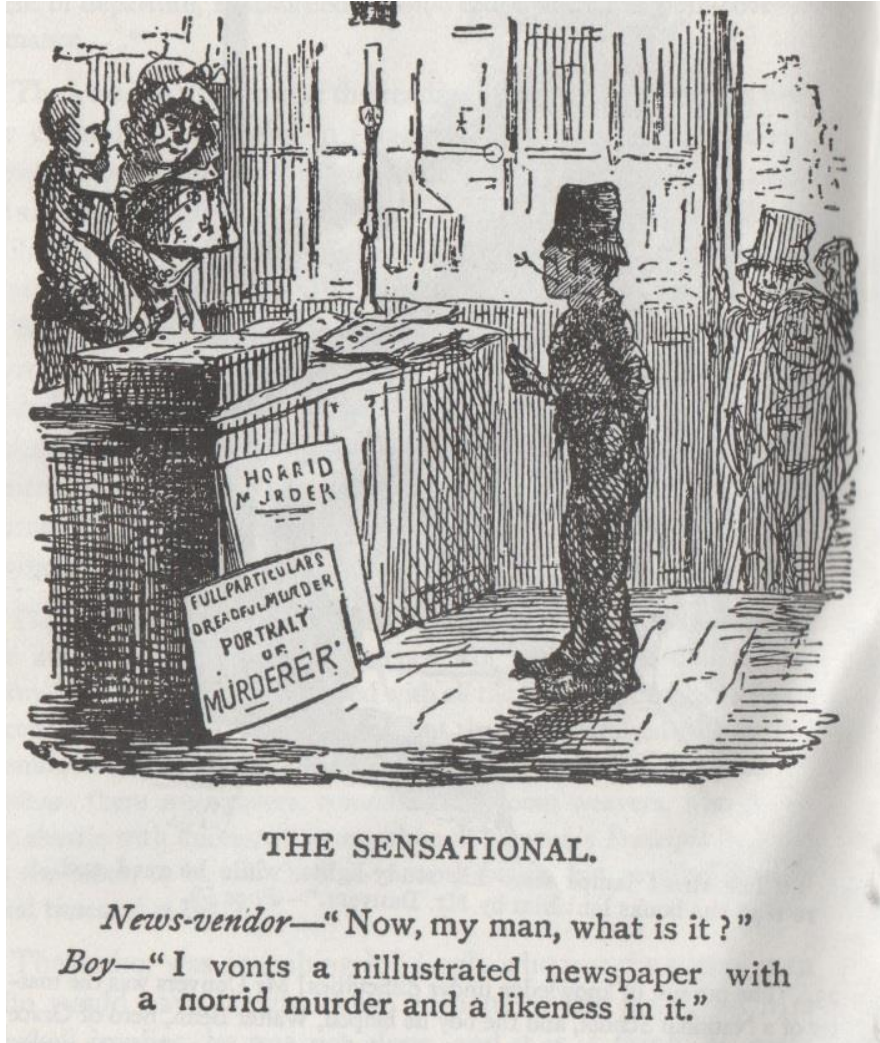


Victorian Popular Fiction Association 9th Annual Conference

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‘Travel, Translation and Communication’, Senate House, University of London



‘Picturing the Mass Market, from the 1880s, in Britain’

An exhibition curated by Professor John Spiers, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of English Studies, University of London; Professorial Research Fellow, London Metropolitan University

In association with the Institute of English Studies, University of London and the Senate House Library

Preface.

This exhibit offers the opportunity to see 41 original copies both of the leading and some of the obscure cheap popular illustrated periodicals of the 1880s and 1890s from my own collection, together with 2 popular predecessors of novelette periodicals. Where possible I have included the first issue of each where I have been able to gather them over the years. The markets served by many of these journals were also served by much cheap paperback fiction from John Dicks, Dean & Co., Ernest Nisbet, Abel Heywood, W.B. Horner & Son, Jarrold & Sons, S. W. Partridge, the Religious Tract Society, The Thrilling Stories Committee of Manchester, W. Nicholson & Sons Ltd., and others. And, of course, by the illustrated magazine publishers themselves, who issued a host of cheap paperbacks in the late-Victorian and Edwardian years. As, too, did such publishers as Chatto & Windus, who were not otherwise publishing cheap illustrated magazines.

Many of the periodicals shown are not commonly seen. Their visual appeal and thus their contemporary impact can be too easily overlooked. Throughout the century illustrative engravings had been a crucial part of attracting readers to popular publishing, in books, in newspapers, and in penny parts of fiction. Many of these 'cuts' were kept by working people, as 'cottage' decoration. The new periodicals appealed directly to aesthetic responses.

This was very significantly a visual culture. Pictorial illustration played an important part in market appeal. The evidence is striking in the Opie and the John Johnson collections at Bodley. Many cheaper serial publications, too, had pictorial and coloured wrappers, and the quality of the wood cuts and engraving was often surprisingly high. It is right that in earlier years some – but not all - of it was crude, poorly worked, historically inappropriate, re-used from elsewhere, or worn out by large print runs. But later in the century leading publishers in this evolving popular market – notably Edwin J. Brett - offered large colour lithographed coloured plates, some as double-sized foldouts, as an additional lure to the potential periodical purchaser. Few surviving volumes retain these; many must have been framed for cottage walls.

There was also the gendering of periodicals, for which another exhibition could be created. We would also need a separate exhibit to show the many papers especially produced for the rapidly growing juvenile market, for boys and for girls. As we would on the significant literary predecessors the novelette publishers.

For the 1890s I have deliberately omitted *The Yellow Book* (1894-97) and *The Savoy Magazine* (1896) as they originated as bound periodicals which were not intended to be sold cheaply. They are also well known and easily seen. Lack of space pressed on me too. As it is I have described here some 40 items from my larger collection, although exhibition space may not enable us to show it all. If any member of the VPFA wishes to see a 'missing' item, please e-mail me at jr.spiers@btinternet.com

This accompanying contextual note is based on parts of the text of my book, *Victorian Popular Fiction: From golden guineas to small change. Access to new adult fiction in an elite culture, and in the evolving 'mass' 19th century market* (Brighton, Edward Everett Root Publishers, forthcoming, 2018). See www.eerpublishing.com

As before, I am grateful to Dr. Janine Hatter, Dr. Helena Ifill, Dr. Maria Castillo and Dr. Angela Craft for their aid and encouragement in creating this exhibit. I have learned much, too, from the essential published works of Elizabeth James, Louis James, Robert J. Kirkpatrick, Helen R. Smith, and John Sutherland.

JS, Sussex, 1 July 2017.

George Newnes, Alfred Harmsworth, W.T. Stead, and C. Arthur Pearson.

Adaptive evolution by risk-taking entrepreneurs was the mark of all 19th-century publishing. The 1880s onwards were the years of the introduction of many new illustrated periodicals in a new 'mass' market.

Much was new, but not everything. There were many important predecessors of the cheap, lively, illustrated new periodicals of the last part of the 19th century – notably by the publishers Edward Lloyd, Edwin J. Brett, and John Dicks. These, too, had provided much cheap fiction for all classes. But there was a qualitative and quantitative change in the 1880s onwards.

Here the key figures as popular periodical publishers and innovators were George Newnes (1851-1910), Alfred Harmsworth (1865-1922), W.T. Stead (1849-1912), and C. Arthur Pearson (1866-1921). Each showed extraordinary gifts as communicators. They specialized in the production and widest sale of penny and half-penny publications offering new illustrated fiction, other entertainments, and educational content too. These publishers were among the greatest influences on British publishing, then and since. They need to be taken seriously. They took advantage of an era of self-improvement, and of major economic and social change, which they then influenced in revolutionary ways. The difference they made to millions of lives is almost beyond reckoning. This was a revolution of cultures, however, not of politics.

