

WILKIE COLLINS
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Editors' Note

The 2002 issue of the *Journal* focuses especially on two areas in Wilkie Collins studies: bibliographical questions, and issues concerning the interface between fiction and other forms of expression prominent in Collins's work. These forms of expression notably include the drama, at the center of Casey Cothran's article on the different printed versions of the melodrama "Black and White," and painting, which lies at the heart of Clair Hughes's account of Braddon's response to *The Woman in White*. Here there is a supplement in the form of reviews of books by Phyllis Welliver and Lillian Nayder, which respectively foreground Victorian music and Victorian journalism. The bibliographical side is represented mainly by Paul Lewis's detailed analysis of the letters of Dickens to Collins, which takes advantage of the recent publication of the twelfth and final volume of the Pilgrim edition of *Letters of Charles Dickens*. Here, in addition, we have Graham Law's inventory and discussion of the papers relating to Collins in the Chatto & Windus archive at Reading University, plus a review of William Baker's reconstruction of Collins's library. We hope you enjoy reading this collection and welcome your comments.

Lillian Nayder
Graham Law

My Dear Wilkie: The Letters from Dickens to Collins

Paul Lewis
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This essay is a bibliographical study into the letters written by Charles Dickens to his close friend Wilkie Collins. The publication in 2002 of the final volume of the Pilgrim edition of *The Letters of Charles Dickens* enables us to catalogue the known letters which Dickens wrote to Collins and collate them with previous sources (see Table 1). Four further letters not in PILGRIM are identified.¹ Careful study of the extant letters allows us to draw some conclusions about the relationship between Dickens and Collins and how it changed over time.

I Letters

The Victorians had ambiguous feelings about letters. They valued the frequent, rapid, and reliable postal service which had followed the introduction of the penny post – paid by the sender not the recipient – in 1840.² But they feared the permanent testament which letters made of their intentions, views and wishes. Burning letters was almost a national pastime and when Dickens joined in he did it with his typical verve. On 4 September 1860, Dickens wrote:

Yesterday I burnt, in the field at Gad's Hill, the accumulated letters and papers of twenty years. They sent up a smoke like the genie when he got out of the casket on the seashore; and as it was an exquisite day when I began, and rained very heavily when I finished, I suspect my correspondence of having overcast the face of the Heavens.³

The weekend before he wrote that letter, Dickens had finally left his home, Tavistock House in London,⁴ and moved his final possessions to Gad's Hill Place – a house near Rochester in Kent which he had bought more than four years earlier, in March 1856, but did not take possession of until March 1857 (Watts, 21-3). The infamous bonfire at Gad's Hill was just the first step. Five years later Dickens wrote “now I always destroy every letter I receive – not on absolute business, – and my mind is, so far, at ease.”⁵

The letters he burned were, of course, those written to him. He could not control those written by him to others. As he consigned letters from Thackeray, Tennyson, Carlyle and, of course, Wilkie Collins to the flames he is reported as

¹ Abbreviated references to collections of letters (such as “PILGRIM”) are explained in the list of Works Cited.

² For a useful summary of how the postal system worked before and after this revolutionary change, see Daunton, ch. 1.

³ To W.H. Wills, 4 September 1860, PILGRIM IX 304.

⁴ To Mrs Davis, 1 September 1860, PILGRIM IX 300.

⁵ To William Charles Macready, 1 March 1865, PILGRIM XI 21-2.

saying “Would to God every letter I had ever written was on that pile” (cited in Storey, 107).⁶ Like many of Dickens’s wishes, this one was not fulfilled. Within ten years of his death, hundreds of his letters were published, and as the years went by subsequent editions added more letters until finally the editors of *PILGRIM* have published a total of 14,252 (*PILGRIM* XII, viii). Of these, *PILGRIM* identifies 165 letters to Wilkie Collins, 1.15% of the total.

The earliest source for letters from Dickens to Collins was the two volume edition of Dickens’s letters published in 1880 and edited by his eldest daughter, Mary (Mamie), and Georgina Hogarth, his wife’s sister and Dickens’s housekeeper for much of his married life. This “careful selection from his general correspondence” was intended as a supplement to Forster’s biography of Dickens and would be “supplying a want which has been universally felt” (MDGH I, vii). The “want” existed because Forster’s biography contained many letters which Dickens had written to him, but almost none Dickens had written to anyone else.

The original MDGH volumes contained just 21 letters to Collins but in the preface the editors acknowledged Collins’s assistance:

A separate word of gratitude, however, must be given by us to Mr. Wilkie Collins for the invaluable help which we have received from his great knowledge and experience, in the technical part of our work, and for the deep interest which he has shown from the beginning, in our undertaking.

(MDGH I, viii-ix)

Collins was the only person Georgina consulted about the edition and she told her friend Annie Fields in 1879 that she had followed his suggestions of a “few trifling alterations ... very good ones and easily made” and Collins finally gave his “unqualified approval”.⁷ Collins arranged a meeting with Georgina Hogarth on 16 October 1878 to talk to her about the project.⁸ The following March he was advising Georgina on whether some letters should be included,⁹ and in July he was consulting the publisher George Bentley about the price to be charged for the two volumes of letters:

I think I told you that I was advising Miss Hogarth and Miss Dickens, in the business of editing Dickens's Letters. They ask me to help them to decide the question of price. The book will be in two volumes demy oct: and each volume will contain 456 pages. – Thirty shillings or Two pounds – which is the wisest selling price to decide on? Do you think I am right or wrong in supposing that the lower price (£1..10..-) is the safest price to ask in these times?¹⁰

In October 1879 he thanked Georgina for an early copy of the *Letters* and

⁶ Storey’s account is based on talks with Dickens’s daughter Kate who died in 1929.

⁷ Georgina Hogarth to Annie Fields, 16 June 1879, HUNTINGTON. See also Adrian, 212 & 291n24.

⁸ Wilkie Collins to Georgina Hogarth, 11 October 1878, PARRISH.

⁹ Wilkie Collins to Georgina Hogarth, 18 March 1879, B&C II 420-1.

¹⁰ Wilkie Collins to George Bentley, 27 July 1879, B&C II 423. Bentley must have supported Collins’s view as the set was in fact sold at the lower price. I am grateful to Bill McHugh of Northwestern University Illinois for this information.

reminded her “I am still entirely at your service. Don’t sanction small advertisements. One ‘across columns’ in the weekly newspaper, (one big one) is worth a dozen little ones—and costs less.”¹¹ A month later he was advising on dealing with Bernhard Tauchnitz concerning an edition in continental Europe.¹² A further volume was published in late 1881, which contained just one more letter to Collins, making 22 altogether, and all three volumes were republished as one chronological sequence in two volumes in 1882. Shortly before his death in 1889 Collins was still advising Georgina – this time on what to do with the remaining copies of various editions of the book.¹³

Wilkie Collins died on 23 September 1889 and within weeks his literary agent Alexander Pollock Watt suggested to Georgina Hogarth that a volume containing more of Dickens’s letters to Collins would be worthwhile. Shortly after that a list of known letters from Dickens to Collins was drawn up by Watt.¹⁴ This, along with some associated documents, is now in the Berg Collection, New York Public Library, and lists 136 letters to Collins, one letter to Augustus Egg¹⁵ – included because it is the letter which led to Dickens meeting Collins in March 1851 – and another from Dickens to Collins’s brother Charles.¹⁶ The list is in five columns – year, number of pages, month and date, a short summary, and signature details.

Watt seems to have changed his mind about the list as he wrote it. The format changes from page to page and although he included the earliest ten letters already published in *The Letters of Charles Dickens* he then appears to have decided to omit the subsequent 12 letters, dated from 13 July 1856, published there. There is also a separate document, apparently in Watt’s hand, which lists four additional letters as follows

The following I recommend should not be sold.

August 16, 1859. This letter contains references to Messrs Bradbury, Evans & Co, & to Mrs Dickens, about the time of the separation. It is signed in full and contains 4 pages.

December 29 1861. A letter of 4 pages, which contains a reference to Sheriff Gordon of Edinburgh, & his habits. Signed C.D.

July 20 1862. This contains a reference to Miss Georgina Hogarth’s health. Contains 4 pages, & is signed C.D.

April 22 1863. This contains references to various people which I think it would be inadvisable to allow to fall into other hands.

These four letters were handed back to Georgina Hogarth and her receipt dated

¹¹ To Georgina Hogarth, 23 October 1879, B&C II 423-4. The book was published on 21 November 1879 – see Adrian, 214. Two editions of the letters were in Wilkie’s library on his death, one inscribed “with love from the editors”. See Baker, 100.

¹² To Georgina Hogarth, 28 November 1879, B&C II 424. Tauchnitz published *The Letters* in February 1880 in three volumes – see Todd and Bowden, 299.

¹³ To Georgina Hogarth, 2 April 1889, ILLINOIS.

¹⁴ Undated MS on Watt’s headed paper and in Watt’s hand, entitled “Letters of Charles Dickens to Wilkie Collins,” 7 pages, BERG 7284908.

¹⁵ Dickens to Augustus Egg, 8 March 1851, PILGRIM VI 310.

¹⁶ Dickens to Charles Collins, 19 November 1859, PILGRIM IX 164-5.

13 February 1890 is also in the collection. It reads “Received from A.P. Watt four letters of the late Charles Dickens to Wilkie Collins dated respectively 26th August 1859 [sic, not 16 August]; 29th December 1861; 20th July 1862; and 22nd April 1863.” Above the receipt in Georgina Hogarth’s hand is added “These I should wish to cancel – to destroy if possible!” Of these four letters the first two have disappeared, perhaps destroyed by Georgina Hogarth. The last two are found in the Free Library of Philadelphia and are published in PILGRIM (X 109 and X 236). Indeed, the last letter was published in part by Georgina herself in *The Letters of Charles Dickens* omitting the personal references she found objectionable (MDGH II 198-9). Of the 169 letters from Dickens to Collins which modern scholarship has identified, 151 were either in this list, were scheduled for destruction or had been published in 1880. Only 18 others have either come to light or been identified in the following 122 years.

Watt paid Georgina Hogarth ten guineas for her work “revising the letters of Charles Dickens to Wilkie Collins”.¹⁷ The letters were edited with commentary by Lawrence Hutton and he wrote in the preface “Miss Hogarth selected the following specimens as being quite as characteristic and fully as interesting as any she gave to the public in her own volume, and they have been printed here under her own supervision.” They were first published in *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* over three months from September 1891. Publication in book form followed shortly by Harper in New York and by Harper’s London publisher, James R. Osgood, McIlvaine & Co. in London, the edition cited here. The text was identical in all three – the same letters to Collins, the same few letters to other people to give context, and the same commentary. It contained 108 letters from Dickens to Collins of which six had already appeared in MDGH,¹⁸ leaving 102 which were newly published. All but one, 6 February 1858, were in the Watt list.

So by the end of the nineteenth century, 124 letters from Dickens to Collins had been published, though a number had some passages cut. Although MDGH was reissued many times, and some new letters to individuals were published in specific volumes such as Dickens’s letters to William Henry Wills, Thomas Beard, and to his wife Catherine,¹⁹ no further letters to Collins were published until Walter Dexter’s three volume edition of Dickens’s letters in 1938 for the Nonesuch Dickens. This added another 20, bringing the total to 144, though three of those were only noted without any content²⁰ and one was misdated.²¹

¹⁷ Receipt on Watt’s headed paper dated 25 February 1890 and signed Georgina Hogarth, BERG 7284908.

¹⁸ In HUTTON: 8 July 1855, 14 October 1862, in full; 13 July 1856, 6 September 1858, 7 January 1860 (wrongly dated as 1859), and 25 January 1864 (wrongly dated as 24 January), in summary only.

¹⁹ See WILLS, BEARD, and CATHERINE.

²⁰ 20 January 1852, DEXTER II 371; 13 December 1856, DEXTER II 815; 14 May 1859, DEXTER III 103

²¹ To Collins, 8 January 1853, DEXTER II 547, misdated [1854].

Table 1. Known and Identified Letters from Dickens to Collins

Date	Subject	Salutation ¹	Sign off ²	MDGH 1880 vol.pg	Watt 1890 ³ p	HUTTON 1892 page	DEXTER 1938 ⁴	PILGRIM 1988-2002 ⁴	Ist ⁵	Notes
12 May 1851	Re Ward's brother seeing the play	My Dear Collins	Faithfully Yours always		1	6-7	II 309	VI 385	H	
31 Oct 1851	Ticket sales mean Play will run extra day								@	Deduced from WC to CD 2/11/51
20 Jan 1852	Thanks for book, poor children	My Dear Collins [Tavistock]	Ever Faithfully Yours				<i>II 371</i>	XII 638-9	P	PILGRIM VI 579 as to W.J. Collins. DEXTER lists.
20 Dec 1852	Thanks for Basil and invite out	My dear Collins	Always faithfully Yours	I 294	1		II 435-6	VI 823-4	M	
23 Dec 1852	Arrangements to dinner and forage	My Dear Collins	Always Faithfully Yours		1	11-12	II 436	VI 833	H	Last para and sig in Yale added in PILGRIM
8 Jan 1853	Publication details of Oliver Twist	My Dear Collins	Faithfully Yours Ever				II 547	VII 5	D	DEXTER has date as [1854]
18 Jan 1853	Re meet for a play and dates of Italian trip	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		1	12-13	II 445	VII 12-3	H	
28 Jan 1853	HW business and meeting with Lemon	My Dear Collins			1		II 446	VII 17-8	D	Letter ends abruptly
24 Jun 1853	Invite to join him there	My Dear Collins			1	13-14	II 467	VII 101	H	Sig cut off
30 Jun 1853	Illness and hopes he will still come	My Dear Collins			1	14-16	II 472	VII 108	H	Not new in PILGRIM. Sig cut off.
14 Dec 1853	Loans to WC on Italian trip	My Dear Collins	Ever faithfully [DEXTER]		1		II 525	VII 226	D	Sig cut off
16 Dec 1853	Accts.re Italian trip WC owes £43-11-8	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully Yours		1		II 525	VII 228	D	
24 Feb 1854	Montaigne pieces + invite to Rochester	My Dear Collins	Faithfully Yours always		1	16	II 543	VII 280	H	
24 Apr 1854	Invites to dinner and Boulogne	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		1	17	II 555	VII 322	H	
23 May 1854	Accepting dedication	My Dear Collins	Always Faithfully Yours		1			VII 335	P	
6 Jun 1854	Joke ticket to Tunbridge Wells	My Dear Collins			2	18	II 560	VII 347	H	No sign off
7 Jun 1854	Invite for Sunday	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		2	18-19	II 561	VII 348	H	
12 Jul 1854	Dissipation London and Boulogne	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully	I 358-9	2		II 565-6	VII 366-7	M	
26 Sep 1854	Long account of domestic detail	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully	I 362-5	2		II 590-2	VII 423-5	M	
3 Nov 1854	Reply about Scott Russell	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		2		II 604	VII 458	D	
11 Nov 1854	Meeting at Garrick for Theatre	My Dear Collins	Faithfully Always		2			VII 463	P	
17 Dec 1854	Jerrold & Lemon; Xmas pantomime	My Dear Collins	Ever Yours		2	20-1	II 609-10	VII 485-6	H	
24 Dec 1854	Part in pantomime	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		2	21-2	II 610	VII 488-9	H	
20 Jan 1855	Proposes trip to theatre and to Paris	My Dear Collins	Faithfully Ever		2			VII 506-7	P	Watt dates 26/1/55
30 Jan 1855	Invite to birthday dinner	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		2			VII 515-6	P	
3 Feb 1855	Travel details to Paris	My Dear Collins	Faithfully Ever		2			VII 520-1	P	
8 Feb 1855	Rooms booked in Paris	Mon cher Collins	Votre fidele		2			VII 526	P	Written in French

4 Mar 1855	Re plays & WC's health, proposing to visit	My Dear Collins	Always Cordially Yours		2	23-5	II 638	VII 554-5	H	
19 Mar 1855	Criticism of Sister Rose etc	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		2	26-2	II 643-4	VII 570-1	H	
24 Mar 1855	His trip, Dinah Mulock etc	My Dear Collins	Ever Yours (Normally)		2	28-30	II 645-6	VII 575-6	H	
4 Apr 1855	The Leader, his health, Pantomime	My Dear Collins	Ever faithfully		2	30-2	II 650-1	VII 585-6	H	
15 Apr 1855	Meeting and Sister Rose printing error	My Dear Collins	Faithfully Always		2	32-3	II 654	VII 593	H	
11 May 1855	The Lighthouse, Paris, Wills and gas	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		2	35-6	II 660-1	VII 616	H	
24 May 1855	Details of The Lighthouse	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully	I 397	3		II 666	VII 628	M	
31 May 1855	Rehearsal next day	My Dear Collins	Faithfully Ever		3	36-7	II 666	VII 635	H	HUTTON wrongly has 21 May; DEXTER 24 May
9 Jun 1855	Rehearsal	My Dear Collins	Ever Heartily Yours		3	37	II 669	VII 644	H	
24 Jun 1855	Invite to a play	My Dear Collins	Ever Yours		3	38-9	II 674	VII 657-8	H	
8 Jul 1855	Future and success of The Lighthouse	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully	III 171-2	3	39-41	II 677-8	VII 669-70	M	
17 Jul 1855	Invite and account of riding accident	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully	I 400-1	3		II 680-1	VII 675-6	M	
30 Sep 1855	News and permission for After Dark	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully	I 403-4	3		II 693-4	VII 711-2	M	
14 Oct 1855	Address in Paris, Xmas number	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully Yours		3	41-2	II 696-7	VII 721	H	
19 Oct 1855	Correcting address in Paris.	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully					VII 721-2	P	On envelope of previous letter.
12 Dec 1855	Arrangements and Xmas number	My Dear Collins	Ever faithfully		3	43-4	II 713-4	VII 762	H	Watt out of order follows 30/9/55
19 Jan 1856	Photograph, visits to him etc.	My Dear Collins	Ever Cordially	I 419-3	3		II 732-4	VIII 28-31	M	
30 Jan 1856	Arrangement to meet in London	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully (working hard)		3	44-5	II 738-9	VIII 39	H	
12 Feb 1856	WC delays in visit to Paris	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		3	45-6	II 744	VIII 53	H	
24 Feb 1856	Regretting delay	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully [MDGH]		3	46-7	II 748	VIII 62	H	PILGRIM: Sign off missing
3 Mar 1856	Joke re writer's block			I 427	3		II 749	VIII 67	M	Joke so no sign off
13 Apr 1856	Collins's journey, life in Paris etc	My Dear Collins	Ever faithfully		4	48-2	II 757-9	VIII 86-7	H	
22 Apr 1856	Collins's health, life in Paris etc	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		4	53-8	II 761-3	VIII 95-7	H	
30 Apr 1856	Collins's health, Howland St visit	My Dear Collins	Ever Yours		4	59-60	II 768-9	VIII 105	H	
6 Jun 1856	Biography	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully	I 437-9	4		II 777-8	VIII 130-2	M	
13 Jul 1856	Visit, Anne Rodway, domestic life	My Dear Collins	Ever Yours	I 448-50		60-1	II 791-2	VIII 161-3	M	Extract only in HUTTON
29 Jul 1856	Arrangements and HW contribution	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		4	61-3	II 793-4	VIII 167-8	H	
13 Aug 1856	Title of To Think or be Thought For	My Dear Collins	Ever Yours		4		II 796-7	VIII 175-6	D	
12 Sep 1856	Frozen Deep plot	My Dear Collins	Ever Cordially		4	64-5	II 798-9	VIII 184-5	H	
13 Sep 1856	Frozen Deep plot	My Dear Collins	Ever Yours		4	65-6	II 799	VIII 186	H	
9 Oct 1856	Changes in The Frozen Deep	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		4	66-7	II 805	VIII 203	H	
15 Oct 1856	Offering part in play	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		4	67-8	II 806	VIII 207	H	

