

Introduction - Fiction in the Hampshire Chronicle, 1772-1829

(D1, D2, etc. indicates the page number of the Database. Full bibliographical references are not given in the Introduction as they are in the Database.)

In order for a Database search of this kind to be effective it has been necessary to reference each work of fiction appearing in the newspaper.¹ Advertisements are often incomplete, omitting the names of authors, titles are frequently inaccurate, and dates of publication are sometimes given as a year later than might be expected, indicating the possibility of a remaindered item; a few titles were advertised but never published. These reference checks have also indicated a few titles of which there is no trace.

The Hampshire Chronicle, published weekly, was selected for close examination as it was a well established newspaper covering a very wide area of distribution. Access to the paper was available to readers from Hampshire and most of the west country; at one period this included the Channel Islands (for further details of distribution see 2 March, 1778, D. 18; 21 January, 1797, D. 75; 9 June, 1823, D. 179). The newspaper, unlike many of its contemporaries, stayed the course and remained in publication despite heavy taxation and the bankruptcy of one of its proprietors. It is still in print today. The years 1772, the date of the inception of the newspaper, to 1829 were chosen as an appropriately long period in which to measure changes and trends. The time span includes the firming up of the publisher-created literary canon and, at the other extreme, a good sprinkling of 'trashy', novels which continue through most of the period under review. The period also covers the politically difficult issues raised by the French Revolution in the 1790s, the radical views of the Jacobin novelists, the expansion of the Gothic, and the Romantic period, ending in 1829 before the start of the early Victorian writers of fiction. No study of this kind would be complete without being set in some sort of context and therefore the Database also offers a background of non-fiction reading and a few pointers to historical landmarks. Some advertisements are given in full, as examples of the ways in which booksellers² tried to persuade the public to read their publications.

General background

The commercial business surrounding the eighteenth century novel was only one small part of a flourishing national book trade that was to continue to increase rapidly throughout the nineteenth century. Figures in relation to literacy vary, but according to a contemporary calculation, Edmund Burke in 1790 estimated that the English reading public included some 80,000 persons.³ This was out of a population of 10.5M in 1801, the year of the first Census, which was to increase to 16.3M by 1831, the end of the period under review.⁴ Earlier in the eighteenth century, few people would have read novels, as the high cost of books prevented all but the comparatively well-off from being able to afford them. Towards the end of the

¹ The reference sources used are the British Library, British Fiction, COPAC, and Garside.

² The difference, if any, between 'publisher' and 'bookseller' was often blurred especially in the eighteenth century. Books were usually 'printed for' and then promoted and sold by the bookseller. For a full explanation of these differences, see James Raven, *The Business of Books, booksellers and the English Book Trade, 1450-1850*. (Yale University Press, 2007) p. 124. Unless the difference is clear, I shall refer to the 'bookseller' which, according to Raven, remained a conveniently broad job description and encompassed the crafts of the book trades practiced individually as well as in different combinations.

³ From the Preface to the first volume of the *Penny Magazine*, 1832, referred to in Robert D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 49.

⁴ Jeremy Black, *The English Press 1621-1861* (Sutton Publishing, 2001). p. 92.

century, with a rise in literacy and an increase in reading largely due to the influences both of increased wealth and education and the opening of many more circulating libraries, there was a lively publishing trade in abridgements, cheap 'sewed' editions, and chap books, reflected in the Database. William Lane was to found the Minerva Press in 1790, publishing sensational and overly sentimental novels. Even the relatively uncultivated reader now had an increasingly plentiful supply of books or magazines to choose from. James Lackington bookseller (1746-1815), wrote in his *Memoirs* that *Tom Jones* and *Roderick Random* could be found stuck up on the bacon racks.⁵

One of the major literary developments in the eighteenth century was the growth of the press. There was an increase both in the numbers of newspapers and in their circulation and distribution networks. The annual sale of newspapers in England was approximately 7.3M in 1750, 12.6M in 1775 and 16M in 1801.⁶ By 1835, just after the end of the period under review, the total sale of stamped papers amounted to 31M.⁷ This is not a true indication of how many people actually read newspapers as they were passed round among friends, read in coffee houses and in circulating libraries. A consensus of rough estimates appears to have been approximately fifteen readers per copy. In 1782 there were about 50 provincial newspapers, and in 1805 over 100.⁸

In the provincial press news was both national and international, mostly copied from London dailies. Local news was a minor contribution and was often relegated to the back page. Many newspapers, including the *Hampshire Chronicle*, printed verses, related scandals and elopements, and indulged their readers in reports of trials and hangings both local and national. There were times during the period of the French Revolution and the war with France when threats of invasion were rife, and during the first years of the nineteenth century, up until 1815, more sombre tones were often evident. Despite a large increase in literacy and a growing readership, the first three decades of the nineteenth century brought little basic change to the way in which newspapers were set out. The format of the *Hampshire Chronicle* which was usually four pages, remained much the same throughout the period under review; for most of the time the front page was almost entirely devoted to advertisements and the back to local news. (For an example of layout, see January, 1826, D. 189.)

The Newspaper Proprietor

Although readers themselves may have played their own part in the selection of novels they wanted to read, there can be little doubt that the most important person in that process was the editor of a newspaper. The professional relationship between provincial newspaper proprietor/editor and London bookseller was very complex. It was usual for advertisements with local content to be taken in by the proprietor's agents in many of the towns in the distribution area. There are only two pieces of evidence that show the use of London agents clearly in regard to the *Hampshire Chronicle*, although they were almost certainly employed frequently. In the entry for 21 January, 1797 (D. 75) two agents are named; the only other mention of agents was at a much later date, on 9 June, 1823 when the newspaper was under

⁵ James Lackington, *Memoirs of the First Forty-Five Years of the Life of James Lackington*, 1791, quoted in J. M. S. Tompkins, *The Popular Novel in England* (London: Methuen, 1932).

⁶ Jeremy Black in *Six Centuries of the Provincial Book Trade in Britain*, ed. Peter Isaac (Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies, Oak Knoll Press, 1990) p. 61

⁷ Jeremy Black, *The English Press 1621-1861* (Sutton Publishing, 2001) p. 73.

⁸ Jeremy Black, *Six Centuries of the Provincial Book Trade in Britain*, ed. Peter Isaac (Winchester: St. Paul's bibliographies, Oak Knoll Press, 1990). pp. 61-63.

the editorship of Jacob and Johnson. They were ‘Messrs Newton & Co., Warwick square and Mr. R. Barker, 33 Fleet street’, living in an area central to the book trade.

It is important to understand the role of the late eighteenth century provincial newspaper proprietor in relation to the society, both commercial and otherwise, in which he lived and where he had considerable power and respect. The very fact that he owned and was editor of a newspaper was evidence of business acumen, and showed that he had either relatively substantial means, or a strong head for gambling! Many provincial papers of that period went out of print quickly, often due to over expansion or crippling taxation; one of the changes in ownership of the *Hampshire Chronicle* was due to bankruptcy. Stamp Duty was high, newsmen and newsagents had to be employed to cover a large geographical area for circulation, and there were transport costs in ensuring that the news arrived from London quickly. Almost all provincial newspaper proprietors were also booksellers, dealing in books as well as patent medicines, stationary, millinery, wine, and other goods. In addition many owned circulating libraries, an important factor when considering that the value of an advertisement to a proprietor/editor was often twofold. Readers needed wooing both in the purchase of books and in joining the library in order to read those they could not afford to buy. For example, John Wilkes, editor from 1 June, 1778, started a Circulating Library which he advertised in the newspaper on 6 September, 1779. ‘Advertisement for a new Music Shop and Circulating Library’ (see D. 20 for the advertisement in full). In the absence of any *Hampshire Chronicle* archive, it may never be possible to establish how much contact there was between agent and editor, and how much between editor and bookseller. The only conclusion that it is possible to make is that undoubtedly the links were there and that there must have been business relationships between editors and booksellers, as well as agents. John Wilkes owned a house in London and on 15 August, 1791 (D. 50) advertised that ‘J. Wilkes is the Printer and Publisher of the newspaper’, but that advertisements were taken in ‘at Mr. Wilkes’s house in Ave-Maria Lane, London and also by other persons’ ... in a long list of town in Wiltshire, Dorset, Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex and the Isle of Wight. The London link, at least in the case of Wilkes, was certainly there.

Some of the London booksellers were very prolific and promoted very varied lists of books. For example, R. Snagg, 29, Paternoster Row, operating in the 1770s and advertising in the *Hampshire Chronicle*, published classics, ‘The Little Books Warehouse’, (which were almost all abridgements), popular novels as *The Newspaper Wedding*, the *Monthly Miscellany* magazine, and books of non-fiction, as *The Complete Florist*. He advertised frequently in the *Hampshire Chronicle* and would undoubtedly have wished to foster provincial trade.

Although there was a multitude of London booksellers involved in both publishing and selling, there were relatively few names recurring under each editor of the *Hampshire Chronicle*; this was more noticeable in the eighteenth rather than the nineteenth century. As editors of the paper changed, so too, to some extent, did the names of their London contacts indicating that business relationships existed and were not merely arbitrary. Under John Linden’s proprietorship (1772-1778) certain names constantly recurred. T. Carnan sold both classics and popular novels; the name of G. Kearsley was to be found in advertisements for works of both fiction and non-fiction. The booksellers T. Lowndes, Allen and West, and John Bell, recurred several times. Under the editorship of J. Wilkes (June 1778-1783) only Carnan continued. J. Wenman, Harrison & Co., Alex Hogg, and William Lane now began to advertise. With the coming of Thomas Blagden as editor (29 December, 1783 to 1791) the major influence of J. Stockdale was evident, as well as Lane and Hogg. Wilkes became editor again in 1791 and although he continued to trade with Alex Hogg, the rest of his

London links appear to have been new. Joseph Bricknell and Benjamin Long advertised very few novels and apart from Cooke, who during the 1790s promoted his lists of classics widely, seemed to relate to few London booksellers or publishers.

This pattern of relationships was not always the case. There was more continuity in the nineteenth century, some names appearing year after year, continuing under different editors. William Lane, followed by A. K. Newman, both trading under the Minerva Press, carried on advertising in the *Hampshire Chronicle* from 1775 to 1819. C. Cooke advertised his lists of classical novels continuously from 1789 to 1814. From 1815 the firm of Whittaker had a long run, advertising both fiction and non-fiction until the end of the period under review. Crosby dominated Samuel Maunders' editorship which began in 1811 but had already started to advertise in 1794. Although a major promoter of fiction, including the selling on of novels already in print, he also sold works of history, travel and memoirs among other subjects. His business continued through the period, ending in 1827. He seemed to be aware of the provincial market as he advertised books on fariery, agriculture, angling and gardening. Starting as Crosby and Letterman, the firm changed to B. Crosby & Co., in 1802. They continued to publish long lists of fiction and also books 'For the Amusement and Instruction of Children.' (30 August, 1802, D. 95). It was not unusual for booksellers to purchase copyrights; Crosby appears to have bought 'The History of Sandford and Merton, as work intended for the instruction of children by W. Day. Caution: Be careful to ask for Crosby's Editions, being the only Genuine ones, purchased of Mr. Day's Executors.' (16 April, 1804, D. 105)

One of the main tasks of a newspaper editor was to understand the market and to use his skill in deciding what to advertise and thereby to increase his circulation. Balancing the books was crucial to the continuing output of the paper and was particularly important at a time when many newspapers went out of business in a very short time. A good editor, therefore, had to understand what his readers wanted to buy. As in any marketing process, promotion is unlikely to succeed unless there is some indication of consumer need. A variety of goods was promoted in the newspaper; jobs, property, bankruptcies, services, and on occasion, denial of financial responsibilities by husbands whose wives had recently eloped, were all advertised. There are no figures given for the price of advertisements in the *Hampshire Chronicle*, but a rough indication is indicated in an advertisement in that newspaper on 8 September, 1823 (D. 179) for the London based *Morning Chronicle*'s costs. Eight lines cost 7s, above eight lines, 6d. a line and for a whole paragraph, the cost was 1s. a line.

The content of the provincial newspaper

Advertisements were often responsible for up to half the content of a provincial newspaper. Much of the rest was concerned with national and international news from the London papers, and a relatively small inclusion of local news mainly in the form of marriages, births, deaths, trials, and events. Popular taste was catered for through reports of scandals, accounts of trials, criminal biographies, and dying words of the condemned. Poems of varying lengths, often by local contributors, were regular inclusions in the provincial papers as they were in the *Times* of London.

A summary of content, applied to the *Hampshire Chronicle* throughout the period under review, changed little over the years. A brief examination of the four pages published in 1826 (D.189) will serve as an illustration:

Page 1 contains local news which in the early years had been on the back page, but

which, in essence, remains much the same and includes prices of country markets, reports of meetings, marriages and deaths.

Page 2 contains news from London in 'Tuesday Night's Gazette', a list of bankruptcies, and Irish news of reports of a multitude of 20,000 people 'to the great danger of the public peace', fearing sedition and violence. Scandal, an ongoing element in the content of the newspaper, is represented in the account of a trial of an Englishman in Paris who was on a charge of bigamy, - and the story is told in detail. There is also an account of the attachment of the Empress Josephine to Napoleon after their divorce and how after his death she would not allow anything to be moved from his room. Further reports include the use of a handkerchief over the nose in order to prevent malaria, current trends in surgery, and a report from the Corn Exchange.

Page 3 has an account of a visit to Mr. Cobbett's farm to see his Indian Corn, and a report of the King's health. A new colony was to be established on the west coast of New South Wales.

Page 4 includes content from 'Friday Night's Gazette' with both national and international news. Court news tells of a visit by London society to the King at Royal Lodge, Windsor. Finally, an account of a meeting in Kent of petitioners to Parliament against granting further concessions to the Roman Catholics reflects one of the important political issues of the day.