These men created illustrated, popular, lively, appealing, and very new looking cheap new periodicals, which sold in large quantities. A different cultural status emerged with such publications. Stead it was who capitalised the words the New Journalism. He, too, became an important campaigner against sexual exploitations of young children, and also in favour women's rights and opportunities He was an important advocate of changes in employment practices and employments, and for women's suffrage. He popularised feminist causes.

These men were not cynics, but idealists in their own ways. And they found hundreds of thousands of ready and willing buyers for their publications, which hundreds of thousands continued to buy. These were readers who spent their own money; they were not the traditional borrowers. This was the real beginning of the popular 'mass market'. These new publishers serialised new novels and published new short stories - as did many cheaper national and local newspapers who took material from the new syndication agencies. Newnes & c spun-off stories as cheap paperback books.

Newnes's penny *Tit-Bits*, the imitative *Pearson's Weekly* and Harmsworth's *Answers to Correspondents* (the foundation stone of the Amalgamated Press, first issued in June 1888) changed the economic basis of newspapers and magazines. By Easter 1897 the 1d *Tit-Bits* was selling 671,000, with perhaps four or more readers per copy. By 1900 the half-penny *Daily Mail* claimed a sale of almost a million. Newnes's *Strand Magazine* (1891), *Pearson's Magazine* (1896), and the *Harmsworth Magazine* (1898) were each claiming circulations over 250,000 by 1900. Between 1875 and 1903 the number of weekly, monthly and quarterly magazines quadrupled. These included hobby and leisure magazines which themselves helped people negotiate new opportunities. Even if there was some geographical and social unevenness in their impact, they gradually created a collective experience of a new national visual and literary media and a rapid expansion of willing demand.

This was the entry of an entirely new kind of publishing entrepreneur - of outsiders, mavericks, movers and shakers, risk-taking entrepreneurs serving new and rapidly expanding popular markets. These were not 'University' men. Each was 'self-made'. They were 'rankers' not born 'gentlemen'. They did not begin with material advantages but succeeded through their own talents and force of

character. This at a time when the world of culture was still dominated by men of social privilege, hereditary position, inherited wealth, and family publishing businesses.

It would have been very easy to be daunted by the difficulties for new entrants into the market. Yet these hard-headed new men - Newnes, Harmsworth, Stead and Pearson - evidently understood their times more than most. They skilfully created new products aimed at mass working-class audiences, who were then enjoying improved incomes, better food and housing, improved medicine and greater longevity in an increasingly urbanised society. At this time, too, the reading nation was divided into overlapping layers of readers, differentiated by income, by socio-economic class and by educational attainment. Between 1840 and 1900 a new popular press developed in Britain. This reflected the economic and cultural changes that were slowly transforming the nation into a democracy. This then established the basis a new paradigm for representative democracy and for 20th-century mass journalism. This ultimately led on to the electronic global culture. There was an improving socio-economic system; better education and public health; improved housing; many new urban amenities; more consumer goods and services; rising real wages; new opportunities for women; the absorption of potentially criminal and riotous elements into the labour-market; new social disciplines that placed a premium on regularity, punctuality, sobriety, cleanliness and orderly behaviour.

People faced many new and competing leisure choices too, and spent their own money on what they wanted. Much, no doubt, evolved in a serendipitous way, but much was also developed by Newnes and the others by deliberate and persistent individual go-ahead actions. Each showed a judicious blend of firmness and flexibility of mind to continue to adapt. Of the four most named, Harmsworth in particular is commonly noted as having showed the driving egotism so often seen in creative artists. His temperament in particular was that of the demanding task-master. However the others could not have been shrinking violets. Each, too, seem to have been genuinely interested in ordinary people, which was at the core of the appeal of their periodicals. Whether these readers were “exploited” or served is a matter for differing cultural and political judgements.

John Ruskin, and other cultural critics - notably Carlyle and Arnold in his time, and later F. R. Leavis, Raymond Williams and E. P. Thompson in ours - posed fundamental alternatives concerning the relationships between art and industry, ethics and life, educational change, literacy, personal and democratic development. Issues concerning market change and the evolution of ‘high’ and ‘mass’ culture. Of ‘popular’ culture, and differing definitions of what that is. Of the roles of publisher, distributor, buyer, and reader in helping to define culture and to live ethically. Of the relative importance of entrepreneurship (and of character). And, in terms of the intention and results of authorship, the elusive difficulties of how we might know who read the books and periodicals, how they read them, their transformational value in individual lives. Who bought, owned, read, gifted, (or stole) which books and journals. Who sold them, and to whom, and with which cultural and personal results. These questions are the pension rights of cultural and book historians. The new popular illustrated periodicals from the 1880s onwards help us to ask and try to answer such questions. That is, if we are to study specifics to reveal generalities; to understand those contemporary choices otherwise concealed by averages and by aggregates purged of human values and stories; to move beyond institutions to individuals; and to puzzle out perennial cultural dilemmas and choices for ourselves. That is, to see the options the changing culture offered Ruskin, those he endorsed or opposed, and what these choices represented.

In parallel, too, there remain those perennial social and political questions concerning the experience and potential of co-operation and mutuality, as well as the alternatives of dynamic markets and of such statist alternatives as Webbian “experts” - who (for example, in ‘public services’) have claimed

to know our individual interests better than we know them for ourselves. Central here are issues of "quality" and values, and who it is who is to decide, and for whom? The problem of agency - or of how huge social changes can be led or how they happen. Issues of individual freedom and choice, and of what art and democracy mean. These issues, of course, pose the widest analysis of the society in which books and periodicals were and are published and received. They concern the life and potentials of the individual, art and aesthetics, imagination and culture, social organisation and the processes of social and economic change, the role of ideas and transformative actions in ethical and social debates

As mass markets for print grew, these dilemmas included what was (and is) ominous and what opportune, for the individual citizen in a newly urbanised and industrialised society. What were the difficulties and what new opportunities were represented by publishing modes, methods, prices and formats, the noisy advertising and wider distribution of books and periodicals in what we can recognise as part of our own modernity? How, too, did these changes in culture, in publishing and in the making of books and periodicals relate to and how compete for interest and personal spending with the newly commercialised leisure industries?

There was an enormous flood of new periodicals offering fiction, many of which had brief May-fly lives. Some of these new publications have enjoyed great fame: *Tit-Bits*; *The Strand*; *Magazine*, *The Review of Reviews*, *Answers to Correspondents*, &c. Many others are never seen, and have survived in very small numbers if at all. Many from now unknown publishers who tried their luck in this new market, such as Ashton & Co who issued *The Young Briton*; Trapps, Holmes & Co. Ltd., who issued *The Vanguard Library*, and Charles Fox (who printed with the Economic Printing and Publishing Company). That firm issued *The Boys' Weekly Novelette*, and also the *Standard Journal*, headlined as 'The Biggest Halfpenny Journal Published. Complete Stories of. Tales of Romance, Adventure, Fun Etc'.

Every major and many minor publishers also issued cheaper and then cheapest editions, in two columns, in illustrated paper covers. Everyone thus had access to a host of new and older novels, in the 1880s and after. Some prices fell to a halfpenny. These books reached an entirely new market, and helped redefine popular fiction publishing.

The glut of these new journals was such that in 1892 W.H. Smith warned that the medley of such magazines was multiplying so fast that they were "likely to choke all other literature."

These publishers realised that their mass readership was one of their key *products*, too. They thus sold their readers to their advertisers, and subsidised the prices of their magazines and their spin-off cheap books. The merger of 'copy' and advertising was evident, and the money this brought in created the successes. Advertising was the essential subsidy to prices in a fast growing elementary market in which these new entrepreneurs knew how to give form and shape to new works to meet and to satisfy new demands.

Newnes, Harmsworth, Stead and Pearson thus represented a new culture of reading and of consuming. They personified a re-invigorated commercial spirit. Each proved to be a significant beneficiary of new mass education, of a growing reading and book-buying public, and of rising real incomes across most of society. They introduced new techniques of production, promotion and costing, directly linked to advertising income. The subsidy this gave to cover prices enabled a mass market to be served with cheap publications. By modifying existing techniques each outran older 'popular publishing' houses like Routledge. Each evidently learned by doing - reaching 'downwards' [*sic*] into new markets, offering entertainment and instruction. Each had all the qualities of the earlier

venturesome George Routledge, but each adopted a business strategy which complemented the existing higher-grade middle-class magazines and the cheaper popular books which were already plentiful.