26 Oct 1856	Social arrangements	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		4	68-9	II 808-9	VIII 214	H	
1 Nov 1856	Frozen Deep production details	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		4	69-2	II 809-10	VIII 217-8	H	
14 Nov 1856	Books and meeting	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		4	72-3	II 811	VIII 222	H	
13 Dec 1856	Tauchnitz	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		4		<i>II 815</i>	VIII 237	P	DEXTER II 815 predicts
16 Dec 1856	Invite to amateur play	My Dear Collins	Ever Cordially		4	73-4	II 816-7	VIII 240	H	DEXTER wrongly indexed 815-6
10 Jan 1857	Dance and meeting	My Dear Collins	Ever Cordially		5	74	II 825-6	VIII 256	H	Watt out of order
19 Jan 1857	Dinner invite	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		4	78	II 828	VIII 263	H	
5 Feb 1857	Frozen Deep performance	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		4		II 833	VIII 275	D	
14 Feb 1857	Trips and galleys	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		5	78-9	II 835	VIII 282	H	Watt out of order
4 Mar 1857	Trip [to Brighton] and Dead Secret	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		4	79-80	II 838	VIII 294	H	
11 May 1857	Visit	My Dear Collins	Yours Ever		4	80-1	II 846	VIII 322-3	H	
17 May 1857	Inaugurating Gad's Hill Place	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully				II 847	VIII 327	D	DEXTER is only source of this
22 May 1857	Looks forward to Sybarite nights	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		4	81-3	II 848-9	VIII 329-30	H	
1 Jun 1857	Meeting and Gad's Hill Place	My Dear Collins	Faithfully Ever		4	83	II 852	VIII 338	H	
12 Jun 1857	Frozen Deep and meeting	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		4			VIII 348	P	
16 Jun 1857	Meeting	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		5	84	II 857	VIII 354	H	
19 Jun 1857	Adding him to committee	Dear Sir	We are Dear Sir Faithfully Yours					VIII 355	P	
26 Jun 1857	Frozen Deep	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		5	84-5	II 858	VIII 361	H	
2 Aug 1857	Frozen Deep in Manchester - actresses	My Dear Collins	In haste, Ever Faithfully		5	85-6	II 866	VIII 394-5	H	
17 Aug 1857	Cast for Manchester	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		5	86-7	II 871	VIII 413-4	H	
29 Aug 1857	Restless plans, misery amazing	My Dear Collins	Ever Faithfully		5	87-8	II 873	VIII 423	H	
22 Oct 1857	Silver Mines	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Faithfully		5		II 892	VIII 470	D	
1 Nov 1857	Xmas No.	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Faithfully		5			VIII 475	P	
17 Jan 1858	Incident	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Faithfully	II 40			III 3	VIII 505	M	
5 Feb 1858	Birthday and Lyceum	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Faithfully		5		III 7	VIII 516	D	
6 Feb 1858	Bound Xmas No.	My Dear Wilkie	Faithfully Ever			76-8	III 7	VIII 517	H	HUTTON out of order
21 Mar 1858	Pieces and Doncaster	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Faithfully		5		III 14	VIII 535-6	D	
17 Apr 1858	Invite to reading	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Faithfully		5			VIII 547	P	
29 Apr 1858	Piece he has written	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Faithfully		5		III 19	VIII 553-4	D	
25 May 1858	Friendship and chat	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Affectionately		5	89	III 24	VIII 567	H	
1 Aug 1858	Tour and CAC piece	My Dear Wilkie	With kind regard, Ever affecy.		5	89-90	III 34	VIII 616	H	
11 Aug 1858	Unknown Public and reading tour	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Affectionately		5	90-2	III 38	VIII 623-4	H	

6 Sep 1858	Reading tour, Xmas No., publishing	My Dear Wilkie	Ever My Dear Wilkie Affectionately Yours	II 67-9		93-4	III 50-1	VIII 649-51	M	HUTTON extract only
9 Nov 1858	Tour, invite, Xmas No., misc	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affectionately		5	94-5	III 70	VIII 700-1	H	
13 Nov 1858	Dinner	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affectionately		5	96	III 72	VIII 703	H	
26 Jan 1859	Titles for ATYR	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy		5	97-9	III 90	IX 16	H	
3 Feb 1859	Changes to 'Burns'	My Dear Wilkie	Affecy Ever		5		III 93	IX 24	D	
6 Feb 1859	Invite to Brighton with girls for birthday	My Dear Wilkie	Yours Affecy					IX 25	P	
9 Apr 1859	AYR No. 1 Sure to Healthy etc and Occasional Register	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Faithfully		6	99-100	III 98	IX 48-9	H	
14 May 1859	Dinner after Sale	My Dear Wilkie	Ever		6		III 103	IX 64	P	DEXTER predicts.
12 Jun 1859	When is he coming to Gad's Hill	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Affecy.		6	100-1	III 106	IX 76	H	
17 Jul 1859	Invite to Gad's Hill	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Affecy.		6	101	III 112	IX 94	H	
16 Aug 1859	Writing, Woman in White title, rowing	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affectionately				III 115-6	IX 106-7	D	WC had written to Wills
25 Aug 1859	Weather, Broadstairs plans	My Dear Wilkie	Love from all. Ever affectionately		6	102-3	III 119	IX 110-11	H	
26 Aug 1859	Bradbury & Evans and Kate Dickens					D			W	Also dated 16 August 1859
16 Sep 1859	Reunion, Caroline, accidents	My Dear Wilkie	Love from all. Ever affecy.	II 101-2			III 123-4	IX 122-3	M	
6 Oct 1859	Rejects WC on A Tale of Two Cities	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.		6	103-5	III 124-5	IX 127-8	H	
7 Jan 1860	Praise and advice on The Woman in White	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.	II 110-11		96-97	III 145	IX 194-5	M	HUTTON extract only, out of order and wrongly dated 1859
25 Jan 1860	Meeting for theatre	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.		6		III 148	IX 201	D	
2 Jun 1860	Copy of Frozen Deep and Antonina	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.		6			IX 258	P	Watt dates 22/1/60
29 Jul 1860	End of TWIW, dinner, Alfred dead	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affectionately		6	105-6	III 169	IX 276	H	
26 Sep 1860	[Invite to dinner with Reade on 5 October]							IX 318	P	Deduced from letter 26/9/60 to W.H. Wills PILGRIM 318-319
24 Oct 1860	Wishes he was in Paris with WC	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.	II 129-32			III 188-9	IX 329-31	M	
24 May 1861	Wilkie's speech, jokes	My Dear Wilkie			6	107-9	III 221-2	IX 419-20	H	Sig cut off
23 Jun 1861	Xmas No., meetings	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affy.		6	110-11	III 225	IX 428	H	
12 Jul 1861	Awaiting boys, Broadstairs, Frank ill	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affectionately		6	111-13	III 229-30	IX 438-9	H	
28 Aug 1861	Whitby, work	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affectionately	II 146-7			III 231-2	IX 447-8	M	
31 Oct 1861	Xmas No. and readings	My Dear Wilkie	Until then and ever Believe Me		6	113-17	III 247-8	IX 489-90	H	More in HUTTON
29 Dec 1861	Sheriff Gordon of Edinburgh					D			W	
5 Jan 1862	Meeting, health, Office of ATYR	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.		6	117-19	III 275-6	X 5	H	Watt and HUTTON have 4 Jan

24 Jan 1862	No Name - crit. And title	My Dear Wilkie	Kind regards Ever affecy.[blank MDGH]		6	119-122	III 282-3	X 20-21	H	Not new in PILGRIM
25 Mar 1862	Won't propose literary club							X 58	P	Does not sound like letter to WC
10 May 1862	[Encloses note from lawyer F Pollock]							X 81	P	Deduced from letter to Frederick Pollock 10 May 1862
13 Jul 1862	Accepting dinner invitation				6				W	
20 Jul 1862	Domestic, mentions No Name, GH health	My Dear Wilkie	yours ever affectionately		D			X 109-10	P	GH wanted to destroy
27 Jul 1862	Invites all including Caroline, Georgina ill	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affectionately		6	122-3	III 300-1	X 113	H	
30 Jul 1862	Dinner meeting	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.				III 301-2	X 115	D	
20 Sep 1862	Loves No Name, Xmas No. GH health	My Dear Wilkie	Ever My Dear Wilkie Affectionately Yours		6	123-6	III 304-5	X 128-9	H	
4 Oct 1862	Christmas number	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Affecy.		6	126-7	III 306	X 134	H	
8 Oct 1862	Xmas No. visitors, poison case	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Affecy.		6	128-31	III 307-8	X 137-8	H	
12 Oct 1862	Proofs, trip to Paris	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.		6		III 308-9	X 139-40	D	
14 Oct 1862	Comments on No Name proofs	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.		6	131-4	III 309-10	X 140-1	H	
14 Oct 1862	WC's illness, offering to help	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy	II 182-3		134-6	III 310	X 142-3	M	
1 Jan 1863	No Name great, go to baths for gout	My Dear Wilkie	Yours ever affecy.		6	136-8	III 333	X 186-7	H	
20 Jan 1863	Paris readings and refs to Ellen Ternan	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affectionately					X 198-9	P	
29 Jan 1863	WC ill, may visit, Frank Beard	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affectionately		6	138-9	III 337	X200-1	H	
22 Apr 1863	Accounts of various people, death of Egg	My Dear Wilkie	Your affectionate	II 198-9	D		III 348-9	X 236-9	M	GH wanted to destroy. Extract only in MDGH and DEXTER
28 Jun 1863	Health and Collins's return	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affectionately		6	140-1	III 355-6	X 263-4	H	
9 Aug 1863	WC health and events at GH	My Dear Wilkie	Ever My Dear Wilkie Affecy Yours		6	141-2	III 359-60	X 280-2	H	HUTTON has big cuts
24 Sep 1863	WC health and GH extension	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.		6	143-4	III 363	X 292	H	
25 Jan 1864	Xmas No., news of Gad's Hill + friends	My Dear Wilkie	Ever my Dear Wilkie Affecy. Yours	II 209-11		144-5	III 378-9	X 346-9	M	HUTTON extract only. MDGH and HUTTON have 24 Jan
00 Oct 1864	[Can't visit Paris can WC come to Dover]							X 433	P	Deduced from to Mrs Birmingham 12/10/64 PILGRIM X 437 and to Georgina Hogarth 12/10/64 PILGRIM X 438
10 Jan 1866	Wants Armadale proofs, back to AYR	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.		6	145-6	III 454	XI 135	H	
10 Jul 1866	Armadale play	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Affectionately		6	146-9	III 476-7	XI 220-2	H	Watt and HUTTON have 9 July as letter is dated.
4 Oct 1866	Frozen Deep scenery	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Affectionately		6	149-50	III 487	XI 251-2	H	Watt has 24 October
12 Feb 1867	Charles Reade and Readings	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.		6	151-3	III 507-8	XI 312-3	H	

20 Feb 1867	Charles Reade and Readings	My Dear Wilkie	Affectionately Ever		6	153-6	III 510-1	XI 317-8	H	Watt has 29 February
13 Mar 1867	Let Reade see letter	My Dear Wilkie	Ever UnPatrick-iotically		6	156-7	III 515	XI 332	H	
1 May 1867	Proposes Xmas No.	My Dear Wilkie	Ever Affectionately		6	157-8	III 525-6	XI 360	H	
4 May 1867	Moonstone and Xmas No.	My Dear Wilkie	Affectionately Ever					XI 361-2	P	
2 Jul 1867	Xmas No.				6	158-9	III 535	XI 387	H	
23 Aug 1867	No Thoroughfare detail	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.		6	159-60	III 541-2	XI 413	H	
28 Aug 1867	No Thoroughfare visit	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy. Yours					XI 414	P	
9 Sep 1867	No Thoroughfare detail	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.		6	160-1	III 546	XI 422-3	H	
10 Sep 1867	No Thoroughfare detail	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.		7	161-3	III 546-7	XI 423-4	H	
18 Sep 1867	No Thoroughfare detail	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.		7	164-5	III 552-3	XI 434-5	H	
23 Sep 1867	No Thoroughfare detail	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.		7	166-7	III 553	XI 436-7	H	
5 Oct 1867	No Thoroughfare detail and meeting	My Dear Wilkie	Affecy Ever		7	167-8	III 557	XI 445	H	Watt out of order after 28/11/67
9 Oct 1867	No Thoroughfare detail	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy.		7	168-9	III 559	XI 451-2	H	
28 Nov 1867	Dramatization of No Thoroughfare	My Dear Wilkie	Ever My Dear Wilkie Your affectionate		7	169-72	III 573-4	XI 491-2	H	
2 Dec 1867	Dramatization of No Thoroughfare etc	My Dear Wilkie			7	173-5	III 576-7	XI 498	H	
3 Dec 1867	Tremendous success last night		Ever My Dear Wilkie Your always affectionate			175-6	III 577	XI 498	H	Postscript to 2 Dec
24 Dec 1867	Content of drama of No Thoroughfare	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affectionately.		7	176-8	III 588	XI 520-1	H	
12 Jan 1868	No Thoroughfare and Webster murder	My Dear Wilkie	My dear Wilkie, yours ever affecy	II 332-3			III 599-600	XII 7-9	M	
31 Jan 1868	No Thoroughfare and readings	My Dear Wilkie	God bless you. Ever affectionately		7	178-9	III 612-3	XII 30-31	H	
4 Jun 1868	Paris production of No Thoroughfare	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy		7	179-81	III 653	XII 125-126	H	
8 Dec 1868	Readings	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affectionately	II 396-7			III 681	XII 234-5	M	
15 Feb 1869	Criticism of Black and White	My Dear Wilkie	Ever affecy		7	181-3	III 706	XII 289-90	H	Watt has 25/2/69. redated DEXTER and PILGRIM from 25th. DEXTER indexes at 707
27 Jan 1870	Rights to pieces in HW and AYR	My Dear Wilkie	Faithfully Yours always		7	184	III 762	XII 472	H	
27 Jan 1870	Enclosing above and about WC's health	My Dear Wilkie	Affectionately always		7	185	III 762	XII 471	H	
	169	169	158	153	22	140	108	144	165	169

Notes

1. Taken from PILGRIM except where stated; capitalisation varies in different editions and may be standardised even in PILGRIM.
2. Where "Affectionately" is abbreviated, PILGRIM has "Affecy,," DEXTER normally has "affecy,," and MDGH and HUTTON have "affc'ly,,"
3. The MS numbers the pages but not the letters; D = on the list of four returned to Georgina Hogarth.
4. Italicised entries are merely listed in DEXTER or PILGRIM, but with no transcription.
5. First publication or, if not published, first mention: @ = in the present article.

Over the next decades a small number of previously unrecorded Dickens letters appeared in auction and dealers' catalogues but they remained uncollected until the PILGRIM edition, begun in 1965. The first letters to Collins appeared in volume VI in 1988, and the series was completed in 2002. PILGRIM attempts to be definitive. It includes full transcripts of every extant Dickens letter and also adds in untraced letters the existence of which can be deduced from the content of the extant correspondence. Out of the 14,252 letters from Dickens, PILGRIM identifies 165 letters to Wilkie Collins, publishing the text of 162 and listing another three which are known only from references in other letters.²² PILGRIM claims that 20 of the published letters are new. In fact two of those claimed by PILGRIM are not new,²³ while six others, not claimed by PILGRIM as new, in fact are,²⁴ leaving 24 which were newly published or identified. PILGRIM also claims that a further 9 letters are published in full for the first time, previous editions having omitted more or less significant sections. That claim is not examined here. Two of the letters to Collins in PILGRIM still have no source apart from their first publication in 1880,²⁵ and another only has Dexter as its source.²⁶

Comprehensive as PILGRIM is, it omits a further four letters from Dickens to Collins.

- Two letters which Georgina Hogarth wanted to “destroy if possible” (26 August 1859 and 29 December 1861)
- One letter in Watt’s list for which no other reference has been found. It is described there as “1862, July 13, 2pp, Accepting invitation to dinner, signed C.D.” This letter is a bit of a puzzle. Dickens went to Paris “on short notice” on 10 July 1862,²⁷ and for the entire surrounding period Collins was in Broadstairs. It is possible the letter is misdated by Watt – several in the list are, though no others are assigned to the wrong year.
- A newly identified letter written around 31 October 1851, the evidence for which is in one of the three extant letters from Collins to Dickens. Dated 2 November 1851 it reads in part: “The report of the great sale of tickets at Bristol had reached me here, before I received your letter. I am delighted – for the sake of the Guild to hear that a second performance at Bristol is to take place...”²⁸

²² Dickens to Collins 26 September 1860, PILGRIM IX 318; 10 May 1862, PILGRIM X 81; and October 1864, PILGRIM X 433.

²³ 30 June 1853 and 24 January 1862, both published in HUTTON.

²⁴ 20 January 1852 was listed in DEXTER but only published in PILGRIM XII 638-639; 19 October 1855 counted as a separate letter of a different date written on the envelope of 14 October 1855, PILGRIM VII 721-2; 26 September 1860, listed only, no transcript, PILGRIM IX 318; 25 March 1862, PILGRIM X 81; early October 1864, listed only, no transcript, PILGRIM X 433.

²⁵ 17 January 1858, PILGRIM VIII 505; and 8 December 1868, PILGRIM XII 234-5.

²⁶ 17 May 1857, PILGRIM VIII 327.

²⁷ See to Osborne 16 July 1862, PILGRIM X 105-6; and to Mrs Henry Austin, 8 July 1862, PILGRIM X 105.

²⁸ Collins to Dickens, 2 November 1851, B&C I 75 summary. Beginning with that cited here, a number of the extracts from the letters of Wilkie Collins are taken from transcripts carried

Another letter listed in PILGRIM as to Collins gives some concern. It is dated 25 March 1862 and the evidence comes only from an Anderson Galleries catalogue of December 1936. In it Dickens refuses to add his name to a proposal for founding a literary club and refers to Mr Fowle Walton, who PILGRIM takes to be Joseph Fowell Walton. It is a curt letter without salutation and of a different tone to letters written to Collins. He was at the time deeply involved in writing *No Name* and none of the known letters by him around this time relate to the subject matter of this letter.

As Table 1 indicates, the final arithmetic leaves us with 169 possible letters to Collins. Of these, **three** owe their existence to deductions in PILGRIM from other letters; **two** were returned to Georgina Hogarth and probably destroyed; **one** from Watt's list appears never to have been published, has now disappeared and may or may not be misdated; **one** is deduced in this essay from a letter by Collins to Dickens; and **one** is in PILGRIM but may not be to Collins at all. From the remaining 161, securely to Collins and with known contents, what can we deduce?

II My Dear Wilkie

Wilkie Collins met Charles Dickens in the afternoon of Wednesday 12 March 1851 at the house of John Forster, a close friend of Dickens who later was his first biographer.²⁹ Collins had been invited to take a small part in an amateur production of a play written by Bulwer Lytton called *Not So Bad As We Seem*. The vacancy had arisen when Dickens's sub-editor and friend William Henry Wills had turned the part down. From that day until Dickens died in 1870, Collins was his friend, often his confidant and throughout most of the time his literary collaborator. They travelled together, dined together, drank together, grew beards together, went to plays together, wrote together, and walked the streets in London and Paris together. But in the few months from the autumn of 1857 to the spring of 1858, their relationship became much closer.

The new comprehensive list of letters from Dickens to Collins provides us with the salutation in 158 letters and the sign off in 153 – several signatures were cut off for autograph hunters. The 158 salutations show that up to the letter of 29 August 1857 Dickens began his letters “My Dear Collins.” From the next letter, 22 October 1857, he had changed that to “My Dear Wilkie,” a form he retained for the rest of his life. For the next six months, up to 28 April 1858, Dickens continued to sign off his letters as he always had, using the word “faithfully” and usually writing “Ever Faithfully.” But from 25 May 1858 he

out by my fellow editors on the forthcoming Pickering & Chatto edition (BGLL), Andrew Gasson, William Baker and Graham Law. I am grateful for their permission to publish these passages here.