The content of the paper changed very little between 1772 and 1829. Although most of the news was given in a non-biased way politically, occasionally the views of the editor of the *Hampshire Chronicle*, or rather those of the editor of the London newspaper from which the comments were taken, were expressed. An article on 'Malcontents on the Approach of Peace' was included on 3 February, 1783 and on 9 July, 1792 the London news, reporting on events in France⁹, refers to the 'violent Jacobin party'. The trial of the King of France reported on 24 December, 1792 brought forth strong anti-Catholic feelings and the issue of that date included an article beginning with 'No Popery. 'The Blood and Sufferings of the Martyrs cry aloud for Protestants to be on their Guard ... when French priests and their emissaries swarm in the streets of the metropolis, and in every part of the kingdom.' These views were also reflected in the advertisements; a listing for Fox's *Book of Martyrs* begins with 'it is the absolute duty of every true Protestant to enquire into the destructive principles of that abominable persuasion etc.' (17 December, 1792. D.59)

News from France was constantly to the fore. The fears of the populace that invasion was imminent was expressed on 21 January, 1793 in an extract from Saturday's *Post*, dated London, Sat, Jan 19th from a State Paper (D. 60). 'We may rest assured that our rival, as soon as she had repaired her losses, will instantly avail herself of the stupor of other powers overawed by her success, and pour her thunder on the British coasts, and destroy our commerce, which has ever been the object of her jealousy. The execution of the King of France was reported in full on 4 February, 1793. The rest of the contents of the paper do not seem to have been affected by the news; light-hearted journals as *Bacchanalian Magazine* and *The Cuckold's Chronicle* were advertised on the same date. *The Wonderful Magazine* was another ribald journal, which included such items as 'The Birth of a Devil', 'The

⁹ The date of the London newspaper was 5 July, 1792, giving some indication of the time it took for news to travel between London and Hampshire and to be published in the *Hampshire Chronicle*.

Grateful Lion'; extracts from Baron Munchausen's *Romantic Travels*, and 'A Lady burnt to Ashes by a fire kindled in her own body', etc., all frivolous when compared with the actual news of the day. This distancing of mood was not always the case, the French Revolution was to the fore of most people's thoughts and Gardner's *Pocket Journal*, advertised in the *Hampshire Chronicle* on 9 June, 1794, (D. 65) included the life of Marie Antoinette.

The news from France continued to be alarming and on 9 January, 1804 a headline announced 'Invasion imminent'. (D.105) Local news from Cowes, dated 6 January brought matters closer to home. 'We were rather alarmed here last Wednesday on a report being circulated that the Enemy were landing; all the volunteers and Militia were called out, and conducted themselves highly.' Although a solemn and sad occasion, the funeral of Nelson, reported on 13 January, 1806, must in some way have restored national pride and security.

An interest in titillating stories and amusing anecdotes continued intermittently throughout the period under review. On 27 April, 1778 the *Malefactor's Register* was advertised, which listed all the scandals, and a duel on Putney heath between Hon. George Canning and Lord Castlereagh, who were both Cabinet Ministers, was reported in full on 25 September, 1809.

Other external events impinged upon the content of the paper. A national deficit in the production of works of fiction occurring in the late 1770s to early 1780s is reflected in the lack of advertisements for novels. Although the editor promised in January 1778 (D. 17) that 'every department of biography, anecdote, or belles letters, that can with propriety come within their plan, will be arduously averted to ...', there are no novels advertised during that year. Apart from Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*, 1762, the only fiction referred to in 1779 and 1780 are classics to be read in the *Novelist's Magazine*.

The tone of the *Hampshire Chronicle*

Through an examination of content some understanding of the 'tone' of the newspaper may be arrived at, giving a further insight into the mindset of its readers, many of whom would have read the fiction advertised in it. It was the responsibility of the editor to select the right tone for his paper and to calculate the tastes and social class of his readers. Initially there was a sense of humour and fun in the paper, but the tone can be seen to change over the period under review. In early editions advertisements were for Jewels, Pearls and Toys, Masquerade dresses, The Luscious Jester, a miscellany of merriment, and Jeremy Twitcher's Jests. The only novel to be advertised at this time was *The Egg or the Memoirs of Geoffrey Giddy Esq.*, a seemingly very light, satirical, piece. 1773 continued with revues of plays, little sentimental poems, scandals and anecdotes; a few popular novels were advertised.

In 1779, however, the mood of the paper became more serious, mostly containing naval news of the English Fleet with threats of battles with the French. The production of novels was low at the time and perhaps the tone of the paper did not encourage their promotion anyway. Although by 1784, levity returned, there were no novels advertised that year, the first of Thomas Blagdon's period as editor; this change of proprietor may have been a significant factor in their lack of promotion. By 1800, with long advertisements from Cooke and also from the Minerva Press, advertisements for novels had increased although the attitude of the current Editor, B. Long, expressed on 4 January, 1802, was a serious one. He made his views very plain, thanking his patrons for the numerous favours received during the past year and promising intelligent articles. (in full D. 92)

And so the fluctuations continued, sometimes explicable and other times difficult to understand. How much the actual tone of the paper and the views of its editor influenced the advertising of fiction is very difficult to establish. Advertising means revenue and at a time of heavy Stamp Tax that may have been the main concern of the editor. It can be concluded that there were many influences both internal and external reflected in content and tone of the paper which undoubtedly affected the mood in which novels were advertised, received and finally interpreted.

Who were the readers?

It has been important to examine the content of the newspaper as this indicates the social world of its customers, and consequently, the kind of people who read the novels advertised within its pages. The editor creates an atmosphere which can both reflect the mood and needs of his readers, but can also be influenced by wider national and international issues. Some of the editors expressed an awareness of the social class of their readership. J. Wilkes acknowledged the upper levels of society in Hampshire. In his editorial of 1 June, 1778 (D. 18) he described 'a county so respectable, so extensive and in which reside so many of the nobility and gentry.' Theatres, concerts, balls, the sale of property and the offer of horses for stud would have satisfied the wealthier readers, but the *Hampshire Chronicle* was a newspaper for everyone as Joseph Bricknell, editor from 21 September, 1795 proposed; he was more varied in his social outlook and hoped that his paper would cater for a wide range of readers. 'The extensive circle of Advertising Friends ... (advertisements) to be displayed in so conspicuous a manner as shall cause them to attract the Notice of every Class of Readers.' (D. 69)

Advertisements, being a major part of content, are an indicator of the kind of readers a newspaper attracts. The *Hampshire Chronicle* covered almost every social class, advertising for expensive properties, assembly balls, and at the other end of the scale, jobs for servants, journeymen, and apprentices, many of whom would have been literate. It would be unreasonable to assume that they all read the newspaper; some of them may have placed advertisements, or found out what vacancies there were, through the agents in local towns and at the printer's. From a survey of small advertisements, other than for fiction, from articles and from the titles of magazines, it would be reasonable to assume that Bricknell's hopes were fulfilled, that the *Hampshire Chronicle* was a paper for a wide cross-section of society, for artisans as well as aristocrats, and continued to be so throughout the period under review.

Tradesmen were represented through advertisements for hairdressers, mantua makers, wine merchants; the prices of such commodities as grain, tea, and sugar were given regularly. *The Builder's Magazine*, a journal for architects, carpenters, brick-layers etc. was advertised from August, 1774 to February, 1803, indicating the ability of some artisans to read. *The Builder's Price Book* followed in 1804. *Tradesman, or Commercial magazine* catered for tradesmen and *The Commercial Agricultural and Manufacturer's Magazine* included farmers as well. A wide range of business people would have read Crosby's *Gentleman's and Merchant's and Tradesman's Complete Pocket Book and Journal* and might have perused his list of books for tradesmen which was advertised on 1 April 1805 (D. 108). Portsmouth was a major channel port and *The Merchant and Seaman's Guardian in the English Channel*, first promoted in the paper on 25 May, 1778, must have been important reading material to sailors and merchants alike. Farmers were catered for in hunt, racing, and sheep trial advertisements, through *The Farmer's Magazine*, and were kept regularly informed as to the market prices.

Many religious works were advertised during the period under review; they included Bibles, Sermons, and books such as *Brief and Plain Instruction on Confirmation, intended for the Use of Servants, Cottagers, and Labourers, in country towns and villages*, 1827, by a Hampshire Vicar. (11 June, 1827, D. 196) On the domestic side, cookery and beer-making books were advertised as, for example, *The Housekeeper's Domestic Library* (29 October, 1804, D. 106) by Charles Millington, and *To Families, Innkeepers, Butlers etc. A Practical Treatise on the nature of Brewing*, (27 January, 1806, D. 113) 'sold in London by Jackson Bookseller.' Over the years several gardening books were promoted including *The Botanic Garden; or, the Magazine of Hardy Flower Plants*, (1 May, 1826, D. 191) by B. Maund. Health was an important subject and long medical advertisements continue to appear in the newspaper throughout the period under review. On 18 June, 1827 Butler's Vegetable Tooth Powder, and an advertisement for Worms, Fits and Pains in the Stomach were included in the paper as they had been continuously on a regular basis.

Throughout the period there was ample material for women in the *Hampshire Chronicle*. Advertisements for magazines were inserted regularly, for example, in 1806 *The Beau Monde or Literary and Fashionable Magazine*, in 1818 *The Fireside Magazine and Monthly Entertainer*, which included an article on 'Effects of Novel Reading upon Female Minds'. In the 1820s women were invited to read *La Belle Assemblée, or Court and Fashionable Magazine*, and in 1828 *Repository of Fashions*, a new monthly magazine, among many others. In an advertisement for *The British Lady's Magazine*, 4 December, 1815, women were appealed to more seductively. (see in full D. 148) There was plenty of other material for the ladies which included advertisements for hairdressers, mantua makers, stays and corsets, dresses, a retreat for Pregnant Ladies, and on one occasion a notice from a man who wanted a wife, but had no money at the time, but hoped to have in the future! On 15 October 1781 an article was included, 'Observations of Ladies painting themselves' and on 4 August 1790 an advertisement for the ladies on how to get rid of superfluous hair. Fashion articles continued throughout the period with full descriptions of all the latest dresses. Reports of special celebrations, such as the Queen's birthday usually included fashions. On one occasion, a woman was allowed to express her views quite forcefully in the pages of the paper with positive results. Calling herself LF, she sent a letter to the newspaper objecting to the fact that women were being excluded from celebrations to commemorate 50 years of the King's reign, to be held on 25 October, 1809. The lady's point was taken and subsequently a ball was arranged on the following day to include the women.

Although their parents were the readers of the newspaper rather than the children, books in the juvenile category were advertised intermittently throughout the period and were nearly always of a moral nature as explained poetically in an advertisement 28 March, 1791 (D. 48). There were rarely long lists of books for children but an advertisement on 14 December, 1807 (D. 123) gives an idea of the kind of titles they were reading and illustrates some of the embellishments habitually used in advertisements. The children are treated to 'elegant engravings' and unusually, copies could be purchased 'coloured.'

Specific advertisements for books for children continued. From 1822 to 1827, towards the end of the period under review, Maria Hack, a very popular author and an enthusiastic educator of children, was given advertising space by her publisher, Darton and Harvey on 2 April, 1827 (D. 194). A long puff was inserted which included 'English Stories, illustrating some of the most interesting Events and Characters from the accession of Alfred to the Reformation under the Tudor Princes', and 'Grecian Stories, taken from the works of eminent historians'. 'Harry Beaufoy; or, the Pupil of nature' founded on Dr Paley's Theology, but

suiting to the comprehension of children,' and 'Winter Evenings; or, Tales of Travellers, being interesting narratives from the works of Celebrated Travellers, abridged, and interspersed with such Questions and Explanations as are likely to make every circumstance intelligible,' The last book in the advertisement was 'Stories of Animals, intended for Children between five and seven years old'. Books promoted through several advertisements in July, 1822 give some idea of the variety of titles for young people. They include *Aesop in Rhyme*, *Harry's Holiday*, *Ralph Richards*, *The Miser*, all by Jeffrey Taylor of Ongar. Throughout the period a few magazines for children or young people were advertised, for example, *The Lilliputian Masquerade*, 1773, *The Cabinet of Lilliput*, June, 1802, 'amusement for the summer holidays', and containing children's stories, 'and *The Youth's Monthly Visitor*, 1822, 'a new magazine for young people'.

School books concerning the Classics, Mathematics, Grammar and other scholastic subjects were frequently advertised, and by 1815 the numbers were growing. By the 1820s there appears to have been an escalation in the sale of this category of book reaching a peak in 1824. An advertisement by Baldwin, Cradock and Joy is headed *Young Ladies Class Book* and includes *The Female Speaker; or, Miscellaneous Pieces, in Prose and verse; selected from the best writers and adapted to the use of Young Women*, by Anna Letitia Barbauld (29 July, 1822, D. 175). Other advertisements included titles for religion, geography and star tables. These school lists were common in the month of July as they coincided with notices of the beginning of term for academic institutions.

The *Hampshire Chronicle* was therefore a newspaper with a very wide range of readers from aristocrat to builder, but figures relating to readership are difficult to establish. As a rough guide to circulation figures of all newspapers in Britain in 1780, the annual sale of newspaper stamps was 14,100,000. The proportion of those sold in the provinces was probably fairly small.¹⁰ As newspapers were habitually not only purchased, but passed round many borrowers, read in circulating libraries and often aloud in coffee houses, the actual number of recipients is almost impossible to determine; a consensus of rough estimates appears to be between ten and fifteen readers per copy. *The Hampshire Chronicle Bicentenary Publication* cites the populations of both Winchester and Southampton in the 1770s as approximately 4,000. The circulation of the paper is given as 'small'.¹¹

There were then a number of people involved in the complicated process of the production of a newspaper and through it the transmission of a novel which was to be a source of entertainment and or education for a reader. Through his contact with a London bookseller or publisher, the editor of a provincial paper, knowing his public, decided which advertisements to accept. With the new turnpike roads copy was delivered quickly and was distributed by locally based newsmen covering a wide area. Many readers would then have received their paper and could begin on the business of buying or borrowing and finally reading the novels of their choice. Were these readers themselves, through their own perceived needs and particular preferences, partly responsible for the choice of novels thus transmitted, responsible for the creation of a market of which they were also the recipient customers? The circle of supply and demand was in place, but what kind of novels did it enclose?

¹⁰ Robert D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 48. The reference is taken from C. H. Timperley, *Encyclopaedia of Literary and Typographical Anecdote*, 1842, p. 806.

¹¹ *The Hampshire Chronicle 1772-1972, a Bicentenary Publication* (Winchester: Jacob and Johnson Ltd., 1972).

