each case on a careful check back to bound volumes or microfilms of the original journals. Here the advice and assistance of the staff of the British Library at Bloomsbury and Colindale is gratefully acknowledged.<sup>5</sup>

Such a record is valuable in both literary and socio-economic terms. Both the constituency of readers provided by particular periodicals at particular historical moments, and the structural demands of the specific length and frequency of serial parts, were likely to exert a material influence on the process of writing.<sup>6</sup> It is no accident, for example, that the sensation novel, a genre foregrounding mystery and suspense, came to literary prominence in tandem with the new literary monthlies of the 1860s. To read Victorian fiction without an awareness of this context is to risk ahistorical judgements. In addition, the changing range of periodicals available to novelists for serial publication in the second half of the century is important evidence of the revolution in the publishing industry then taking place, and in particular of the gradual opening up the divide between literary and commercial modes of production and reception. In both these respects Collins's work provides a particularly interesting case study, standing as it so often did on the dangerous edge between serious and popular genres, between an elite and a mass readership. These points will be discussed in more detail in the final section of the paper.

## 2. DATA

### *I. List of Works Serialized*

(with details of both serial and volume publication, including serial divisions where not recorded in VANN; chapter numbers refer in each case to the undated [1900] New York Collier 30-volume collected edition of the works of Wilkie Collins, photographically reprinted by A.M.S Press, New York in 1970, but are given in Arabic rather than Roman numerals for convenience; the symbol \* indicates the continuation of a chapter over the serial break)

#### 1. *The Dead Secret*

Serialized in 23 weekly parts in *Household Words* Jan 3-Jun 13 1857 (exclusive of Apr 4).

Serial divisions recorded in VANN 43-4.

Published in two volumes by Bradbury & Evans, Jun 1857.

#### 2. *The Woman in White*

Serialized in 40 weekly parts in *All the Year Round* Nov 26 1859-Aug 25 1860.

Serial divisions recorded in VANN 44-6.

Published in three volumes by Sampson Low, Aug 1860.

#### 3. *No Name*

Serialized in 45 weekly parts in *All the Year Round* Mar 15 1862-Jan 17 1863.

Serial divisions recorded in VANN 46-7.

Published in three volumes by Sampson Low, Dec 1862.

#### 4. *Armada*

Serialized in 20 monthly parts in the *Cornhill* Nov 1864-Jun 1866.

Serial divisions recorded in VANN 48.

Published in two volumes by Smith Elder, May 1866.

#### 5. *The Moonstone*

Serialized in 32 weekly parts in *All the Year Round* Jan 4-Aug 8 1868.

Serial divisions recorded in VANN 48-50.

Published in three volumes by Tinsley, Jul 1868.

#### 6. *Man and Wife*

Serialized in 37 weekly parts in *Cassell's Magazine*, possibly 20 Nov 1869-30 July 1870.<sup>7</sup>

Serial Divisions:

1	<i>Prologue</i>	1-4		<i>1st Scene</i>	1-2
2		5-9 &	3		3-4

<b>4</b>		5-6	<b>22</b>		36
<b>5</b>		7-8	<b>23</b>		37-38
<b>6</b>	<i>2nd Scene</i>	9	<b>24</b>		38* &
<b>7</b>		10-12		<i>8th Scene</i>	39
<b>8</b>		12*-13	<b>25</b>	<i>9th Scene</i>	40
<b>9</b>	<i>3rd Scene</i>	14-16	<b>26</b>	<i>10th Scene</i>	41
<b>10</b>	<i>4th Scene</i>	17-18	<b>27</b>	<i>11th Scene</i>	42-43
<b>11</b>		19	<b>28</b>	<i>12th Scene</i>	44
<b>12<sup>8</sup></b>		20	<b>29</b>	<i>13th Scene</i>	45
<b>13</b>		21	<b>30</b>	<i>14th Scene</i>	46
<b>14</b>		22	<b>31</b>		46* &
<b>15</b>		23		<i>15th Scene</i>	47
<b>16</b>		24-25	<b>32</b>	<i>16th Scene</i>	48-49
<b>17</b>		26-27	<b>33</b>		50-51
<b>18</b>		28 &	<b>34</b>		52-53
	<i>5th Scene</i>	29-30	<b>35</b>		54
<b>19</b>	<i>6th Scene</i>	31	<b>36</b>		54*-55
<b>20</b>		32-33	<b>37<sup>9</sup></b>		55*-57 &
<b>21</b>		33* &		<i>Epilogue</i>	1-2
	<i>7th Scene</i>	34-35			

Published in three volumes by F.S. Ellis, Jun 1870.