²⁹ To Augustus Egg, 8 March 1851, PILGRIM VI 310; and to Mrs Watson, 9 March 1851, PILGRIM VI 312.

changed to “Ever Affectionately” and the word “affectionately” or its abbreviation appears in the sign off in every subsequent letter he wrote to Collins except for two – one of which was a letter “on absolute business”.³⁰ How significant was this change? In writing letters Dickens addressed few people outside his family by their first name. Exceptions were Mark Lemon (whom he began addressing as “My Dear Mark” early in 1851), and Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton (who moved in two stages from “My Dear Sir Edward” to “My Dear Bulwer” also in 1851). Other close friends such as Douglas Jerrold and Frank Stone were consistently addressed by their surname; Daniel Maclise and Clarkson Stanfield by nicknames: “My Dear Mac” and “My Dear Stanny.” His subeditor William Henry Wills remained stubbornly “My Dear Wills” throughout decades of close acquaintance.³¹ The very few extant whole letters to John Forster – most are available only in Forster’s own extracts published in his biography of Dickens – begin “My Dear Forster,” raising a question over the closeness of the two. Dickens was freer with closing a letter “affectionately” rather than “faithfully.” Forster, Frank Stone, and William Macready merited “affectionately” despite their surname in the salutation. Even Wills got the occasional “affectionately.”³² But only three people outside the family – Mark Lemon, Daniel Maclise, and Clarkson Stanfield – were addressed by first or nick-names and parted with “affectionately.” It was into this group that Wilkie Collins was admitted in 1857-8.

The twelve months from spring 1857 were turbulent ones for Dickens. He worked on his new house, fell in love, separated from his wife, fought with his publishers, broke off his relationship with several friends, and started the public readings which were to take much of his energy and generate most of his income until his death in 1870.

The key events began unspectacularly. In March 1857 Dickens took full possession of Gad’s Hill Place, which became his home until his death. Early in June his friend Douglas Jerrold died unexpectedly and Dickens decided to raise money for his family by reviving an amateur production of Wilkie Collins’s play *The Frozen Deep*. The cast included friends – Collins among them – as well as his daughters Kate and Mamie and his sister-in-law Georgina Hogarth. Despite the visit of Queen Victoria to one of the four performances at the Gallery of Illustration in Regent Street the play failed to raise the £2000 which Dickens had hoped for. At the end of July Dickens went to Manchester to read *The Christmas Carol* to raise more money. After a deputation from the Mayor and acclaim from the audience he decided to perform *The Frozen Deep* there too. As he returned on Sunday he wrote to Collins:

³⁰ The two letters were 9 April 1859, PILGRIM IX 48-49, and 27 January 1870, PILGRIM XII 472.

³¹ The last known letter to him begins ‘My Dear Wills’ – 26 February 1870, PILGRIM XII 482.

³² See to Wills, 14 September 1863, PILGRIM X 289, for the first identified occurrence; it became more common towards 1870.

As our sum is not made up, and as I had an urgent Deputation and so forth from Manchester Magnates at the Reading on Friday night, I have arranged to act *The Frozen Deep* in the Free Trade Hall on Friday and Saturday nights, the 21st and 22nd. It is an immense place, and we shall be obliged to have actresses...³³

It was not just the size of the Free Trade Hall that necessitated the changes in the cast. To many, actresses were not far removed from prostitutes. The respectable ladies of Dickens's family could not appear on the public stage. So he was "obliged to have actresses". After a couple of false starts, the actresses chosen were Frances Ternan and her two daughters, Maria and Ellen. Rehearsals were scheduled for 18 and 19 August before travelling to Manchester on the 20th. So on Tuesday, 18 August 1857 at the Gallery of Illustration in Regent Street,³⁴ the poor and relatively unknown actress Ellen Ternan, aged 18, met the rich, famous and successful 45-year-old writer Charles Dickens. Two days later the entire cast, together with Dickens's wife Catherine and her sister Georgina, went to Manchester. The play was performed for three nights, not two – and it is now clear that Dickens always had the extra Monday night in mind after the Friday and Saturday performances and even considered taking posters for the extra night down with him and playing it without a licence from the Lord Chamberlain.³⁵

In those four days in Manchester Dickens became besotted with Ellen Ternan. Collins was among the first to know. Four days after returning from Manchester he wrote to his friend:

Partly in the grim despair and restlessness of this subsidence from excitement, and partly for the sake of *Household Words*, I want to cast about whether you and I can go anywhere – take any tour – see any thing – whereon we could write something together. Have you any idea, tending to any place in the world? ... We want something for *Household Words*, and I want to escape from myself. For, when I do start up and stare myself seedily in the face... my blankness is inconceivable – indescribable – my misery, amazing ... Shall we talk at Gad's Hill? What shall we do?³⁶

Dickens soon knew what he was to do. Collins and he went to the North of England to write a piece together for *Household Words*. But he was less than honest with his friends when he wrote to them about this trip. He signed himself "Your faithful friend" when he wrote to Hannah Brown on 4 September: "We start on ... Monday Morning, and have not the least idea where we are going to."³⁷ And the next day he told his long-time friend, Angela Burdett Coutts: "I have decided on a foray into the bleak fells of Cumberland".³⁸ They did start by going to Allonby on the Cumberland coast. But before he composed those letters he had already written on 3 September to

³³ To Collins, 2 August 1857, PILGRIM VIII 394-5.

³⁴ See to Fairbairn, 13 August 1857, PILGRIM VIII 409

³⁵ To John Deane, 12 August 1857, PILGRIM VIII 407.

³⁶ To Collins, 29 August 1857, PILGRIM VIII 423.

³⁷ To Mrs Brown, 4 September 1857, PILGRIM VIII 430.

³⁸ To Angela Burdett Coutts, 5 September 1857, PILGRIM VIII 432.

book rooms for himself and Collins from 13 September in the town of Doncaster, 120 miles south east of Allonby.³⁹ So Dickens knew perfectly well where and when he was going to end up – Doncaster in the week of the St Leger horse-race, where Ellen Ternan and her mother and sister were acting at the theatre. One can only conclude that the whole expedition was engineered with that in mind.

On Monday 7 September they set off by train to Carlisle. Only then did Dickens write to his sister-in-law and his sub-editor to tell them that Doncaster was their final destination: “We shall not arrive at Doncaster until Sunday night ... we have a grotesque idea of describing the town.” This in race week when a room could not be had for less than 12 guineas. Clearly to Dickens it was worth every penny.⁴⁰ Throughout the trip Dickens did not write a word to his wife (at least, no letters to her survive) nor send his love to her through his letters to her sister, though he assiduously sent kisses to his children.⁴¹ The presence of Collins, Dickens and the Ternans is confirmed by *The Doncaster Gazette* and *The Doncaster Chronicle*.⁴² Claire Tomalin, in her biography of Ellen Ternan (ch. 7), finds evidence that they met in two rather Delphic references in letters to Wills describing the actress as “the riddle”;⁴³ and also in two passages in the five part fictional account which Collins and Dickens wrote about the trip. This was “The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices” which was published in *Household Words* with Dickens in the role of Mr Goodchild and Collins depicted as Mr Idle. In particular:

Mr. Goodchild would appear to have been by no means free from lunacy himself at “t’ races”, though not of the prevalent kind. He is suspected by Mr. Idle to have fallen into a dreadful state concerning a pair of little lilac gloves and a little bonnet that he saw there. Mr. Idle asserts, that he did afterwards repeat at the Angel, with an appearance of being lunatically seized, some rhapsody to the following effect: “O little lilac gloves! And O winning little bonnet, making in conjunction with her golden hair quite a Glory in the sunlight round the pretty head, why anything in the world but you and me!”⁴⁴

Ellen herself was described later by Kate Dickens as a “small fair-haired rather pretty actress” (cited in Storey, 93). Tomalin (ch. 7) concludes that whatever Dickens proposed to Ellen he was, at that time, rejected. Whoever knew, or did not, about the real purpose of the trip, Collins must have. And in the first

³⁹ To the Master of the Angel Hotel, Doncaster, 3 September 1857, PILGRIM VIII 429.

⁴⁰ To Georgina Hogarth, 7 September 1857, PILGRIM VIII 438, and to Wills, same date, PILGRIM VIII 438-9.

⁴¹ See to Georgina Hogarth, 9 September 1857, PILGRIM VIII 441-2; 12 September 1857, PILGRIM VIII 443-5; 15 September 1857, PILGRIM VIII 447-8.

⁴² See, for example, *The Doncaster Chronicle*, Friday, September 18, 1857, 5 col.1.

⁴³ To Wills, 17 September 1857, PILGRIM VIII 448-9, and 20 September 1857, PILGRIM VIII 450-1. Both references were excised in all editions before PILGRIM.

⁴⁴ *Household Words*, 16 (31 October 1857) 411-2, in Chapter the Fifth, which refers to the time in Doncaster. The other passage refers to the rowdy behaviour of theatre-goers towards the actresses (412).

surviving letter to Collins written after it was over,⁴⁵ Dickens adopts the “My Dear Wilkie” salutation – which he kept for the rest of his life. Shared intimacies had brought Collins one step towards a new closeness with Dickens.

Dickens certainly was troubled by his feelings for Ellen and they affected his marriage. In October 1857 he ordered the doorway between his dressing room and the bedroom he had shared with his wife to be “fitted with plain white deal shelves”. In future he slept alone in the dressing room on “a small iron bedstead”.⁴⁶ Two months later he wrote to Mrs Lavinia Watson, a long-time friend:

I weary of rest, and have no satisfaction but in fatigue ... I wish an Ogre with seven heads ... had taken the Princess whom I adore – you have no idea how intensely I love her! – to his stronghold on the top of a high series of Mountains, and there tied her up by the hair. Nothing would suit me half so well this day, as climbing after her, sword in hand, and either winning her or being killed.⁴⁷

Early in 1858 he sent Collins a specially bound copy of the Christmas number they had written together,⁴⁸ with the message:

Thinking it may one day be interesting to you – say when you are weak in both feet, and when I and Doncaster are quiet and the great race is over.⁴⁹

And then again six weeks later:

The Doncaster unhappiness remains so strong upon me that I can’t write, and (waking) can’t rest, one minute. I have never known a moment’s peace or content, since the last night of the Frozen Deep. I do suppose that there never was a Man so seized and rended by one Spirit.⁵⁰

Noone knows precisely what crisis caused his final separation from his wife. But we do know that things came to a head in the week of 17 May 1858. It may have been precipitated when a piece of jewellery ordered for Ellen Ternan was mistakenly delivered by the jeweller to Catherine.⁵¹ But by the beginning of June it was settled. Dickens provided Catherine with a house and £600 a year and he remained in Tavistock House with Catherine’s sister Georgina and all the children except the eldest, Charley, who went to live with his mother.

That led to rumours that Dickens had separated from Catherine because he “preferred his wife’s sister to herself”. Others associated him with an “actress” and a “professional young lady”.⁵² On 25 May he wrote to Collins:

⁴⁵ 22 October 1857, PILGRIM VIII 470.

⁴⁶ To Anne Cornelius, 11 October 1857, PILGRIM VIII 465.

⁴⁷ To Mrs Lavinia Watson, 7 December 1857, PILGRIM VIII 488.

⁴⁸ “The Perils of Certain English Prisoners”, *Household Words*, Christmas Number, December 1857.

⁴⁹ To Collins, 6 February 1858, PILGRIM VIII 517.

⁵⁰ To Collins, 21 March 1858, PILGRIM VIII 536.

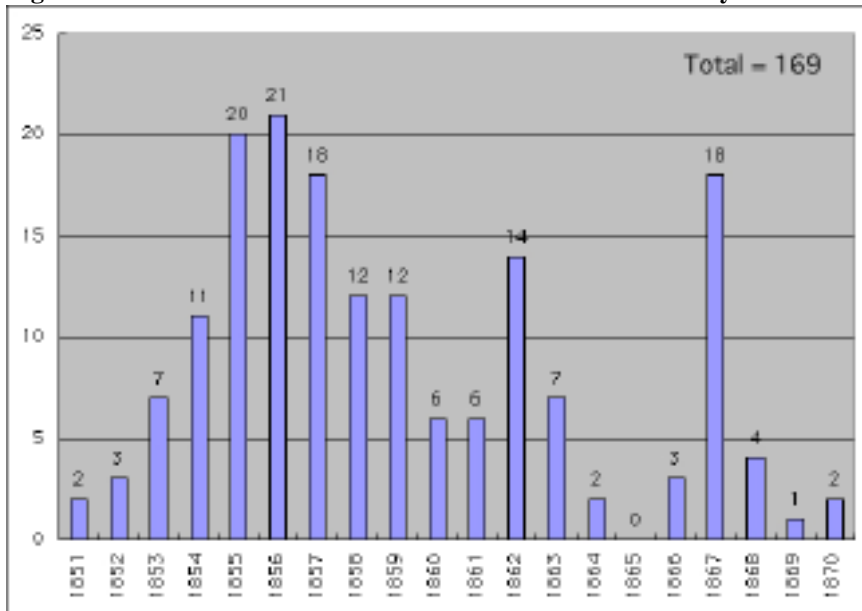
⁵¹ There is a full account of the separation in Slater (135-62), where it is related to Dickens’s psychology and writings. There is also a well-documented account of this difficult period and the bracelet incident in Johnson, pt. 8 ch. 9.

⁵² See the various letters in PILGRIM VIII 739-45.

A thousand thanks for your kind letter: I always feel your friendship very much, and prize it in proportion to the true affection I have for you ... Can you come round to me in the morning ... before 12. I can then tell you all in lieu of writing. It is rather a long story—over, I hope, now.⁵³

For the first time he signed the letter “Ever affectionately” – a form of closing he kept for the rest of his life. The rumours continued and Dickens decided to repudiate them in a personal statement which he persuaded *The Times* to run,⁵⁴ and which he repeated in *Household Words*.⁵⁵ However, his friend Mark Lemon refused to print the statement in *Punch* which he edited. Lemon had also reluctantly taken on the job of advising Catherine. In addition to the break with Bradbury & Evans who published *Punch* as well as *Household Words*, the split ended the friendship between the two men. Dickens did not write again to Lemon for ten years. By then “My Dear Mark ... Ever Affectionately CD” had become “My Dear Lemon ... Faithfully Yours Charles Dickens.”⁵⁶ Thus he remained. As Collins entered the closest circle, Lemon left.

Figure 1. Number of Known Letters from Dickens to Collins by Year



⁵³ To Collins, 25 May 1858, PILGRIM VIII 567.

⁵⁴ *The Times*, 7 June 1858.

⁵⁵ *Household Words* 17 (12 June 1858) 601.

⁵⁶ To Lemon, 6 October 1868, PILGRIM XII 195.

Collins stood by Dickens throughout the separation and was clearly seen by him as on “his” side. But Collins continued to be warm to Catherine, in 1862 sending her an affectionate note and photograph for an album she compiled, and in 1871 giving her an author’s box ticket to see *The Woman in White*.⁵⁷ Based on documents such as Dickens’s letters to others – notably that to W.H. Wills of 26 July 1868, with its description of *The Moonstone* as “wearisome beyond endurance” (PILGRIM XII 159) – all Collins’s major biographers have assumed that the friendship between him and Dickens cooled towards the end of Dickens’s life (see Robinson 215, Davis 257-8 & 265, Clarke 127-8, 138, and Peters 311-2). Other evidence for the cooling, notably in the collaborative efforts of the two men, has recently been presented by Lillian Nayder (chs. 5-6), who sees it as indicating a deepening rivalry rather than a falling out. What is remarkable, though, is that the letters from Dickens to Collins provide no concrete support for the idea of the cooling relationship.

As Figure 1 shows, the frequency of the letters peaked in the mid-1850s when Dickens and Collins were working and travelling together. Collins was a staff writer on *Household Words* and then *All The Year Round* from October 1856 to early in 1862. As Collins’s independent fame grew – after *The Woman in White* was published in 1859-60 – the two friends undoubtedly spent less time together, both socially and for work, and Collins left *All The Year Round*. He was wealthy enough to travel independently and much of the time he spent abroad trying to cure his various ailments. From around 1865 he had relationships to sustain with Martha Rudd as well as his companion since 1857, Caroline Graves, and his first child was born in November 1869. Dickens’s public readings took him around the country and to the United States of America. The number of letters inevitably fell, only to grow again in 1867 when they reunited for their last collaborative work *No Thoroughfare*.⁵⁸ Indeed in 1867 there are 18 known letters – the third highest total for any year.

After 1867 there are few letters – just seven in the next two and half years. Evidence for a cooling in the relationship has been seen in Dickens’s last letter to Collins which closes “I don’t come to see you, because I don’t want to bother you. Perhaps you may be glad to see me bye and bye. Who knows!”⁵⁹ But the words before those do not indicate animosity. Dickens wrote, “I have been truly concerned to hear of your bad attack; but I have two hopes of it; first that it will not last long; second, that it will leave you in a really recovered state of good health.” The slightly melancholy tone is no more than that of a letter eight years earlier when Collins left his seven-guineas-a-week job at *All The Year Round* to earn £5000 from the publisher Smith & Elder for his next novel, *Armada*: “I am very sorry that we part company (though only in a literary sense), but I hope we shall work together again, one day.”⁶⁰ When Dickens

⁵⁷ Collins to Catherine Dickens, 7 April 1862 and 18 October 1871, PM; BGLL.

⁵⁸ “No Thoroughfare,” *Household Words*, Christmas Number, December 1867.

⁵⁹ To Collins, 27 January 1870, PILGRIM XII 471.

⁶⁰ To Collins, 5 January 1862, PILGRIM X 5.

wrote in January 1870, Collins was unable to see anyone – literally. He had written to his lawyer Tindell two days earlier, “As for me, the gout has got me in the eye. I am confined to my room blinded for the time being.”⁶¹ Barely three months earlier Collins had

... had a day at Gadshill, a little while since. Only the family. Very harmonious and pleasant – except Dickens's bath, which dripped behind the head of my bed all night. Apropos of Gadshill, your cutting from the *New York Times*, has been followed by a copy of the paper and a letter from Bigelow. I don't think Dickens has heard of it – and I shan't say anything about it, for it might vex him, and can do no good. Why they should rake up that old letter now, is more than I can understand. But then a people who can spell Forster's name without the “r”, are evidently capable of anything.⁶²

The “old letter” referred to here is that written by Dickens in May 1858 to his friend Arthur Smith concerning his separation. This is the so-called “violated letter” that Dickens claimed he had not intended to be published, but merely to be shown to people who questioned what had happened (Forster, bk 8 ch. 2). However, to his dismay it was published in an American newspaper on 16 August 1858 and was then widely reprinted in America and Britain. For some reason, eleven years later, the *New York Times* had published it once more under the heading “Why Charles Dickens Separated From His Wife: His Own Statement. From The Boston Folio.”⁶³ Clearly this would have upset Dickens greatly if he had learned of it, and Collins's considerate action in concealing the news hardly seems the stuff of enmity. Further, a newly published letter to Charles Fechter also shows that Collins visited Dickens at Gad's Hill Place barely two weeks before his death.⁶⁴ He is also reported to have been planning another visit in June when he had finished *Man and Wife*, an appointment only prevented by Dickens's death (Robinson, 242; Davis, 265; Peters, 317).

Writing to a friend in 1888, towards the end of his own life, Collins recalled being “... with Dickens at Paris in 1855. We saw each other every day, and were as fond of each other as men could be. Nobody (my dear mother excepted, of course) felt so positively sure of the future before me in Literature, as Dickens did.”⁶⁵ The new evidence presented here suggests that they died as they lived, the closest of friends. Earlier conclusions about the cooling relationship may thus need to be reappraised.