Greater disposable incomes, more leisure time, and continuing urbanisation determined many new consumer choices. The new men created new products and a new economic and business strategy. Their publications had cost advantages due to the development of new, popular, 'mass' and very swift printing presses. They could thus combine mass circulation and mass advertising revenues as a production and sale-price subsidy, and achieve very low unit prices in very long runs. This provided great bounties to readers, magazine and book buyers. Advertising increased in volume and in content, and was much more aggressive than the soap advertisements which Routledge and others had attracted for their yellow-back covers. Many new novels were then spun-off as cheap productions from their initial serialisation in the new magazines.

The exhibited items.

1: *Tit-Bits From All The Most Interesting Books, Periodicals And Newspapers In The World.*

Conducted By Geo. Newnes. No.1 - Vol.1. Price One Penny.

On 22 October 1881 George Newnes (then aged 30, having been born at Matlock, Derbyshire on 13 March 1851) issued the first number of the 16-page 1d. weekly, the ‘snippets-paper’ *Tit Bits*. It was a popular, low-brow periodical. Its success surprised even him.

Here was most emphatically revealed the new mass market. With this move down the price slope to the cheapest publication of periodicals and books, this was Newnes’s headliner, his fortune-maker, and the first of many periodicals which he invented – both for a working-class, and a middle-class audience.

He is not to be underestimated either for he was also a publisher of quality hardcover original fiction and non-fiction - which is commonly thought by some cultural critics to be the ‘real’ test of a publisher!

As usual with such a popular publication as *Tit-Bits* Newnes found himself in the academic hot-water of “commodification” – which however shows how many “ordinary” people gave their scarce and willing revenues to newsagents in order to be entertained and informed. They read his magazines, instead of marching. Here we need to be careful to avoid making facile or over-simplified judgements.

The full title was *Tit-Bits from all the most interesting Books, Periodicals and Newspapers in the World*. Within two hours, according to his biographer Hulda Friederichs, 5,000 copies had been sold in Manchester alone, where the paper originated. Within six months there were twelve imitators; within a year, twenty-six. Within two years *Tit-Bits* was selling 200,000 copies weekly.

The bound volume shown contains the first 26 weekly issues through to 15 April 1882. Decorative brown cloth publisher’s binding, blocked blind, spine gilt lettered *Tit-Bits*. Vol.1. Each issue One Penny. Originally Fscap., self-covered, paper, each issue 16pp.

Tit-Bits was selling 200,000 copies in 1883, 671,000 by Easter 1897. *Tit-Bits* itself had immediate imitators, including *The Ha’porth*, and *Rare-Bits*. Charles Shurey published *Sketchy Bits* in London, and there was an American imitator, *Tid-Bits*. However, to show that it was not easy to do what Newnes did, most of these competitors rapidly failed. Again, Harmsworth and Pearson were unusual in that they also succeeded over a long time span.

Tit-Bits, too, was soon issued in a Pitman’s shorthand edition for the new office-secretaries, then known colloquially as “typewriters” (the machine being first patented in 1868) just as the word “computer” first described the person who worked the new machine. Newnes also issued many *Tit-Bits Novels*, in paperback at 1d., and in cloth-bound collected volumes. There was also a *Tit-Bits Monster series*. He issued nearly 20 pocket-libraries, competing with The Aldine Publishing Company and others. Newnes’s new series included the *Captain Library*, the *Redskin Library*, the *Dick Turpin Library*, the *Nick Carter Library*, *Football Novels*, and the *4d Library*. Harmsworth issued nine such library series, too. Together these two large firms changed the face of the boys’ own story paper – using format, design, price and advertising to supply the growing market. Robert J. Kirkpatrick (in his essential book *Pennies, Profits and Poverty*) says that of the 130 or so boys’ papers launched between 1900 and 1950 well over a third came from these two publishers.

When he invented *Tit-Bits* in 1881 Newnes may or may not have known of the earlier publications issued by W.M. Clarke, or by John Limbird, both of whom were expert at scissors and paste journalism in the 1840s and 1820s. Limbird especially with *The Mirror Of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction*. It seems very unlikely that Newnes did not know of this, even if he did not know the more obscure periodicals *The Thief* (1832-33), *The National Omnibus* (1831-3), and *The Cab* (1832), each of which was compiled in this way in plundering other people's publications. These also printed readers' letters with question and answer columns.

Indeed, offering answers to readers' letters was a device in many publications, including the *Family Friend*. Beeton's *English Woman's Domestic Magazine*, the *Boys' Own Paper* and the *Girls' Own Paper*, while many others offered advice columns. The scissors-and-paste approach had long been a standard means for periodicals to fill their pages, not excepting the radical unstamped press in the 1820s and 1830s.

Harmsworth, Newnes, and Pearson's each issued many other periodicals, for adults and children. Harmsworth Brothers Limited issued *The Harmsworth Monthly Pictorial Magazine*, initially at 3d. and the half-penny *Pluck, A High Class Weekly Library of Adventure at Home & Abroad, on Land & Sea*. This was promoted by Alfred Harmsworth himself as "the paper that kills the 'Penny dreadful.'"

Tit-Bits rapidly achieved a national circulation of 500,000 copies (with many more readers). It was incorporated into *Weekend* in 1984, but the title of *Titbits International* continued.

2. *The Ha'porth Of Wit, Wisdom, Fiction, Pastime & General Information*. Weekly, One halfpenny. Saturday, August 30, 1890. William Rider & Son, 14, Bartholomew close, London, E.C. Large sq. roy8vo, 12pp.

One of at least 22 imitators of *Tit-Bits* launched in the first year alone, and even heading its front page with "£100 Free Railway Accident Insurance Policy", which marketing idea Newnes had first introduced.

3. *Rare Bits From All The Most Interesting Sources*. Large sq. roy. 8vo. Cover printed in orange. No.381. – Vol. XV. Saturday, March 16, 1889. 1d .Dale, Reynolds & Co., 24, Wellington-street, Strand, London, W.C.

With the usual soap and other advertisements, and accident insurance offers. This copy stamped 'Specimen'. If the information printed on the front cover can be believed this was a very successful competitor to *Tit-Bits* and to Harmsworth's *Answers*, but it is the only copy I have ever seen. Another comic competitor was *Illustrated Bits*, published by Thomas Harrison Roberts from October 1884 and taken over by his close associate William Lucas in 1886. Rare Bits offered £100 for Death or Total Disablement and £50 for Partial Disablement.

4. *Book-Bits*. No.1. Vol.1. 4th July 1896. One Penny. Large sq. roy.8vo. Cover with advertising printed on red paper. Horace Marshall & Son, 125, Fleet Street, E.C.

Another 'Popular illustrated weekly' seeking some of the new market revealed by *Tit-Bits*.

5. Cassell's Saturday Journal. No.817. May 24, 1899. Large sq.roy. 8vo. Pale fawn covers. 1d.

Cassell's response to Harmsworth's *Answers*. With the by now normal advertisement of free insurance in case of accident, but broadened to include Train, Steamboat, Tram, Omnibus, Cab or Motor Car accident. The firm also issued at this time similar 'improving' high-quality boys' and girls' papers including *The New Penny Magazine*; *Cassell's Magazine*; *The Quiver*; *The Magazine of Art*; *Chums*; &c. In 1850 he had issued *the Working Man's Friend*, which reached a sale of 100,000 copies in a few months. He anticipated in some ways Newnes' ideas. The firm persisted in these educational and juvenile markets. In 1905 Cassell's founded *The New Boys' World*, a 1d. weekly. In the mid-1850s its leading periodicals had included the very large format *Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper*, which was splendidly illustrated, weekly, 1d. and with some 2d. double-numbers.