The frequency of Fiction

Unlike the *Times*, which had daily advertisements for novels, the *Hampshire Chronicle* was much more infrequent in the promotion of fiction in its pages. For example, only one novel was advertised in 1777 and none in 1778 and 1779 while very few books at all were promoted in 1784. This dearth of fiction was to continue until the end of 1786. In an advertisement by Harrison & Co. on 1 May, 1780 (D. 21) for *The Novelist's Magazine*, an explanation may be found, 'In the work now offered to the public it will be only necessary to observe, that the great scarcity and high Price of such NOVELS as are worth reading, is alone a sufficient apology for this publication.' After a short revival in the fortunes of the novel in the *Hampshire Chronicle*, there was another decline in 1797. There had been very few advertisements for books, both fiction and non-fiction for many months. During that year there were almost no advertisements for ladies' magazines, an unusual shortfall for this category of published writing. It is possible that the reason may be found in a letter published by Joseph Bricknell, the then editor of the newspaper, on 3 March, 1798 (D. 77) in which he explained why he was relinquishing his job. 'In consequence of the ruinous operation of the last excessive stamp duty on newspapers ... For my own part I feel the impropriety of persevering in a concern from which the Government receives three fourths of the produce.'

Fiction picked up again in the following year and although by 1800 Cooke, the Minerva Press, and Crosby and Letterman were all advertising, the irregularities continued. J. Robbins became editor in February 1805 and presumably it took time for him to build up his connections. There was a gap from August 1806 until 26 January 1807 with an increase to 18 works of fiction, with some repeats, in the latter year. These lengthy gaps were to continue; in 1808 there was only one list of novels; there were gaps between 1 February, 1813 and 27 September, 1813, 4 October 1813 to 30 May 1814 and February 1815 to December 1815. 1816 was a very good year with a spate of novels, mostly in the popular category, amounting to 29. In 1818 the total rose to 30, and to 33 in 1819. The beginning of the 1820s was fruitful, coinciding with a possible increase in reading in the Winchester area indicated by a notice in the newspaper drawing attention to a public reading room (25 October, 1824, D. 183) By the end of the 1820s advertisements for fiction were trailing off again. It was a difficult time for the trade with political unrest in the country. In 1826 Constables of Edinburgh were declared bankrupt, seriously affecting the London booksellers. It had been a roller-coaster ride but the advertisements for fiction in the *Hampshire Chronicle* had never actually stopped for long and if readers were desperate for titles of books to read there was always the Circulating Library. The reasons for the fluctuations were complex, some due to external national circumstances as expensive Stamp Duty and the threats of war, others to changes in editorship with the consequent alterations in those business relationships which were essential to the promotion of goods, in this case, novels.

What kind of novel - Fashion or Choice?

Did people in the country chose what to read and did those living in London accord with Dr. Johnson's opinion that 'we must read what the world reads at the moment?'¹² Were Hampshire newspaper readers given a wide enough selection to choose what kind of novels they read, or were they dished up spasmodic lists of whatever the booksellers, printers and editors chose to push in their direction? Were they given the opportunity to see advertisements for a good selection of the most popular novelists as well as the growing body of canonical works now evolving on the English literary scene? How much was the

¹² From P. Korshin, *The Widening Circle* (Pennsylvania Press, 1976) p. 87. The reference to Samuel Johnson is given in n. 5, p. 113.

transmission of the novel through the *Hampshire Chronicle* affected by outside influences and were readers able to dictate their own consumer demands?

References to novels in the newspaper were almost exclusively found in advertisements. These may be divided into two sections, the popular novel and those ascribed to the growing literary canon of accepted 'classical' works. This section explores both types of novel and also includes an overview of the foreign literature advertised.

Popular novels

As discussed above, novels referred to in the *Hampshire Chronicle* appear in a very irregular manner, the paper sometimes running for weeks, or even months, without a mention of the lighter genres of fiction. A number of factors appear to have been responsible for this irregularity, the most important of which was the editor himself. Setting the tone at the inception of the paper in 1772, J. Linden, the first editor, started his publication with exuberance and included advertisements for magazines such as *The Luscious Jester*, and *Jemmy Twitcher's Jest*s. The first fiction to be advertised was *The Egg*, an obviously amusing and satirical piece (5 October, 1772, D. 2). Then the newspaper became more serious - was Linden's initial enthusiasm criticised by his reading public? Almost without exception, through to May 1774, light fiction was ignored and only the 'classics' advertised.

At this time, the main London supplier of books appears to have been R. Snagg, whose involvement did not continue after Linden ceased to be editor. Although he did advertise the classics, many of the titles on his short list of new novels, advertised on 16 May, 1774 (D.8) were by relatively unknown authors. It must be questioned as to whether these little known works of fiction would have ever become known in Hampshire had John Linden, or his agents, not had an obvious business relationship with Snagg. In accordance with the general production of popular novels in England, the period from 1775 to 1782 was a very lean one indeed. Although the paper continued to advertise *The Lady's Magazine* and *Town and Country*, both good sources for light reading, there were almost no new popular novels during this period.

It was not until the appearance of William Lane, (1745-1814) a magnate in the London book trade and founder of the Minerva Press, that advertisements for popular novels were inserted in the paper in any quantity. Lane was partly instrumental in the growth of circulating libraries towards the end of the eighteenth century in that he offered for sale instructions, a catalogue, and a number of books to anyone wishing to start such a library. He also promoted Public Libraries and advertised a plan on 15 September, 1788 (in full D. 40). He emphasised that they must be 'convenient to all classes of people.' Lane's first list to be advertised in the newspaper was published on 20 November, 1786 (D. 33) and is interesting for its content. Although most of the authors were known and respected, they were not part of the evolving literary canon; many of them were women. Agnes Maria Bennett was a very popular writer; her novel *Anna, or Memoirs of a Welsh Heiress* sold out on the first day. Others on the list reflected fashionable themes. *Zoriada*, by Anne Hughes is set in exotic India and features a hermit. *Warbeck, a pathetic tale*, by Francois-Thomar-Marie de Baculard d'Arnaud is sentimental and has an historical setting, while *Saraphina*, a Turkish tale is epistolatory, tragic and exotic. Within that small selection, Hampshire readers had a wide variety of choice, although in these lists they were given little indication as to the contents of what they were to read.

Ever enterprising, from 1790 Lane published long lists of popular fiction under the heading of Minerva Press, fiction that would inevitably find its way into the circulating libraries. Fifty-two novels were advertised in his Minerva Press list for 25 August, 1800 (D. 83), a possible check list for the library. It included five novels by the popular Maria Regina Roche whose third novel, *The Children of the Abbey*, sold more copies than Anne Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. These novels were not for private shelves but for borrowing, or to cast aside. Lane retired from business sometime between 1803 and 1808; the Minerva Press continued to be advertised in the *Hampshire Chronicle* until 1806 under the proprietorship of Lane, Newman & Co. Popular novel production had turned the corner; lists of light fiction were to continue well into the nineteenth century. B. Crosby & Co. were also prolific advertisers, promoting a wide range of non-fiction books, as well as novels. Advertisements for popular novels continued; a list by Longman, Hurst, Reed, Orme, and Brown (20 February, 1815, D146) included Walter Scott, Mary Brunton, Fanny Burney, Maria Ann Porter, and Amelia Opie, all novelists who are still read today.

In 1816 as many as 28 popular novels were advertised, in 1818 there were 30, rising to 33 in 1819. Although some had been advertised before, the titles offered a reasonable degree of choice to readers. On 31 July, 1820 (D.167) Longman's fiction list included Maria Opie, Walter Scott, Anna Maria Porter, as well as Barbara Hofland, who was very popular at the time, and whose novels were still being advertised on 10 December, 1827. Subject matter at this time was varied with an ongoing interest in America. In 1822 G. and W. B. Whittaker advertised 'A New Novel, *The Spy, a Tale of Neutral Ground*, by the author of *Precaution*' and included a short piece on the book which is about particular occurrences during the American War, together with descriptions of American scenery (D.175). Other fiction on historical subjects continued to be published; in 1826 titles such as *The Highest Castle and the Lowest Cave; or the Events of Days which are gone*, *The Camisard; or the Protestants of Languedoc*, *Mariamne, an Historical novel of Palestine*, and *Castle Baynard; or, the Days of John, an Historical Romance*, were advertised. None of the main Silver Fork novels were promoted in the *Hampshire Chronicle*, and few titles suggest this subgenre which first started in the 1820s, although *Husband Hunting; or, the Mother and Daughters, a Tale of Fashionable Life*, inferring a concern with upper class society, might conform with that group of fiction. There was then, a wide range of fictional subject matter throughout the period under review and although advertisements for popular novels were spasmodic, sometimes appearing in long lists and at others promoting one, two, or three novels at a time, there was usually a choice for the reader and ideas for something to look for at the Circulating Library.

Single novel advertisements.

A novel very rarely appeared on its own in the *Hampshire Chronicle* as most book advertisements were in lists, but there are exceptions and it can be informative to examine why they were included. Some of these single novel advertisements appear difficult to explain initially but with some delving the inclusion becomes more obvious. For example, on 18 April 1791 (D. 49) there is a long advertisement dedicated solely to *Euphemia* by Charlotte Lennox. The publishers, Cadell, Jordan, and Evans seemed to have had no other connection with John Wilkes, the editor at the time and this was their only advertising contribution to the *Hampshire Chronicle*. The novel was exceptionally well reviewed, being criticised in nine different journals and was situated in America, always popular with the fiction reading public. One of the scenes is set in an American Mohawk chapel. There were therefore good reasons why the publishers might want to advertise and try out the title in the provinces.

Some inclusions are very difficult to explain. Why, for example, after a period with almost no novels advertised at all, did the editor take an advertisement for *The Trials of Life* by Elizabeth Caroline Grey (1 December, 1828 D.200)? It is the only work of fiction in Edward Bull's list. The novel was expensive, costing 31s. 6d. for its three volumes of very indifferent writing. The reviewer in *La belle Assemblée* almost gave up on the book. 'We can no farther pursue the narrative, the characters of all parties are so out of nature, that of Alicia would be heroic were it human, but as it is not so, it fails to excite our interest or sympathy' (December, 1828). *Lochiel, or the Field of Culloden*, by David Carey, (10 July, 1820, D. 167) is a surprising single entry advertisement. It was the author's only novel and has not withstood the test of time. A journalist and poet, it can only be speculated that Carey's considerable links with the London press earned him favour with the publisher. The only fiction to be advertised in the *Hampshire Chronicle* which was by a local writer had a very small single notice. *Laura, a Tale*, (12 June, 1820, D. 167) a story in verse, was written by Mrs Henry Woodcock, the wife of a vicar in Michelmersh, Hampshire and is unknown today.

The popular novel: exclusions

Hampshire readers, had they not read the London papers, might not have heard of some of the major novels of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Even a cursory look at The *Times* archive will demonstrate that many works of fiction were never brought to the attention of the *Hampshire Chronicle* readers. Although certain London publisher/Hampshire editor relationships may have contributed to this, there is also the possibility that some novels were excluded because of their morally questionable or controversial political nature, possibly unacceptable to members of the local community. John Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, looks at the social structure of provincial society: 'their culture was dominated by their own elites of gentlemen, merchants, doctors and lawyers, but in the larger towns, shopkeepers, artisans and skilled craftsmen established their own institutions. Gentlemen and shopkeepers were sometimes found in the same book clubs and debating societies ...'¹³ Although Winchester became the home of the *Hampshire Chronicle* from 1778, it did not expand and develop as a town until the end of the eighteenth century. Southampton, a spa town and seaside resort, was larger. From biographical study, it is clear that the editors/proprietors of the *Hampshire Chronicle* were men of position within a society dominated by local gentry, merchants and professionals. The ownership of their newspaper was not their only means of influencing the public among whom they lived and worked so closely.

John Linden, the first editor, who lived in Southampton, owned a commercial printing enterprise dealing in handbills and posters, a lending library, and the Register Office which he operated as an employment agency for domestic servants; he also held a lodgings register.¹⁴ Thomas Baker, Southampton, editor of the newspaper in 1788, became a successful trader in the Baltic in timber, iron and hemp and was also a local politician. Thomas Blagden, 1783-1791 married the daughter of a vicar. It might be speculated that men holding these kinds of positions within a relatively closed society, who may have shared membership of book clubs with the gentry, as well as enjoying business relationships in the tight communities of their towns, were unlikely to risk their reputations by publishing advertisements of controversial novels.

¹³ John Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination* (London: Harper Collins, 1997), p. 494.

¹⁴ Information from *The Hampshire Chronicle 1772-1972, a Bicentenary Publication*, (Winchester: Jacob and Johnson Ltd., 1972). Sadly, after a long battle to keep afloat, Linden was made bankrupt.

Comparison with the London *Times* can be a fruitful exercise when considering exclusions, the year 1796 being particularly controversial politically. Would the editor of the *Hampshire Chronicle* have promoted the second part of *The Age of Reason* by Thomas Paine (*Times*, 8 July 1796), or *An Exposition of the Principles of the English Jacobin* by R. Dinmore Jun. (*Times*, 17 December 1796)? An examination of novels advertised in the *Times* during 1796 will illustrate the point further. One of the most controversial writers in the 1790s was William Godwin. On 3 March, 1796 the booksellers G. G. and J. Robinson advertised his work *Enquiry concerning Political Justice in the Times and Things as they are; or the Adventures of Caleb Williams*. As David McCracken in his introduction to the World Classics edition of *Caleb Williams* observes, 'It is as a propaganda or political novel that the work has received the most condemnation ... Especially during the time of the French Revolution, critics in the Establishment found the novel offensively propagandist.'¹⁵ Thomas Holcroft associated with Godwin and was tried for high treason in 1794. Elizabeth Inchbald and Mary Hays were both said to be associated with Godwin's circle, and their novels are included in the book advertisement columns of the *Times* but not the *Hampshire Chronicle*. Could a provincial editor, with all his local connections and claims to respectability, risk his reputation with the advertisement of a novel such as *Emma Courtney* by Mary Hays which advocated that 'obedience is a word which ought never to have existed?' On 4 April, 1796 *The Monk, a Romance*, 'this day is published', in the *Times*. This controversial novel by Matthew Lewis had been criticised in the *British Critic* as containing 'lust, murder, incest, and every atrocity that can disgrace human nature, brought together without the apology of probability, or even possibility for their introduction.' Although there were said to be extra-salacious abridged editions of this novel available in circulating libraries, that is a different matter from a public advertisement in a provincial newspaper.