### 7. *Poor Miss Finch*

Serialized in 26 weekly parts in *Cassell's Magazine*, probably 2 Sep 1871-24 Feb 1872.<sup>10</sup>

Serial divisions:

<b>1</b>	<i>Part 1st</i>	1-4	<b>15</b>	<i>Part 2nd</i>	34-35
<b>2</b>		5-7	<b>16</b>		35*-36
<b>3</b>		8-10	<b>17</b>		37-38
<b>4</b>		11-13	<b>18</b>		38*
<b>5</b>		14-16	<b>19</b>		39-40
<b>6</b>		17-19	<b>20</b>		41-42
<b>7</b>		19*-21	<b>21</b>		43
<b>8</b>		22-23	<b>22</b>		44
<b>9</b>		24-25	<b>23</b>		45
<b>10</b>		26-27	<b>24</b>		46
<b>11</b>		28-29	<b>25</b>		47-48
<b>12</b>		30-31	<b>26</b>		49-50 &
<b>13</b>		31*-32		<i>Epilogue</i>	
<b>14</b>		33			

Published in three volumes by Bentley, Feb 1872.

8. *The New Magdalen*

Serialized in 10 monthly parts in *Temple Bar* Oct 1872-Jul 1873.

Serial divisions recorded in VANN 53.

Published in two volumes by Bentley, May 1873.

9. *The Law and the Lady*

Serialized in 26 weekly parts in the *Graphic* Sep 26 1874-Mar 13 1875.

Serial divisions recorded in VANN 53-4.

Published in three volumes by Chatto & Windus, Feb 1875.

10. *The Two Destinies*

Serialized in 9 monthly parts in *Temple Bar* Jan-Sep 1876.

Serial divisions recorded in VANN 54-5.

Published in two volumes by Chatto & Windus, Sep 1876.

11. *The Haunted Hotel*

Serialized in 6 monthly parts in *Belgravia* Jun-Nov 1878.

Serial divisions recorded in VANN 55.

Published (together with the short story 'My Lady's Money') in two volumes by Chatto & Windus, Nov 1878 (1879 on title page).

12. *The Fallen Leaves*

Serialized in 30 weekly parts in the *World* Jan 1-Jul 23 1879.

Serial divisions recorded in VANN 55-6.

Published in three volumes by Chatto & Windus, Jul 1879.

13. *Jezebel's Daughter*

Serialized in 21 weekly parts in a number of provincial newspapers, syndicated by Tillotson and Son of Bolton, including the *Bolton Weekly Journal* 13 Sep 1879-31 Jan 1880.<sup>11</sup>

Serial divisions:

<b>1</b> 13 Sep <i>Part 1st</i>	1-3	<b>12</b> 29 Nov <i>Between Parts</i>	1-3 &
<b>2</b> 20 Sep	4-6	<i>Part 2nd</i>	1-2
<b>3</b> 27 Sep	7-9	<b>13</b> 6 Dec	2*-4
<b>4</b> 4 Oct	9*-10	<b>14</b> 13 Dec	5-6
<b>5</b> 11 Oct	11-12	<b>15</b> 20 Dec	7-8
<b>6</b> 18 Oct	13-15	<b>16</b> 27 Dec	9-10
<b>7</b> 25 Oct	15*-16	<b>17</b> 3 Jan	11-12
<b>8</b> 1 Nov	17-19	<b>18</b> 10 Jan	13-14
<b>9</b> 8 Nov	20-21	<b>19</b> 17 Jan	15-17
<b>10</b> 15 Nov	22-23	<b>20</b> 24 Jan	18-19
<b>11</b> 22 Nov	24-25	<b>21</b> 31 Jan <i>Postscript</i>	1-9

Published in three volumes by Chatto & Windus, Mar 1880.

#### 14. *The Black Robe*

Serialized in 26 weekly parts in a number of provincial newspapers including the (Cardiff) *Weekly Mail* 2 Oct 1880-26 Mar 1881.<sup>12</sup>

Serial divisions:

<b>1</b> 2 Oct	<i>Before Story</i>	1-5	<b>14</b> 1 Jan	4-5
<b>2</b> 9 Oct		6-8	<b>15</b> 8 Jan	5*
<b>3</b> 16 Oct		9-10 &	<b>16</b> 15 Jan	5* &
	<i>Book 1st</i>	1		<i>Book 4th</i>
<b>4</b> 23 Oct		2-3	<b>17</b> 22 Jan	1
<b>5</b> 30 Oct		4-5	<b>18</b> 29 Jan	2-3
<b>6</b> 6 Nov		6-7	<b>19</b> 5 Feb	3*-5
<b>7</b> 13 Nov		8-9	<b>20</b> 12 Feb	<i>Book 5th</i>
<b>8</b> 20 Nov		10-11	<b>21</b> 19 Feb	1-2
<b>9</b> 27 Nov		11*-12	<b>22</b> 26 Feb	3
<b>10</b> 4 Dec		12*-13 &		4 &
	<i>Book 2nd</i>	1		<i>After Story</i>
<b>11</b> 11 Dec		2-3	<b>23</b> 5 Mar	1-2
<b>12</b> 18 Dec		4 &	<b>24</b> 12 Mar	2*
	<i>Book 3rd</i>	1	<b>25</b> 19 Mar	2*
<b>13</b> 25 Dec		2-3	<b>26</b> 26 Mar	2*

Published in three volumes by Chatto & Windus, Apr 1881.