6. Tit-Bits From All The Most Interesting Books, Periodicals And Newspapers In The World.

Conducted By Geo. Newnes. No.384. - Vol. XV. February 23, 1889. Price One Penny. Large sq. quarto.

These later issues were more attractively designed than the first issues, and printed on green coloured paper. Newnes made a leading feature of letters from readers, and replies. But this was not new, as I have noted earlier. Many story papers, including Brett's, had made use of this inexpensive 'copy'.

7. Tit-Bits From All The Most Interesting Books, Periodicals And Newspapers In The World.

Conducted By Geo. Newnes. No.1. – Vol.1. Monthly Shorthand Edition in Pitman's Phonography. October 11, 1890. Large sq.8vo. 2d.

This was the same text as the Longhand Edition. No. 409, Vol. XIX. 384

Newnes, as usual, proved to have tremendous insights, influence and entrepreneurial powers in supplying new markets. With the boom of the 1880s onwards of working-girls as 'typewriters' (as they were then called) and secretaries the publishers Pitman also produced illustrated shorthand editions of classics, too, such as *The Vicar of Wakefield*, issued by Isaac Pitman & Sons in London and the Phonetic Institute in Bath in 1889. Newnes sold space in his shorthand edition to Pitman's, who issued a monthly shorthand version in Pitman's Phonography. He sold, too, to the suppliers of Remington Standard Typewriter, and to the Metropolitan School of Shorthand, Ltd., in Chancery Lane, which also had a separate school for type-writing. Edward Lloyd had trained in shorthand here!

Newnes' other greatest invention was *The Strand Magazine*.

8. The Strand Magazine. No.54 Vol 9. June 1895. Roy. 8vo. George Newnes, Ltd., Southampton Street, and Exeter Street, Strand, London. W.C.

Original pale blue paperback covers, inked in dark blue, as were all of the early issues. After the Great War various different coloured and illustrated covers were introduced. The half-yearly bound volumes were issued in bright blue cloth covers, blocked in black and gold, again in the in Royal 8vo format.

This famously offered new fiction, illustration, general interest articles and entertainment. It will always be associated with Sherlock Holmes. As a consequence, it remains one of the most famous of all fiction-based magazines. Newnes invested his large profits from *Tit-Bits* into his new magazine. No doubt influenced by what he had seen with American magazines, notably *Harper's* and *Scribner's*.

The Strand Magazine was a securely middle-class 6d. monthly, published from January 1891 to March 1950, running to 711 issues, though the first issue was on sale well before Christmas 1890. Its immediate popularity is evidenced by an initial sale of nearly 300,000. Sales increased in the early months, before settling down to a circulation of almost 500,000 copies a month, a figure which lasted well into the 1930s. It was edited by Herbert Greenhough Smith from 1891 to 1930. The magazine's original offices were in Burleigh Street off The Strand, London.

It merged with *Men Only* in March 1950 – a very different proposition. It was revived in 1998 as a quarterly magazine. Newnes also issued *The Sunday Strand And Home Magazine. An Illustrated Home Monthly*, the first volume being bound with the issues for January – June 1900. This was a handsome, high-grade production, in royal 8vo format. It was well illustrated, and with an index in each volume. It was bound in green buckram, blocked in gold and black, with floral decoration. There is a complete guide to the contents of *The Strand Magazine: Geraldine Beare, Index To The Strand Magazine 1891-1950* (Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 1983).

9. *The Million*. No.118, Vol. 5. For the Week Ending Saturday, June 28, 1895. Edited by Geo. Newnes. Large Sq.8vo. One Penny. Monochrome cover and an illustrated colour title-page.

It was a combative market, and major book publishers joined in.

10. *The Woman at Home*. ‘Annie S. Swan’s Magazine’. Vol.1. No.1. October 1893. Royal 8vo. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row, E.C. (1893).

Swan (1859-1943) was a prolific novelist, and at this time she was also writing a series of short stories being published in *The Young Woman*, issued by S.W. Partridge & Co., the religious publishers. Swann also wrote for many other outlets, including *Woman's Own*, published by W. B. Horner & Son, which issued Grand Fiction Numbers.

11. *The Osborne. A Monthly Illustrated Magazine Of Fact & Fiction*. Vol.1. – No.1. November 1896. S.W. Partridge & Co., 8 & 9 Paternoster Row. London, E C.

Issued at 3d., the blue inked cover a drawing of The Queen’s Isle of Wight retreat.

The juvenile market was increasingly important. Newnes, like Cassell’s, established a special juvenile section in his firm, for the boy’s and girl’s papers he issued. Productions after the founder’s death included the *Boys’ Best Paper* (1911), the *Nick Carter Weekly* (1911), and the *Crusoe Mag* (1924), among a dozen or so.

Newnes employed many good writers and illustrators. P.G. Wodehouse was one of the authors of stories for *The Captain, A Magazine for Boys and Old Boys* from April 1902. This appeared in 30 monthly issues in 50 vols. to March 1924, edited by ‘The Old Fag’ [Robert Stanley Warren Bell] up

to 1910. Newnes went on into the 20th century issuing other cheap boys books in wrappers, such as his *Dick Turpin Library*, which ran to 138 numbers between 1922 and 1930.

As Jackson notes, “This list covered a diverse range of journalistic prototypes: the penny weekly, the sixpenny illustrated magazine, the women’s magazine and the boys’ paper...Newnes pioneered new styles, formats and journalistic techniques, and accessed new audiences.” As he said, he was not frightened by originality, and he was inclined to do things differently, and in his own way. Those who write about Holmes do not necessarily carefully examine the rest of *The Strand* and its contents, which were in fact very varied, educational as well as entertaining. Spin-offs included the *Strand Musical Magazine* (1895-99), the handsome Sherlock Holmes hardcover editions, and many cheap fiction paperbacks of good novels.

Newnes’s life ended tragically, with his house being burned down by suffragettes, and he had by then lost his fortune in ill-advised speculations. After his death on 9 June 1910 the company continued in business, and in 1963 it became part of IPC Media, later absorbed by Time Warner. His North Devon house is now a ruin. Newnes had started with no capital, but he had founded the Vegetarian Company’s Saloon in Manchester, and with the £400 he made there he went into publishing. Northcliffe died in sad circumstances too, at his last home, 1 Carlton Gardens, London, in 1922. He was buried in St. Marylebone cemetery.

12. *The Strand Novelettes*. Vol. II George Newnes, Limited, Southampton Street And Exeter Street, Strand, 1895. Sq. Double Demy 16mo. Pale duck-egg blue buckram, ruled black and tan, decoratively inked in red, gold and black. Pale fawn, decorated floral end-papers. Set in two-columns.

Contains thirteen separately published novelettes, bound up together in this one volume in publisher’s cloth, with a general title-page. Three such volumes were issued in all, separately, at intervals between March and August 1895. The Flower of Vengeance, by Frederic Breton. True Love’s Mistake, by Miss M. Capes; A Love that Grew, by Alys Hallard; Maying in Harvester, by Alison Buckler; St Valentine’s Lottery, by Isabel Bellerby; Alan Lindow’s Wife, by Huan Mee; A Wish And its Cost, by Lester Lorton; In Exchange for a Life, by Robert Halifax; A Shadowed Life, by Bertha Henry; A Famous Mystery, by Hugh Coleman Davidson; The Taming of a Madcap, by Edith Maude Dunaway An Unsuspected Witness, by Hannah Marty, and Story of Two Singers, by Mrs. Henry E. Dudeney. The authors were all well-known popular writers of the day.

Newnes also issued many other periodicals publishing new fiction, including *The Grand Magazine* (from Vol. I, February - July 1905). This first issue included *A Tropical Horror* by William Hope Hodgson, and the ‘My Best Story’ series by A. Conan Doyle, W. W. Jacobs, Max Pemberton, H. G. Wells, Barry Pain, M. E. Braddon. The volumes later included short stories and articles (some reprinted from the previous century) by authors including Morley Roberts, Charlotte Gilman, Max Pemberton, Barry Pain, Frank A. Stockton. P. G Wodehouse (*Tom, Dick and Harry A Cricket Story*) & William Hope Hodgson (*A Tropical Horror*), and J. Sheridan le Fanu (*The Room in the Dragon Volant*).