Camilla by Frances (Fanny) Burney whose first novel, *Evelina*, was widely read, is also absent from the advertisements in the *Hampshire Chronicle*. The book was advertised in the *Times*, 1796 under subscription publishing. Although subscriptions were occasionally invited for charitable purposes, it was very rare for a novel to be promoted in this way in Hampshire. Although Frances Burney was well known in fashionable London circles, both Dr. Johnson and Sir Joshua Reynolds being admirers of her work, it is possible that Hampshire readers may never have heard of her. If that were the case, they may have been very unwilling to pay a subscription in advance for a writer unknown to them.

In the early nineteenth century there are fewer obvious omissions, but there is one which is outstanding. It is difficult to understand why Jane Austen, a Hampshire novelist, was never advertised in the newspaper before the end of the period under review. According to Claire Tomalin, in her book, *Jane Austen, a Life, Sense and Sensibility* was first advertised on 31 October, 1811 in the *Morning Chronicle* and had sold out by the summer of 1813. She goes on to comment that 'it had taken the fancy of the *beau monde*, the people whose taste and opinions were most influential, and was passed round at dinner tables and in letters to friends and lovers.'¹⁶ Unfortunately for the readers of the *Hampshire Chronicle*, Thomas Egerton, the publisher of *Sense and Sensibility* never advertised in that newspaper and during the years 1811 to 1813 the promotion of works of fiction was dominated by B. Crosby & Co. *Pride and Prejudice* published by Egerton in 1813, was enthusiastically received, but again, there was obviously no connection between London publisher and provincial newspaper

¹⁵ *Caleb Williams* by William Godwin, ed. David McCracken (Oxford: Oxford University Press, World Classics, 1982) p. vii.

¹⁶ *Jane Austen, a Life*, by Claire Tomalin (London: Viking, 1997) pp. 219-220.

editor at that time. *Mansfield Park* followed in 1814, again published by Egerton, after which his association with Jane Austen ended. *Emma* came next in 1816, advertised by Austen's new publisher, John Murray. This time there was a business relationship with the editor of the *Hampshire Chronicle* and Murray advertised a number of works of non-fiction, although not novels, in the newspaper. This was especially so in the years 1814 and 1815 relevant to the publication of *Emma*, and in 1818 when both *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* were published after Austen's death. It can only be concluded that books that were fashionable and talked about in London were not necessarily going to make it to the provinces even if the author was from the locality.

One final group of works of light fiction excluded from the *Hampshire Chronicle* were the 'Silver Fork' novels, tales of high society, with the importance of etiquette and the minutiae of the aristocratic world dominating. The sub-genre began in 1825, continuing well beyond the period under review; a search of lists of these novelists has not produced any links with *Hampshire Chronicle* advertisements at the time.

It would be possible, though speculative, to conclude that in not wishing to offend their readers or to take risks in fashions, no doubt for their own reputations, the editors of the *Hampshire Chronicle* deprived them of some of the most controversial and interesting popular novels of the day. These provincial readers may not have chosen what they read, but their editors may well have chosen for them in deciding what to advertise. Perhaps part of the responsibility lay with the readers themselves, whose own moral and political attitudes may well have dictated what could be safely presented to them; marketing can create a circle of its own making. Editors unwilling to take risks may have judged their readers too conservative for these books. It must be hoped that readers made up the shortfall by borrowing from the circulating libraries or by buying from the bookshops. At least if they also read the London papers, they would have been exposed to a much wider range of what to read.

The Canon of Classics

From the middle of the eighteenth century, a literary canon had slowly been building up. Certain novels, most of which had gone into many editions, were beginning to comprise a list of those which *ought* to be read. According to Robert Mayo, *The English Novel in the Magazines*, the creation of this canon was quite a complicated matter and was done by a number of people. 'The Ladies Librarian' had a column in the *Lady's Magazine* in which a shelf of thirty books was recommended, eleven of them being works of French and English fiction.¹⁷ Certain selected novels were becoming obvious candidates; there were, for example, already several editions of *Clarissa Harlowe*, and *Pamela*, by Samuel Richardson, and *The History of Joseph Andrews*, and *Tom Jones*, by Henry Fielding. The first intimation of a canon in the *Hampshire Chronicle* is to be found on 27 December, 1773 (D. 5) in an advertisement headed NEW BOOKS FOR CHILDREN, inserted by F. Newberry. These books are clearly abridged, as they are cheap, costing 1s. each and almost exclusively include works by Richardson and Fielding. Advertisements for this group of novels continued; on 28 August 1775 R. Snagg listed abridgements under the title of 'The Little Book Warehouse' and on 14 December, 1775 (D. 13) he advertised his classic abridgements as 'Entertainment for the Ensuing Holidays'. His titles included *The Entertaining History of the Fortunate Country Maid*, *Roderic Random*, *David Simple*, *Pamela*, *Joseph Andrews*, *Peregrine Pickle*, *Gil Blas*, *The Female Quixote*, *Clarissa*, *Sir Charles Grandison*, and *Tom Jones*, all novels

¹⁷ Robert Mayo, *The English Novel in the Magazines* (Northwestern University Press, 1962).

which continued to appear in similar lists of the ‘classics’ and most of which are still considered in that category today. Joseph and Paul Wenman also advertised lists of classical novels, from 1780 to 1787, emphasising the quality of the writers (see in full 24 September, 1787, D. 35).

Cooke, the most prolific bookseller of this type of fiction, promoted long lists in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Starting on 5 October, 1792 he advertised continuously in the *Hampshire Chronicle* until December, 1812, his titles changing very little over the years. The term ‘classics’ was one he used himself in his advertisement heading on 28 November, 1795 - ‘*The British Classics, (Polite and Elegant Literature)*’ (D. 70). The leisured class, living in the wide distribution area of the newspaper, were relatively new, increasing as more people benefited from education and growing wealth. It must have been important for readers to be seen to possess the ‘best’ novels, to be discerning and fashionable, and to display them on newly made library shelves. What better choice could they have than Mr. Cooke’s Pocket editions of universally approved novels by the most esteemed authors, which included names they could recognise? As will be discussed in the section on advertising, this was a bookseller who laid considerable emphasis on books as attractive objects to possess. He also specialised in cheap editions, managing to make them attractive to look at. Leigh Hunt wrote in his Autobiography of his love of ‘those little sixpenny numbers’. ‘I doted on their size; I doted on their type, on their ornaments, on their wrappers, containing lists of other poets, and on the engravings from Kirk. I bought them over and over again, and used to get up select sets, which disappeared like buttered crumpets; for I could resist neither giving them away, nor possessing them.’¹⁸ On a few occasions Cooke advertised novels which he had not previously included in his canon, as on 11 August, 1794, (D.66-67) when *Betsy Thoughtless*, (Eliza Haywood) and *Louisa Mildmay* (Henry Kelly) were added to his list. Not only was a canon forming for children and the wealthier among their parents, but also for the lower paid, who with little cost, through the pages of a new magazine entitled *The British Novelist, or Virtue and Vice in Miniature*, due to be published on ‘the second Day of May, 1774’, could read a ‘valuable Collection of the best English Novels carefully selected from the Works of Mrs. Behn, Mrs. Griffiths, Mrs. Lennox, Miss Fielding, Sig. Cervantes. Mons. Le Sage, Henry Fielding Esq. Mr. S. Richardson, Dr. Smollett, Dr. Croxall, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Brooke, Dr. Goldsmith.’ (18 April, 1774, D. 8)

A study of the Database will show that the canon itself changed very little over the years. Novels translated from the French such as *Moral Tales after the Eastern Manner* by *Marmontel* stayed on the lists from 1772 through to 1799; works by Fielding and Smollett continued to be advertised. Richardson seems to have diminished in popularity by 1795. Some novels, noticeably not read today, such as *The Devil on Two Sticks* by Le Sage, *Solyman and Almena*, by John Langhorne, and *Almorán and Hamet* by John Hawkesworth, were added around 1780, and continued in popularity into the nineteenth century. Although Cooke’s judgement as to which works would last were usually correct, two novels appearing in an advertisement in the *Hampshire Chronicle* on 11 August, 1794 (D. 66) are listed on one occasion only. *Dr. Quevedo’s Vision*, ‘translated from the original by Jack the Spaniard,’ was a title originally published in 1713; it is difficult to understand why Cooke restored it after a long period of time. The second of the two novels, *Life and Adventures of Peter Wilkins* by RS was a more recent publication. It was printed for Harrison & Co. in 1783 and also appeared in *The Novelist’s Magazine* in the same year. It is possible that Cooke

¹⁸ *The autobiography of Leigh Hunt*, ed. J. E. Morpugo, 1949, p. 77, quoted in Thomas Bonnell, ‘Cooke, John (1730/31 – 1810)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford University Press, 2004)

purchased it as a remaindered book, but there is no trace of an edition or reissue by him in 1794. For whatever reason, he must have decided not to risk these two titles any further.

Cooke was not the only promoter of fiction of the emerging canon. Alex Hogg, a regular advertiser in the *Hampshire Chronicle*, set out his principles in the newspaper on 3 December, 1792, making a clear distinction between ‘those novels, in the English language, which deserve reading ... the most perfect of their kind’, and ‘trash’. He was advertising ‘Mr. HOGG’s New NOVELIST’s MAGAZINE’. Having extolled the beauty of his print bindings, etc. Alex Hogg goes on to give his reasons for publishing and selling his chosen titles in a lengthy publisher’s address (see in full D.56-59). According to Robert Mayo, *The English Novel in the Magazines*, Hogg was involved in numerous magazine enterprises, many of them designed to trade upon the reputation of already established periodicals. He would fix on a magazine with a large circulation, then he would issue another periodical as much like it as possible, and add ‘New’ to the title.¹⁹ Hogg continued to advertise; for example on 21 July, 1794 (D.65) his list included *Don Quixote*, *History of Pamela*, *Sir Charles Grandison*, *Clarissa Harlowe*, *Gil Blas*, *Porney’s collection of Romances and Novels*. In the mid 1790s he seemed to be in competition with Cooke who was promoting similar lists. Although he continued to advertise works of non-fiction, his lists of novels did not continue into the nineteenth century.

Apart from occasional single entries, lists of works considered to be the novels which *ought* to be read did not continue after Cooke ceased to advertise. Although popular fiction was advertised regularly, there was a very long gap before the resumption of the promotion of ‘classical’ novelists in the newspaper. On 2 January, 1826 (D.189) Jones & Co. advertised ‘University editions of BRITISH CLASSICAL AUTHORS embellished with highly finished engravings in Steel from the Great Masters’ It was a ‘compact and elegant library series.’ The advertisement promoted Diamond Classics which were very small editions which ‘scarcely exceeds the size of a watch.’ The novels listed with their prices were *Rasselas* 1s. 6d., *Vicar of Wakefield* 2s., *Elizabeth*²⁰ 1s. 6d., *Paul and Virginia* and *Indian Cottage*, 2s., *Gulliver’s Travels* 2 vols. 4s., *Castle of Otranto*, 1s. 6d., and other ‘popular works in the Press’.

Foreign language novels

There were many indications of an interest in foreign writers evident from the pages of the newspaper and lasting through the period under review, whether through literature or otherwise. *The London Review of English and French Literature*, a magazine, was advertised on 16 January, 1775 (D.12) at the beginning of the period. On 6 September 1779 (D. 20), J. Wilkes, editor of the *Hampshire Chronicle*, advertised a new Music Shop and Circulating Library which included ‘French and English books in every department of Polite Literature.’ The French Revolution and threats of an invasion by the French were of continuing interest to the reading British public long after the events and continued throughout the period under review. On 8 January, 1827 (D. 194) W. Simpkin and R. Marshall promoted *The Reign of Terror; a Collection of Authentic Narratives of the Horrors committee*, by the Revolutionary Government of France under Murat and Robespierre, translated from the French (no author given). There were a few advertisements in the French language, as on 21 May 1827

¹⁹ Robert Mayo, *The English Novel in the Magazines* (Northwestern University Press, 1962), p. 234.

²⁰ Sherwood, Neely and Jones published a title *Elizabeth, or the Exiles of Siberia*, translated from the French of Madame Cottin by W. R. Bowles, in 1815. It is almost certain that this is the same book as Madame Cottin was known in Britain and might well have been regarded as a classic. The other titles were already well known as being in the canon.

(D. 196), 'La Catholicisme, ou Discussion Amicale ... by George Lowther Esq. Chez John Booth, Duke-street. Portland-place.' Although the interest in French fiction waned, it did not die out altogether during the period under review. On 7 June, 1824 (D. 182) an advertisement announced that 'At Bracewell's circulating Library and Fancy Warehouse, Square, Winchester, the following elegant French work on the Fashions, etc. published in Paris every five days, may be had – PETIT COURIER DES DAMES'; there was a notice on 16 April 1827 (D. 195) 'Sale of a Library of Books by auction in Hampshire'. It includes 'several of the best modern French novels.'

An interest in Britain in French fiction, especially from the sentimental genre, began in about 1765, when translations started to appear on the English market. Most of the translators were women and included a number of the mainstream novelists as for example Fanny Burney, Charlotte Lennox, Clara Reeve, and Helen Maria Williams. French fairy stories, oriental tales, full length novels and romances were published in popular miscellanies as well as in full length books. Magazines included works by French writers, the most popular of which were Marmontel, Madame de Genlis, Chevalier de Florian, Arnaud and Voltaire.²¹ The originals of many of the novels had been in publication in France for some time; by the end of the 1790s the interest began to wane.