#### 15. *Heart and Science*

Serialized in 11 monthly parts in *Belgravia* Aug 1882-Jun 1883.<sup>13</sup>

Serial divisions recorded in VANN 58.

Published in three volumes by Chatto & Windus, Apr 1883.

#### 16. *'I Say No'*

Serialized in 31 weekly parts in a number of provincial newspapers including the *Glasgow Weekly Herald* Dec 15 1883-Jul 12 1884; and also in 12 monthly parts in *London Society* Jan-Dec 1884.

Serial divisions:

*Glasgow Weekly Herald*

<b>1</b> 15 Dec	<i>Book 1st</i>	1-3	<b>9</b> 9 Feb	18-20
<b>2</b> 22 Dec		4-5	<b>10</b> 16 Feb	20*-22
<b>3</b> 29 Dec		6-7	<b>11</b> 23 Feb	23
<b>4</b> 5 Jan		8-9	<b>12</b> 1 Mar	24-25
<b>5</b> 12 Jan		10-11	<b>13</b> 8 Mar	26-27
<b>6</b> 19 Jan	<i>Book 2nd</i>	12-13	<b>14</b> 15 Mar	28-29
<b>7</b> 26 Jan		14-15	<b>15</b> 22 Mar	30-31
<b>8</b> 2 Feb		16-17	<b>16</b> 29 Mar	<i>Book 3rd</i>
				32-33

<b>17</b>	5 Apr	34-35	<b>25</b>	31 May	50-51
<b>18</b>	12 Apr	36-37	<b>26</b>	7 Jun	52-54
<b>19</b>	19 Apr <i>Book 4th</i>	38-39	<b>27</b>	14 Jun <i>Book 6th</i>	55-57
<b>20</b>	26 Apr	40-41	<b>28</b>	21 Jun <i>Book 7th</i>	58-59
<b>21</b>	3 May	42-43	<b>29</b>	28 Jun	60-62
<b>22</b>	10 May	44-45	<b>30</b>	5 Jul	63-64 &
<b>23</b>	17 May	46-47		<i>Book Last</i>	65-66
<b>24</b>	24 May	48 &	<b>31</b>	12 Jul	67 &
	<i>Book 5th</i>	49		<i>Postscript</i>	

### *London Society*

<b>1</b>	Jan <i>Book 1st</i>	1-5	<b>8</b>	Aug	40-45
<b>2</b>	Feb	6-11	<b>9</b>	Sep	46-48 &
<b>3</b>	Mar <i>Book 2nd</i>	12-17		<i>Book 5th</i>	49-51
<b>4</b>	Apr	18-23	<b>10</b>	Oct	52-54 &
<b>5</b>	May	24-27		<i>Book 6th</i>	55-57
<b>6</b>	Jun	28-31 &	<b>11</b>	Nov <i>Book 7th</i>	58-62
	<i>Book 3rd</i>	32-33	<b>12</b>	Dec	63-64 &
<b>7</b>	Jul	34-37 &		<i>Book Last</i>	65-67 &
	<i>Book 4th</i>	38-39		<i>Postscript</i>	

Published in three volumes by Chatto & Windus, Oct 1884.

### 17. *The Evil Genius*

Serialized in 21 weekly parts in a number of provincial newspapers, syndicated by Tillotson's, including the *Leigh Journal and Times* 11 Dec 1885-30 Apr 1886.<sup>14</sup> Serial divisions recorded in VANN 58-9.

Published in three volumes by Chatto & Windus, Sep 1886.