⁶¹ Collins to Tindell, 25 January 1870, MITCHELL; BGLL.

⁶² To Frederick Lehmann, 25 October 1869, B&C II 326-327.

⁶³ *The New York Times*, 28 September 1869, 5 col. 5; the misprint “Foster” is found around half way down the column.

⁶⁴ To Charles Fechter, 28 May 1870, PILGRIM XII 536-538

⁶⁵ Collins to Robert du Pontavice de Heussey, 15 March 1886, PARRISH; BGLL.

III My Dear Dickens

The other side of this correspondence is missing. Letters to Dickens from Collins, like all the rest, were burnt in the fire at Gad's Hill and subsequently. Only three remain. One is a letter which fulfils Dickens's criterion of a letter "on absolute business". On 7 August 1860 Collins accepts an engagement to work for two years as a writer on Dickens's periodical *All The Year Round* on a salary of seven guineas a week plus a share in the profits.⁶⁶ The others are small letters. One, cited above, is about a play they were performing. The other asks leave to come and stay at Gad's Hill. Both somehow survived. All are addressed "My dear Dickens" but their sign offs change from "... attached and obedient servant W. Wilkie Collins" in 1851 to "Ever yours Wilkie Collins" in 1860 to "Ever your afftly W.C" in 1864.⁶⁷

But that is not the end of the Collins side of the correspondence. There is one final secret waiting to be discovered in these 169 letters. Almost every one either replies to a letter from Collins or invites a reply – some do both. From these clues we can reconstruct something of the missing half of this correspondence. That will be the subject of a second essay, which will also return to the claims that their relationship cooled towards the end of Dickens's life.

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Black and White: British and American Versions

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Wilkie Collins's 1869 play *Black and White* was written together with Charles Fechter and first performed on the stage of London's Adelphi Theater on 29 March 1869. In her biography of Collins, Catherine Peters is dismissive of the collaboration, describing Fechter's plot as "preposterous" and Collins's denouement as "nothing but melodrama" (314-5). Yet, like other critics who have discussed *Black and White*,¹ Peters focuses on the British production and does not consider the play's run in Boston or the American version of the text. In consequence it has yet to come to scholarly attention that there are two distinctly different versions of this play. This critical oversight should be rectified.

Black and White has recently gained popularity among scholars for its surprisingly radical portrayal of racial injustice. The story concerns Maurice de Layrac ("de Leyrac" in the American version), a French Count who sails to the island of Trinidad to woo the woman he loves. There, Maurice learns that he is the son of a female slave and a white plantation owner and thus, though ostensibly "white," technically a slave. During the course of the drama, his lover's initial revulsion toward his black heritage is overcome, Maurice escapes the schemings of a vindictive rival who wishes to bind him into slavery, and the play concludes with an interracial marriage. In the process, it provides many examples of the various ways, prejudiced as well as progressive, in which Wilkie Collins approached issues of racial difference in his writing.

Black and White, like many of Collins's plays, has not been republished. However, if one compares the American and British printed versions of the play, it quickly becomes apparent that, although the two plots are basically the same, the written texts vary significantly. Certainly it may be argued that dramatic scripts published and performed in the nineteenth century were subject to frequent revisions during the course of their "run." However, as scholarly interest in Collins's textual treatment of race increases and as more critics discuss this particular play, the differences between these two editions need to be recognized, especially so as the two versions of the play provide readers with differing images of slavery and black identity. Additionally, modern scholars may be interested in yet a third printed version of the play: the "Licensor's Copy." This document, perhaps the original form of Collins's drama, can be found in the British Library.

¹ See, for example, Robert Ashley (80) on the poor reception of the play in Britain, or William M. Clarke (117-9) on Collins's response to it.

Three different nineteenth-century publishers produced copies of *Black and White* for acting purposes. The play was printed by C. Whiting in London in 1869, by De Witt Publishers in New York in either 1869 or 1870, and by The Dramatic Publishing Company in Chicago around the turn of the century.² Close reading proves that the Chicago and New York editions of the play are identical.³ Obviously the Chicago edition was not reset but reproduced either from stereotype plates or photographically. Other than a distinctive title page announcing the publisher and graced with unique decorative flourishes, the wording and appearance of these two editions of the play are the same, line for line.

Conversely, differences between the London text and the New York text are immediately visible. Where the title page of the London edition reads *Black and White: A Love Story, in Three Acts*, that of the New York edition bears the designation *Black and White: A Drama, in Three Acts*. A further early indication that the form of the New York edition departs from the London printing is the note that appears on the title page, beneath the title of the play and the names of the two authors. The passage reads:

As first performed at the Adelphi Theatre, London, under the management of Benjamin Webster, esq., on Monday, March 29, 1869. To which is added a description of the costumes – cast of the characters – entrances and exits – relative positions of the performers on the stage, and the whole of the stage business.

(*Black and White*, New York and Chicago, title page)

Unlike the London edition of the play, the New York edition has five pages of detailed notes and stage directions at the front of the text, complete with five different drawings of the stage; it also boasts a “synopsis” of the story printed at the end of the script. Furthermore, the text of the play itself is full of directions for the actors’ movements, expressions, entrances and exits, and relationships to various stage props, few of which are found in the London printing of the play.

In the absence of documentary evidence in Collins’s correspondence or elsewhere, it is difficult to provide a definitive explanation for these differences. However, because Charles Fechter left England for America at the end of 1869 and was involved in the Boston production of the play, it seems

² No date appears on either of these American acting editions. As performances of the play began in Boston’s Globe Theatre on 26 December 1870, it may be assumed that this version of the play was printed by De Witt either in 1869 or in 1870. Kirk H. Beetz (49) dates the Chicago edition as “around 1900.”

³ There are several “points” that provide conclusive evidence of this. The same asymmetrical lines appear in the diagrams of the stage (found under the heading of “Scenery”) that were drawn by hand. On page 11, the typing of Miss Milburn’s lines “For you to come all the way from Paris on my account, across I don’t know how many oceans! Oh, how very absurd!” is noticeably uneven; the letter “y” in the word “very” is placed in an odd position, with the bottom of the tail of the letter “y,” rather than the joining of the two diagonal lines, resting on the same line as the r. Also, on page 15, the reader will note a typesetting error: Maurice’s question “Is she here” is followed by a colon rather than a question mark.

possible that it was he who edited Collins's written text for its publication in America.⁴ Fechter, along with Dickens, had previously edited Collins's play *No Thoroughfare* for its Paris production. In addition, one might conclude from the abundance of stage directions in the American version that an actor (as Fechter was) may have penned this draft of *Black and White* for publication in the United States. Fechter certainly was known for his fondness for dramatic physical expression. In her brief discussion of his career, Catherine Peters writes, "In his short career on the London stage ... Fechter probably did more to change the style of English acting than any other single actor at the time. Wilkie's account of Fechter's preparation ... suggests he was a nineteenth-century forerunner of Method acting" (288). She also claims, "As the villain Obenreizer in *No Thoroughfare*, Fechter was at his best. The story ... is full of stage 'business,' more visual than verbal, with Swiss settings that drew on Dickens' and Wilkie's memories of the journey to Italy" (288-9). Such an individual seems likely to have emphasized dramatic action and stage directions in his work. Furthermore, Fechter had played the part of Maurice in London and during the play's provincial tour of Britain. His memory of the script, as an actor, also might explain the many odd discrepancies between the written lines of the two texts. Lines recited by actors during performances of the play may very likely have deviated from the exact wording of the printed script.

Of course, this is not the only conceivable explanation. Certainly the name of "Benjamin Webster, esq." appears prominently (and perhaps needlessly) on the title page below the names of Wilkie Collins and Charles Fechter in the New York edition. The director of the London production might have altered elements within the drama during rehearsal. Or, Collins himself could have done this. He poured a great deal of money into the British productions of *Black and White*; he also may have attended rehearsals and made suggestions for changes in dialogue. Finally, it is even possible that someone in the audience at a London production of the play scribbled down a rough copy of it during a performance in order to republish it for a profit in America. Although this scenario seems least likely, one might note a "paraphrased" quality in some of the passages that suggests that they were only loosely recorded. This too might explain why the written texts vary so noticeably.

However, whatever truth lies in these speculations, it is certain that there are large sections of the New York text where Collins's text is rewritten or rearranged. One of many curious examples is a speech where Maurice prepares himself to explain to Miss Emily Milburn, the love of his life (and the privileged daughter of a plantation owner), the fact that his mother is a slave. The London version of the text reads:

The sun shines brightly; the sounds of day are abroad in the air; my weary eyes rest on the beauty and the luxury of this room – and still my mind sees nothing but the ghastly moonlight and the squalid hut; my ears are

⁴ For a brief discussion of Fechter's travels, see Peters, 357.

deaf to all but my mother's dying words. (*He looks towards the side entrance.*) Oh, you whom I love, come, with your soft footfall and your gentle smile! Emily! Emily! give me the courage to tell you what I heard last night!

(*Black and White*, London, 25)

The American versions read:

The sun shines brightly, and the fruit and flowers gleam, but I freeze in the ghastly moonlight of last night – the night my mother died! All seems dead to me now, and yet I breathe, I think, I move and live! (*music*) Ah! you whom I love! Emily! come to me with your light footfall and your gentle smile! come and give me the courage to tell you what I learnt last night! (*music for MISS MILBURN'S entrance.*)

(*Black and White*, New York and Chicago, 19)

One could certainly claim, after noting the “ghastly” quality of the descriptive writing in the American version, that the London edition seems the better written of the two texts. However, despite this fact, the New York script manages to advance certain themes, particularly those involving relationships between blacks and whites, that might be termed “underdeveloped” within the London version of Collins’s play. The American version of the text may be considered a corruption of Collins’s original work; however, one might also argue that the differences between the two editions reflect the two audiences’ national expectations and cultural preoccupations. Ultimately, within the American *Black and White*, sentimental language and a focus on feeling are used to intensify larger political themes concerning systems of slavery. Such mechanisms were used liberally both in the literature and in the non-fictional works on slavery appearing at this time in America, specifically in the wake of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s influential 1852 work *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.⁵ In the British acting edition of *Black and White*, the audience’s sympathy is aligned with the hero of the story, and less dramatic emphasis is placed on the tragedies of the slaves, notably Ruth. The fact that the longer “Licensor’s Copy” of Collins’s text itself offers a less restrained discussion of interracial romance may suggest that the drama Collins originally wrote had already been tempered for a British audience.

Indeed, the ideological messages generated by these editions are greatly affected by their textual variations. For example, the New York version of the text seems to have been “Americanized.” This is most obviously seen in the names of the island’s slaves. In each text, it is established that slaves have

⁵ Many scholars have noted the various ways in which Stowe’s novel became an American cultural phenomenon for decades after the Civil War. For example, in his discussion of the theatrical renditions of the novel, Alfred Kazin points out that “garish dramatizations ... flourishing in one provincial ‘opery house’ after another ... emphasized the most melodramatic, seemingly improbable incidents in the novel” (vii). Collins’s play actually suffered in Britain as a result of the proliferation of dramas that reenacted Stowe’s work. Andrew Gasson (19) notes that Collins considered that the play “achieved only limited success because English audiences had been saturated with adaptations of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.”

taken “lustrious” names for themselves; Mr Plato argues, “we don’t see why de dam white man should hab all de good names to hisself” (London, 14; New York and Chicago, 13). In the London edition of the play, the slaves are Messrs. Plato, Socrates, Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare, and Milton, but in the American versions, along with other alterations, Mr. Homer is replaced by Mr. Washington. However, these are far from being the most significant changes in the American version. The New York text, with its copious stage directions and extravagant language, is more melodramatic and exaggeratedly theatrical than the London version. Nevertheless, because of the reinforced sentimentality in the American edition of *Black and White*, the stand against slavery and against racial prejudice is more pronounced.

Of course, black characters in both texts are mocked for taking a “radical” position in the name of the “sacred right ob freedom”; the blacks on the island plan either to kill all the whites or to form a coalition by which they might unite themselves “in one great conspiracy to learn no lessons, and to do no work” in an effort to drive the white man off the island (*Black and White*, London, 13-14). Nevertheless, black characters in the London version of the text are repeatedly shown to take pleasure in serving whites. This becomes obvious at the beginning of the play as the slave woman Ruth goes out of her way to please a spoiled and unappreciative mistress, in spite of the fact that she herself is seriously ill. The scene reads as follows:

(Enter RUTH, with ices on a tray.)

MISS M. (to RUTH). Why are you still here? You know how ill you have been – I told you you were not fit to wait at the party. Go home – do pray go home!

RUTH. Yes missy – yes. I only waited to give you your ice. Take the pineapple ice. I made them, and I know which is best.

MISS M. (taking an ice from the tray, and then putting it back again). No! now it has come, I don’t want it. I don’t know what I want! It isn’t your fault Ruth – I’m sorry I troubled you.

RUTH. I’ll find something you like, missy – never fear!

(She goes out.)

MISS M. (looking after RUTH). I wonder whether there is anybody – except that poor old Quadroon – who really loves me? I spoke to the doctor about her this morning, Jane. He said she had got a heart-complaint; and, at her age, he owned frankly there was nothing to be done.

MRS. P. Is Ruth your slave?

MISS M. No. She is a slave on a plantation close to mine, called “The Upper Croft.” The owner has been absent for years – and Ruth is allowed to earn a little money by making ices for any one who will employ her. She does her best, poor thing! But the ices in Trinidad are not to be compared with the ices in Paris.

(*Black and White*, London, 5-6)

In this segment of dialogue, the reader becomes aware of the condescending pity and the keen desire to please that characterize the relationship between Miss Emily Milburn and Ruth. Ruth is shown to be “needy” and eager to

garner approval from the self-aggrandizing Emily Milburn, who looks down on her unParisian ices. Although Plato's band of rebels speaks of overthrowing the whites on the island, Ruth rushes to find "something" that will please her mistress, despite her illness.

However, in the New York version, the relationship between Emily and Ruth appears more equitable. This may come as a surprise to the modern critic; after all, it was the Americans, not the British, who continued the practice of slave-ownership until the mid-nineteenth century. Of course, this disparity may result from romantic American fantasies about the positive, loving relationships existing between some masters and their slaves as against traditional British notions about the ways in which masters and servants interact in a well-ordered house. Nevertheless, in the American version of Collins's text, slaves do not simply assume it is an honor or duty to serve whites. Accordingly, in this edition of the script, the scene communicates quite a different impression:

Enter, R.U.E. and by C.D.F., RUTH, with bunch of flowers. Drops on one knee and offers flowers to MISS MILBURN.

MISS M. Ruth! (*takes flowers.*) Why, you ought not to be here. Thank you. You are not strong enough to be out. Do go in, do go in.

RUTH. I only wanted to see you and bring you these, with my sincere wishes for your happiness on your birthday.

MISS M. My happiness! (*bitterly, almost in tears*) I can't bear it! I'll go away – I am only plagued more and more. (*kindly*) But don't you be pained – it is not your fault, Ruth!

RUTH. I did not mean to grieve you, miss. (*kisses MISS MILBURN'S hand, and exits D.P. and off R.U.E.*)

MISS M. Poor old Ruth! poor girl! I was speaking to the doctor about her – he says she is dying of a heart broken, nothing else. Even a slave can love (*sighs*) Ah!

MRS. P. But you have not told me what ails your heart.

(*Black and White, New York and Chicago, 8*)

In the London version, Emily chastises Ruth as she meekly puts forth her offering of a pineapple ice and then orders her (rather brusquely) to go home. In this version, Emily seems more concerned about Ruth's health. She welcomes her into her own house, and she specifically urges Ruth to go inside to rest. Here, Ruth brings flowers – a gift on her birthday. Although she goes down on one knee to present them and although she kisses Emily's hand, she does not wait upon Emily. Their connection is one of feeling, not economics, and in this scene, Ruth does not appear to be employed. She seems to be more an independent agent and less an object of charity. Here Emily genuinely appears to care for Ruth, and Ruth travels to the plantation in order to visit a friend, rather than to work. It provides a contrast to the London version, where Ruth specifically plays the role of an anxious inferior.

Still, perhaps the most striking difference between these two scenes is the description of Ruth's illness. In the London version of the text, Ruth is dying of old age and of a "heart-complaint." In the New York edition, Ruth is dying "of

a heart broken, nothing else,” a significant variation on the original story. In the American version of *Black and White*, “even a slave can love.” This sort of language endows Ruth’s character with a humanity that is missing from the London edition of the text. In the New York script, Ruth is an individual of passion and feeling; in addition to mothering and serving, she participates in a romantic narrative. Although her relationship with Maurice’s white father is discussed in the London version of Collins’s text, the American script’s emphasis on her broken heart reinforces her character as a secondary heroine rather than merely as an individual whose past actions shape the course of the plot.

It is Collins’s original dramatic framework, however, that provides the basis for the new American interpretation of this story. Indeed, one may argue that the political nature of Collins’s text lends itself to further interpretation by audiences, by adaptors, and even by plagiarists, and that Collins himself might have originally intended to place greater emphasis on racial issues.

A document that gives further evidence of the play’s radical potential is an additional printed copy of the play – the Licensor’s Copy – a factor that further complicates issues of critical interpretation for the modern Collins scholar. According to nineteenth-century British Law, all plays were required to be submitted to the Lord Chamberlain’s office for approval before they could be publicly performed. This third edition of *Black and White*, also printed by C. Whiting and now held in the British Library, appears to be the copy sent to the licensor’s office before the opening of the play. “Licensors copy [sic]” is written in cursive on the cover, as is Benjamin Webster’s signature and the note “Received, March 17.”

According to the *Index of English Literary Manuscripts* (674), the text of *Black and White* was licensed on 18 March 1869. However, the printed London version of *Black and White* that is available today differs in many respects from the copy that was turned in to the licensor’s office on 17 March 1869. There are no records available in the British Library of comments that may have been made by a censor on Collins’s play; nevertheless, it is possible that parts of the play that appear in this version (and not in the London edition) may *not* have been approved. Under the Theatre Regulation Act of 1843 (and in conjunction with the Lord Chamberlain’s regulative capacity, which dated back to the Licensing Act of 1737), the Lord Chancellor was authorized to prohibit the acting of a play *or* the performance of specific lines, acts, or scenes within a play.⁶ Such censorship could be carried out whenever the Lord Chamberlain

⁶ According to the *Concise Oxford Companion to the Theatre*, “In Great Britain the wide powers of supervision and control over the stage which were vested in the Lord Chamberlain, until they were abolished by the Theatres Act, 1968, derived originally from the function of a minor official in the Royal Household, the Master of Revels ... first appointed in the reign of Henry VII” (143). Zygmunt Hubner writes, “The Licensing Act proved unbelievably handy. It endured for more than two centuries, regulating theatrical matters – with some minor changes ... introduced in 1843 by the Theatre Regulation Act – until the Theatres Act of 1968 put an end to prior censorship” (40).

was of the opinion that it was “fitting for the preservation of good manners, decorum, or the public peace to do so” (“Report from the Joint Select Committee,” 47). Such may have been the case with some of the lines within *Black and White*. For example, a brief conversation between Maurice de Layrac and his arch-enemy Stephen Westcraft (which happen to contain a few disparaging comments about London and the British) do not appear in either the London or the New York versions of the play. The missing lines read:

MISS M. (*trying to quiet* WESTCRAFT) Stephen! The Count brings the latest news from Europe. (*To MAURICE*) There are troubles expected in France, are there not?

MAUR. (*seriously*) Yes. Some people see the signs of a new revolution before long.

WEST. How like the French! One revolution is not enough for them.

MAUR. (*with a momentary irritation*). Pardon me, sir, it's more like the English. One revolution wasn't enough for *you*!

MISS WEST. (*to her brother*). Stephen!

WEST. (*impatiently*). Yes! yes! (*To MAURICE*.) *Our* revolutions, Mr. Count, happened a long time ago. We consider it in cursedly bad taste to refer to them now.

MAUR. Such is English gratitude for English liberty!