Many of the French novels advertised were included in the lists of classics. *The Works of Voltaire* translated by T. Smollett and others, on 21 December, 1772, (D. 3) appeared in the same advertisement as *Memoir of the Year Two thousand Five Hundred*, translated from the French by W. Hooper, MD. During the following year the very popular work, *The Adventures of Telemachus, the Son of Ulysses* (13 December, 1773, D. 4) abridged from the French of Archbishop Cambrai and first published in France in 1699, was listed, together with *The Adventures of Gil Blas of Santillane*, (27 December, 1773 D.5) by Alain Le Sage. *The Viziers: An Oriental Tale* by Madame Fauques de Vaucluse followed on 24 April, 1775 (D. 12) after which there was a gap until 1786 when *Warbeck, a pathetic Tale* by Francois-Thomar-Marie de Baculard d'Arnaud was advertised on 20 November (D. 33). 1794 was a prolific year for the promotion of French novels in the newspaper. *Gil Blas* and *The Devil upon Two Sticks*, were included in Cooke's list of 'Cheap Pocket Novels', both very popular works by Le Sage, together with exotic sounding titles as for example, '*Chinese Tales; or, the wonderful adventures of the mandarin Fu-Hoam. Related by himself to divert the Sultana, upon the celebration of her nuptials.* Written in French by M. Gueulett. Translated by the Rev. T. Stackhouse.' *The Letters of a Peruvian Princess*, translated from the French of Madame de Grafigny was added to the list. (11 August, 1794, D. 66) The popularity of Madame de Genlis at the turn of the century is reflected in the number of her novels advertised: *The Age of Chivalry, or Friendship from other times* in 1799, *The Young Exiles* in 1800 and *Impertinent Wife* in 1806. Among other popular foreign novels, often advertised, was *Paul and Virginia* translated from the French of Bernadin St Pierre, by Helen Maria Williams. The inclusion of French novels continued very intermittently almost to the end of the period covered by the Database, ending with *The Hermit in Prison* translated from the French of E. Jouy, advertised on 26 January, 1824 (D. 181).

Translations of German novels were also advertised in the newspaper, although less frequently. Of these, *The Sorrows of Werter* was known throughout Europe while others as *Henrietta of Gerstenfeld*: a German story, by Adam Beuvius, 29 October, 1787 (D. 36) were less well known. Advertisements for German novels in translation continued very

²¹ Robert Mayo, *The English Novel in the Magazines* (Northwestern University Press, 1962) p. 373.

intermittently until 1824 when *Popular tales and Romances of the Northern Nations* (D. 181) was listed and named several authors: La Motte-Fouque, Friedrich Heinrich Karl, Freiherr de; Johann Karl August Musaus; Ludwig Tieck. Finally, on 22 March in the same year, readers were invited to read *The Outcasts* (D. 181), a Romance translated from the German of the Baroness de la Motte Fouque; with historical notes and illustrations by George Soane. Translations from Portuguese, Swedish and Chinese literature were very occasionally advertised, but as it was over a long period of time, merit little consideration. *Hampshire Chronicle* readers may have been limited in their choices of novels, but they were given an opportunity by advertisers to sample the literature of Europe although in a very small way.

Advertising

General

There were three main ways in which novels were advertised in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: through bookseller's catalogues, on the flyleaves of other books, and in journals and newspapers. Without the income from advertisements, newspaper proprietors would have been unable to meet very heavy costs, principally incurred by Stamp Duty and distribution. The Stamp tax was 1 ½ d. in 1776 rising to 4d. in 1815 and staying at that amount until the end of the period under review.²² Not only were the advertisements themselves a source of revenue, but if the proprietor assessed the market correctly they could also increase the sales of the paper. As in all marketing processes, the customer, or the reader, was essential in the two-way system of supply and demand.

Although not on the scale of the London papers in which book advertisements appeared daily, readers of the *Hampshire Chronicle* were persuaded to read. Through his contact with a London agent, bookseller or publisher, the editor, knowing his reading public, would have decided which advertisements to accept. He had many agents covering his distribution area, part of whose job was to take in advertisements, probably of a more localized nature concerning employment or sales of property. It is reasonable to assume that the editor himself was concerned with the books. Some of the long lists of novels advertised would have made excellent check lists for use at the local Circulating Library often owned by that same editor, thereby fulfilling a dual purpose. What is not clear is to what extent the advertisements, in this case of novels, were absorbed by, and influenced their recipient readers in what they bought and read, and how many those readers were.

According to John Feather it was only in exceptional cases that any real attempt was made to advertise books in the country newspapers.²³ As exemplified from this study, a search in the *Hampshire Chronicle* does not uphold his view. Although the advertisements of novels fluctuated from year to year, it was rare for none to appear at all in a given twelve months. From 1772 to 1799, for example, readers were invited to read a total of 138 novels both popular and classical, many of which are listed more than once. During the first ten years of the nineteenth century the number rose to 326, the increase partly due to the long lists advertised by the Minerva Press, and then dropped to 179 in the next ten years. Finally, 122 novels were promoted between 1820 and 1829. Novels were advertised both as whole books and were also named in magazine advertisements as part of the content. Most of these magazine entries were in serial form continuing over a long period of time, while others were abridgements. A high proportion of this material came through the unpaid contributions of

²² Figures from Jeremy Black, *The English Press 1621-1861* (Sutton Publishing, 2001) p. 166.

²³ John Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) p. 50.

amateurs and therefore added a further dimension to the quality, or lack of it, and quantity of fiction available to the Hampshire readers through their perusal of advertisements in the paper.²⁴

Throughout the period under review there is little consistency as to where in the newspaper the advertisements were placed. As a general rule, and common to most newspapers of the time, the small advertisements were on the front page and the larger ones inside, but this was variable and the same advertisement might occur on the front page one week and inside the next. Unlike the layout of the eighteenth century *Times* in which all book advertisements were placed together, those in the *Hampshire Chronicle* could be found anywhere in the paper, although the long lists of books submitted by very prolific publishers such as Cooke, Lane (of the Minerva Press), and Crosby, were usually somewhere in the middle. Nevertheless, it was not uncommon to find a large 'puff', filling most of a column, on the front page. The difference in layout between these two newspapers may indicate a different focus on the importance of reading, and the listing of many more titles in shorter advertisements. Was there an editorial perception of a better educated class of reader needing to see at a glance which books were readily available that day? It must be recognised that many Hampshire newspaper readers would have had access to both London and other local similar publications and could have read advertisements for the same books elsewhere.

Embellishments

On 20 January, 1761 Dr. Samuel Johnson wrote in *The Idler*, 'Advertisements are now so numerous that they are very negligently perused, and it is therefore become necessary to gain attention by magnificence of promises and by eloquence sometimes sublime and sometimes pathetic. Promise, a large promise is the soul of an advertisement.' Puffing was the name of the game and whole newspaper columns were taken up with lengthy eulogies extolling the merits of one particular novel and putting forward the reasons why readers should purchase a particular edition offered by a particular bookseller. Grand Master of the art of puffing, the London publisher C. Cooke employed all the strategies in the book. His advertisement for a list of classic novels advertised in the *Hampshire Chronicle* on 15 October, 1792 (in full D. 53) and 12 November, 1792 (in full D. 54) contains them all. He promised 'to unite elegance with cheapness and utility and to embrace all the disadvantages of the largest, without omitting the convenience of the smallest editions.' A close study of these two advertisements will illustrate the breadth of his arguments as to why readers should favour his publications. Well over a newspaper column in length they are an excellent example of the art of 'puffing'. 'The puff direct, the puff preliminary, the puff collateral, the puff collusive and the puff oblique or by implication' gives some indication of the ways in which puffing was viewed and lambasted in the eighteenth century.²⁵ Would Cooke have passed the test of Addison, 'the great art in writing Advertisements is the finding out a proper method to catch the Reader's Eye, without which a good thing may pass over unobserved...'²⁶? An analysis of these two advertisements might answer the question. Cooke coerced the reader in a multitude of ways: the use of upper casing to catch the eye, the quality of the paper including some special copies on superfine wire-wove vellum paper, the elegant printing with new type, engravings by well-known artists, and a copper-plate dedication. A convenient and

²⁴ Robert D. Mayo in *The English Novel in the Magazines, 1740-1815* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1962) comments that the essential character of miscellany fiction is that it is trashy, affected, and egregiously sentimental and wretchedly written, with which most critics would probably agree. p. 351

²⁵ *The Critic*, Richard Sheridan, 1779, from *A History of British Advertising* by Blanche B. Elliott (London: Business Publications Ltd., 1962) p. xiii.

²⁶ *The Tatler*, Joseph Addison, 12 April, 1710, referred to in Elliott, p. 104.

uniform size, which would have given a nice display for the library, was also proposed by Cooke, 'its size is but little larger than the Ladies Annual Pocket Book' and again, 'the proprietor thinks it necessary to advert to the peculiar convenience of the size of this work.' Seemingly important to him, was a mention of his own reliability; the work is produced 'from his own diligence and exertions.' Above all, his books are for everyone, 'this work is not only calculated to amuse the polite and fashionable circles but to entertain the industrious family, who, after retiring from their daily toil, will be amused with the delineation of characters which their more confined situation precludes them from observing in real life.' That the book as an object has a price, is one of Cooke's main arguments in these advertisements. His novel is 'considerably cheaper than any other edition whatever that has yet to be offered to the public, although it is embellished with every degree of expensive elegance that the artist could devise, or the typographical skills of the printer display.' The price may have been cheap, but Cooke fails to mention that an edition costing sixpence was almost certainly an abbreviation.

Although given a list of titles, and usually the name of the author, the readers of these two advertisements were told very little about the content or plot, except that it was there to entertain. They were being encouraged to own the book not only as a text, but as an elegant and convenient object. It must be assumed from these advertisements in which the emphasis is on appearance, that Cooke was astute enough to realise that books were used to build up elegant libraries in the provinces and were probably being bought for decorative effect rather than reading material, or why else would he have worded his lengthy puffs in this way? Increasingly, the middle classes were building libraries in their homes; this was no longer a prerogative of the aristocracy, but of the gentry and the increasing numbers of the new wealthy from the middle class.

The emphasis laid on embellishments, the material aspect of publications, continued to be used in varying degrees by other publisher/booksellers, during the rest of the period under review. With the exception of long lists of titles, the book as an object was emphasised in almost every advertisement for novels and varied from a brief statement of binding, format, and price to an elaborate puff concerning elegance, size, cheapness, quality of the paper, woodcuts, and engravings.

Some form of illustration was a frequent attraction, as, for example, 'the Incomparable engravings in the Novelist's Magazine, which are known to be the best Production of the several Artists,' and which were included and given away. They were 'beautiful Prints from the original Drawings, which have been so universally admired by all true judges of the Arts.' (17 August, 1795, D. 69) The more important the book, the more elaborate the bibliographical presentation especially if the title was one from the newly formed canon of classical novels. In an advertisement in the *Hampshire Chronicle* on 23 July 1792 for *The Hogarthian Novelist*, a new magazine, the engravings are listed in detail (see in full D. 52) *Charms of Literature*, published by Jordan and Maxwell and advertised in the *Hampshire Chronicle* on 29 April, 1805 (D. 109) was embellished with 'a great variety of original Designs in Wood Cuts, Tail Pieces and other Devices, designed and engraved by Bewick, and other eminent Artists, and well calculated for POCKET or POST CHAISE COMPANIONS.' By 18 August 1828 (D. 199) illustrations were still being advertised: 'Fables of Esop with 153 beautiful Wood Cuts in one volume' and 'The Fables of Gay with 100 beautiful Wood Cuts in one volume'.

Bindings continued to be of some importance, although not to the same extent as they were in the eighteenth century when vellum and calf were available at an additional expense. On 3 March, 1800 (D.82-83) B. Long, bookseller, advertised a list of books, giving a choice of bindings: 'BOOKS BOUND in the most elegant Manner, or in plain common Binding.' Again, Crosby and Sharpe in their puff for *British Theatre in Miniature* in the *Hampshire Chronicle* on 25 August, 1806 (D. 115) gave a choice of 'elegant or common bindings'. Vellum backs were referred to occasionally in the early nineteenth century and later, 'half bound, roan backs' appeared in an advertisement for the works of Maria Hack, a prolific and popular writer, on 2 April, 1827 (D. 194-195).

Following Cooke, paper and type were referred to rarely but Bell's edition of the British Constitution classics (in Numbers) was produced in the 'finest woven paper with a clear and beautiful type', (25 July, 1814, D. 145) and on 10 November, 1823 (D. 180) Sherwood Jones & Co., of Paternoster Row, advertised,

'Points of Misery; or, Fables for Mankind. Chiefly original by Charles Westmacott. Illustrated by Robert Cruikshank ... will be found a singularly fine specimen of improved typography and exquisite embellishment every way worthy the attention of the curious in literature. A hundred copies only with the letter press and vignettes on tinted paper ... price 18s.'

Advertisements for popular novels were usually simpler in their presentation with a noticeable lack of embellishments. They were 'sewed' and were relatively cheap; they were not intended to impress the guests of the library owner and were habitually advertised in long lists. William Lane's advertisement for 'INTERESTING AND ELEGANT NOVELS,' was terse and to the point. Above each novel title the number of volumes, the format and the price were given, for example, 'In three vols., 12mo. price 7s. 6d. sewed.' In another form of display, the information was listed beside the title as, for example: *The Highland Castle and the Lowland Cottage* by Rosalia St Clair, author of *Son of O'Donnel*, *Blind Beggar* 4 vols., price 22s. (29 November, 1819, D. 163) Although these details of price and size are included, many popular novels would not have been bought, but were titles to borrow from the local Circulating Library or from friends.

The word on the page

What other methods are 'proper' 'to catch the Reader's Eye', and how else was the reader of novels persuaded, wooed, or coaxed to buy or borrow the goods on offer? Does the wording of an advertisement colour the reader's view and influence his interpretation of the book? A close reading and analysis of some advertisements may begin to answer some of these questions. Advertisers were frequently at pains to extol the entertaining qualities of novels no matter how serious the actual content of the book, as in two examples from R. Snagg's list of classics, dated 5 September, 1774 (D. 9). *Joseph Andrews*, by Henry Fielding, was described by the publisher as 'curious/laughable adventures, to promote Mirth and Merriment', whereas a modern description of the novel given in the *Oxford Companion to English Literature* gives a darker side and describes the book very differently. 'His, (Fielding's) declared object is to defend what is good by displaying the ridiculous, which he believes arises from Affectation, and ultimately from Vanity and Hypocrisy.'²⁷ Secondly, Snagg described *Peregrine Pickle* by Tobias Smollett, 'The many droll tricks that Peregrine

²⁷ *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, ed. Margaret Drabble (London: Guild Publishing, 1985) p. 318.

played his Mother and others ...,' whereas the *Oxford Companion to English Literature* notes that the novel seems to be about *Pride*, and uses words such as 'degradation', 'repentance', 'savage caricatures'. Despite their so-called levity, or perhaps because of it, both these novels were well received. *Joseph Andrews* was advertised in the *Hampshire Chronicle* between 1773 and 1812, and *Peregrine Pickle* was consistently included in advertisements from 1774 to 1812. It is clear that these advertisements were worded to suit the response of the reader, as the marketing of both books was successful. It is an example of the reader's effect on transmission whereby advertisements reflect his demands rather than mirroring the original intention of the author.