### 18. *The Legacy of Cain*

Serialized in 21 weekly parts in a number of provincial newspapers, syndicated by Tillotson's, including the *Sheffield Weekly Independent* 18 Feb-7 Jul 1888.<sup>15</sup>

Serial divisions:

<b>1</b>	18 Feb <i>1st Period</i>	1-5	<b>10</b>	21 Apr	31-32
<b>2</b>	25 Feb	1-916	<b>11</b>	28 Apr	33-35
<b>3</b>	3 Mar	10 &	<b>12</b>	5 May	36-37
	<i>2nd Period</i>	11-12	<b>13</b>	12 May	38-40
<b>4</b>	10 Mar	13-14	<b>14</b>	19 May	41-43
<b>5</b>	17 Mar	15-17	<b>15</b>	26 May	44-46
<b>6</b>	24 Mar	18-20	<b>16</b>	2 Jun	47-49
<b>7</b>	31 Mar	21-24	<b>17</b>	9 Jun	50-51 &
<b>8</b>	7 Apr	25-27		<i>3rd Period</i>	52
<b>9</b>	14 Apr	28-30	<b>18</b>	16 Jun	53-55

19 23 Jun	56-58	21 7 Jul	62-64 &
20 30 Jun	59-61		<i>Postscript</i>

Published in three volumes by Chatto & Windus, Nov 1888.

19. *Blind Love* (partly posthumous, completed by Walter Besant)  
 Serialized in 26 weekly parts in the *Illustrated London News* 6 Jul-28 Dec 1889.  
 Serial divisions recorded in VANN 59-60.  
 Published in three volumes by Chatto & Windus, Jan 1890.

## *II. List of Serializing Periodicals*

(with brief information concerning frequency, cost, content--including sub-title if any, format, origin and ownership)

A. *Household Words* (1 work: #1) WEEKLY Sat 2d.  
 A Weekly Journal'/Secular family magazine of fiction and essays.  
 Normally 24 double-column pages per issue, unillustrated.  
 Founded 1850; edited by Charles Dickens; published by Bradbury & Evans.

B. *All the Year Round* (3 works: #2-3 & 5) WEEKLY Sat 2d.  
 A Weekly Journal'/Secular family magazine of fiction and essays, successor to *Household Words*.  
 Normally 24 double-column pages per issue, unillustrated.  
 Founded 1859; edited by Charles Dickens; published by Charles Dickens with Chapman & Hall.

C. *Cassell's Magazine* (2 works: #6-7) WEEKLY Sat 1d./(MONTHLY 6d.)  
 Cheap secular family magazine of poems, fiction, and essays.  
 Normally 16 double-column pages per issue, illustrated.  
 Founded 1853 (as *Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper* until 1857); published by Cassell, Petter & Galpin.

D. *Cornhill* (1 work: #4) MONTHLY 1s.  
 High quality literary magazine, featuring two serialized novels per issue.  
 Over 150 single-column pages per issue, illustrated.  
 Founded 1860; edited by WM Thackeray until 1863; published by Smith, Elder.

E. *Temple Bar* (2 works: #8 & 10) MONTHLY 1s.  
 A London Magazine for Town and Country Readers'/Middlebrow literary magazine, successor to *Bentley's Miscellany*.  
 Generally 128 single-column pages per issue, illustrated.  
 Founded 1860; edited by George Bentley; published by Bentley.

F. *Belgravia* (2 works: #11 & 15) MONTHLY 1s.  
An Illustrated Magazine'/Middlebrow literary magazine.  
Generally 144 single-column pages per issue, illustrated.  
Founded 1866; edited by ME Braddon; published by Chatto & Windus.

G. *London Society* (1 work: #16) MONTHLY 1s.  
An Illustrated Magazine of Light and Amusing Literature for the Hours of Relaxation'  
Generally 120 double-column pages per issue, illustrated.  
Founded 1861; published (from 1864) by Kelly & Co, 51 Great Queen Street, London WC.

H. *Graphic* (1 work: #9) WEEKLY Sat 6d.  
An Illustrated Weekly Newspaper'/Competitor of the *Illustrated London News*.  
Normally 24 four-column pages per issue, copiously illustrated.  
Founded 1869; published by EJ Mansfield, 190 The Strand, London WC.

I. *World* (1 work: #12) WEEKLY Wed 6d.  
A Journal for Men and Women'/Newspaper devoted principally to gossip and personalities, though with some literary material.  
Normally 24 double-column pages per issue, unillustrated.  
Founded 1874; edited by Edmund Yates; published from 1 York St, Covent Garden, London WC.

J. *Illustrated London News* (1 work: #19) WEEKLY Sat 6d.  
Popular newspaper consisting principally of high-quality graphics of contemporary events, figures and scenes, with brief news articles.  
Normally 32 three-column pages per issue, copiously illustrated.  
Founded 1842; published by Ingram Bros, 198 The Strand, London WC.

K. Various Provincial Newspapers (5 works: #13-14, & 16-18) including:  
. *Bolton Weekly Journal* WEEKLY Sat 1d.  
. (Cardiff) *Weekly Mail* WEEKLY Sat 1d.  
. *Glasgow Weekly Herald* WEEKLY Sat 1d.  
. *Leigh Journal and Times* WEEKLY Fri 1d.  
. *Sheffield Weekly Independent* WEEKLY Sat 1d.  
Detailed coverage of local news, plus a local perspective on national events.  
Generally 8 seven- or eight-column broadsheet pages per issue, unillustrated until the late 1880s.