(*Black and White*, Licensor's Copy, 9-10)

The action of *Black and White* is set in the year 1830 and the above passage makes an interesting statement about the ways in which English society was then attempting to silence (through censure) noises of revolution. Although one revolution wasn't (and isn't) enough, it is considered “cursedly bad taste” to speak of it. Additionally, the audience is encouraged to think that Westcraft has no appreciation for the ideals of liberty. The British gentleman wants to enslave Maurice de Layrac and to dominate Emily Milburn; additionally, he is shown to be the owner of many black slaves. In *Black and White*, the black, French gentleman is the hero; the English colonizer is the villain.

In his discussion of censorship in Britain, Zygmunt Hubner writes (48), “[u]sually the censor objects to the theater's using universally understood symbols, such as the cross, national emblems and colors, military uniforms, and even makeup and costumes that could be taken as a direct allusion to real people in political life.” Technically, British censors were directed to remove these symbolic elements, as well as potentially controversial references to British politics, from plays that were to be performed in front of public audiences. Accordingly, one might conclude that the above discussion of British revolution may have been censored. Nevertheless, it is difficult to know how strict late-century censors were in handling plays that were submitted to them for approval. In addition, this passage does not seem exceptionally offensive. Thus there arises the possibility that Collins himself chose to rework his text at some point.

Indeed, the above excerpt is only one of a number of passages of dialogue that do not appear in the printed London edition of the play. Although censors in the Lord Chancellor's office clearly had the power to force an author to

change or to cut segments of the dialogue, it is quite possible that Collins made these changes himself. Perhaps changes were made in the interests of time or artistic quality; perhaps Collins chose to tone down a few of his more subversive passages. Whatever the motivations for these changes may have been, the Licenser's Copy of this play provides the modern scholar with an interesting look at some of the additional ways in which Collins's drama might have recognized injustice and questioned the social frameworks regulating relationships of love and desire.

Possibly the most interesting of the passages included in the Licenser's Copy but omitted in the London edition are those that address issues concerning women and race. Particularly remarkable are the segments that discuss the relationship between Ruth and Mrs. Brentwood, her white lover's wife. In the Licenser's Copy of *Black and White*, Mrs. Brentwood emerges as a particularly vengeful and hateful character.⁷ In all three versions of the play, the wife (perhaps not surprisingly) disapproves of her husband's affair with the slave woman, Ruth. Nevertheless, serious consequences result from Mrs. Brentwood's successful efforts to prevent her dying husband from freeing both Ruth and her husband's son by Ruth. Ruth laments this action in the London edition of the play; however, in the Licenser's Copy, her response to the actions of the "jealous wife" are much stronger. At one point she exclaims "Keep the letter – it proves that the jealous wife had her sin to answer for – sin against *me*" (*Black and White*, Licenser's Copy, 24). In this edition of the drama, the actions of the wife are labeled as "sin," and Ruth openly declares to her son her feelings of condemnation and anger.

In the printed London version, the actions taken by Mrs. Brentwood and her feelings of regret on her deathbed are quickly related over the course of a paragraph (*Black and White*, London, 22-23). However, in the Licenser's Copy, the entire story of the wife's guilt is divulged by Ruth in great detail. The passage reads as follows:

RUTH. They say she repented of it afterwards – when her time came to die. The clergyman who was with her, wrote down what she had said about me on her death-bed. You will find it under my pillow.

MAUR. (*taking a letter from the pillow*). This?

RUTH. Yes. I kept the letter – if we ever met again – for you to see. Turn to the second page, and read what the clergyman has written there.

MAUR. (*reading*). "I have now to tell you what passed between us, word for word. I asked Mrs. Brentwood if she remembered injuring or wronging any one. She admitted, Ruth, that she had wronged *you*. She had destroyed a letter which her husband left to be given to you, after his death. I asked what

⁷ For example, additional lines not present in the London version read:

MICH. He tried to communicate with your mother—

MAUR. And his jealous wife prevented it. He left a letter to be given to my mother, after his death – and his jealous wife destroyed it.

(*Black and White*, Licenser's Copy, 32-33)

the letter contained. She became violently agitated – convulsions seized her – and death silenced the confession that was trembling on her lips.”

RUTH. Is there no more?

MAUR. Yes – a few words more.

RUTH. Read them.

MAUR. (*reading*). “I thought it my duty to mention what I had heard to Mrs. Brentwood’s executors. I asked them to let me know if they found anything among her papers relating to Ruth, the Quadroon. They found a pocket-book, which had once belonged to Mr. Brentwood. It contained an entry alluding to a duplicate letter, which Mr. Brentwood had hidden – the copy, I suspect, of the letter which his wife destroyed.” (*Maurice looks up*.) Where is that copy?

(*Black and White*, Licenser’s Copy, 23-24)

Here, Mrs. Brentwood’s actions against Ruth are repeatedly shown as immoral. She is unable to make her final “confession” because she is seized with wild convulsions, convulsions the audience assumes are brought on either by terrible guilt or raging hatred, neither of which bode well for her spirit’s coming voyage into the realm beyond. Although audience members may conclude that the wife has some reason for her feelings of anger, Mrs. Brentwood is condemned by Collins for suppressing the evidence that Ruth should be freed. Despite her position as Brentwood’s wife, she is not justified in keeping her husband and her husband’s true love apart while he is on his deathbed. Certainly Collins seems to argue that she is wrong to vent her anger by taking revenge on Ruth and on her husband’s son.

Two additional lines within Maurice’s vow never to be separated from his wife Emily (on account of his status as a slave) elaborate on this theme. In the Licenser’s Copy, Maurice announces, “I acknowledge no bargain that allows you to come between us. I bow to no custom which helps you to bend a man’s spirit by breaking a woman’s heart.”⁸ These lines are missing from the official London edition of the play; nevertheless, they illuminate one aspect of the play’s theme. Romantic love takes precedence over legal, social, and religious decrees. Because of their complex and passionate romantic relationships, Ruth and Maurice are shown to be justified both in rejecting the laws that designate them as slaves and in defying the religious codes and social contracts that prevent their unions.⁹

In addition to those already mentioned, other small differences appear between the Licenser’s Copy of the text and the printed London version. For example, the last lines of the London edition read as follows:

THE PROV. MAR. (*contemptuously*). A man like you always disputes the truth.

⁸ *Black and White*, Licenser’s Copy, 57. The same speech, minus the two aforementioned lines, appears on pages 54-5 of the London edition of the play.

⁹ Interestingly, it is announced early in the play, before Maurice’s arrival, that Emily Milburn and Stephen Westcraft are already engaged to be married (*Black and White*, London, 4). Maurice and Emily, of course, marry regardless of this previous contract.

WEST. I'll spend my last shilling in disputing it!

MICH. You can't do that, Mr. Westcraft. You have spent your last shilling on my estate.

(WESTCRAFT looks at MICHAELMAS with a cry of baffled rage, and goes out. MAURICE and MISS M. come down to the front; MISS M. having the letter in her hand.)

MISS M. Oh, Maurice! can you realize it yet? Free!

MAUR. (taking her hand). No. Yours!

THE END

(Black and White, London, 56)

The ending in the Licensor's Copy is longer, and it pays more attention to the reactions of the black characters. It reads:

THE PROV. MAR. (contemptuously). A man like you always disputes the truth. Release us from the sight of you!

MICH. I beg your pardon, sir – do the gentleman justice! I'm sure he has done the generous thing by me. Thank you, Mr. Westcraft, for spending all your money on my estate!

(The people laugh.)

WEST. (looking round him with impotent rage). Mark my words! I'll be even with some of you yet!

(He goes out, followed by WOLF and his negroes.)

MAUR. (looking up from the letter). Michaelmas! (He tries to speak – his emotion chokes him.) Friend! Come to my heart!

MISS M. My turn next! Friend! there's a kiss for you! (She kisses him on the cheek. MICHAELMAS stands bewildered.)

MR. PLATO. (piteously). Not one word ob tanks to de black gentleman who's at de bottom ob it all!

MICH. (aside to PLATO). Hush! My master will give the black gentleman that ten-pound note.

MISS M. (while MAURICE folds up the letter). Oh, Maurice! can you realize it yet? Free!

MAUR. (taking her hand). No. Yours!

THE END

(Black and White, Licensor's Copy, 58-59)

Here, instead of "baffled rage," Westcraft is a victim of "impotent rage," roundly scolded and rejected by the authority of the Provost Marshall. Moreover, Mr. Plato enters the dialogue. Despite the fact that his intervention is a comic one, there is truth in the statement that there will be little or no thanks to the "black gentleman" who has made this happy ending possible. Plato has provided crucial information to the main characters within the play; additionally, he has worked with the whites to bring about a marriage of racial assimilation rather than joining with the "Liberal" blacks on the island who wish to escape from oppression by killing all the whites.

Each of these three versions of the text thus has something different to offer the modern Collins scholar. Despite variations in wording and tone, each version of the play attempts to express, in its own way, a frustration with the laws that specifically enforce racial inequality and the social customs that deny individuals the right to pursue romantic fulfillment. Indeed, by paying attention to the variety of texts that have evolved from the original collaborations of Collins and Fechter, scholars can come to appreciate the multiplicity of discourses that developed around this complex and interesting drama.

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Lady Audley: The Woman in Colour

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Mary Braddon, in a magazine interview, acknowledged the debt her hugely successful novel of 1862, *Lady Audley's Secret*, owed to Wilkie Collins's novel of 1860, *The Woman in White*. In her novel she had reversed Collins's central situations: her criminal is female, her victims male: Anne Catherick and Laura Fairlie are rescued from a lunatic asylum, Lady Audley is consigned to one at the end of the novel. But as Toru Sasaki points out, and as these reversals suggest, "she was also expressing opposition to [Collins]. ... Lady Audley was clearly meant as a protest against the passive and angelic heroines of the period" (Sasaki, xii). Extending the idea of reversal or protest to the novel's title image, I wish to suggest that Lady Audley is a Woman in Colour, but that her colours are bound up with her "secret."

I

Even Collins's admirers must have found Laura Fairlie, the heroine of *The Woman in White*, irritating. A needlessly supine victim of men, Laura, like so many of Collins's ostensible heroines, is bleached into nonentity. She is pale, fair and blue-eyed, and the bleaching effect is doubled in her alter ego, Anne Catherick, whose face is "colourless," whose hair – like Laura's – is "a pale brownish-yellow" (Collins, 20). The frequent confusion of these women with wraiths further undercuts their physicality. Laura's single concession to colour is in the "delicate" blue stripe on one of her otherwise white dresses – and for her last evening with Walter before her marriage she wears blue silk. Anne always wears white.

Laura is wisely kept absent during much of the action. Often too weak to leave her room, ill, believed dead, incarcerated in a lunatic asylum, and then reduced to such infantilism that even speech fails her, she becomes what Alfred Hitchcock called "the Macguffin" – a catalyst for the actions of others. One of the most attractive of those others is, of course, Marian Halcombe, her dark and voluptuous half-sister. Marian dresses more interestingly, in rich yellow silk for evening, but when she climbs out of her window onto the roof to eavesdrop on Count Fosco's plot against Laura, she compounds the unfemininity of the action by removing not only her silks but her petticoats – there would have been many in the heavily-crinolined 1860s – to stand in the rain in coarse dark flannel and a black cloak. Count Fosco in the novel is one of literature's more appealing villains, not least because he admires Marian, "this magnificent woman" whom he compares with "that poor flimsy pretty blonde," Laura (Collins, 331). But Collins confuses gender stereotypes and quickly scotches Marian's sexual attractions for the hero, Walter Hartwright, by giving her a

moustache. If this masculine attribute frees her to become the intelligent and resourceful protagonist who rescues Laura, it does not radically challenge the blonde/brunette oppositions of popular literature.

Collins himself seemed to be pleading against such formulae in 1856 when he wrote that he wanted to “revolutionize our favourite two sisters. ... Would readers be fatally startled ... if the short charmer with the golden hair appeared before them as a serious, strong-minded, fierce-spoken, miserable, guilty woman?” (cited in Carnell, 154). Readers, as we know, were in fact delighted in their millions when in 1862, Mary Braddon gave them Lady Audley, a heroine with Laura Fairlie’s looks and Count Fosco’s wicked ingenuity and energy. Laura/Anne had been the Woman in White. How then would Helen Maldon/Lucy Graham/Lady Audley colour her multiple personalities? The colouring is, as I hope to show, not just a matter of dress and complexion, but a matter of description, representation and associated properties.

II

Braddon’s heroine wears the white summer dress appropriate to an unmarried woman when, at the sunny start of the novel, as the humble young governess, Lucy Graham, she wins the love of Sir Michael Audley. As Lady Audley, however, she appears in a sequence of highly-coloured, lavishly-dressed set-pieces. The change in style and colour of dress reflects, on the most superficial level, her altered social and (apparent) marital status, from poor spinster governess to wealthy aristocratic wife; but the way Braddon dwells on these scenes, in a novel she wrote at high-speed, suggests there is more to it than this. Collins’s title concealed the fact that there were *two* women in white; equally Braddon’s title teased the reader with the question of just *what* Lady Audley’s awful secret was – there seem to be several. She’s a bigamist, possibly a murderer, she has a baby, her father is an alcoholic, she’s a forger, she may be mad – but most of these facts are revealed well before the end. Only hereditary madness is offered with any sense of revelation. Under that first white dress, however, she wears a trinket on a black ribbon, “but whatever the trinket was, she always kept it hidden under her dress” (Braddon, *Lady Audley*, 8).

While working on *Lady Audley* Braddon was also writing *Aurora Floyd*, a novel in which Aurora’s appearance is frequently noted, but the focus is almost entirely on hairstyles and headgear; dress is registered in brief colour-notes. Aurora too has her secret, but it is not really bigamy she conceals, it is a traditionally angelic heart beneath a hoyden’s surface. Elsewhere Braddon chose to describe dress precisely enough to date a novel. For example, the costume in which Lesbia intends to elope in *Phantom Fortune* (1884) is described minutely, from her “little blue silk toque” down to the toes of her “dainty little tan-coloured boots” (Braddon, *Phantom Fortune*, 256). In *Lady Audley’s Secret*, however, Braddon gives us neither a single telling detail nor a fashion-plate, but instead focuses on dramatically loaded effects. Henry James

accused her in a review of 1865 of “getting up” her “photograph” of Lady Audley with “the small change ... [of] her eyes, her hair, her mouth, her dresses, her bedroom furniture” (James, 744-5): it is not, however, photography she has in mind but, quite specifically, Pre-Raphaelite painting. The deliberate references in the novel to this other, earlier, popular “sensation” seem worth exploring.

III

Before Robert Audley meets Lucy Audley, he and George Talboys enter her apartments while she is absent. Making their way through the intimacies of discarded dresses and untidy toilet-table, they penetrate her boudoir, where they face not her but her portrait: “I am afraid the [painter] belonged to the pre-Raphaelite brotherhood, for he had spent a most unconscionable time upon the accessories of this picture – upon my lady’s crispy ringlets and the heavy folds of her crimson velvet dress” (Braddon, *Lady Audley*, 69). First Robert, then George, look at the picture:

No one but a pre-Raphaelite would have painted, hair by hair, those feathery masses of ringlets with every glimmer of gold and every shadow of pale brown. No one but a pre-Raphaelite would have exaggerated every attribute of that delicate face as to give a lurid lightness to the blonde complexion and a strange sinister light to the deep blue eyes... I suppose the painter had copied quaint mediaeval monstrosities until his brain had grown bewildered, for my lady, in his portrait of her, had something of the aspect of a beautiful fiend.

Her crimson dress, exaggerated like all the rest in this strange picture, hung about her in folds that looked like flames, her fair head peeping out of the lurid mass of colour, as if out of a raging furnace. Indeed, the crimson dress, the sunshine on the face, the red gold gleaming in the yellow hair, the ripe scarlet of the pouting lips, the glowing colours of each accessory of the minutely painted background, all combined to render the first effect of the painting by no means an agreeable one.

(Braddon, *Lady Audley*, 70-71)

We should note that the demonic hints in these paragraphs are the narrator’s. The focus is on colour but is selective, what the French critic Denis Apothéloz terms a *découpage*, where face, hair and dress are “cut off from [their] surroundings” (cited in Hughes, *Reading Novels*, 58) – which are described only as “minutely painted.” George Talboys says nothing, Robert Audley says he dislikes the portrait; but in the novel’s final pages, visitors to Audley Court wonder about “the pretty, fair-haired woman” in the portrait (Braddon, *Lady Audley*, 446).

Braddon was evidently familiar with the work of the Pre-Raphaelites, who had first shocked the London art world in 1848. Though they were controversial and claimed to be radicalizing British art, in their first phase they simply brightened and intensified its colour-range while creating a rage for medieval subjects. Otherwise they continued to produce the detailed moral narratives that typified Victorian art. In fact, with Ruskin’s support, they were

soon fashionable, though they maintained a reputation for outrage and modernity. It is worth asking just what Pre-Raphaelite paintings Braddon could have seen, with which works she might expect her readers to be familiar, and what associations these would have had.

As we now know from Jennifer Carnell's biography, at the time of the Pre-Raphaelite exhibitions of the 1850s, Braddon was pursuing a career as an actress, mainly in Brighton, but occasionally in London and the north (Carnell, 287-375), so she could have visited any London exhibitions in which she was interested. That she had more than a passing interest in art is suggested by her 1865 letter to a fringe-Pre-Raphaelite, Alfred Elmore, suggesting titles for a work of his she had evidently seen before it was offered for exhibition (Carnell, 178). In Elmore's picture, *On the Brink*, a woman is the focus of a morally ambiguous drama, a scene characteristic of Pre-Raphaelite work after 1860. Pre-Raphaelite images of women before this betray few obviously sinister aspects: Rossetti's early pictures feature pure if etiolated virgins; Holman Hunt's seductive shepherdess, in his much-discussed *Hireling Shepherd*, is a cheerful, bouncing brunette.

Braddon's focus, in Lady Audley's portrait, on a meticulously painted head of golden hair, blue eyes and a pale face against a brilliant dress does recall, however, two of the most popular works exhibited by the P.R.B. at the Royal Academy: Arthur Hughes' *April Love* (1856) and his *Long Engagement* (1859). Ruskin rhapsodised over *April Love* in his *Academy Notes*, praising its sweetness and use of colour. The girl at the centre of both pictures conforms to the angelic stereotype – blue eyes and a tremulous, child-like face framed by fine gold hair. Both wear vivid violet blue clothing (a colour we will see on Lucy Audley, and very fashionable at the time) – velvet in one case, silk in the other – set against a sharp green backdrop. The violent colouring runs oddly counter to the otherwise ideally angelic appearance of the women, and in both cases their vividness almost obliterates the background males. Though never exhibited, Hughes' *Aurora Leigh* of 1860 takes the image further: blonde Aurora in her acid-green dress overwhelms her dim suitor. Ellen Heaton, who commissioned the work, wanted a more traditional white dress, but Hughes held out for green. Ruskin, urging Heaton to commission a work from Hughes, assured her that he was “quite safe – *everybody* will like what he does” (Bowness, 190).

These popular images have nevertheless none of the hell-fire Braddon hints at in Lady Audley's portrait. The essence of Braddon's plot, however, is the success with which Helen Maldon inhabits her successive roles. She is not simply an actress, putting her costumes on and off; she *becomes* her other personae, and Braddon never uses her earlier, “real” name, as she moves from one identity to another. There is no suggestion that she is anything other than a model governess to the Dawsons, and a loving and attentive wife to Sir Michael. Alicia Audley's dislike of Lucy is based not on any perceived threat, but contempt for her childishness and china-doll looks. Lucy's sunny kindness

is welcomed by her husband's tenants and no demons are visible until she feels threatened by the boorish Luke Marks and misogynistic Robert Audley. I would suggest, then, that it is part of Braddon's scheme to remind the reader of actual Pre-Raphaelite icons of blue-eyed, golden-haired, blameless girlhood, an ideal to which Lucy Audley, in life, seems to conform, while at the same time colouring the fictional portrait in sinister lights. To be really dangerous Lady Audley must seem utterly innocent.