Despite this emphasis on entertainment, moral intent was an important ingredient in eighteenth and early nineteenth century novels and is sometimes reflected in the advertisements. R. Snagg, in promoting *The History of Pamela*, on 5 September, 1774 (D. 8), advocated that the book was intended 'to cultivate the principles of Virtue and Religion in the minds of both sexes.' In other puffs the reader's intelligence and his ability to appreciate wit was appealed to. *The Egg, or the Memoirs of Gregory Giddy Esq.*, 1772 is 'conceived by a celebrated HEN, and laid before the public by a famous COCK-FEEDER.' Readers were invited to 'Come with a sharp keen mental Appetite; / We hope our Egg will feast you with Delight.' (5 October, 1772, D. 2)

A further appeal to the intelligence and virtue of the reader was made through quotations from book reviews; the first advertisement with this embellishment appeared in the *Hampshire Chronicle* on 22 September, 1788 (see in full, D.41-43). It advocated, in a quotation from the *Monthly Review*, that *Caroline, or the Diversities of Fortune*, by Anne Hughes was 'a pleasing and well wrote story' and that a female has nothing to fear 'amid the severest storms of fortune' if well armed by virtue and fortitude. Other extracts from the *Critical Review, Town and Country Magazine* (well known to Hampshire readers as it was frequently advertised), and *The English Review* were long and frequently repetitive. Appealing to the intelligence of the reader was an advertising device which continued throughout the period under review. 'Rameses, by Edward Upham belongs to the class of historical novels, and is one of the most intellectual and imaginative publications of the age' was the opinion of the reviewer in the *Critical Gazette*, quoted by the bookseller G. B. Whittaker, in the *Hampshire Chronicle* on 23 January, 1826 (D. 190).

Moral teaching was a common theme in novels of the period and a quotation by Hannah Moore (20 April, 1818, D. 158) was used to bring the point home in an advertisement for *Correction* by Anne Raikes Harding.

'The seducing images of luxury, of splendour, and of homages, of power and independence are too seldom counteracted by the only preservative – a religious education. The world is too genuinely entered upon as a scene of pleasure instead of trial; as a theatre of amusement, not action.
Hannah Moore.

Only the most favourable reviews were used in advertisements; not all reviewers agreed as to the merits of a given novel. On 26 March, 1821, (see in full D. 170) G. and W. Whittaker advertised *Such is the World* by an anonymous writer. The work, according to *The Literary Chronicle*, 27 January, 1821, had a 'good moral tendency' with 'no course ribaldries, no indecent allusions, no double entendre to raise a blush on the cheek of youthful innocence'. What the advertiser does not tell the reader of the newspaper is that *The Monthly Review* (2nd series 95) had a very different opinion of this novel. 'In a rather pompous

preface, the exhibition of nature and novelty, men and manners is promised to the reader of this book: but it proves to be a mere common-place and improbable love story ...'

As if one review quotation was not enough to convince the reader that a book must be read, on occasions as many as three were added to the advertisement. On 1 December, 1828 (see in full D. 200) Edward Bull, a new advertiser to the *Hampshire Chronicle*, inserted an advertisement for *The Trials of Life* by Elizabeth Caroline Grey. He quoted the *Times*: 'This is decidedly one of the best novels of the class to which it belongs.' There is no mention of what that class is. *Gentleman's Magazine* found that 'It presents a richer abundance of circumstances and sentiments that we can really recall in any recent writer'. Finally there is a small insight into content, 'It is a novel of the most extraordinary fertility, it is, in truth, the book of matrimony.' (Atlas) Need it be added that the review of this novel in *La Belle Assemblée* was very negative!

Another eye-catching method of puffing was to include poems in the advertisement. Although the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century advertisements for novels in the *Hampshire Chronicle* were usually in lists and therefore did not often include verse or extracts from the critics, there were exceptions. Longman & Co. chose to embellish their puff on 10 May, 1819 (D. 162) for *The Veteran; or Matrimonial Felicities*, by Edward Harley, with a short verse by a little known poet,

'A married life, to speak the best,
Is all a lottery confest;
And ever has been since the fall;
And though a slave in love's soft school,
In wedlock claims his right to rule – Cotton.'

In some advertisements attention was drawn to the novel by the name of a well-known poet. John Phillips the author of *Lionel or the last of the Pevenseys* was neither a prolific author of the day, nor is he remembered now, but a mournful little verse by Coleridge might well have caught the eye. (8 June, 1818, D. 159)

"A cypress and a myrtle bough
"This morning round my harp you twin'd,
"Because it fashioned, mournfully
"its murmurs in the wind!" – Coleridge.

Although the wording of most advertisements does actively encourage the reader to purchase or borrow the book by positive embellishments, it is sometimes difficult to know how this may be the case. Why should anyone wish to read *Campbell; or, the Scottish Probationer* by Alexander Balfour when the advertiser's poetic introduction to the novel is so gloomy? (11 January, 1819, D. 161)

'Hard is the scholar's lot, condemn'd to sail
Unpatronised, o'er life's tempestuous way;
Clouds blind his sight; nor blows a friendly gale
To waft him to one port – except the grave!'

An equally gloomy poem promoted *Henry and Isabella, or the Reverse of Fortune*, when the only introduction to it was in a gloomy poem in a newspaper advertisement? (26 November, 1810, see in full, D. 133)

Although poems gave some indication of the emotions to be experienced in reading a book, the actual contents were very rarely referred to. A lively exception to this is to be found in an advertisement by R. Snagg on 5 September, 1774 (D. 9) for New Cheap Books, in which he gives just enough information to the reader to wet his appetite. 'The Comical and Curious ADVENTURES of RODERIC RANDOM. Containing the most remarkable Accidents, Serious and Comic, which happened to him and his Friend Strap the Barber.' and 'The remarkable and surprising Adventures of DAVID SIMPLE, containing an Account of his Travels through the Cities of London and Westminster, in the Search of a real Friend. with the many droll and whimsical Tricks that were played him by those he confided in.'

The subjective views of the advertisers could sometimes conflict and were it not for the fact that the following examples were often some years apart, readers could be forgiven for a certain degree of confusion. An analysis of puffs for *Clarissa*, by Samuel Richardson, will serve to demonstrate how arbitrary and varied the wording of these advertisements was. On 14 December, 1775 (D. 13), R. Snagg advertised books of 'Entertainment for the Ensuing Holidays' which, as they were priced at 6d. each, were certainly abridgements and included 'Clarissa who was deluded and ruined by the vile Contrivances of an arch Libertine'. Another abridgement, costing 1 shilling, came under the heading, 'NEW BOOKS FOR CHILDREN' but gave no detail (27 December 1773, D. 5) The Little Book Warehouse advertised *Clarissa* as one of a list of 'Little books of Entertainment, for the Amusement of Little Boys and Girls' on 28 August, 1775 (D. 12). Alex Hogg's advertisement for *Clarissa Harlowe* was of a more serious nature and reflected the wording of the Preface, as was sometimes the case. It is a novel, 'comprehending the most important Concerns of private Life; and particularly showing the Distresses that may attend the Misconduct of both Parents and Children with respect to Marriage.' (8 December, 1794 D. 68) The advertisement included the fact that the book was 'a warning to parents against forcing the inclination of their children in marriage.' On another occasion Hogg advertised the same novel as an object, 'also his new octavo edition of *Clarissa Harlowe*, with copper plates, 26 numbers etc'. (21 July, 1794, D. 66) The price was 6d. per number. Sensationalism, a lesson in conduct, a children's book, an object for the library shelf; what was the reader to believe and what were his first impressions upon receiving the mixed messages about the content of this book? Did these advertisers really know their market? Would the eighteenth century reader have viewed *Clarissa* as a popular and salacious novel to be read and put aside, or a classic embellishment to the library shelf? Interpretations of meaning by readers must have differed greatly according to the initial impact of the various influences through transmission which they received.

In some advertisements the fact that a book was considered to be a 'classic', part of the relatively newly formed canon, was clearly stated as in 'Wenman's Cheap Editions of the most celebrated works in the English language, both poetry and prose, are printed verbatim from the best editions of the respective authors.' (24 March, 1783, D. 28) Cooke's collection 'will comprise only those highly approved Novels which have been stamped with universal approbation,' and, 'the Proprietor flatters himself that his Works will gain Admission into the Libraries of the Literati, and the most fashionable of the present Age.' (14 January, 1797, D. 74)

Genres were often indicated, the words 'History of', 'Adventures of', 'Memoirs of' etc. frequently being part of the title; the nature of the content was often included in the puff. Examples are *Isabella or the Rewards of good Nature, a Sentimental Novel*, by Alexander Bicknell, 'intended chiefly to convey united Amusements and Instruction to the Fair Sex,' (13 May, 1776, D. 15) and *The Friends, or the Contrast between Virtue and Vice, a Tale, designed for the Improvement of Youth* by Elizabeth Griffin. (3 March, 1800, D.82-83) The puff for *Willoughby; or, Reformation. The influence of Religious Principles* by Caroline Ormsby promised religious content (24 November, 1823, D. 180) Groups of books indicated genre as in 'The Entertaining Museum', 'Histories', 'Novels', 'Romances', 'Adventures', 'Journeys', 'Works of Humour'. An advertisement for works by Maria Hack, a popular writer in the late 1820s, goes a little further, enlarging on the type of history to be expected. 'ENGLISH STORIES, illustrating some of the most interesting Events and Characters from the accession of Alfred to the Reformation under the Tudor Princes.' (2 April, 1827, D. 194-195)

A comparison with another, but better-known author offered a further incentive to the reader to buy the book. In the advertisement for *Platonic Guardian, or the History of an Orphan*, by a Lady, 'we can trace our Author in the footsteps of Miss Burney.' (22 September, 1788, D. 41) At other times previous works by the same author were used to catch the eye of the reader. The advertiser of *Euphemia* extolled the virtues of Mrs. Charlotte Lennox, 'author of *The Female Quixote*, *Henrietta*, etc. and the celebrated translator of *The Duke of Sully's Memoirs* and *Father Brumou's Greek Theatre*.' He also referred to her as 'the literary friend of Fielding, of Richardson, and of Johnson,' thereby inferring to the reader that this novel was a classic. (18 April, 1791 D. 49) For those who wished to embellish their library shelves, works with these associations may have been important.

Anon frequently took the place of the name of the author. On writing on the arts of Book-Puffing, Fielding was critical of this device.

'Others have contented themselves with concealing the name of the Author on the Title-Page, and only spreading whispers through the Coffee-Houses, that he is a very considerable Person. But the most usual way is to throw out certain Hints in the Advertisements, such as by a Lady of Quality, By a celebrated Physician. By all which means very spurious issue is propagated in the learned world.'²⁸

There were other ways of denoting respectability. On 9 March 1807, *A Winter in Bath* 'by the author of two much esteemed modern Novels, who is well known in the polite and fashionable circles of London, Bath, Brighton etc.' was advertised. (see D. 120 for discussion of reference). Cooke's authors are 'the most esteemed', he published 'much esteemed French and Spanish novels' (14 January, 1788, D. 39). Dedications, too, reassured the reader. *Village of Martindale*, by Norman Nicholson, (29 October 1787, D. 36) is dedicated to the Duchess of Portland, and Cooke's edition of *Tom Jones* to the Prince of Wales. (15 October, 1792, D. 53). Words used to describe novels as fashionable, selected, moral, the importance of authors, dedications, bindings and plates, are all used to influence the Hampshire reader. Did these tempting morsels make him feel more fashionable, important, or discerning in choosing a novel selected by others for him to read? Was his interpretation influenced before he had even opened the book?

²⁸ *A History of English Advertising*, by Blanche B. Elliott (London: Business Publications Ltd., 1962), p. 116. The reference is taken from Fielding on 'The Art of Puffing', *The Champion*, 4 March, 1740.

The minutiae of print

Dr. Addison's comments that 'the great art in writing Advertisements is the finding out a proper method to catch the Reader's Eye'²⁹ continued further. He went on to add that 'asterisks and hands were formerly of great use for this purpose. Of later years, the N. B. has been much in fashion. I must not here omit the blind Italian character which being scarce legible, always fixes and detains the eye, and give the curious reader something like the satisfaction of prying into a secret.' There were many devices employed by advertisers to fix and detain the eye. An example of a general overview of these devices is an advertisement by Cooke for SELECT BRITISH NOVELS. (15 October, 1792, D. 53). Historical differences in approach are difficult to assess, but some reference to ways in which novels were printed may give an indication as to what late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century readers had learned to expect. Title pages were frequently made up of upper casing, often varying in font size; Cooke used this method in advertising, engaging the reader's interest and then leading him on to the most important part of the advertisement, a list of the novels themselves. Titles were frequently in upper casing as in a list of children's books, 14 December, 1807. (D. 123) Upper casing was also used more selectively, emphasising the first half, or part of a title. An example of this is to be found in a list of popular novels advertised by R. Snagg. 'THE ORPHAN SWAINS, or London contagious to the Country' and 'THE LOCKET, or History of Mr. Singleton' emphasise the first half of the title, while 'The Newspaper WEDDING, or an Advertisement for a Husband' offers a key word easy to remember and promising romance. (16 May, 1774, D. 8) In other advertisements the tone of the book is emphasised by the use of upper casing. On 7 June, 1802 (see in full D. 93) J. Harris promoted MORAL, INSTRUCTIVE, AND AMUSING TALES, under the title of The Cabinet of Lilliput, 'stored with INSTRUCTION AND DELIGHT.'

Italic print, Addison's 'blind Italian character which fixes and detains the eye', is used in several ways in the *Hampshire Chronicle*. In the advertisement for *The Egg, or the Memoirs of Geoffrey Giddy Esq.*, the amusing poem, quoted above, which sets the tone of the book, is highlighted in this way.

*'The Title of our Egg, is but the Shell,
The Meat, or Sense, its Excellence will tell ...'*

It is indeed an eye-catching way in which to engage the captive reader. 'An entirely new translation' of *The History of the Renowned Don Quixote de la Mancha*, translated from the Spanish by Charles Henry Wilmot Esq., (14 March, 1774, D. 7) gives the reader a foretaste of adventure and glory:

*Honour and Conquest, Triumph and Renown,
Shall all my bold Adventures nobly crown!
Shine out, fair Sun! and gild the blooming Day!
Come forth, my Horse! – 'Tis Glory leads the Way!*

Prices

An important part of any advertisement is the price of the object to be sold. Prices for ordinary 'sewed' volumes, which were not cheap editions, were high and varied little from

²⁹ *The Tatler*, Joseph Addison, 12 April, 1710, referred to in *A History of British Advertising*, by Blanche B. Elliott, (London :Business Publications Ltd.,) p. xiii.