### 3. DISCUSSION

We can distinguish the following four overlapping stages in the serial publication of Collins's fiction according to the class of periodical.

#### *1 In weekly family magazines (A-C; 1856-72)*

In the early 1850s, while still in his twenties, Collins was happy to place his first three published novels as library editions with the house of Bentley without prior serialization. But in 1851 his passion for amateur theatricals gave him an introduction to Dickens and he rapidly developed a close and fruitful friendship with the older man; the two were to spend considerable periods of time together over the next decade performing, travelling, and writing. One of Collins's short stories appeared in Dickens's new venture *Household Words* in 1852, and from the following year he began to publish short fiction and journalistic articles with some regularity. In 1856 Collins became a regular salaried staff writer, remaining in that position when Dickens broke away from Bradbury & Evans and replaced the magazine with *All the Year Round* in 1859, and continued to contribute even after his own resignation as staff writer in 1862. During that period, Collins's fiction and his often polemical articles on contemporary social issues regularly appeared side by side. In all, Collins contributed four serialized novels (#1-3 & 5), including three of the four major sensation novels which made him famous in the 1860s.<sup>17</sup> The structural demands of weekly serialization were clearly a factor in stimulating Collins's interest in these genres.<sup>18</sup>

Both magazines bore the strong stamp of Dickens's personality, and appearing in them meant that contributions were both unsigned and subject to his close supervision and control. However, by the mid-1860s Collins's relationship with his mentor had become more distant, and his fame had given him a much greater degree of independence.<sup>19</sup> In all, the association with Dickens and his magazines was undoubtedly a strongly positive influence on the young writer's career. Certainly there were no obviously better alternatives for serial publication in periodicals in the mid 1850s. Dickens's magazines offered a unique combination of high quality and low cost, which together with his reputation ensured that they reached a much wider middle-class family audience than the few parallel publications such as *Bentley's Miscellany* or *Once a Week*. At the same time, there existed fiction magazines such as the *London Journal*, the *Family Herald*, *Reynold's Miscellany*, and *Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper* selling at only a penny per weekly issue, which reached a mass readership measured in hundreds of rather than tens of thousands. But their stories were generally crude and ill-written, and, though Collins was strongly attracted by the idea of reaching a mass audience, he obviously regarded appearing in such an outlet as beneath his literary dignity. His historically perceptive essay 'The

Unknown Public' (*Household Words*, 1858) on such magazines and the emergence of the mass reading public, at the same time reveals a curious combination of fascination and repulsion with regard to the prospect of a proletarian readership.<sup>20</sup> It should be noted that other sensation writers such as Charles Reade and Mrs Henry Wood were prepared to take the risk or opportunity of appearing in the popular fiction weeklies.<sup>21</sup>

Later, shortly after Dickens's death in 1870, Collins was to contribute two novels (#6-7) in serial to one of the more respectable of the cheap family weeklies, by then entitled *Cassell's Magazine*. However, by this stage the effect was to briefly revive the flagging circulation of the magazine rather than dramatically widen the novelist's readership. There was also a minor irritation for Collins in the form of demands for the removal of an expletive to avoid offence to the magazines's family audience.<sup>22</sup> The first of these novels, *Man and Wife*, was also Collins's first with a consistent social 'mission', the reform of the marriage laws. During the 1870s and 1880s, after he ceased to work regularly as a journalist for Dickens, Collins's polemical rhetoric and intent were often incorporated directly into the fictions themselves either wholesale or piecemeal, and often led to conflicts with publishers, editors, reviewers and librarians.

## 2 In monthly literary magazines (D-G; 1864-84)

Already in 1864, Collins had once been tempted away from the Dickens fold by a lucrative offer from George Smith to serialize *Armada* (#4) in the prestigious literary monthly the *Cornhill*, recently launched by Smith, Elder. Along with *Macmillan's Magazine* founded in late 1859, the *Cornhill* began the trend of the 1860s for literary book publishers to begin issuing monthly magazines at one shilling, predominantly featuring the serialized fiction of their own authors. Such house journals were encouraged by both the abolition of the taxes on knowledge and technological advances, and, even if not self-financing, served to provide valuable advertising for the novels published in volume. *Temple Bar* (Bentley from 1860), *Belgravia* (Chatto & Windus 1866) and *Tinsley's Magazine* (1867) were among the imitators of *Macmillan's* and the *Cornhill*. Other 'non-house' literary monthlies featuring fiction in serial soon joined the rush: *Argosy* (1865, edited by Mrs Henry Wood) and *St. Paul's Magazine* (1867, edited by Trollope), for example. The *Cornhill* began spectacularly with a circulation in six figures, though the proliferation of parallel journals soon helped to cut this down considerably, and many of the competitors had to be satisfied with a circulation in four figures. By the early 1870s the boom was over, although most of the magazines continued publication with declining circulations until at least after the demise of the library edition in the early 1890s.<sup>23</sup>