The strength of a novel, as opposed to a painting, is that several images can be held by the mind at once, denying a single viewpoint on which to rest. As Lyn Pykett has argued, *Lady Audley's Secret* "is staged as a spectacle, just as within the narrative the character is staging herself" – and, furthermore, being *re-staged* as a painting. The heroine becomes the object of our gaze, but as Pykett points out, there is "no single ideological perspective" nor even "a coherent range of perspectives," but a series of conflicting views – "if the sensation heroine embodies anything, it is an uncertainty about the definition of the feminine" (Pykett, 89, 81, 82). Nina Auerbach, in her study of 19th century iconography, *Woman and the Demon*, describes strategies for maintaining angelic faces in mid-19th century fiction: among Dickens' pure angels, Little Nell dies young to stay intact; Sheridan LeFanu's Carmilla, while a cat-vampire, keeps an angel face; Thackeray's demonic Beatrix Castlewood lives side by side with the ageless angel, Rachel. Auerbach notes that Braddon "employs with scholarly precision angelic iconography for demonic purposes ... it requires only the fire of an altered palette to bring out the contours of the one latent in the face of the other" (Auerbach, 107).

Indeed the novel's Pre-Raphaelite colouring pales the morning after the viewing of the portrait, when Lady Audley appears in pink muslin, seen within the classic Victorian frame for a domestic "Queen" – in the garden, gathering roses. The sinister suggestions of the night before are overlaid and confused by this very different style of female imagery. But we return to P.R.B. tones in the scene where she gives Luke Marks fifty pounds on his marriage to her maid Phoebe: "Lady Audley sat in the glow of firelight ... the amber damask cushions of the sofa contrasting with her dark violet velvet dress, and her rippling hair falling about her neck in a golden haze." When Marks insolently demands more, she realizes he knows something of her secret, and confronts him, "her clear blue eyes flashing with indignation" (Braddon, *Lady Audley*, 108-9). Shortly after, when Robert Audley menacingly recounts his suspicions of her role in George Talboys' disappearance, she faints against the amber cushions, and "shadows of green and crimson [fall] upon my lady's face from the painted escutcheons in the mullioned windows" (120). The colours are exotic rather than demonic, and recall John Millais' popular painting of Tennyson's long-suffering *Mariana*, of 1851.



Arthur Hughes “The Long Engagement” (1853-5)
Courtesy, Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery.



Holman Hunt “The Awakening Conscience” (1853-7)
Courtesy, Tate Gallery.



Dante Gabriel Rossetti "Bocca Baciata" (1859)
Courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Dante Gabriel Rossetti "Lady Lilith" (1868)
Courtesy, Delaware Art Museum.

IV

It is always a risky exercise to nail a factual detail to a fictional account; Mary Braddon was not a note-book novelist nor even as meticulous about train-timetables as Wilkie Collins. She wrote at speed, which sometimes led to slips. (In a later novel she calls the Italian police “carbonari” – a nice confusion of cuisine and law-enforcement.) She does, however, refer specifically to one painter, Holman Hunt, in a later scene in the novel, after Lady Audley has left the bedside of her sick husband and returned to the boudoir, whose inner recess contains her Pre-Raphaelite portrait. These two descriptions – the portrait and the boudoir – occasioned James’s criticism of the novel. The description of the boudoir runs to over a page and is so overloaded with accounts of *objets d’art*, furniture, rich colours – as well as references to notorious Frenchwomen, the whole bathed in firelight, with a storm howling outside – that Braddon might reasonably be accused of overkill. I have elsewhere criticised Braddon for using descriptive details indiscriminately (Hughes, *Henry James*, 11), but it might well be suggested in defence of her style that this particular description has its equivalent in Holman Hunt’s *The Awakening Conscience*, a work that had a sensational reception at the Royal Academy exhibition of 1854 and with which readers of the novel would be familiar.

Virginia Morris rightly notes in her study of murderous Victorian heroines, *Double Jeopardy*, that “there is no Hunt work as evocative of the sense of feminine evil that Braddon is trying to create” (Morris, 162). She suggests alternatives: either Rossetti’s *Lucrezia Borgia* or Burne-Jones’s *Sidonia von Bork*, both of 1860, as sources for Lady Audley’s “portrait.” There seems to be some confusion here between two very different parts of the novel: on the one hand there is the portrait of Lady Audley, on the other there is a description of Lady Audley in her boudoir (which happens to contain a reference to Holman Hunt).

Chris Willis points to the same Burne-Jones work as possibly “the original of Lady Audley’s Pre-Raphaelite portrait,” relating it to the first description of Lady Audley, though she acknowledges the colour is wrong (Willis). *Sidonia von Bork* is indeed gorgeous and sinister, but as Pykett says, Braddon’s image of Lucy Audley is always ambiguous, and the image of Sidonia could never have been described at the end of the novel as “the pretty fair-haired woman” of the portrait. Moreover, Burne-Jones was almost unknown at this time; this apprentice watercolour was bought by a Newcastle magnate, James Leatherheart, and not exhibited until 1892 (Wilson, 123). As for Rossetti, he exhibited only once, privately, in the 1850s – though his work at this time has a significance to which I will return.

V

In turning, then, to a consideration of *The Awakening Conscience*, I wish to make clear that the woman at the centre of the work bears no resemblance to Lucy Audley. Hunt’s Fallen Woman, moving out of her lover’s

clasp, is undergoing a repentance that has been stirred by memories of lost innocence, symbolised by the sunlit natural world seen through the window of her “love-nest.” Lucy Audley is alone and unrepentant to the last. Hunt’s brunette wears a loose, ivory gown in the Aesthetic style, but Braddon describes Lucy only briefly, and in sensual rather than fashionable terms – “the rich folds of drapery [fell] in long undulating lines from the exquisite outline of her figure.” She is beautiful, “but made bewilderingly beautiful by the gorgeous surroundings” (*Lady Audley*, 295). As is clear from Ruskin’s defense of *The Awakening Conscience*, it is the fevered, magnified focus on the details of the *setting* in this painting that draws the eye, not the rather vacuous central figure: “nothing is more notable”, Ruskin wrote, “than the way in which even the most trivial objects force themselves upon the attention”. He felt there was something especially sinister in “the terrible lustre ... the fatal newness of the furniture,” most evident in the piano at which the girl sits (Ruskin). Her sheet music lies on the piano and on the floor; beside the piano, is an embroidery frame, whose coloured silks also tumble to the floor. Behind her is a gilt-framed mirror that reflects her figure within a window-frame, against a garden-view.

In Lady Audley’s “elegant chamber” the piano is open, “covered with scattered sheets of music ... my lady’s fairy-like embroideries of lace and muslin, rainbow-hued silks and delicately-tinted wools littered the luxurious apartment; while the looking-glasses, cunningly placed at angles and opposite corners, multiplied my lady’s image.” The reference to Holman Hunt follows, after which Braddon intensifies the account of the room by listing china, gold, ivories, cabinets, figurines, Indian filigree, pictures, mirrors and drapery. The image concludes with Lady Audley looking not at a redemptive garden, but “into the red chasms in the burning coals” (Braddon, *Lady Audley*, 294-5). The devil is – we might say – in the details. This account of her background reverses the *découpage* of the portrait description; Lucy Audley’s figure is now placed within a surrounding mass of objects, which are recorded in one sweeping unselective gaze, a bonfire of the vanities – almost an English version of Delacroix’s *Death of Sardanapalus*.

As she had reversed Collins’s situations in *The Woman in White*, Braddon now takes Hunt’s modern moral subject of a Kept Woman, clad in near-white, saved from the “wages of sin” (all those shiny new things) by a vision of Eden, and reverses it while she protests at its implausibility. Lady Audley is fixed and defined by the “wages” of her respectable marriage, by even more shiny new things. The notion of giving it all up for an epiphany of grass and trees, trusting to the mercies of the patriarchal world of Robert Audley, is mocked by the sound of the wind in the leafless branches outside Lady Audley’s window. Her figure, left unrealised amidst the intensely realised welter of rich objects, is neither evil nor sympathetic, but more simply, disturbing.

The Garden of Earthly Delights in which Lucy Audley now finds herself has become a nightmare. She has seen no reason why a determined and

competent woman should not only be able to survive by her wits but also amass the trophies of success, the paintings and *objets d'art* of a Victorian consumerist world.¹ Denied legitimate masculine paths to material rewards, she has worked through the means available to beautiful women – men – and has arrived at her goal, her connoisseur's boudoir, which is now also her trap. To keep it she has to “wade in blood” much deeper, for repentance is not really an option. And so, as Dr. Musgrave diagnoses, she is “not mad ... she is dangerous” (Braddon, *Lady Audley*, 379), an uncertifiable and more alarming condition.

VI

Hunt's art is avowedly there in the text. But we may also return to Rossetti, whose images of female beauty have so often been evoked in relation to Braddon's heroines. Indeed, Jennifer Carnell records that Braddon's favourite stage version of *Lady Audley's Secret* was that of 1863, with Ruth Herbert, who had also modelled for Rossetti (Carnell, 196-7). As I have said earlier, Rossetti did not exhibit during the 1850s. It cannot, then, be a question of Rossetti influencing Braddon, but rather of an idea – that of the Dangerous Woman – whose time had come, an idea which Braddon and Rossetti had begun to explore simultaneously. What Hughes's blonde angels lacked were “the strange-coloured fires” of Braddon's first “portrait” (*Lady Audley*, 71). In the unrealised figure of Lady Audley in the second description “it requires only the fire of an altered palette,” the slumbering volcano of a Rossetti woman, to emerge from behind Hunt's white girl, to reveal the true colours of Braddon's heroine.

By the 1850s the original Pre-Raphaelite group had disbanded; Rossetti had withdrawn, the movement had acquired new members and could now be seen as moving towards Aestheticism, or, as has recently been suggested, a British version of Symbolism (Wilton). Rossetti had begun to experiment with Italian Renaissance subjects and a simplified colour range, and, among a series of watercolours featuring the Borgias, is *Rossavestita*, of 1851, a single female figure against a plain background, in voluminous crimson dress, with the mass of gold hair that would become Rossetti's signature. There can be no actual connection between this sketch and that first Pre-Raphaelite description of Lady Audley, but there they both are – startlingly crimson and gold heralds of things to come.

Rossetti moved back into oils in the late 1850s, and, phasing out his anorexic maidens, decided to “exploit the more voluptuous style of Titian and Venetian art in general” (“The Rossetti Archive”). Big, blonde Fanny Cornforth also entered Rossetti's life at this time and displaced ailing Elizabeth Siddal as model and mistress. The pivotal work in his new style was *Bocca*

¹ There were now, in fact, numerous women art-collectors – Ellen Heaton, Lady Trevelyan, Martha Combe, for example – and coincidentally, they collected Pre-Raphaelite and Aesthetic works rather than mainstream art.

Baciata, painted in 1859 and exhibited in 1860 at the Hogarth Club. This innocent/seductive half-length figure of Fanny, trapped between a parapet and a dark floral background, richly dressed and jewelled with flowing red-gold hair, marks the emergence of the distinctive Rossetti Woman. Placed in “hieratic scenes of various kinds” these pictures “arrange themselves in a dialectic of ‘Madonna and Whore’ figures” (“The Rossetti Archive”). There followed a succession of increasingly dangerous, beautiful females – *Fazio’s Mistress*, 1863; *Morning Music* and *Venus Verticordia*, 1864; *The Blue Bower* and *Il Ramoscello*, 1865; *Monna Vanna* of 1866; *Lady Lilith*, started in 1864 and finished in 1868. They don’t stop there, of course: like Mary Braddon’s women they have many years of life, but these sirens of the 1860s, who “turn traditional portraiture on its head” (Wilton, 19), share enough characteristics with Lucy Audley – who turned traditional heroines on their heads – to make my point.

Perhaps the first thing to note is that the paintings are without attendant males – as are the two central descriptions of Lady Audley. What drives Lucy Audley is not sexual desire, after all – the man is only her means to an end, which is the possession and enjoyment of luxury. “Luxury,” as Lyn Pykett puts it, “is erotic to Lady Audley” (Pykett, 101). Rossetti’s women are most frequently shown at dressing tables, usually alone, gazing into mirrors, or abstractedly out at the spectator – or, as Andrew Wilton suggests, “into their own soul” (Wilton, 19). Rossetti said of the first of these self-caressing women, *Fazio’s Mistress* of 1863, that the picture “was chiefly a piece of colour... done at a time when I had a mania for buying bricabrac, and used to stick it into my pictures” (cited in Rossetti, 69). With their vibrant colour, nets of golden hair and “bricabrac,” *Fazio’s Mistress*, *Lady Lilith* or *Monna Vanna* might sit at the vacant centre of Braddon’s version of *The Awakening Conscience* – and reverse Hunt’s intentions. Hunt called Rossetti’s new style “remarkable for gross sensuality of a revolting kind,” and there is indeed nothing redeemed or redeemable about these big, brooding women, who threaten unnameable things if once allowed out.

Rossetti’s women have not abdicated as Queens in Gardens or Angels in Houses, but the fiction of power attached to such empty titles now threatens to become real. His Liliths, Pandoras, Proserpines and Marianas are far too big for their spaces, and they push up against and out of parapets, windows, curtains and high hedges. Rossetti’s rendering of dress has moved from an archaeological approach to a much less specific treatment, in which voluptuously draped figures can inhabit Titian’s Venice, Winterhalter’s mid-19th century Europe or the medievalising modes of late 19th century British Aestheticism. Shown in half-length and close to the picture surface, demanding the spectator’s attention, Rossetti’s women display symbols of the World, the Flesh and quite possibly the Devil: jewels, bottles, mirrors, brushes, textiles, and, above all, hair.

Braddon's concluding account of Lucy Audley is similarly selective: the dreary room in the mad-house has a "faded splendour of shabby velvet and tarnished gilding"; what appear to be mirrors turn out to be "wretched mockeries of burnished tin" (Braddon, *Lady Audley*, 389) – and a mockery of her luxurious boudoir. The light of a single candle illumines her figure, which rises out of the darkness in a defiant blaze of diamonds and golden hair; while her dress, undescribed, merges with the gloom. Confronting her adversary, Robert Audley, she plucks "at the feathery golden curls as if she would have torn them from her head. It had served her so little after all, that gloriously glittering hair; that beautiful nimbus of yellow light" (391-2). I resist defining Lady Audley by a single image, because I believe Braddon uses multiple images to confuse rather than define, but Rossetti's *Lady Lilith* contains enough suppressed violence, moral ambivalence, self-caressing sensuality – and hair everywhere – to make one wonder if he had not recently read *Lady Audley's Secret*. The companion poem Rossetti wrote for the painting speaks of Lilith winding round Adam's heart "one strangling golden hair."

Like Lilith of pre-Christian legend, Lady Audley is a capable and intelligent woman, who sees herself the equal of the male, who refuses to lie down under a series of early reverses and, bent on self-improvement like David Copperfield or Julien Sorel, sets out, like them, to secure much more than bare survival. Those are her transgressive secrets. For a woman in mid-19th century Britain the means to this end is a man, and, as she says, the means to a man are her golden-haired, blue-eyed good looks and the meanings society attaches to them. Angelic virtue only becomes a problem when things go wrong. Her angel self is still a workable pretence until Sir Michael consents to her incarceration, after which she confesses to hereditary madness as her "secret."

VII

Braddon, as I have indicated, uses a montage of conflicting images to convey ambivalence. The portrait within Lady Audley's boudoir contains the artist/creator's insight – the prototype Rossetti woman in blazing red and gold – but other images drawn from the art of her time, and *beyond* her time, co-exist and often conflict with that portrait. Images late in the novel are left unrealised, inviting the reader to colour them according to the way they have read the woman within her surroundings: there is, as Lyn Pykett says, "an uncertainty about the definition of the feminine." I have said that both Rossetti and Braddon continue to explore the *Femme Fatale*; I should perhaps qualify that by adding that Braddon's Lucy Audley is – as far as I have read in her immense oeuvre – the only consistently ambivalent and therefore memorably dangerous woman: the rest conform or die. Although Braddon mentions Lucy Audley's death, years later, our last image is of her blazing defiance, and of a "pretty, fair-haired woman" in a portrait, in the novel's final pages (Braddon, *Lady Audley*, 390).

The ambivalence is then not only Lucy Audley's but Braddon's own ambivalence over her creation – she didn't paint such a colourful portrait again,

though she had dealt a fatal blow to the old Woman in White. The precarious trajectory of Braddon's own career – from poverty, to bare subsistence as an actress, to mistress then wife of an improvident man, and then hard-won security in respectable Richmond – did not invite further risks. It needed, in fact, a Rossetti – a man, most importantly – but also an outsider, a self-styled hedonist, who both shocked and seduced Victorian England with his images of women, to write tenderly and frankly of his mistress while she slept,

I lay among your golden hair
Perhaps the subject of your dreams,
These golden coins.

(D.G. Rossetti, *Jenny*, 1860)

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Collins and Chatto: The Reading Papers

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In February of this year, with the generous assistance of the Archivist Michael Bott, I was able to spend two days studying the materials relating to Wilkie Collins in the Chatto & Windus archive at Reading University.¹ This was in connection with the preparation of a forthcoming edition of Collins's as yet unpublished letters.² The following brief article has no greater pretensions than to provide an inventory of the Reading papers,³ and to suggest their potential interest for scholars of Victorian literary and publishing history.

I

The firm of Chatto & Windus came into being following the premature death of the publisher, John Camden Hotten (1832-73). Hotten had set up as a bookseller in Piccadilly in 1855 and by the mid-1860s had gained a somewhat unsavoury reputation as a publisher that today seems hardly deserved.⁴ Andrew Chatto (1841-1913) had joined Hotten's firm almost from the beginning. At the time of Hotten's death, he was general manager and decided to purchase the publishing house from the widow, Charlotte Hotten, for £25,000, with the minor poet W.E. Windus as his rather inactive partner. Percy Spalding joined the new firm in 1876 and took over the financial arrangements, leaving Chatto in command of the literary side. As Simon Eliot has shown, Hotten had been very much a "general publisher," with little in the way of original fiction on his lists.⁵ Andrew Chatto continued to develop the general list but soon became known also for his series of "Piccadilly Novels." By the end of 1876, he had not only acquired much of the stock and copyrights formerly held Henry G. Bohn, but also arranged to take on the fiction of

¹ The Chatto & Windus archive is owned by Random House. Permission to view the materials and to inventorize them here is gratefully acknowledged.

² Edited by William Baker, Andrew Gasson, Graham Law, and Paul Lewis, to be published in 4 vols in 2005 by Pickering & Chatto as *The Public Face of Wilkie Collins*. For details, go to <<http://www.pickeringchatto.com/wilkiecollins.htm>>.

³ The book historian Alexis Weedon has already made excellent use of many of these materials in analysing changing book production costs at Chatto & Windus. However, the listing she provides is incomplete and includes a number of errors, most notably misdatings of the publishing agreements for *The Fallen Leaves*, *Jezebel's Daughter*, *Heart and Science*, and *The Evil Genius* (Weedon, "Watch This Space," 179-82).

⁴ See Warner, 2-11, and, especially, Eliot, "Hotten: Rotten: Forgotten?", in which Hotten's reputation as a pornographer and swindler is discussed extensively.

⁵ Hotten's most characteristic publications were perhaps his own scholarly works such as *A Dictionary of Modern Slang* (1859), the poetry of Swinburne, and unauthorised reprints of American authors such as Oliver Wendell Holmes and Mark Twain.

popular names like “Ouida,”⁶ James Payn, the Besant-Rice partnership,⁷ and, of course, Wilkie Collins.