1772, when the *Hampshire Chronicle* started publication, until the beginning of the nineteenth century. They were, however, cheaper than previously, a point made strongly by J. Wenman when advertising in the newspaper on 23 October, 1780 (D. 22). He quoted *Tom Jones* at 6s. 9d. 'the price of the old edition of *Tom Jones* is 12s. and Count Fathom, with Capital Engravings, 4 volumes bound and lettered, or four volumes bound in 2 and lettered, 2s. 8d.', as against 'the old inferior editions of Count Fathom without plates [which] are sold for 6s.' Apart from abridgements, of which there were many, it was not until the introduction of cheap editions by Bell and then Cooke, that the poorer provincial reader was likely to be able to afford to read whole novels, and they were usually limited to classics. However, if he wished to indulge in popular novels, he had recourse to the magazines. Prices rose again with the Napoleonic Wars, but by 1828, the end of the period under review, they had gradually declined until the average price of a book was 12s.³⁰

Advertising - Conclusions

It is clear from a close reading of the advertisements in the *Hampshire Chronicle* that there were many and diverse ways in which its provincial readers were told which novels they were to borrow, purchase, or use to adorn their library shelves. Appeals were made to their intelligence, snobbery, knowledge of criticism, and the fact that they were well read and had already perused novels by such writers as Miss Burney or Miss Lennox. They were encouraged to read the 'classics' in the newly forming canon, for that is what their class and their allegiance to fashion dictated. Long advertisements in flowery language were devoted to many of these books. Devices as italics, variation between upper and lower casing, NBs, finger pointers were employed as were poems, reviews, and publishers' comments all in an effort to persuade readers to purchase or to borrow both classic and popular novels. Above all, they were invited to buy books which were elegant, neatly bound, adorned with engravings and eminently suitable for showing off to guests in their libraries.

The advertisements give little information and clues as to the poorer, more recently literate readers who hung *Tom Jones* and *Roderick Random* from the bacon racks. There are many advertisements for cheap, often abridged, novels, and for magazines, which indicates a market, but this class of reader does not seem to have been actively pursued and persuaded through specific wording. That this was done, though rarely, is evidence that the lower class reader did in fact exist. *The Novelist's Magazine*, advertised in the nearby *Portsmouth Gazette*, 25 October, 1795, is 'elegant enough for the Library of a Prince and cheap enough for the shelf of a Peasant', and at the cost of 3d. a volume, it was within the means of most of those who were literate. John Dawson Carl Buck in his article, 'The Motives of Puffing: John Newbery's Advertisements,' 1742-1767, points out Newbery's emphasis on aiding social aspirants. 'Newbery frequently identified himself implicitly with these people and presented himself as a man who had succeeded and wanted his customers to succeed.'³¹

On the whole there was a difference in the advertising approach between town and country. The urban readers of the *Times*, (1796) were not so specifically directed towards embellishments, and consequently library shelves, whereas their country counterparts, particularly in the late eighteenth century, were inundated with lengthy puffs and a variety of devices to persuade them to purchase books not only to read, but as objects to enjoy as they would any other decoration in the home. There were some exceptions; Alex Hogg advertised his 'New' magazines in very long-winded puffs as for example, the *New London Magazine* which contained an 'Address to the Public', *The Times*, 23 July, 1785, and *Ladies*

³⁰ Price taken from Louis Dudek, *Literature and the Press* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1960) p. 160.

³¹ John Dawson Carl Buck, 'The motives of puffing: John Newbery's advertisements 1742-1767', *Studies in Bibliography*, 30, 1977

New and Elegant Pocket Magazine in the *Times*, 14 February, 1795. It is possible that city sophisticates had already built up their libraries and were more concerned to indulge in fashionable reading.

From a study of these advertisements, it may be concluded that readers were invited to view novels in a multitude of ways and whether the book in hand was for moral instruction, entertainment or merely a commodity for the library shelf, the reader was bound to be influenced in the way he received it before he had even turned the first page, and was therefore open to a number of different emphases and interpretations. But he and his fellow readers were also factors in that change. Advertisers' devices were employed with a knowledge of the recipients' needs and responses, and the advertisements were part of an ongoing circle of transmission of the novel in a large provincial newspaper.

Magazines

To assume that all fiction consumed by late eighteenth and early nineteenth century readers was contained in books of tales or novels would be both misleading and untrue. That magazine advertisements were to be found in the *Hampshire Chronicle* throughout the period under review has already been discussed; the importance and wealth of the narrative material contained in these journals cannot be underestimated. They provided a vast store of popular literature and fulfilled the needs of a section of the reading public whose only leisure reading may have been supplied through this source. Calhoun Winton, *Newsletters to Newspapers: Eighteenth Century Journalism*, makes this point. 'In all probability, for every one reader who first encountered fiction in book form, twenty read fiction in periodicals.'³² Robert D. Mayo, *The English Novel in the Magazines*, takes the matter even further, assuming that readers of magazines must have included all who could read. He also asserted that fiction of some sort was found in 470 different periodicals published between 1740 and 1815.³³

Advertisements for servants were inserted in the *Hampshire Chronicle*, giving some indication that they read the paper. Girls in this class were known to have read light fiction to the disapproval of Hannah Moore who wrote that she lamented:

'... that this corrupt reading is now got down among some of the lowest class ... I think I do not go too far when I say that the vain and showy manner in which young women, who have to work for their bread, have taken to dress themselves, added to the poison they draw from these books, contribute together to bring them to destruction, more than almost any other cause.'³⁴

There is also the viewpoint that these serving girls found an escape from their daily drudgery in reading 'trash' novels as indicated by Paul Kaufmann,

'But I suggest that for masses of people in England at this time (the second half of the eighteenth century) the new fiction was an incalculable liberating force. The tales of wild adventure, the descriptions of the amours of the nobility and gentry, the livid accounts of

³² Winton Calhoun, *Newsletters to Newspapers: Eighteenth Century Journalism*, ed. Bond, Donovan H., McLeod, W., and Reynolds, W. (West Virginia University, 1977) p. 25.

³³ Robert D. Mayo, *The English Novel in the Magazines, 1740-1815* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1962) p. 2.

³⁴ Hannah Moore, *The Two Wealthy Farmers*, Works 4, 1801. The reference is given in Paul Kaufmann, *The Community Library, A Chapter in English Social History* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1967), p. 60

scenes remote in time and place, all were thrilling new experiences for the imagination.³⁵

Novels were expensive whereas magazines were relatively cheap and were probably the main source of fiction for these girls. How many of them read magazines may never be known but they were certainly available to the young servants of Hampshire.

Miscellany Magazines

The presentation of novels in magazines fell into two categories. Firstly there was the miscellany magazine in which it could take as long as two years to conclude a novel which had been published in very short episodes; frequently the author gave up before completion and readers could only guess at the end of the story! Acceptance of voluntary contributions by readers, whose reward was to see themselves in print, was common practice among magazine editors, who were hard pressed to meet expenses; consequently much of the writing was poor. Secondly, there were journals, as for example the *Novelist's Magazine* or the *Hogarthian Novelist*, which were devoted to one novel at a time usually with no other inclusions. Short stories, or tales, were also published in the miscellany magazines and occasionally in the newspapers. There was no established length in magazine fiction, which ranged between a short story of 100 words to a full length novel.

Some of the wording in the magazine advertisements reflects both the social spread of the readership and on occasions, the general pervading mood of the time. The opening number of *The Lady's Magazine, or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex*, 1770 was intended to suit 'the housewife as well as the peeress' and was 'appropriated solely for their amusement.' It was first advertised in the *Hampshire Chronicle* on 7 December, 1772 (D. 2) and a puff in the following year, 31 May, 1773 (D. 4) gives some detailed insight into the content. 'Entertaining Companion for the FAIR SEX. Appropriated solely to their Use and Amusement. Containing a *Sentimental Journey through England by a lady*. The History of an Heiress, written by Herself. Rosalia or the Inconveniences of Sensibility. *Dialogue of the Dead*.' Promotion for the magazine continued in the newspaper up to 1786. Another similar publication, *The Westminster Magazine*, was first advertised on 10 May, 1773 (D. 4) and its contents included some titillating titles: 'Sailors' Love letters continued, Memoirs of Miss M ... n; the Yorkshire Rake, and the handsome Captain Dick Wh ... ee. Julius, or anecdotes of a Curate's son.' Advertisements of the magazine in the newspaper did not continue beyond 1782.

Miscellany magazine advertisements continued to appear regularly in the newspaper throughout the remainder of the eighteenth century. On 10 January 1774 (D. 7) *The Lady's Magazine* named the serialised novels included in the current issue, 'History of Miss Charlotte Camply concluded', 'Cleara, or the Assassination' and 'History of an Heiress', continued. A week later, on 31 January 1774 (D. 7) the Supplement to the 5th volume of *Town and Country* included more inviting titles: 'Memoirs of the Macaroni Preacher and Miss R ... n; The Triumph of Gratitude.' 1774 appears to have been a prolific year for miscellany magazines and again, on 4 April, *Lady's Magazine* included yet more eye-catching titles: 'The Misfortunes of Lucinda', and 'Adventures of Cupid the Little' *The European Magazine* was advertised in the *Hampshire Chronicle* four times in 1782 and contained fiction. The *Bon Ton Magazine, or Microscope of Fashion and Folly*, was promoted in the newspaper on April 4, 1791 (D. 48) as light and amusing. 'It will include all that is curious, critical and interesting, in the various circles of the real and fictitious high life.

³⁵ Kaufmann, p. 23.

To which will be added Comic Tales, operatic and dramatic Memoirs, containing original anecdotes and characters, etc., etc.’

Although the publisher, H. D. Symonds, does not give the titles of fiction pieces in his advertisement for *The Matrimonial Magazine*, 21 January, 1793 (D. 60), he does indicate the tone and content of his publication. There are ‘elegant prizes for the Ladies’, and subjects include original essays, biographical sketches, dramatic news, ‘tales humorous and pathetic alike calculated for the Maid, the Widow and the Wife, the Stripling and the Greybeard. Wit will be combined with Decency and Humour with Sense. *The Monthly Mirror*, 28 January, 1797 (D. 76) did not usually print fiction, but did include matters of a literary nature publishing portraits of M. G. Lewis, ‘Author of the popular Romance of the Monk, Mary Wollstonecraft, ‘the Champion of the Rights of Women’, ‘the famous Mrs. Seward’, and a portrait of Mrs. Inchbald.

Listings of fiction included in magazine advertisements did not continue in the *Hampshire Chronicle* in the nineteenth century. Titles as *La Belle Assemblée*, *Le Beau Monde or Literary and Fashionable Magazine*, *Town and Country magazine*, and *The Ladies Magazine*, continued to be advertised into the nineteenth century and mainly promoted fashion, but did not always contain fiction. There were some exceptions. For example, on 7 September, 1812 (D. 140), White, Cochrane & Co. advertised the *Edinburgh Review* as including ‘Tales of Fashionable Life, by Miss Edgeworth’. Occasionally, fiction currently in publication appeared in one of the magazines. An advertisement for *The Augustan Review*, published by Law and Whittaker, regular advertisers in the newspaper, was inserted on 9 May, 1815 (D. 147). A novel contained in that edition, *Gulzara, Princess of Persia, or the Virgin Queen, collected from the Original Persian* is listed in the contents of the magazine for that year and is also advertised in the *Hampshire Chronicle* on 17 June, 1816 (D. 149) but by John Souter, a different publisher.

Fiction was also promoted in other ways in the miscellany magazines. Occasionally the inclusions of reviews were mentioned as part of an advertisement as, for example in the *Fireside Magazine* on 21 December, 1818 (D. 160). ‘*The Fireside Magazine* includes reviews of Miss Porter’s new novel *The Fast of St. Magdalen* and of Lady Morgan’s *Novel of Florence McCarthy*.’ On a more derogatory note, there was a puff on 27 December 1819 (D. 165) for an article in *The Fireside Magazine and Monthly Entertainer* entitled ‘Effects of Novel Reading upon Female Minds.’

Despite the horrors of the French Revolution, frivolity in miscellany magazines never completely disappeared as illustrated by an advertisement for *The Man of Pleasure Magazine, or Cabinet of Female Fashion and Curiosity* (17 January, 1791, see in full D. 48), which includes the astonishing trial in Doctor’s Commons, of ‘Mrs. piper for crim. Con with John her husband’s black servant, including an interesting relation of the kitchen and keyhole adventures, plan for escaping to Jamaica, detection, copy of the frail lady’s ardent love-letter to her Othello,’ etc.

Magazines for women continued whether they contained fiction or not and were sometimes of a serious nature. An advertisement for *The British Lady’s Magazine* serves as an example: ... the effect of superior views in the education of women, is beginning to display itself, and every day adds to that number of those who, in mental acquirement, as in domestic propriety, dignify the character and adorn the name...her improvement, her convenience, and in the highest sense, her amusement, is the principal object of its conductors. (4 December,

1815, D. 148) Towards the end of the eighteenth century, supplements and indexes for miscellany magazines became available in annual volumes, some of which were advertised in the *Hampshire Chronicle*, an indication of the growing importance of this reading material.

Single novel magazines

Another group of magazines published one novel only, usually abridged, in each issue. The first of these journals to be advertised in the *Hampshire Chronicle* was *The British Novelist, or Virtue and Vice in Miniature* (18 April, 1774, (D. 8). It consisted of:

a valuable Collection of the best English Novels carefully selected from the works of Mrs. Behn, Mrs. Griffiths, Mrs. Lennox, Miss Fielding, Sig. Cervantes, Mons. Le Sage, Henry Fielding Esq., Mr. S. Richardson, Dr. Smollett, Dr. Croxall, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Brooke, Dr. Goldsmith etc. ...
Faithfully abridged, as to contain all the Spirit of the Originals. ...'