During the 1870s and 1880s, Collins's issued five further novels (#8, 10-11, 15-16) in literary monthlies successively lighter in tone: *Temple Bar*, *Belgravia*, and *London Society*. In terms of both prestige and money, placing *Armada* in the *Cornhill* was then the peak of Collins's success in serial publication. In the late 1880s Collins informed his agent that he would be prepared to accept lower terms for the prestige of being serialized alongside Hardy and James in *Macmillan's*, but the opportunity never arose.<sup>24</sup>

### 3 In popular metropolitan weekly papers (H-J; 1874-89)

In the mid 1870s, as the middle-class circulation of the respectable literary monthlies proved disappointing, Collins began a series of experiments serializing his novels in a number of popular sixpenny London weekly papers with a much broader readership but in which literary material held a marginal place. The results were not always happy. The serialization of *The Law and the Lady* (#9) in the *Graphic* illustrated newspaper ended in public acrimony, when the editor disowned the novel at the end of its run, after he had bowdlerized what he perceived to be a salacious passage but which Collins, insisting on its innocence, had succeeded in restoring by having his solicitor enforce the letter of the contract. Edmund Yates, a long-time friend of Collins, as editor of the *World*, a recently-founded popular weekly paper specializing in social gossip and personalities, strongly attacked the *Graphic's* conduct, and later offered the pages of the journal for the serialization of *The Fallen Leaves* (#12).<sup>25</sup> The novel proved decidedly unpopular in both magazine and volume form and a series of planned sequels had to be abandoned. Finally, Collins died during the serialization of his last novel (#19) in the original illustrated weekly, the *Illustrated London News*, with only eighteen of the twenty-six parts completed, although Walter Besant was able to produce the remaining episodes in time from the author's detailed scenario.

### 4 In popular provincial weekly papers (K; 1879-88)

Five out of seven of Collins's last novels (#13-14 & 16-18) were syndicated in serial in a number of cheap provincial weekly newspapers. This final attempt both to reach a mass audience and to achieve a greater financial return on his labours was in some ways his most successful. The potential readership for journals combining local news and melodramatic fiction in the industrial towns and cities of Scotland, Wales and the Midlands and North of England was immense and largely untapped by popular metropolitan papers. The 1870s and 1880s consequently witnessed a boom in both the number of provincial daily and weekly titles and their circulations.<sup>26</sup> And syndication of fiction in a dozen or so different regional papers allowed the reward to the author to more than match that offered by the metropolitan monthlies or weeklies.

Both *The Evil Genius* and *The Legacy of Cain* earned Collins in excess of a thousand pounds for British newspaper serial publication rights alone.<sup>27</sup>

A key institution here was the firm of Tillotson and Son of Bolton, Lancashire. Largely due to the entrepreneurial energies of the Son, WF Tillotson, the family firm rose within a few decades from being a small printing company to become the operator of one of the first halfpenny daily papers (the *Bolton Evening News* from 1867), a chain of half a dozen weekly papers based in different Lancashire towns (the Lancashire Journals Series beginning with the *Bolton Journal and Guardian* in 1871), and a successful and respected national and international fiction syndication agency. Tillotson's Fiction Bureau began in 1872 acquiring anonymous fiction for the *Bolton Journal*, but quickly came to provide a stereotype syndication service for many other provincial and colonial periodicals, and to pay substantial sums for newspaper publication rights to established authors such as ME Braddon, Capt. Mayne Reid, Rhoda Broughton, Hall Caine, Walter Besant, Charles Reade, "Ouida", Thomas Hardy--and Wilkie Collins.<sup>28</sup>

Despite the relative success of Collins's experiment it is clear that, like other authors with metropolitan literary reputations to uphold, he found it difficult to submit to the indignity of negotiating with the provincial proprietors, the 'curious savages' as he once described them.<sup>29</sup> On one occasion he even referred to WF Tillotson himself as 'that impudent little cad', when the latter complained, quite reasonably and politely, of short supply in some of the parts of *The Evil Genius*.<sup>30</sup> Some of the irritation was relieved when AP Watt became Collins's literary agent in 1881 and took over much of the work of negotiation. And from the beginning Collins had been much more canny than other Tillotson's authors in demanding contracts that specifically prevented any alteration in the author's text and title by the serial publishers.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, Collins was obviously under persistent pressure to produce melodramatic episodes to satisfy the audiences of the provincial weeklies. This helps to account for the by then slightly anachronistic emphasis on mystery and sensation in most of the later novels, although Collins clearly was aware of and interested in contemporary literary developments such as the psychological realism of Hardy and James, or the naturalism of Gissing and Moore. *The Evil Genius*, with its plot centred around adultery, divorce and the custody of children, is the only one of his late novels to articulate that interest successfully.<sup>32</sup>