Similarly, *The Home Magazine*, launched on 23 April 1898, 1d., published every Wednesday with new serial fiction, it was edited by George Clarke and Frank Newnes. It was promoted as an “Illustrated Paper for Sunday And Weekly Reading.” [Found tucked into my copy was a receipt from the Frances Mary Buss Schools for Girls. North London Collegiate School, Sandall Road, Camden Road, N.W., dated 14th May 1900.]

13. *The Wide-World Magazine*. No.1, Vol.1. April 1898. Geo. Newnes Ltd., Southampton Street, Strand. London. Sq. Roy. 8vo. format, 6d. Pink wrappers.

Newnes's many other periodicals included *The Strand Musical Magazine*, and *The Penny Musical Library*. Each comprised sheet music. He issued many practical guides and periodicals for specific interests. I show three:

14. *The Strand Musical Magazine: A Musical Monthly*. *Number 1, Vol.1. January 1895. Large sq. roy. 8vo. George Newnes Limited, 8, 9, 10, & 11, Southampton St., Strand, W.C. Illustrated cover, in black and red. 6d.*

This was a substantial periodical of 80 pages, and 16 pp. of advertising.

15. *The Penny Musical Library*. No.1. [n.d.] Edited by E.Hatzfeld. George Newnes Lmd. 8.9.10.11. Southampton St. Strand WC Large roy.8vo.

The issue also promoted the Grand Christmas December Double Number of 'The Strand Musical Magazine'. Price 1s. Newnes also issued *The Picture Magazine*. No.1. January 1893, in orange paper covers lettered in red, and with an annual bound volume too. That was sold as 'Companion To The Strand Magazine'.

16. *Answers To Correspondents On Every Subject Under The Sun*. Vol. VII. No.172. September 12th 1891. One Penny. Weekly. Printed in black on orange paper. Large sq.quarto.

The first issue was marked by the printers as No. 3 – dated June 2 ,1888 - Harmsworth deliberately giving the impression that the replies to letters were as a result of the first 2 issues, of which only a few were printed, and these only later. Curiously, too, the final issue dated February 18, 1956 was never seen by the public it being prevented from being put on sale by a printer's strike. Initially it was printed on cream coloured paper, with no cover or advertisements. Harmsworth wrote all of the articles, paragraphs and jokes for the early issues. It adopted its distinctive orange colour in the autumn of 1888.

Harmsworth had roughed out his own 'dummy' of his new idea on a copy of *Tit-Bits*, dated April 14, 1888. The copy shown is the 10th year of the periodical. The distinctive orange cover had been adopted five months after its launch. The original title was *Answers to Correspondents on every Subject Under the Sun*, which subsequently became *Answers: a weekly journal of instruction and jokes*, and then *Answers To Correspondents*. Its masthead declared itself to be Interesting, Extraordinary. Amusing.

The title was directly lifted out of *Tit-Bits*. A page there was headed 'Answers to Correspondents, with paragraphs of two or three lines only. Newnes wrote many of the replies. He may also have written some of the questioning letters too. Harmsworth could have pleaded innocently that he had used the idea of 'Answers to Correspondents' when he edited *The Henley House School Magazine*. Both probably knew of another paper, *Replies, A Journal of Question and Answer* which had appeared two years before *Tit-Bits* started. It had been published, unsuccessfully, by the Co-operative Publishing Company who sold it to a firm of money-lenders when it was renamed *Oracle*.

There was also an American paper, *Queries*, on sale in London. The earlier *Family Herald* issued by William Stevens had also used many readers' letters. *Noted and Queries* served the same middle-class purposes. Yet Newnes had shone the spotlight on the idea nationally and for a wide popular audience. Harmsworth developed it much further, making letters *the* feature in what he called his SCHEMO MAGNIFICO.

Harmsworth had worked his way as a freelance journalist and as an editor of other people's papers, including the weekly and illustrated *Bicycling News*, to which the putative novelist Arthur Morrison was also a contributor. Harmsworth had given readers' letters prominence there too. He had then left, and shared an office at 26 Paternoster Square with the publishers of *Horner's Penny Stories* – divided by a matchboard partition.

Answers To Correspondents was Harmsworth's response to *Tit-Bits*, and his first independent press venture, when he was aged only 22. He copied *Tit-Bits* and also the similar columns dealing with readers' questions from the long-established *Lloyd's* and *Reynolds's* weeklies. So he followed his announced precept that he would let his reader ask the questions. *Answers to Correspondents* rapidly became the foundation of Harmsworth's fame, fortune, and ultimate political influence. With its title soon shortened to *Answers* in December 1889 it was an enormous seller, attaining 13,000 copies to start with, c.40,000 copies within the year, nearly 400,000 copies by 1893, and 1m. by 1894.

The firm employed street-sellers, who took an aggressive approach to possible buyers. He also secured major writers. Conan Doyle's serial story *The Doings of Raffles* was followed by *Convict 99, or Penal Servitude for Life* by Marie Connor Leighton – forgotten now but a sensation then. After appearing in *Answers* in 1892 it was reprinted in several other papers. Harmsworth can be credited with popularising the serial story. By June 1892 the net sales of Harmsworth's publications were certified as in excess of a million copies a week.

Harmsworth offered large cash prizes in competitions, as did Newnes. But in this neither was an innovator, it being a regular lure in earlier periodicals. For example, S.O. Beeton had done so with his magazines in the 1860s. The Newsagents' Publishing Company - from where at 147 Fleet Street Edwin J. Brett published the 16-page weekly periodical *Boys of England. A Young Gentleman's Journal of Sport, Sensation, Fun & Instruction*, and much else including *Boys of the Empire and Young Men of Great Britain* - showed the prizes he offered as displays in large windows. These included watches, gilt clocks, muslin dresses, silk dresses, writing desks and gloves.

In April 1889 *Answers* became a limited company, one of several interlocked companies which Harmsworth developed. He then took another major step. In May 1890 there then truly started the modern comics boom. Harmsworth entered the juvenile market with new productions and at a new price – a halfpenny. This shook up the entire trade. Due to him there came into the modern culture the word 'comic' in common usage, together with the full-page comic strip, speech balloons, colour printing for the cheapest papers, and regular characters. He issued *Comic Cuts*, the weekly *Illustrated Chips* (quickly shortened to *Chips*), and the *Funny Wonder* in 1890. *Comic Cuts* promised "One Hundred Laughs for One Halfpenny!" just when sales of his key periodical *Answers* were flagging.

Harmsworth had here established a half-penny as the price of many journals, and competitors had to fall into line. The *Answers* price and visual appeal worked (although an all-fiction supplement, sold separately, failed, and was turned into *Home Sweet Home*). At a half-penny the *Answers* price was rock-bottom – welcomed by working-class boys but with many newsagents reluctant to handle it as there was no margin for them. However, Harmsworth proved right with his 'halfpenny principle', and everyone profited from it. *Comic Cuts* ran to 3,006 issues. These were his first ventures into the

children's market, and they were very successful. His companies, issued more than 50 comics, into the 1960s. *Comic Cuts* itself ran until September 1953, issuing 3,056 numbers. These half-penny periodicals took a large slice of the boys' market. Adult periodicals were then priced at that level, too. For example, *The Peep Show*.

"The Chief" also established the *Answers' Library*, a series of 1d. paperback novels. No.29 was issued on December 10 1910.

17. *The Peep Show*. No. 1. Vol.1. Edited by Frederick Leslie. One Halfpenny. Sq. large 8vo. [n.d.] ?1890

Published by Charles Strong & Co., 167, Strand, London. E.C. Headlined as 'The Most Wonderful Ha'porth On Earth!' It claimed to publish "The daintiest Novelettes in the World."