Although this particular magazine is only recorded in 1774, other similar titles were to follow, for example, *The Novelist's Magazine*, (Harrison & Co. 1780-1793) *Mr. Hogg's New Novelist's Magazine*, (1792-1795) *The New Novelist's Magazine, or, Entertaining Library* (Harrison & Co. 1786 – 1787)³⁶. Sometimes advertisements for this kind of publication could be very flowery and extensive. Alex Hogg appears to have surpassed himself in his efforts to sell his *New Novelist's Magazine* to *Hampshire Chronicle* readers on 3 December, 1792; from some of the wording, it is clear that the advertisement is intended for the provincial market. It is an excellent example of a publisher's plan of work and address to the public; it merits reading in full, please see D. 56-59. Magazines for complete novels were relatively short-lived and advertisements for them did not continue in the *Hampshire Chronicle* much after the end of the eighteenth century.

It is impossible to calculate figures for the numbers of readers who read magazines containing fiction in the distribution area of the *Hampshire Chronicle*, but taking into account the large number and variety of these publications which were advertised, it must have been a considerable proportion of the overall readership, and many of those readers were women. There is some dispute as to how often these miscellanies, magazines, and journals were promoted. John Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth Century England*, argues that the *Novelist's Magazine* was not very widely advertised when it appeared in 1780 and neither were the established periodicals, even in the London newspapers.³⁷ It is difficult to agree with this viewpoint when there are so many advertisements for all kinds of journals in the *Hampshire Chronicle* throughout the period under review. Publishers were businessmen and would have taken the market into account when spending money on advertising. Harrison & Co., *The Novelist's Magazine*, R. Snagg, the *Monthly Magazine*, and G. Robinson, *The Lady's Magazine*, were powerful in the book trade and advertised a wide variety of books regularly in the newspaper and would probably have been anxious to promote sales and capture the provincial market.

Fashion or fiction?

³⁶ These dates are taken from the COPAC catalogue and unless there are missing copies from other years, should be comprehensive.

³⁷ John Feather, *The Provincial book Trade in Eighteenth Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) p. 50.

It is widely recognised that provincial newspapers took much of their material from their London counterparts and this was true of fashion articles which were included in the *Hampshire Chronicle* regularly throughout the period under review. On one occasion fashion and fiction combined. On 21 November, 1785 an article entitled *The Charlotte and Werter Mania* was printed in the newspaper. Its subject was *The Sorrows of Werter, a German story*, by J. W. Von Goethe, a novel which was translated into French and English and was very widely read. It went into a number of editions in England, sold by several different booksellers. *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*³⁸ notes the fame of this epistolary novel throughout Europe. ‘Young men wore blue coats and yellow breeches in imitation of Werter, and china tea-sets were produced with scenes from the novel painted on them, and perfumes named after Werter were sold.’ The article in the newspaper is also concerned with fashion, describing the *Charlotte-bonnet*, the *Charlotte-cap* and the *Charlotte-curls*. The writer’s opinion of the novel was subjective and his approach satirical. He commented that the Ladies are fond of her (Charlotte, the heroine) and of the book, ‘because it inculcates a very convenient example – It gives a precedent of a virtuous woman marrying one man, and keeping up a correspondence with another.’ He went on to describe how Charlotte, ‘this exquisite model of female manners’, was either knitting, nursing an infant, or playing a tune during the young student Werter’s final paroxysms in his successful suicide. Despite the popularity of *The Sorrows of Werter*, the source of these fashions, there are no advertisements in the *Hampshire Chronicle* for the novel until well past the date of the article and then only for an abridged edition. Cooke advertised it on 11 August, 1794 (D 66), but did not continue to include it in his Hampshire list.³⁹

Short stories

Although there was a regular inclusion of poems, many of them lengthy, throughout the years under review, only four short stories were published. They are all fanciful tales, have a similar style and a moral though somewhat satirical slant. They are very difficult to trace and may have been submitted either by a local contributor or contributors or have been taken from a London publication. A similar style of story, headed ‘For the Universal Register, The Sorrows of Charlotte, a Pathetic Tale,’ was printed in *The Times* on 17 November, 1786, about the same period.

Three of the tales were published in 1785, the same year as the Charlotte and Werter article discussed above. The first of these, on 3 January of that year (D. 31), is entitled *The Unfortunate Elenor*; it is a very short piece which extols the need for religion and the dangers of philosophy. Starting with the quotation,

‘Crop’d this fair rose, and rifled all its sweetness;
Then threw it like a vile defoiled weed away.’

it tells a tale of a very sheltered innocent young girl, brought up by her philosophical father and seduced by the worldly and unscrupulous Melvil. ‘Unhappily for poor Elenor, Melvil, like her father was a philosopher – but, alas! possessed of neither *religion* nor *morality*. – The father of Elenor had principles of honesty and humanity – Melvil had neither.’ The inevitable happened and Melvil, ‘leaving Elenor in a situation which might naturally be expected from her intimacy with him’, went off and married someone else. Father and daughter soon died and were buried together in the same grave.

³⁸ *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, ed. Margaret Drabble (London: Guild Publishing, 1985, p. 1056.

³⁹ There is no trace of this Cooke edition.

The second story which was published in the newspaper on 25 July, 1785 (D. 32) a few months later, was entitled *A Talisman of Truth*, a Tale, and also has a moral conclusion. It was taken 'from the Countess of Rosenburg's "Letters" lately published', but there is no trace of this publication. The story starts with a warning to anyone with an extravagant imagination. 'The pleasures which it procures us, are much inferior to the sufferings we oft experience from it.' To illustrate his point, the writer goes on to tell the tale of two Genii, one good and one bad, as in all the best fairy tales, who bestow their gifts upon a newborn infant Prince. The one gives him a powerful imagination, while the other provides a talisman in the form of a stone, which in due course modifies it. He becomes a paragon of virtue and 'he now found his happiness to consist in adding to that of others; he loved his fellow creatures and in return, was cherished and admired by them.'

Later in the same year, on 28 November, 1785 (D. 32) the third tale was published. Different in tone from the others, it tells of a visit to London by Ali, a young Persian Prince, and his English friend and emphasizes the fickleness of political allegiance and the power of the 'mob'. The piece ends,

Should you have abilities sufficient to call forth the indignation of Government, your business is done, you are considered as the champion of liberty and the devoted martyr of the public They will raise you to the highest officer of the city, till Government, finding opposition but increases your consequence, either ceases to notice you, or buys your silence with pensions or with title. "Gracious powers, (cried the Prince) I no longer wonder at this people's success, if heaven, as our holy Prophet teaches, has a particular care of madmen; this nation must certainly claim his protection!"

Published in the *Hampshire Chronicle* on 6 September, 1790, *Who breaks the ice, a Tale*, is a short satirical piece which tells of three sharpers who convince a King that they are weaving a very beautiful brocade although it does not, of course, exist. The King sends a number of his courtiers to view the material being made, and all are equally enthusiastic about it. He goes to see it himself and begins to doubt his own existence, but agrees to wear the alleged garment in a procession. The deception is unmasked and the story ends with the moral, seemingly applied to a recent event that:

'This story may very well apply to the doctrine of libels. All the world has been accustomed, in conformity to the doctrine laid down by a person of great name (no-one daring to confess that they could not perceive the equity of common-sense of the opinion,) to brand truth with the epithets of fake, scandalous, and malicious, till an Irish jury, like the Moor in the preceding tale, had the resolution to affirm that truth is truth.'

Conclusion

Although my primary intention in creating this Database is to provide a research tool, there are a few conclusions which may be drawn from a study of it. This is with the caveat that there are inevitable limitations when considering material from one provincial newspaper alone, however widely it is distributed, and which has a relatively small amount of fiction presented within its pages within a limited time span of 57 years. It must also be taken into account that many readers of the *Hampshire Chronicle* would have had access to fiction from other sources as, for example, additional newspapers and circulating libraries; influences on an individual's interpretation of a novel would have stretched well beyond the boundaries of this one newspaper. Therefore conclusions from a survey of this nature, will inevitably be

limited and partially hypothetical, yet there are a few solid findings resulting from it which increase our knowledge of reading experience in the provinces and point the way to future scholastic investigation.

What is clear is that there is a complex network of people, materials and events involved in the production of literary works, and the influence of the readers cannot be ignored. Newspaper editors may have thought they knew what readers wanted, but the readers too were partly responsible for the formation of their own taste; the system is an ongoing process of cause and effect. The bookseller wanted to expand his business in the provincial market, the editor wanted to sell his paper and to increase revenue by the sale of advertising space, but unless the customer bought the product, there would be no business to expand. Many provincial newspapers closed down quickly; it was not an easy matter to maintain a balance between supply and demand. It has therefore been important to examine in some detail who both the providers and the consumers were, and their contributory roles in the overall process of the transmission of fiction in the *Hampshire Chronicle*.

The two principle providers were, as has already been discussed, the provincial editor and the London bookseller; it has been demonstrated, and may be concluded, that the relationship between them was an important one. There was also an element of choice on the part of the editor as it is likely that he or his agents could select who they wanted to do business with; there were many booksellers wishing to expand their business into the provinces, yet only a few advertised in the *Hampshire Chronicle*. In the eighteenth century the names of the booksellers appearing in the paper changed with each new editor. Although there was more of an overlap in the nineteenth century and an increase in advertisers of fiction, there were still many London booksellers whose books never appeared in the pages of the newspaper. This limitation undoubtedly had an effect on the titles advertised and consequently the choice of fiction available to the readers. The editor himself, with his own position in business and social circles to consider, imposed a further limitation by not advertising some of the more controversial novels, particularly those published in the 1790s. Readers in the distribution area of the *Hampshire Chronicle* almost certainly had far less choice of what to read than their urban contemporaries who saw novels advertised on a daily basis in the London papers. Even a cursory search in *The Times* reveals title after title never advertised in the *Hampshire Chronicle*.

Who were the readers who suffered these limitations and were not given the same choices as city dwellers? Through a survey of general advertisements and reading material, including magazines, it has been demonstrated that the consumers of this large provincial newspaper were from a cross-section of the social classes, their occupations ranging from servant, artisan, merchant seaman, farmer, through to gentleman, politician, and aristocrat. In other words, the *Hampshire Chronicle* was a newspaper for all. Its consumers may not all have read novels, but it must be assumed that the opportunity was there were they to read the advertisements. The tone of the paper also gives some idea as to the kind of people who might have read the *Hampshire Chronicle* and what their tastes were likely to be. The newspaper encouraged popular taste in the reporting of accounts of trials and scandals, which was mirrored in the inclusion of advertisements for popular novels of a 'trashy' and often sensational nature. Sentimental poems were regularly contributed to the paper; so too were advertisements for sentimental novels. Other purchasers of novels clearly came from a wealthier class. Some of them had newly acquired library shelves to fill and their demands, as emphasised in many of the advertisements, were for beautifully bound volumes which might never be read, but which would undoubtedly impress guests with their bindings and

illustrations. It may be tentatively concluded that the editors understood the tastes of their readers and by including advertisements for both popular and classical novels catered in a limited way for the wide readership they undoubtedly had. A certain balance appears to have been achieved between supply and demand and it is not surprising that the *Hampshire Chronicle* survived all the difficulties of newspaper taxation and that, with one brief exception, the editors remained solvent. Editors may have set the tone in order to capture the patronage of their perceived readership but at times external factors intervened; for example, during periods when the threat of invasion from France was imminent the tone of the paper was more serious and very few novels of any kind were advertised.

The way in which a novel, either as a book or as a magazine, was marketed or transmitted, or even omitted, in the *Hampshire Chronicle*, with all the messages about it which advertisers or reviewers conveyed, presented a work to the reader which was already coloured by views other than those of the author. The survey of advertising techniques already described above gives some idea as to how complex these methods of persuasion were. Classical novels, although sometimes advertised in the form of a list, particularly relevant to Cooke, were usually presented in flowery language, accompanied by rhymes, reviews, and puffs about embellishments. Unlike their popular counterparts, these novels were beautifully bound, decorated with gold lettering, wood cuts, and engravings, and were eminently suitable to place on library shelves. Although a few such embellishments were still being advertised towards the end of the period under review, it was in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that this evidence of the building up of libraries and the book as an object to admire rather than to read was of particular relevance. A comparison with *The Times*, 1796 emphasises the difference between these methods and short inserts of one or two lines devoted to one novel at a time. Although further research is need to measure the extent of this difference, provincial readers of the *Hampshire Chronicle*, certainly in the late eighteenth century, were undoubtedly more at the mercy of the advertising scribblers than their urban cousins. It has been shown through an analysis of presentations of *Clarissa*, how subjective the advertisers could be in presenting the reader with different perceptions of the novel before the first page had been turned. There is no evidence in the Hampshire archive as to how texts of advertisements of novels were received by readers, but it may be assumed that the ways in which they were presented did affect the expectations of the reader and thereby changed for each individual the meaning of the work in some small way.

Popular novels were advertised much more sparsely in the form of long lists inserted by publishers such as William Lane of the Minerva Press. It is extremely unlikely that any one individual would have bought many of these books at a time, but they did provide excellent check lists to use at the circulating library, often an additional business venture on the part of the newspaper editor. These advertisements therefore fulfilled a dual purpose commercially and gave a wider choice to the reader.

This difference in the imposition of external forces on urban and provincial readers is one of the main conclusions of this study. Much has been left to speculation, but some solid truths emerge. The choice of fictional reading material for the provincial reader was limited by the relationships his editor forged with booksellers and agents and by the imposition of the editor's own values on what he would advertise. The London reader had a wider choice. He had more freedom to make up his own mind as to what to read and was less likely to have to contend with lengthy puffs than his provincial cousin. There is much more work to be done in the investigation of the presentation of fiction in provincial newspapers and this study merely offers food for thought and some brief conclusions. David H. Richter in his chapter

on 'The Gothic Novel' in *The Idea of the Novel in the Eighteenth Century*, writes that given the wide range of obscure sources that need to be consulted, it is unlikely that it will ever be possible to make a broad and general study of reception. He goes on to write that each researcher will be able to comprehend only a carefully delimited area of audience response. According to Richter, 'though a familiarity with literary theory will be required for such a task, this is work, not for professional theorists as such, but for practical critics who will solve these massive problems in the course of trying to say something true about the imaginative life of the past.' This study is one 'delimited' area, which may hopefully in the future become part of a much larger whole as we understand more about the mind-set of provincial readers, their newspapers and their editors.

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