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Three general points emerge clearly from the above descriptions of Collins's choices of periodicals for serial publication. Firstly, despite the Bohemianism, even the profligacy, of his private life, and the exoticism and controversialism of his literary imagination, his public dealings as a writer bear all the hallmarks of bourgeois professionalism. He worked hard at his business as a writer and was constantly on the look out for new ways of increasing the returns on his literary

capital. Though he was always fierce and canny in acting to protect his own rights and interests, he felt the need to employ a solicitor, and later, when the opportunity arose, a literary agent; and in 1884 he supported Walter Besant in the foundation of the Society of Authors and became its first vice-president. Nevertheless, at the end of the day the return on his investment of time, energy and talent was considerably smaller than he had anticipated.<sup>33</sup>

Secondly, throughout his career, Collins exhibited considerable uncertainty concerning the audience at which he was aiming. He wished for the approval of the respectable bourgeois literary establishment but his frequent Bohemian gestures repeatedly brought him into conflict with it. Access to the 'Unknown Public' seemed to hold out the hope of direct, unmediated contact with a vast innocent readership, thus by-passing the Grundyism of literary editors, publishers and librarians. But this hope was always illusory; the channels of mass communication were inevitably just as mediated and the proprietors just as meddling as those Collins wished to escape.

Finally, though the choices of periodicals for serial publication in Collins's case reveal considerable evidence of specifically personal motives and pressures, they also bear witness to larger impersonal forces at work. The emergence of the 'Unknown Public' in many respects tended to diminish rather than multiply the demand for literary fiction, since it coincided with the gradual opening up of the divide between serious and popular markets, as publications increasingly took on the characteristics of other commodities under industrial capitalism. Much of the economic and ideological insecurity of Collins's literary position came from the attempt to straddle this growing divide. From our point of view, much of the interest of Collins's case derives from the same source.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> For general accounts of developments in British publishing in the second half of the nineteenth century, see: ALTICK esp. Chs.12-15; FELTES Chs.2-4; KEATING esp. Ch.1; SUTHERLAND esp. Chs.1-3; and TERRY Ch.2. On the circulating libraries, see also GRIEST; on the periodical press, HOUGHTON, SCHMIDT, and SHATTOCK; and on the professional writer, CROSS. (These and all subsequent brief citations in capitals in both the notes and the text refer to the list of References at the end of the paper.)

<sup>2</sup> In addition to the large number of Collins's short stories and novellas published entire in magazines and Christmas numbers, a few were also published in a small number of parts in periodicals. For examples, see note 17.

<sup>3</sup> General bibliographies of Collins's works, including ANDREW, ASHLEY, BEETZ, PAGE 279-80, PARRISH, WATSON, and WOLFF, are all patchy on initial serial publication, particularly so in the case of the later novels. LONOFF 271-2 attempts a slightly more complete listing, including North American serializations, but introduces errors of dating in the cases of *The New Magdalen*, *The Two Destinies*, and *The Evil Genius*. VANN 43-60 offers the most accurate and complete list, including serial divisions and North American publications, but remains incomplete

on the novels published in *Cassell's Magazine*, and omits all the late serializations in British provincial weeklies with the exception of *The Evil Genius*. Based on the study of correspondence concerning publication in provincial newspapers, PETERS (1991) Chs. 22-3 offers some useful hints on the serialization of the late novels but does not provide bibliographical information.

<sup>4</sup> See LAW 31-2.

<sup>5</sup> I am especially thankful to Mr Brian Huff of Book Supply at the Newspaper Library in Colindale for expediting matters so that I could complete my research within the limited time I had available in London during August 1994.

<sup>6</sup> HUGHES in detail, and VANN 2-15 more briefly, offer general discussions of the effects of serialization on the composition of Victorian novels. SUCKSMITH v-xxiii, in his scholarly edition of *The Woman in White* for the World's Classics series, provides an excellent study of its effects on a single Collins's novel. It is unfortunate that more recent editions of other Collins's works in the same series, such as PETERS (1989) and TAYLOR, pay little attention to the process of serialization, and fail to provide information on serial divisions.