18. *The Railway Signal Or Lights Along The Line. A Journal of Evangelistic and Temperance Work on all Railways*. With which is incorporated "The Railway Chariot." No.10.-Vol.X. October 1892. One Penny, Post free, 1 1/2d.

The railway line-to-heaven as a persuasive motif was much used by religious organisations. This journal was published by The Railway Mission, 15, New Bridge Street, London. E.C. It was a monthly miscellany with some poetry and short fiction included. A very attractively bound annual volume was issued in blue cloth.

19. *Our Own Gazette*. Y.W.C. Association News. Vol. VIII. No27. March 1886. One penny. Large sq.8vo.

Published by S.W. Partridge & Co. from c.1884, edited by Mrs. Stephen Menzies, with similar purposes to *The Railway Signal* - and also with some fiction - rallying the Young Women's Christian Association.

20. *The Daily Mail*, first issue May 4, 1896.

I show a photograph of this.

On 4 May 1896 Harmsworth issued the first half-penny *Daily Mail*. "A Penny Newspaper for One Halfpenny." It proved to be one of the greatest building blocks to his empire. It became the supreme British popular newspaper. It is regarded as the most consistently efficient journalistic expression of his commanding and effervescent personality. Although its front page was crowded with small advertisement (just like *The Times*) it was deliberately intended to be an entertainment, as well as a news source. Harmsworth had already acquired the failing *Evening News* in 1894, and went on to launch the *Daily Mirror* too in 1903. The *News* was one of five penny evening papers in London. By then Harmsworth owned the largest magazine company ever formed anywhere. He continued to expand. In 1903 he bought the *Weekly Dispatch* from the Newnes family. In 1905 he acquired *The Observer*, Edmund Yates's old paper *The World* in that year, and then *The Times* in 1908. He bought an interest in the social weekly *Vanity Fair*, and tried to buy *Country Life* from Newnes.

As owner of *The Times* – which even under his control retained a semi-independent editorial role - he also owned the controversial Times Book Club, and the *Times Literary Supplement*. In 1919 he had also bought *Notes and Queries*, to save it from closure. His firm then controlled some 110 publications.

The Daily Mail sold 397, 213 copies of the first issue – an unprecedented sale for a morning paper. By 1900 sales had reached 989,255, and never fell below 713,000 copies. In 1920 it had reached 1,350,000, the world's largest. At Northcliffe's death in 1922 its circulation had grown to 1,735,000 copies. His publications together then sold more than 20 million copies weekly.

From the beginning the *Daily Mail* was printed on good quality white paper, to facilitate the growing use of illustrations. Although abused as 'a paper run by office-boys for office-boys' – and as 'the yellow press' - it employed Max Beerbohm, and other well-educated men.

The paper discovered a new reading public. The modern world of the mass reading public was here. The *Sunday Daily Mail* was launched in April, 1899, the *Overseas Daily Mail* in November 1904, and the *Continental Daily Mail* in May 1905. In 1913 there was a *Berlin* edition. In March 191 the *Daily Mail* was advertised as "THE TIMES at 1d."

Harmsworth issued the first coloured comic exclusively for children too. The genteel and unthreatening *The Rainbow* (on February 1914 published as the first coloured comic deliberately created just for children), *The Children's Paper That Parents Approve Of*, was launched by The Amalgamated Press on St. Valentine's Day 1914. This reached a weekly circulation of c.1m. copies. It was delivered to Buckingham Palace for the Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret – a publicity coup, or on order from approving parents?

The Amalgamated Press, as Harmsworth's organisation was then known, was the world's largest periodical publishing organization.

21. *The Harmsworth Monthly Pictorial Magazine*. No.1, July 1898. Large sq. roy. 8vo. Harmsworth Brothers limited, 21 Tudor Street, London, E.C. Illustrated coloured cover. 3d.

First published in July 1898, another of the ventures by the family, amongst a host of periodicals in every market. Soon priced at three pence half-penny

Harmsworth was very interested in the new reading market for women. Few popular periodicals dealt with what were then thought to be 'women's interests'. The more expensive journals included *The Queen*, the *Ladies' Field*, and the *Lady's Pictorial*, which had secure but small circulations. There was also *Woman*, edited by Arnold Bennett.

Harmsworth launched his monthly pictorial and a second pictorial magazine *Forget-Me-Not* (1891), a penny magazine, printed on pale blue paper, sub-titled *A Pictorial Journal for Ladies*. It secured what was claimed to be the largest circulation of any ladies' journal. The firm also sought the Sunday market, where women may have had more time to read, with the *Sunday Companion* (1894), and a succession of new papers including *Golden Stories*, *Handy Stories*, *Home Companion*, *Sunday Circle*; and *Sunday Stories*.

Harmsworth's success consistently showed a high rate of profit to turnover. Alfred provided the journalistic flair and intuitions, his bother Harold (from 1914 the first Viscount Rothermere) the business skills. They emphasised 'better value' as their unique selling point, or more for less. The

five eldest brothers were awarded four baronetcies, three baronies, two viscountcies and one Privy Councillorship.

In 1890 another competitor Cyril Arthur Pearson emerged – a former commercial manager of Newnes'. He founded *Pearson's Weekly* – “To interest, to elevate, and to amuse.” He innovated with a new competition to attract readers – ‘Missing Words’ - which became a new popular craze. Pearson had made his own start in journalism by winning a *Tit-Bits* competition and then joining the paper. Like Harmsworth, Pearson wrote almost all of the material for his first issues. He went round the country in third-class railway compartments, living on sandwiches, selling the paper, writing articles between stations. *Pearson's Weekly* was in the 6d. class, with *The Strand*, *The Windsor*, and *The Royal*.

By 1900 *Tit-Bits*, *Answers*, and *Pearson's Weekly* were selling over 2 million copies between them. The coloured covers on railway bookstalls distinguished them: pink for *Pearson's Weekly*; orange for *Answers*; green for *Tit-Bits*. Tinted paper was cheaper than white.

Pearson (the son of a CofE clergyman) also founded the *Daily Express* in 1900 – basing it on *the Morning Herald*, the new paper being named the *Daily Express and Morning Herald*, with news on the front page, unlike *The Times*. Both Harmsworth and Pearson had worked for Newnes.

Other similar successful competing periodicals included *T.P.'s* and *Cassell's Weekly*. Pearson's periodical specifically for women was *Home Notes*. In 1895 Harmsworth launched *Home Chat* in direct competition, sold for a penny. It featured articles on careers and new outlets for women's creativeness as well as gossip and entertainment. It survived until 1959.

22. *Pearson's Magazine*. Vol. 1, No.1. January 1896. C. Arthur Pearson, Henrietta Street, London. W.C. Sq. roy. 8vo. Coloured illustrated cover. 6d.

The chief publication of C. Arthur Pearson, together with his later acquisitions of several national newspapers. Printed with a pink cover – ‘To Interest, To Elevate, To Amuse’ - it ran from 1896-1939. In the late 1890s it was selling a million copies monthly. It included serial fiction by Kipling, H. G. Wells, Walter Besant, Conan Doyle, Jack London, etc. Pearson was his own editor between 1896-1900. The magazine also published poetry, society news, &c.

23. *The Royal Magazine*. No.10. Vol. II, August 1899. Large sq. Roy. 8vo. Coloured illustrated paper cover by Edward Read, printed in red and black. C. Arthur Pearson Ltd., London, W.C. 3d.

24. *Pearson's Society News with which is incorporated The Weeks News*, Edited by C. Arthur Pearson (of *Pearson's Weekly*). No.1. – Vol.1. Week ending August 6, 1892. 1d. Large sq. roy. 8vo. Cover printed green.

We know that such periodicals had multiple readers. This issue included the heading “If the paper pleases you, will you be good enough to hand it to a friend when you have finished with it?” Tinted papers were supposed to be easier on the eye. This issue was presented *gratis* with *Pearson's Weekly* for this date.