Until then Collins had never enjoyed a stable relationship with a single publisher – in part because of his tendencies to sell to the highest bidder and to make combined deals for both serial and volume rights. After his lack of financial success through both Tinsleys (with *The Moonstone* in 1868) and F.S. Ellis (with *Man and Wife* in 1870), Collins had returned after a gap of eighteen years to his original publishers, Bentleys. But, conscious of his deteriorating health and declining fame, Collins was concerned to find a publisher who would build a coherent backlist of his works, produce them elegantly, and sell them efficiently. Here he found the ideal match in Andrew Chatto’s new firm.

The relationship began in the autumn of 1874, and thereafter Chatto & Windus not only issued virtually all of Collins’s new fiction in volume form,⁸ but also acquired the rights to his earlier works as soon as available.⁹ The general pattern was for Collins to lease for seven years the rights to publish his novels in all available formats down to the cheap “yellowback” edition.¹⁰ The remuneration he received in the case of new works in three volumes dropped from £1500 for *The Law and the Lady* in 1875, to £600 from *The Fallen Leaves* in 1879, and finally to £500 from *I Say No!* in 1884. Collins earned £2000 from the lease of thirteen previously published works in 1874, but only £1000 when that lease was renewed. Near the end of his life, financial worries forced him to sell outright his copyrights to twenty-four works for £1800, although he had refused an offer of £2500 for only nineteen back in 1883. In the end, and perhaps inevitably, the publishers probably got the better of the deal. But Chatto & Windus was also a periodical publisher, having acquired *Belgravia* in 1876 and *The Gentleman’s Magazine* the following year. None of Collins’s works appeared in the *Gentleman’s*,¹¹ but two of his novels ran as serials in *Belgravia* (*The Haunted Hotel* and *Heart and Science*), in addition to half-a dozen of his short stories written initially for American journals. Perhaps more importantly, Andrew Chatto was to encourage the author to attempt the

⁶ See Weedon, “From Three-Deckers.”

⁷ See Eliot, “Unequal Partnerships.”

⁸ *The Guilty River* in a single volume from Arrowsmith of Bristol, following its appearance as Arrowsmith’s Christmas Annual for 1886, is the only real exception.

⁹ Chatto & Windus were only able to acquire publication right to *A Rogue’s Life* from Bentleys in 1889, and to *Armada*, *No Name*, and *After Dark* from Smith, Elder in 1890, following the author’s death.

¹⁰ Collins’s novels began to appear after the author’s death in the sixpenny format in colourful paper covers, of which Chatto & Windus were one of the pioneer publishers, beginning in 1893. See *Sixpenny Wonderfuls*.

¹¹ Though, when Collins made his Christmas tale “A Shocking Story” available while *The Haunted Hotel* was still running in *Belgravia*, he wrote to Chatto to ask “whether you will put me into ‘The Gentleman’s Magazine’ this time. I must do something for the Gentleman’s Magazine – so as to call myself a fellow-contributor with Doctor Johnson!” (30 September 1878, Parrish Collection, Princeton).

latest and most remunerative mode of serialization – syndication in British provincial newspapers (Law, 78 & 102-3).

II

The materials in the Chatto & Windus archive at Reading serve a variety of interests. As Weedon has shown, the agreements and publishing ledgers provide key data concerning changing modes of production and marketing in the later Victorian publishing industry (“Watch This Space”). The miscellaneous documents accompanying the contracts shed a more refracted light on what were then ancillary issues but which were soon to assume a rather greater importance. These include: the trading of rights and stock between publishers; the insertion of advertising material in books; and even the sale of film rights to fictional material.¹² Not least, though, the correspondence between author and publishers preserved at Reading reveals a fascinating mixture and of personal and business concerns.

Table 1. Extant Letters of Wilkie Collins to Chattos

Location	Personally to Andrew Chatto	Impersonally to Chatto & Windus	TOTAL
Parrish Collection, Princeton	92	48	140
Chatto & Windus Archive, Reading	12	7	19
State Library of Victoria, Melbourne	2	2	4
Other*	4	2	6
TOTAL	110	59	169

* The two addressed to Chatto & and Windus are found at the Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin, and at the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Of the letters to Andrew Chatto, one is found in the Berg Collection, New York Public Library, one at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, and one is in private hands. The present whereabouts of the fourth is unknown, though a transcription is found in Wolff, 2:262.

With the lion’s share in the Morris L. Parrish Collection at Princeton (as Table 1 shows), only a small proportion of Collins’s letters to the firm are held in the Chatto & Windus archive.¹³ In contrast, the copies on flimsy in the firm’s letterbooks seem to all that have survived of the other side of the correspondence.¹⁴ Collins discriminates scrupulously between addressees.

¹² See Weedon, “From Three-Deckers.”

¹³ Only those letters constituting or accompanying contracts, and those tipped in to the outgoing letterbooks, remain. Those among the files of incoming letters were presumably dispersed to be sold. We should also note here that the handwritten indexes to the letterbooks are not always entirely accurate or complete, and that a small number of outgoing letters might have been overlooked.

¹⁴ The ratio of outgoing letters to Collins (25 from Andrew Chatto to 20 from Chatto &

Letters to “Messrs Chatto & Windus”- mainly aimed at Percy Spalding, who is referred to as “the financial partner” in Collins’s letter to Andrew Chatto of 30 December 1878 (Parrish Collection, Princeton) – are formal and business-like. There the author is quick to complain about slow payment of his dues or sloppiness by the printers. These are far outnumbered by letters to “Andrew Chatto Esq”, the literary partner, which are always gentlemanly in tone and become increasingly intimate as time goes by.¹⁵ There we find many examples of references to mutual acquaintances, social invitations, and personal banter, plus evidence that the publisher frequently called on the author at home, while the author often popped in to see the publisher at his office in Piccadilly. Clearly Collins’s personal relationship with his literary publisher Andrew Chatto, as indeed with his literary agent A.P. Watt,¹⁶ was a psychological mainstay of the author during his declining years.

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Windus), which differs so markedly from the ratio in the case of letters *from* Collins as shown in Table 1, suggests that many of Andrew Chatto’s letters to Collins may have been written privately and not on the firm’s notepaper.

¹⁵ Nevertheless, it was only on 19 March 1883 that WC suggested to AC that they “leave off ‘mistering’ each other” (Parrish Collection, Princeton).

¹⁶ See the many letters from Collins to Watt held at Pembroke College, Cambridge, and the flimsy copies of Watt’s side of the correspondence in the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library.

An Inventory of the Main Documents relating to Wilkie Collins in the Chatto & Windus Archive, University of Reading

Abbreviations

AC = Andrew Chatto

ALS = Autograph letter signed

APW = A.P. Watt (WC's agent from 1881)

C&W = Chatto & Windus, publishers

HPB = H.P. Bartley (WC's solicitor from 1877)

LB = Letterbook

TLS = Typed letter signed

WC = Wilkie Collins

WT = William Tindell (WC's solicitor to 1877)

(A) Publishing Agreements signed by WC or his executors

- 1) 9 Sep 1874, Stamped Memorandum of Agreement re *The Law and the Lady*
- 2) 19 Nov 1874, Stamped Memorandum of Agreement re 13 named works, previously issued by other houses (*Antonina; Basil; Hide and Seek; The Dead Secret; The Queen of Hearts; The Woman in White; The Moonstone; Man and Wife; Poor Miss Finch; Miss or Mrs?; The New Magdalen; The Frozen Deep; My Miscellanies*)
- 3) 3 Aug 1876, Unstamped Letter memorializing Agreement re *The Two Destinies* [=C2]
- 4) 20 Feb 1878, Stamped Memorandum of Agreement re *The Haunted Hotel*
- 5) 25 Jun 1879, Stamped Memorandum of Agreement re *The Fallen Leaves*
- 6) 19 Feb 1880, Stamped Memorandum of Agreement re *Jezebel's Daughter*
- 7) 7 Apr 1881, Stamped Memorandum of Agreement re *The Black Robe*
- 8) 1 Feb 1882, Stamped Letter memorializing renewal of Agreement re *The Law and the Lady* & Agreement re *Little Novels* [=C12]
- 9) 27 Mar 1883, Stamped Memorandum of New Agreement re 13 named novels (as in A2)
- 10) 3 April 1883, Stamped Memorandum of Agreement re *Heart and Science*
- 11) 20 Oct 1884, Stamped Memorandum of Agreement re *I Say No!*
- 12) 8 Sep 1886, Stamped Memorandum of Agreement re *The Evil Genius*
- 13) 15 Mar 1887, Stamped Letter memorializing Agreement re *Little Novels* [=C15]
- 14) 23 April 1888, Stamped Receipt memorializing renewal of Agreement re 5 named novels (*The Two Destinies; The Haunted Hotel; The Fallen Leaves; Jezebel's Daughter; The Black Robe*)
- 15) 7 Aug 1888, Stamped Receipt memorializing Agreement re *The Legacy of Cain*
- 16) 2 April 1889, Stamped Memorandum of renewal of Agreement re 24 named novels (as in A1, A2, A14, plus *Heart and Science; I Say No!; The Evil Genius; Little Novels; The Legacy of Cain*)
- 17) 30 Sep 1889, Stamped Memorandum of Agreement re *Blind Love* [signed by APW as executor]
- 18) 1 Nov 1889, Stamped Memorandum of Agreement re *A Rogue's Life* [signed by APW as executor], previously issued by Bentley

(B) Documents accompanying Publishing Agreements

I. Up to 1889

Relating to A1

- 1) Signed and stamped receipt to C&W in WC's hand with his signature, 21 Jan 1875, for £500 as first instalment of payment for *The Law and the Lady*

Relating to A2

- 2) Handwritten draft of agreement re 13 named novels (see A2), dated 5 Nov 1874, not signed by WC

- 3) Detailed Lists of stock, stereotypes, and illustrations of 8 named novels (*Antonina*; *Basil*; *Hide and Seek*; *The Dead Secret*; *The Queen of Hearts*; *The Woman in White*; *The Moonstone*; *Man and Wife*), purchased by C&W from Smith, Elder in Jan 1875, at valuation of George Bell
- 4) ALS from George Bell to [WT?], of 6 January 1875, giving his valuation of Smith, Elder's stock, etc
- 5) ALS from WT to C&W, 6 Jan 1875, accompanying valuation by George Bell and Smith, Elder's lists
- 6) ALS from Spottiswoode & Co. (printers to C&W) on their headed notepaper, 16 Jan 1875, acknowledging receipt of stereotype plates from Smith, Elder (of *Hide and Seek*; *The Woman in White*; *The Moonstone*; *Man and Wife*)
- 7) Invoice signed by Horace Davenport, dated 23 Feb 1877 and stamped 27 Feb 1877, for the insertion of a full-page advertisement for the patent medicine Chlorodyne (Dr J. Collis Browne's Chlorodyne, manufactured by Davenports of 33 Gt. Russell St) in 14 unnamed books by WC for two years at 7gns per insertion, probably on the flyleaves

Relating to A8

- 8) Undated memo in AC's hand in black ink on a torn sheet of watermarked paper headed "Little Novels" listing royalties (totalling £147/5) on sales of the work, with ink jottings on the reverse, which probably dates from around the time of the author's death

Relating to A16

- 9) Memo signed by AC, 28 Mar 1889, of offer to WC of £1800 for all residual rights to 24 novels (also £500 for all residual rights to new novel [*Blind Love*])
- 10) Page 6 from C&W printed Trade Catalogue (of c1888—last listed work is *Little Novels*), listing reprint editions of 23 WC novels, annotated in ink (red and later black) with the dates at which C&W's interest in the works expires
- 11) Cutting from C&W printed Trade Catalogue (of c1889—last listed work is *The Legacy of Cain*), listing various editions of 24 works by WC, annotated in red ink on 28/3/89 with the dates at which C&W's interest in the works expires
- 12) Torn leaves containing 9 pages of calculations in AC's hand in black/red ink relating to the value of WC's residual copyrights (lists of copies bound, sales, stock in hand, payments to the author etc, regarding 24 novels in all)
- 13) Page 61 from C&W printed Trade Catalogue (of c1888—last listed work is *Little Novels*), listing WC's 23 Piccadilly Novels, annotated in ink (red and later black) with the dates at which C&W's interest in the works expires
- 14) Page 34 from Librairie Hachette printed Trade Catalogue (of c1889—last listed work is *Je dis non*), listing French translations of 13 works in 19 vols by WC available at 1F 25c, annotated in ink (black then red), with heading "Ap 7 89"

Relating to A18

- 15) ALS from APW on his headed notepaper to C&W, of 31 Oct 1889, re *A Rogue's Life*

II. 1890 onwards

Relating to Novels

- 16) Handwritten Statement to Smith, Elder, dated 13 Oct 1890 and stamped as paid 23 Oct 1890, for the sale of the copyrights, stock, plates etc in 3 WC novels (*Armada*, *No Name*, & *After Dark*) for a total of £632/1/7
- 17) Hand-written list of 28 numbered works by WC in three columns from *Antonina* 1 to *A Rogue's Life* 28 (includes all works to which C&W hold copyright from 1890 onwards except *Blind Love*), undated

- 18) TLS from the Customs House, London, to C&W, 15 May 1891, re discrepancies concerning the date of expiry of the copyright to 3 of WC's works (*Antonina, The Dead Secret, Basil*)

Relating to WC's dramatic works

- 19) ALS from APW on his headed notepaper to Mr Hytah (of C&W), of 12 Jul 1890, re which works by WC have been dramatized
- 20) TLS from APW to AC, 16 Oct 1901, re management of WC plays, with pencil annotation giving C&W reply
- 21) TLS from APW to C&W, 19 Oct 1901, re management of WC plays
- 22) ALS from H. Calfsens (?) of Antwerp to C&W, 4 Oct 1897, re rights to a dramatization in Flemish of *The New Magdalen*
- 23) C&W official memo, undated but c1904, "Cut from the proof slips of Adam's 'Dictionary of the Drama'" [by W.A. Adams, first volume only (A-G) published by C&W in 1904], has pasted on entry for WC bearing annotations in red ink
- 24) Typed postcard from J.B. Mulholland (of the King's Theatre, Hammersmith) to C&W, of 24 July 1919, re dramatic rights he holds in *The New Magdalen*, enclosed in folded sheet of C&W notepaper, with caption on reverse

Relating to the stories in Little Novels

- 25) ALS from APW on his headed notepaper to Mr Hytah (of C&W), of 13 Jan 1891, re publication of "The Ghost's Touch" (= "Mrs Zant and the Ghost" in *Little Novels*) in the periodical *Sequah*, and Tillotsons' rights in the story
- 26) Handwritten memo with pencil annotations headed Wilkie Collins' Little Novels, undated but referring to LB24:29, 9 Mar 1891, re the serial rights held by Tillotsons of stories in that volume, notably "Mrs Zant and the Ghost"
- 27) TLS from Tillotsons of Bolton on their headed notepaper to C&W, 11 Jun 1896, re the fact that they do not hold German rights to any stories in *Little Novels*
- 28) Three versions of typed C&W receipt, all with annotations, 29 Aug 1919, to Messrs White, Langner, Stevens, & Parrry for £78/15 for a 5 year licence to film the story "She Loves and Lies"/"Mrs Lismore and the Widow," first published in *Belgravia/Little Novels*

(C) ALSs from WC

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) To AC, 8 Feb 1875 [relating to A1 &A2] | 11) To AC, 1 Feb 1882 [with D24] |
| 2) To C&W, 3 Aug 1876 [=A3; with D4] | 12) To C&W, 1 Feb 1882 [=A8] |
| 3) To C&W, 12 Jan 1878 [relating to A3] | 13) To AC, 28 Mar 1883 [relating to A9] |
| 4) To C&W, 25 Jun 1879 [relating to A5] | 14) To AC, 20 Apr 1883 [relating to A10] |
| 5) To AC, 26 Jun 1879 [relating to A5] | 15) To AC, 15 Mar 1887 [=A13] |
| 6) To C&W, 20 Feb 1880 [relating to A6] | 16) To AC, 23 Apr 1888 [relating to A16] |
| 7) To C&W, 7 Apr 1881 [relating to A7] | 17) To AC, 7 Aug 1888 [relating to A14] |
| 8) To AC, 18 Aug 1881 [with D21] | 18) To AC, 27 Mar 1889 [relating to A15] |
| 9) To C&W, 18 Aug 1881 [with D21] | 19) To AC, 2 Apr 1889 [relating to A15] |
| 10) To AC, 29 Jan 1882 [with D24] | |

(D) Back copies of letters to WC or his agents

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) AC to WC, 18 Dec 1874 (LB8:41) | 4) C&W to WC, 2 Aug 1876 (LB8:694) |
| 2) AC to WC, 6 Feb 1875 (LB8:78) | 5) AC to WC, 25 Oct 1876 (LB8:787) |
| 3) C&W to WC, 3 Mar 1875 (LB8:106) | 6) C&W to WC, 7 Nov 1876 (LB8:815) |

- 7) C&W/AC to WC, 9 Oct 1877 (LB9:187)
 8) AC to WC, 15 Mar 1878 (LB9:416)
 9) AC to WC, 21 Oct 1878 (LB10:716)
 10) C&W to WC, 5 Nov 1878 (LB10:741)
 11) C&W to WC, 19 Nov 1878 (LB10:767)
 12) AC to WC, 21 May 1879 (LB11:252)
 13) AC to WC, 24 Jun 1879 (LB11:290)
 14) C&W to WC, 30? Jun 1879 (LB11:296)
 15) C&W to WC, 19 Feb 1880 (LB12:220)
 16) AC to WC, 9 Mar 1881 (LB13:488)
 17) AC to WC, 18 Mar 1881 (LB14:10)
 18) C&W to WC, 6 Apr 1881 (LB14:63)
 19) C&W to WC, 7 Apr 1881 (LB14:67)
 20) C&W to WC, 11 Aug 1881 (LB14:342)
 21) C&W to WC, 18 Aug (LB14:354)
 22) C&W to WC, 9 Sep 1881 (LB14:388)
 23) AC to WC, 8 Nov 1881 (LB15:65)
 24) C&W to WC, 30 Jan 1882 (LB15:235)
 25) C&W to WC, 3 Feb 1882 (LB15:257)
 26) AC to WC, 9 Mar 1883 (LB17:289)
 27) AC to WC, 27 Mar 1883 (LB17:332)
 28) AC to WC, 3 Apr 1883 (LB17:349)
 29) AC to WC, 19 Apr 1883 (LB17:397)
 30) AC to WC, 5 Aug 1884 (LB18:872)
 31) C&W to WC, 19 Aug 1884 (LB18:894)
 32) AC to WC, 18 Jun 1885 (LB19:571)
 33) AC to WC, 8 Sep 1886 (LB20:473)
 34) AC to WC, 23 Sep 1886 (LB20:508)
 35) AC to WC, 23 Mar 1887 (LB20:906)
 36) C&W to WC, 31 Mar 1887 (LB20:921)
 37) AC to WC, 1 Jun 1887 (LB21:55)
 38) AC to WC, 10 Oct 1887 (LB21:322)
 39) C&W to WC, 8 Aug 1888 (LB22:15)
 40) AC to WC, 13 Dec 1888 (LB22:289)
 41) AC to WC, 1 May 1889 (LB22:696)
 42) AC to APW, 25 Sep (LB23:137)
 43) AC to HPB, 2 Oct 1889 (LB23:158)
 44) C&W to APW, 6 Oct 1889 (LB23:181)
 45) C&W to APW, 16 Oct 1889 (LB23:203)

(E) Publishing Ledgers (folios relating to the printing of WC's works)

- The Two Destinies* 3:90; 3:654; 4:716; 6:16; 8:302
The Woman in White 3:127; 3:375; 3:638; 4:365; 4:777; 5:280; 5:465; 5:587; 5:862; 6:57; 6:268; 6:411; 8:157; 8:273; 9:65; 9:582
The Dead Secret 3:128; 4:824; 5:528; 5:446; 6:230; 6:273; 8:371; 8:392; 9:313
Hide and Seek 3:129; 4:628; 4:59; 5:242; 8:729
Antonina 3:130; 4:134; 5:337; 5:340; 6:713
Basil 3:131; 4:287; 4:549; 5:341; 6:934
The Queen of Hearts 3:132; 4:517; 5:536; 9:4
The Moonstone 3:133; 3:435; 4:666; 4:518; 5:159; 5:280; 5:586; 5:647; 6:50; 6:411; 6:415; 6:949; 8:320; 8:706
Man and Wife 3:134; 3:604; 4:270; 4:436; 5:410; 5:834; 5:585; 6:558; 9:66
Poor Miss Finch 3:135; 4:138; 4:693; 5:422; 6:714; 8:204
Miss or Mrs? 3:136; 4:86; 4:533; 5:243; 9:8
The New Magdalen 3:137; 3:543; 4:314; 4:699; 5:21; 5:682; 6:127; 9:6
The Frozen Deep 3:138; 4:321; 5:423; 6:284; 8:454
My Miscellanies 3:139; 4:532
The Law and the Lady 3:140; 4:144; 4:511; 5:500; 6:660; 8:369
The Haunted Hotel 3:229; 4:437; 5:540; 6:776; 6:840; 9:5
The Fallen Leaves 3:286; 4:256; 5:526
Jezebel's Daughter 3:323; 3:617; 4:154; 5:777; 9:3
The Black Robe 3:419; 3:644; 4:402; 4:464; 5:858; 8:676
Heart and Science 3:670; 4:128; 8:304
I Say No! 3:881; 4:398; 5:130; 6:454
The Evil Genius 4:240; 4:379; 6:577
Little Novels 4:291; 4:460
The Legacy of Cain 4:423; 4:655; 6:444; 8:435
A Rogue's Life 4:545; 6:132
Blind Love 4:550; 6:573
Armada 4:629; 5:810; 6:63; 6:755; 8:641
After Dark 4:630; 5:897; 9:7
No Name 4:631; 5:184; 6:49; 6:173; 8:184

~Reviews~

Lillian Nayder. *Unequal Partners: Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins, and Victorian Authorship*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002. pp. xvi + 221. (ISBN 0-8014-3925-6).