<sup>7</sup> *Cassell's Magazine* was published weekly in the first instance, and then subsequently bound in monthly issues. The only indications of dating were thus normally on the weekly and monthly paper covers. Because the only run of the magazine I have been able to see, the bound volumes in the British Library Reading Room, contains no weekly covers and few monthly covers, the dating of the serialization is problematical. Based on the remaining monthly covers, it is clear that *Man and Wife* was issued in ten monthly parts from Dec 1869-Sep 1870. The weekly dating suggested here is conjectural, being consistent with the internal evidence and parallel to that of the American serialization in *Harper's Weekly*, for which see VANN 50-1.

<sup>8</sup> The twelfth part of the serialization concluded with a lengthy author's note affirming the authenticity of the legal situations presented in the novel. This was retained in subsequent volume publications of the novel.

<sup>9</sup> The thirty-seventh and last part of the serialization is in fact missing from the run in the bound volumes held at the British Library Reading Room. However, both the index of the Dec 1869-Aug 1870 volumes and the paper cover of the Sep 1870 monthly issue provide the page numbers, and indicate that it was a part of double length, equivalent to parts 37-38 of the serialization in *Harper's Weekly*.

<sup>10</sup> For the reasons given in note 7, the dates offered are again conjectural, although the internal evidence in this case is stronger. Unusually, the weekly issue following that concluding the serialization of the novel is clearly dated 'Saturday March 2, 1872' in the body of the text. The serialization was also issued bound in seven monthly parts, Oct 1871-Apr 1872.

<sup>11</sup> ROBINSON 310 states that the novel was serialized in thirteen different papers, though no source is offered for the information. In this case and in others involving serialization in different provincial papers, one publication can stand for all, since the stereotype method ensured that, from a literary perspective, the texts were identical.

<sup>12</sup> I have also located the serialization in the *Glasgow Weekly Herald* and the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* (Saturday Supplement) with the same parts and on the same dates.

<sup>13</sup> PETERS (1991) 395 & 399 suggests that the novel was also serialized simultaneously in provincial weeklies, though I have been able to find no trace in likely journals. Elsewhere (p.404) she is certainly incorrect in stating that '*I Say No*' was not syndicated in the provincial press.

<sup>14</sup> I have also located the serialization in the *Bolton Weekly Journal* with the same divisions, but dated 12 Dec 1885-1 May 1886, that is, with Saturday rather than Friday as the day of weekly issue.

<sup>15</sup> I have also located the serialization in the *Leigh Journal and Times* in 20 parts (the same divisions except for a double-length final part), dated 17 Feb-29 Jun 1888.

<sup>16</sup> That is, the opening five chapters were reprinted along with the following four in the second week of the serialization, presumably as a service to readers who had missed the opening part. The provincial papers also often used to print a synopsis of preceding parts during the early stages of the serialization, with similar intent.

<sup>17</sup> In addition, *Household Words* serialized two picaresque novellas by Collins: *A Rogue's Life* (5 parts; Mar 1-29 1856) and, in collaboration with Dickens, *The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices* (5 parts; Oct 3-31 1857).

<sup>18</sup> Though it should be noted that *Hide and Seek* (1854), the last of Collins's non-serialized novels, shows a shift from a comic, discursive mode to a sensational, melodramatic mode between its two 'Books'. See PETERS (1993) vii-xxiii.

<sup>19</sup> For example, though the serialization of *No Name* in 1862 was still unsigned, each episode was clearly designated as 'by the author of *The Woman in White*'.

<sup>20</sup> The essay was reprinted in *My Miscellanies* (London: Sampson & Low, 1863; 2 vols), a collection of journalistic pieces first appearing in Dickens's weeklies.

<sup>21</sup> For example, Reade's *White Lies* (later retitled *The Double Marriage*), his first novel to be serialized, was initially published in 22 parts in the *London Journal* Jul 11-Dec 5 1857.

<sup>22</sup> See PETERS (1991) 316.

<sup>23</sup> For more detailed accounts of the boom in shilling literary monthlies in the 1860s see ALTICK 358-60, TERRY 25-7, and SCHMIDT.

<sup>24</sup> See PETERS (1991) 420.

<sup>25</sup> See TAYLOR xxv-xxvi & 415-8, and GASSON.

<sup>26</sup> For a more detailed account of the boom in the provincial press, see ALTICK 356-7.

<sup>27</sup> See ROBINSON 311.

<sup>28</sup> For more detailed general accounts of Tillotson and the Fiction Bureau, see COLBY, JONES, SINGLETON Chs. 2-3 & 6, and TURNER (1978) 52-7.

<sup>29</sup> Cited in PETERS (1991) 394.

<sup>30</sup> Cited in PETERS (1991) 417.

<sup>31</sup> See TURNER (1975) 366-8.

<sup>32</sup> For a more detailed discussion of this point, see LAW 7-25.

<sup>33</sup> See CLARKE Ch. 1.

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