25. *The Search Light*. Pearson's Monthly. Vol.1. – No.1. March 1892. 3d. 4TH Edition. Edited by C. Arthur Pearson. Large ro.8vo. Illustrated cover on fawn paper.

Its editorial by Pearson stated that it sought to offer in more permanent form “stories and articles that everyone would like to read, if they only knew where to find them.”

26. *Short Stories*. Edited By C. Arthur Pearson (Of Pearson's Weekly). No.369. For Week Ending January 25th, 1896. One Penny. Sq.8vo. Printed on pale orange paper.

A £10 prize in a puzzle picture competition, p.823.

27. *The Review of Reviews. A Sixpenny Monthly*. Edited By W.T. Stead. Vol.1. No. 1. January 1890. Office Of the Review Of Reviews. Burleigh St. Strand W.C. Large sq.roy.8vo. Paper covers, illustrated, and with Contents.

The very first issue. Very directly intended for women readers as well as for men. *The Review of Reviews*, 1896-1936 was a major journal and much influenced politics, especially feminist issues. He promoted the New Woman novelists, including Sarah Grand and Olive Schreiner.

In 1896 W.T. Stead was George Newnes's founding-partner in the *Review of Reviews*, which on 6 January 1890 first appeared as a 6d monthly to make “the best thoughts of the best writers universally accessible.” It was to be a guide through the literary maze, and a time-saver – besides being “a common centre for the intercommunication of ideas.”

On the first day 60,000 copies were sold, and the publication attained a circulation of 150,000. But Newnes and Stead diverged in their views and Stead bought Newnes out after 6 months. Newnes then founded the *Strand Magazine*. Stead went on as editor, publisher, and proprietor of the *Review of Reviews* (which he founded in January 1890) at Mowbray House. He also founded *American* (1891) and *Australian* (1892). His connection with the *RofR* ended with his death by drowning on the *Titanic* 14 April 1912. Each issue was produced in grey paper-covers, with an annual bound volume, and with separate editions for America, France, and Australasia.

28. *The Review of Reviews. A Sixpenny Monthly*. The Review of Reviews Editorial Office: Mowbray House, Norfolk Street, London, W.C. Publishing Office: Horace Marshall And Son, 125, Fleet Street, London, W.C. Large sq. roy. 8vo. Light Blue cloth, blocked in black and gilt, with the design adopted from the beginning showing the globe, and the word illustrated in large capitals. Vol. IV, July - December, 1896. Price Five Shillings. With wording W. T. Stead, Mowbray House London at foot of spine in gilt. Pale blue end-papers. There is a website: www.attackingthedevil.co.uk/ Stead was a spiritualist.

One of the annual bound volumes.

29. *Pall Mall Magazine*. Vol. 1. No.1. May 1893. Grey paper covers with decorative illustrated cover printed in black. Sq. roy. 8vo. George Routledge & Sons. Limited, London, Manchester And New York.

The first issue.

The half-yearly bound volumes were initially issued in a handsome, buckram-bound, light fawn cloth in royal 8vo. format, decoratively illustrated and blocked in red and gold. The later style was again beautifully produced volumes but in pale blue cloth blocked in gold

The Pall Mall Magazine virtually took the name of the fictional newspaper in Thackeray's *The History of Pendennis* (1848–1850): Pall Mall is where many gentlemen's clubs are located, hence Thackeray's description of this imaginary newspaper in his novel: "We address ourselves to the higher circles of society: we care not to disown it—the Pall Mall Gazette is written by gentlemen for gentlemen; its conductors speak to the classes in which they live and were born. The field-preacher has his journal, the radical free-thinker has his journal: why should the Gentlemen of England be unrepresented in the Press?"

W.T. Stead was editor from 1883 to 1890. In October 1912, the *PMM* merged with *Nash's Magazine*, to become *Nash's and Pall Mall Magazine*. From May 1927 the two magazines were again published separately, but were re-merged in September 1929. The magazine closed following the issue of September 1937.

30. Nash's and Pall Mall Magazine. March 1917. The National Magazine Co. Ltd., 69, Fleet Street, London. E.C. Roy. 8vo. Illustrated coloured cover. 7d.

Front cover carried the message: "After you have read this magazine hand it in at any post office and it will be forwarded post free to the troops at the front." Whoever had bought this copy evidently did not do so.

There were other periodicals seeking to offer current information, including *The Torch*, which did not include fiction.

31. The Torch. A Weekly Review of Society, Literature, Art, Fashion, and Finance. Printed for the Proprietors by the Economic Printing And Publishing Co. and Published by W.J. Sinkin at 26, Paternoster Square E.C. Fscap. Illustrated cover (signed Forrest 96) printed in beige -red and black. Number 1: Vol.1. Thursday, October 15, 1896. 24pp. plus 4pp. covers. 1d. weekly, per annum post paid 6/6.

32. I.O.U. A Bright and Up-To-Date Journal of Instruction & Amusement for Coast, Country, & Fireside. No.1. Vol.1. 29th June, 1901. 1d. Large sq. roy. 8vo. J. W. McLaren & Co., St. Giles Street (Stairs), Edinburgh. Cover printed red.

A Scottish late-entrant, competing with Newnes and Harmsworth. Offered £500 Railway Insurance. 20pp. and covers. £4,100 free insurance.

33. Smart Fiction. Christmas Number. Large sq. 8v. Shurey's Publications, 17 Tudor Street. London, E.C. Nov. 22, 1915. Red and black illustrated cover showing glamorous upper-class woman in large hat, a favourite device for suggesting an aspirational market. Contains Kitty Lofting, "Another Man's Wife" and other stories. 24pp. and covers. No.3. 1d.

34. Letters Upon Every Interesting Subject In The World. No. 1. – Vol.1. Saturday, March 12, 1892. One Penny. Large sq.8vo.

Another imitative echo of *Answers*? But with some fiction, including ‘A True Detective Tale’, by a Commissioner of Police. Published from 10, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, and possibly a Brent or a James Henderson publication, although credited on the back to the British Publishing Company.

35. Stories. Interesting Articles, Etc. Entertaining. Instructive. From The Best Books & The Best Writers. The Best Magazines Throughout The World. A Weekly journal Price One Penny. No.1. – Vol.1. Week Ending November 6, 1897. Large sq. roy. 8vo. Stories Limited, 8, 9, and 36 Essex Street, Strand, London. W.C. Cover printed in orange, imitating Harmsworth’s *Answers*. 24pp. and covers.

36. The London Reader. An Illustrated Magazine Of Fiction. New Series, No.1. October 10, 1903. One Penny. Large sq. 8vo. Pale orange cover. Walbrook & Co., 13-15 Whitefriars Street, London, E.C.

This now obscure adult publication contained work by the best-selling novelist Charles Garvice, Hugh Conway, T. P. O’Connor and others. I have never seen an example of an earlier series, if there was one.

37. School Girls. Edited By Olivia Landale. Large sq. roy. 8vo. Vol. 1. No.1. July 7th, 1894. Messrs. Marshall Brothers, 5a, Paternoster Row, London, E.C. Price One Penny. Monthly Part, Sixpence. Contains *St. Catherine’s Tower* by Dorothy K. Thornton., and other stories. 16pp including covers.

38. Pick Me Up. Pick Me Up, 11, Southampton Street, Strand, W.C. Small sq. folio. No.1. Vol.1, Saturday October 6, 1888. 1d. 6s.6d. per annum post free.

An illustrated, black and white, 12 page miscellany. This was issued at an address occupied by George Newnes. Another journal. The Pepper-Box was started on July 6, 1909, by the Editor and principal staff of *Pick-Me-Up*, but by then issued by Odhams Ltd. from 93 and 94 Long Acre, E.C.

This Harmsworth paper was a stable-mate of *The Marvel* which featured Sexton Blake, Detective. Its running title was *The “Halfpenny Marvel Library”*, 1893-1922.