Unequal Partners explores a range of material arising out of the relationship between Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins, from direct collaborative works such as “The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices” and “No Thoroughfare”, to different versions of *The Frozen Deep*. Hitherto, this material has received relatively little attention from critics. More recently, scholars (including Anthea Trodd and John Bowen in a collaborative project funded by the Leverhulme Trust) have begun to give this material the attention it deserves, and it is in this context that Nayder’s work asserts a series of important claims. As the introductory chapter to *Unequal Partners* makes clear, the collaborative work of Dickens and Collins is significant on a number of levels. Not only does it shed light on the changing relations between Dickens and Collins; it offers an insight into the Victorian publishing industry, as well as addressing “their collaborations in the larger context of Victorian labor disputes and political unrest, to which their stories explicitly and self-consciously respond” (5).

Having used the introduction to identify the themes with which her book is concerned, Nayder’s first full-length chapter considers the Victorian publishing business, paying particular attention to the way in which economic factors determined its overriding values. In contrast to the view of Dickens as a benevolent figure who sought to promote the careers of other writers in *Household Words* and *All the Year Round* (a view that Dickens was keen to encourage), Nayder insists that the “conductor” of these periodicals was primarily a producer who placed his own commercial interests before those of fellow writers. The case that Nayder constructs is one that some Dickensians are likely to find disconcerting, but it is hard to ignore the overwhelming evidence that she presents. Although more might have been said about other writers who suffered at the hands of Dickens (including Gaskell, who is only mentioned in passing), the material that Nayder outlines is damning enough. Among other things, the chapter challenges the notion that *Household Words* gave Collins his major break as a writer, arguing instead that “in becoming Dickens’s staff member, Collins did not simply join the ranks of professional writers. He also gave up his connection to the *Leader*, became affiliated solely with *Household Words*, and made his subordination to Dickens official, as one of the satellites of ‘Jupiter,’ as a contemporary reviewer put it” (33).

Yet this subordination to Dickens was something that Collins became increasingly resistant of in the years that followed. Nayder examines different

collaborative works in the middle four chapters of her book, and in each case, she locates various stages in the deteriorating relationship between Dickens and Collins. Chapter two looks at “The Wreck of the Golden Mary” and reads it in terms of the dissension among the management team at *Household Words*. We are informed that “Dickens would take the central authoritative role in the new story, that of the heroic captain, while reserving the roles of passengers and crew members for his subordinates at *Household Words*” (35). While Dickens’s work on the story is described as an attempt to redefine and defuse the threat of an insubordinate labor force, Collins’s contributions, though not openly rebellious, are seen to question the authority of Captain William George Ravender, Dickens’s fictional persona, and raise questions about the allegiance of the crew (and, by implication, the workers at *Household Words*).

The critical framework that Nayder uses in chapter two is one that she returns to in the next three chapters. Increasing tensions between Collins and Dickens are explored, respectively, through variants of *The Frozen Deep*, the collaborative fiction of 1857, and “No Thoroughfare”. Each of these chapters offers sophisticated readings which show how Collins challenged the authority of Dickens through constructing more subversive narratives than the conservative Dickens was willing to accept. The hermeneutic that Nayder uses throughout is commendably wide ranging, and if the discussion threatens to become slightly laboured in a couple of places, it is due more to the amount of detail that she attempts to squeeze in than any inherent restrictions in her critical outlook. Indeed, one of the strengths of this book is the way in which it combines detailed biographical and textual research with stimulating theoretical accounts of gender, class, and imperial concerns. The diversity of Nayder’s critical approach facilitates the perceptive interpretations to be found in her writing about “The Perils of Certain English Prisoners” in chapter four and “No Thoroughfare” in chapter five.

Another strength of Nayder’s writing is the way in which she combines an extensive knowledge of existing criticism with her own original perspectives. This bears fruit in chapter six when she turns her attention to two texts dealing with empire – Collins’s *The Moonstone* and Dickens’s *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. A considerable amount of work has already been written on the imperial dimensions of these works, much of it conflicting, but Nayder’s discussion avoids merely going over old ground. Reminding us that of “the four central crimes committed” in *The Moonstone*, Collins “mitigates only one – that of the Brahmins” (170), Nayder contends that Collins is seeking to highlight the crimes of the empire through his novel. She goes on to argue that Dickens’s novel was intended as a corrective to Collins, revealing a “different set of concerns on Dickens’s part” that “more clearly points to the dangers of imperial decline than the criminality of empire building” (182).

The shift in chapter six to two novels that, though not directly collaborative, are “the last and most acrimonious in a series of exchanges that began nearly two decades before” (165) offers a rich and fitting conclusion to

the discussion of the relationship between Dickens and Collins. At the same time, it raises questions about why Nayder does not look for similar collaboration in the novels that the two published earlier in the 1860s. Chapter five considers *No Name* briefly by way of a prelude to the discussion that ensues of illegitimacy in “No Thoroughfare”, but it would have been interesting to hear more about the parallels between three extremely influential novels that were published in *All the Year Round* between 1859 and 1861 – *A Tale of Two Cities*, *The Woman in White*, and *Great Expectations*. It is not difficult to see why Nayder has chosen to use the limited space available to focus on neglected material rather than works frequently discussed by critics, yet the absence of any serious discussion of this crucial stage in the relationship between the two authors remains an unfortunate omission. However, the failure to say everything that might be said should not detract from the important things that are said. *Unequal Partners* is a considered and authoritative contribution to our understanding of Dickens, Collins, and mid-Victorian authorship, and one that those working in this area are advised to consult.

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Phyllis Weliver. *Women Musicians in Victorian Fiction, 1869-1900: Representations of Music, Science and Gender in the Leisured Home*. Aldershot, Hants. & Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2000. Series: Music in 19th-century Britain. pp. x + 330. (ISBN 0-7546-0126-9)

The cliché of the female musician in the Victorian drawing-room is epitomized by William Orchardson’s painting, *Her Mother’s Voice*, with its pensive father, pausing from his newspaper to listen as his daughter plays the piano and sings to her lover. The role of parlour performances within middle-class courtship rituals certainly has its place in Phyllis Weliver’s *Women Musicians in Victorian Fiction*. Her study, however, sets out to complicate this stereotypical image with reference both to fictional and to real-life women musicians. Whilst the piano was a mark of Victorian respectability, and society encouraged young women to display their musical accomplishments to audiences within the domestic environment, Weliver argues that, from 1860 onwards, there was, in fiction, a shift towards depicting some musical women as positively dangerous – as likely to signify the “demon” as the “angel” in the house.

Her investigation of fictional representations of female musicians in the period 1860-1900 focuses upon changing gender roles, actual musical practices and scientific discourses. As the author herself acknowledges, *Women Musicians* is not the first scholarly study to deal with music in Victorian

literature. She cites, among others, Alison Byerly's *Realism, Representation and the Arts in Nineteenth-Century Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 1998). Weliver, however, emphasizes music's function as an "important component of mental science and a central metaphor for explaining and conceptualizing theories of consciousness" (8). It is this emphasis that leads to the dominance of George Eliot's works in her book.

Explorations of the angelic and demonic, and of music's relationship with nineteenth century writings on such topics as mesmerism, hypnotism, multiple consciousness and double personality, all lend themselves quite naturally to analyses of the sensation novels: Mary Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret*, Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White* and Charles Dickens's *Edwin Drood*. Equally, George Du Maurier's 1890's *Trilby*, a strikingly dramatic example of the "mesmerized female musician," the tone-deaf *grisette* who, under Svengali's power, becomes a great professional singer, provides an apt conclusion to the book. This chapter works particularly well, both chronologically, and in its linking of those "mental science" topics to Weliver's early discussion of the actual musical practice, amateur and professional, of Victorian women.

On the other hand, when it comes to a well-known novelist of the time, who might be shown to draw upon theories of music, aesthetics and evolutionary biology, and who was known to be familiar with the writings and ideas of Arthur Schopenhauer Charles Darwin, Ludwig Feuerbach, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Herbert Spencer and James Sully, there is perhaps only one credible contestant – George Eliot. Devoting three chapters to Eliot, and treating in detail three of her novels, when two chapters must suffice to cover Collins, Dickens, Braddon and Mrs Henry Wood, may leave some readers who come seeking an overview of "Victorian women musicians in literature," with a sense of imbalance. Indeed the Dickens chapter focuses largely upon the *male* musician, the villain, John Jasper, a variant of the Fosco type, "the diabolical, foreign male musician who practices animal magnetism." Jasper is particularly insidious because his position as an English clergyman masks his "criminality, mesmerism and Eastern orientation," enabling him to infiltrate a girls' school without arousing suspicion. (116).

Weliver's scope, however, includes a wider range of Victorian texts than simply fiction, and, whilst women feature prominently, it is the gendered concept of the musician as "other", rather than the female music maker *per se*, which is her main concern. Her subject matter is perhaps more accurately summarized as the issues implied by her subtitle, "*Music, Science and Gender in the Leisured Home*." It is their interrelationships in Victorian culture and society, and how they are exemplified in fiction, that is the thrust of this book. The intriguing and informative illustrations further emphasize this. Here are no reproductions of *Her Mother's Voice*. The bias is, instead, scientific: anatomical Venuses and Dr Elliotson "playing" the brain of his mesmerized female patient, rather than the female singers and violinists whom the book

celebrates as precursors and examples of the “New Woman.” The few images of historical musicians are all of men – Paganini, in dramatic pose, exhibiting all the alienating characteristics of the “foreign musician,” and an 1864 cartoon of Berlioz and Wagner “in a recognized position of mesmerism” (fig. 11).

In fact the great strength of the book lies in Weliver’s interdisciplinary approach, which should make it attractive to scholars from varied backgrounds. She makes use of a commendably broad range of sources, including contemporary periodicals; and though she chooses to restrict herself to a handful of novels for detailed discussion, references throughout the text to other fiction – Madame Pratolungo in *Poor Miss Finch* and Lydia Gwilt’s passion for Beethoven in *Armadale*, for instance – testify to the author’s extensive knowledge. Moreover, the focus upon the leisured home of the middle classes is contextualized by her outlining of the role of music in the lives of workingmen and women.

The early chapters, dealing with real-life musical women in England between 1860 and the end of the century, and with the links between music and the theory and practice of mesmerism, should be of interest to researchers in women’s studies as well as musicologists. It may surprise some to see the number of prominent professional women instrumentalists (mainly, but not exclusively, pianists), singers and composers, who continued to practise their careers after marriage. Of particular note is Weliver’s convincing evidence for the importance of her musical activities in Caroline Norton’s professional career, a facet of her life which receives little attention from feminist historians. The chapter “Music, Mesmerism and Mental Science” draws upon the practice of mesmerism in Britain to explain how it was that fiction, in expressing contemporary anxieties about foreign immigrants and influences, particularly upon innocent English girlhood, found in the discourses of music, mesmerism and the occult, such potent images. Weliver’s discussion provides illuminating insights into the many instances found in sensation fiction of the seductive power of music, and its relation to the unconscious.

Readers of the *Wilkie Collins Society Journal* may well be familiar with the central discussion of “Female Power in Sensation Fiction” since much of the material relating to *The Woman in White* first appeared here in 1999. Fosco offers an obvious example of the villainous, musical foreign charmer, just as Mary Braddon’s accomplished Lady Audley is a prototype of the demonic siren, capable of destroying the domestic harmony over which she ostensibly reigns as “angel.” Weliver’s study of their musical displays and the part played by music in the lives of characters such as Lucy Audley, Maggie Tulliver and Rosamund Vincy enable her to throw new light upon Laura Fairlie. Weliver offers a subtle reading of Laura’s exploitation of her “cultural capital,” her musical sensitivity, knowledge and skill, to woo Walter, the man she loves, whilst overtly engaging in a dutiful courtship with Percival Glyde. Laura’s responsiveness to music is, unlike that of *Middlemarch*’s well-trained, but imitative, Rosamund Vincy, whose playing deceives as it ensnares Lydgate,

integral to Laura's sense of identity. It is this part of her identity which is the price she pays for domestic happiness with Walter. Weliver shows how her music both assists and demonstrates Laura's strength, but that ultimately Walter Hartright masters the woman he loves by silencing her. She is one of those Victorian "angels in fiction, like young women in reality, [who] ... relinquished music upon marriage" (114-5).

The role of music in affecting the subconscious is further explored in Eliot's works. The powerful influence of sound and music upon Maggie Tulliver's psychological development makes her "both exemplary and undesirable" (184), stimulating her human sympathy and sense of the divine, but also inspiring forbidden passion, and ultimately leading to an unresolvable conflict. In the chapter "Sexual Selection and Music: *Middlemarch* and *Daniel Deronda*" Weliver shows how Eliot skilfully deploys the social phenomenon of parlour performance as an agent of courtship rituals. *Deronda* also gains from the earlier account of actual Victorian professional practice, enhancing our understanding of the novel's practitioners, Klesmer, Gwendolen, Alcharisi and Myrah. Weliver revisits earlier feminist views of this novel's portrayal of the female singer, suggesting that in *Daniel Deronda* "the activity of creating personal meaning by making music ... might be seen as a more accurate feminist reading ... than that of focusing on independence, freedom or career" (237). In such detailed interpretation of her theme the author risks seeming occasionally over ingenious. This reviewer remains sceptical of the idea that there is at one point in *Middlemarch* an intended pun on the name of *Will* Ladislaw who "understands the musical aspect of Schopenhauer's *das Will*" (221). But one need not be convinced by every suggestion to find Weliver's book a stimulating reading.

The scholarly apparatus is impressive. As well as detailed references and an extensive bibliography, the non-musician will appreciate the appendix of musical terms, and even readers familiar with Weliver's contemporary sources will find it convenient to have to hand her appendix of relevant extracts. To those for whom this is virgin territory, these "Source Readings" should prove a most valuable addition to the book.

Barbara Onslow
University of Reading

William Baker, *Wilkie Collins's Library: A Reconstruction*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002. Series: *Bibliographies and Indexes in World Literature*, #55. pp. xv + 192. (ISBN 0-3133-1394-6).

The Victorian library is a very interesting institution, and also a very interesting room. The nineteenth century saw the founding of numerous public libraries in England, and so far there have been few attempts to extend Roger Chartier's extremely important work on the subject into Victorian England.¹ Did Wilkie Collins ever go to the library? William Baker does not tell us. But libraries are found in private households as well, and especially in need of critical analysis.² The library is traditionally gendered male, and often connected to the smoking room or the billiard room; books are sometimes collected for reading, but more often as objects of luxury and ostentation.³ Baker's reference book begins with a few pages on the importance of libraries in Collins' novels, but this compelling topic soon gives way to the bibliography itself.

Baker's library is "reconstructed" from two auction catalogues of Collins' books which were sold after his death. Baker devotes ten pages to describing the dispersal of Collins' books—the buyers, the prices (5-14)—and he notes how consistently low the prices paid for the books were. Baker attributes these low prices to "an agreement amongst established dealers and booksellers to allow the prices to be kept down," a "classic 'ring'" (10). Baker then goes on to provide an analysis of the make-up of Collins' library (as drawn from these catalogues) in terms of "presentation/association volumes," "imprint" (publication dates), "place of publication," "language," and "subject." The bulk of Baker's book consists of an alphabetical listing of all the books in the auction catalogues.

What Baker is after in his description of books is not stated theoretically, nor even very clearly.

The purpose of the present reconstruction is to combine these two catalogues containing information on books in WC's library, so that identification of them can take place, to give some sense of their nature and contents, and to indicate what their importance may have been for him. Wherever possible, from the evidence available, the exact editions owned by WC, as well as the identification of works themselves, has taken place.

(70)

¹ Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe Between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

² See my "Victorian Interior," *Modern Language Quarterly* 62 (2001), 83-116.

³ For a discussion of Victorian floor plans and their ideological implications, see Mark Girouard, *The Victorian Country House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979).

The uncertain syntax of the second sentence may be said to reflect a general uncertainty as to what to do with all this bibliographical exactitude. What happens, in practice, is that entries are annotated by a sentence or two of who's who about the author, with an occasional apt quotation from Collins' letters, or a suggestion about how this or that book may have provided a source for one of Collins' novels. Baker says that his bibliography does not proceed in the manner of W.W. Greg or Fredson Bowers, but rather "in the tradition of my own *The Libraries of George Eliot and George Henry Lewes*" (70). Unless one wants to spend ten years copying down Collins' marginalia, I'm not sure that the information provided in Baker's entries can actually be improved. The main question is: what to do with such a list?

The libraries of Eliot and Lewes, for example, are going to provide a much more obviously useful list. As two of the most erudite and deeply read authors in Victorian England, whose works almost inevitably represent enormous labors of research, it is very helpful to know what Lewes and Eliot had readily available to them. What scholars will be able to do with this list of Wilkie Collins' books, however, is less apparent. We know that he did research at various clubs (65), and there are major authors gone missing from this list (there is not one volume of Trollope, for instance). So one can't conclude definitively, one way or the other, as to whether Collins is familiar with a book not on the list. The collection itself is "eclectic," as Baker says, with a tendency towards the "popular" (a more theoretical analysis of the categories of "high" and "low" culture in the mode of Pierre Bourdieu might be possible). So how this reference book might assist in future Collins scholarship is an open question. I personally prefer reading around in the obscure titles of Robert Browning's library, but it is probably important for students of Victorian literature to remind themselves periodically of the still quite varied reading of a less "intellectual" man of letters.

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WILKIE COLLINS SOCIETY JOURNAL



The *Wilkie Collins Society Journal* is an annual volume, sponsored jointly by the Wilkie Collins Society and the Wilkie Collins Society of North America, and is dedicated to original scholarly essays and reviews of publications relating to Wilkie Collins, his writings, and his culture.

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