A.A. Milne remarked that “Harmsworth killed the ‘penny dreadful’ by the simple process of producing the ha’penny dreadfuller.”

Harmsworth’s other famous best-selling magazines for juveniles included *Gem* (1907-39), and its companion, the half-penny *Magnet* (1908-40), featuring school stories, notably of Greyfriars School and Billy Bunter.

39. Pluck. A High Class Weekly Library of Adventure at Home & Aboard, on Land & Sea. Every Saturday. Vol. II. - No.51. Large roy.8vo. Cover printed in red. 16pp. and cover. 1/2d. [n.d.] ?1895.

Pluck – with the running title of The “Pluck” Library - was launched on 24 November 1894 as a halfpenny weekly. It ran to 519 issues, to 5 November 1904, and was then repriced at 1d., and continued in a “new” series of 594 issues to March 1916 when it was merged with the large-format *Boys’ Realm Of Sport and Adventure*, which became the firm’s most successful boys’ paper, lasting until February 1930. Harmsworth also issued the 2d. weekly *Sport and Adventure* in the 1920s.

The front cover of the shown item says that “PLUCK is the paper that kills the “Penny Dreadful” and at the foot of the first inside-page is printed the line that “Answers” is the most successful paper in the world.” So, another Harmsworth venture, if hardly “high class.”

The firm also published *The Union Jack, Library of High-Class Fiction*, weekly, 1/2d., which offered complete long novels, in 16 pages, and the *Halfpenny Marvel*, launched on 11 November 1893 by Alfred Harmsworth under the sententious (and inaccurate) slogan “No more penny dreadfuls! These healthy stories of mystery, adventure etc. will kill them.” This project undercut rivals and changed the pricing structure of competitive periodicals for boys, while delivering the kinds of content it descried. *True Blue, A Weekly Library of High-class Fiction*, issued at a half-penny, offered exciting tales of ‘empire’ and adventure. Entirely incorrect politically.

40. Millions. *The Magazine For All*. Large sq. roy. 8vo. No.8, May 1913. Millions Monthly Magazine 115 Victoria Street, London. S.W.

Red and black engraved illustrated cover showing aristocratic couple in carriage, signed A. Morrow. “The Largest and The Best Magazine Ever issued for One Penny. Every Subscriber a Shareholder.” Contains short stories by “Rita”, Elizabeth Quayle, Caryll Ford, E.M. Hardy, &c. Also, serial stories by Joseph Keating and Marie Connor Leighton. 32pp. plus covers.

Predecessors:

Novelettes were a crucial element in popular market appeal.

There were many such predecessors of the cheaper fiction publications of Newnes, Harmsworth, Pearson and Stead, and which contained some of the key elements of the successes of the 1880s and onwards. Here the reader is referred especially to the important guides in the works of Elizabeth James, Louis James, Robert J. Kirkpatrick, and Helen S. Smith. The context is superbly presented in John Sutherland's books, now standard.

Amongst the publishers with the largest circulations throughout the 19th century were the publishers of penny novelettes. These continued into the 20th century as very cheap paper-covered items, and it is still a relatively unexplored field of study.

This novelette format was used by some of the most successful publishers of popular cheap penny fiction. These novelettes were often very well illustrated, and by skilled artists. The pictorial material needs to be taken seriously, and so does the fiction in its own terms.

Wilkie Collins commented on the earlier novelettes in 1858 – dubbing them “penny-novel journals”. They came into greater prominence in the 1870s, offering complete new serial stories. In the last years of the century there were some 35 titles competing. Kristine Leslie Moruzi, in *The Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism*, wrote that “In 1883, in the *Nineteenth Century*, Thomas Wright contradicted the prevalent view that the novelettes were read by the female domestic servant, citing rather the semi-educated daughter of the genteel classes, who had too much leisure but not much money.”

These *Novelettes* (or short novels) were published at different market levels, predominantly for working class readers. But some volumes were very handsomely bound as well as being issued in paper covers and were clearly aimed at middle-class buyers. The bound volumes gathered the weekly or monthly printed copies from the previous quarter, half year, or year.

There were many middle-class journals as well as those for ‘down-below’. Lower-class weekly penny magazine publications (supplementing access to penny-novels) proliferated, and some also reached into the middle-classes, especially from the late 1880s. Many were published at 1d. Some were named as edited by women. There were also those with a religious bent, led by the *Saturday Magazine* (1832-44) issued by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, which sold 70,000 copies weekly in the 1830s.

The leading publishers of cheap popular novelettes were Edwin J. Brett, Charles Shurey, William Lucas, T. Harrison Roberts, &c. Much of the writing was anonymous or pseudonymous but Mrs. M.E. Braddon was one contributor.

Some publications were of astonishing quality in their bindings. I show one example.

41. *The Illustrated Drawing Room Novelette*. Containing Twenty-Six Complete Novels. Half-Yearly Volume. London: The General Publishing Company, 280, Strand, W.C. and 125, Fleet Street, E.C. [n.d.]. ?1885. Fscp.

Very handsomely bound in green cloth, blocked in gilt and black, with inlaid lithographed coloured picture on front cover. Contains Numbers 327 to 351 of weekly 16pp. issues, price one penny each. Illustrated engraved title-pages to individual stories.

How could a middle-class buyer with a few 'spare' shillings have resisted this as a purchase?

This was surely exclusively intended for the well-off upper and middle-class reader who will perhaps have been a 'Lady With A Library Table'.

By contrast with this splendid production, at the lowest end of the market there were said to be farthing-novelettes, but I have not seen one. Frederick Willis, in *A Book of London Yesterdays* (London, Studio Books, 1960) said that dealer's shops priced their wares with three-farthings [there were four farthings in an old penny], and in some such establishments a farthing novelette was given as change.

Agnes Repplier, in her essay 'English Railway Fiction', in her *Points of View* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1891) said that one firm claimed a weekly sale of 7 million copies for its penny novelettes. Victor Neuberg made an estimate of the sheer volume of publications intended for the popular market at the close of the 19th century. For 1885, a year at random, he traced 46 monthly and weekly publications featuring fiction, noting his list as "certainly far from complete."

Many of the London publishers who issued penny fiction between 1830 and 1850 are listed in Louis James's classic comprehensive, *Fiction for The Working Man: 1830-1850. A study of the literature produced for the working classes in early Victorian urban England* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1963; Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1974; new edition, Brighton, Edward Everett Root, 2017). He also provides a check-list of Penny-issue novels.

And, finally, a glance forward to next year's VPPFA annual conference exhibit: 'The English Novelette in the 19th Century.'

42. [Anon], The Princess's Novelettes. "Carried By Storm", Complete Story. Edited by Edwin J. Brett. No.23 – Vol. I. Price One Penny. [n.d.]. ?1886-7. 16pp. Fscap, blue paper covers, illustrated with dramatic engravings.

Surely the most visually attractive of these kinds of publications. The series was offered weekly at 1s., or in monthly parts for 4d. Later it became a monthly. In collected volume form it was issued in cloth. When found the original covers are often missing – were they framed in cottages?

A successful Victorian 'penny' magazine aimed at the market of mainly working-class young women. Each issue featured one short novel and gossip on royals and/or celebrities. It included many illustrations and plates. Most of the novels are by unknown authors and contain sensational stories of romance or mystery. The word 'novelette' obviously 'sold'.

43. *The Illustrated Family Novelist.* Edited By Florence Hodgkinson. Large sq. roy. 8vo., pale orange paper printed in red on cover, with engraved illustration signed W.D. Ewart [?]. No.237, New Series [but this copy also has printed on it No.919. Old Series]. W. Lucas, 158, Fleet Street, London, E.C. [n.d.] ?1885. 1d. "The Biggest Pennyworth In The World." 22pp. and covers. Contains two complete novels, *The Message of The Bells*, and *That New Year's Eve and This*, both anonymous.

This periodical should be distinguished from the earlier *Illustrated Family Novelist* issued by Ingram, Cooke & Co. in the 1850s, and which was a conventional series of full-length hardcover novels.