

## PICKWICK PAPERS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERIAL FICTION

by Robert L. Patten

"If I were to live a hundred years, and write three novels in each, I should never be so proud of them, as I am of *Pickwick*, feeling as I do, that it has made its own way. . . ."

—Charles Dickens to Chapman and Hall, November 1, 1836<sup>1</sup>

*The Pickwick Papers* stands at the end of a long, complex, and accelerating series of developments in book publication. The success of the flimsy shilling parts, issued in green wrappers once each month from April 1836 to November 1837, was unprecedented in the history of literature. "It is doubtful," Edgar Johnson writes, "if any other single work of letters before or since has ever aroused such wild and widespread enthusiasm."<sup>2</sup> The lion's share of credit for that success has always, and properly, gone to the pseudonymous "Boz," a twenty-four-year-old shorthand writer and journalist with a quick eye, a fluent pen, and an inexhaustible, buoyant, and loving imagination. Critics from 1836 on have slighted the part played in the runaway reception of the novel by its unusual format; yet subsequent to Dickens's success with *Pickwick*, parts publication became for thirty years a chief means of democratizing and enormously expanding the Victorian book-reading and book-buying public. Dickens and his publishers discovered the potential of serial publication virtually by accident. In so doing, they changed the world of Victorian publishing, and the Victorian novel, permanently. And, at the same time, their discovery yielded profits hitherto thought impossible for any publisher or author, transforming them all from minor figures in Victorian letters to titans. What forces made that format suddenly possible, and how the changes in publishing converged in 1836 and were married by two shrewd, courageous, and lucky booksellers to the one man who could write letterpress for *all* the people, is the subject of the following narrative.

### I

The "piecemeal publishing of books," observes R. M. Wiles, "was well established a hundred years before Dickens put pen to paper."<sup>3</sup> Early serial publications were generally of five kinds: fascicle issue, cheap part reprints,

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newspapers and magazines, installment fiction, and series. Most visible, though probably not most common, were long, expensive books—dictionaries such as Johnson’s, encyclopedias such as Chambers’s, histories such as Smollett’s—issued in fascicles periodically as printed to subscribers or to booksellers for retail sale. The first leaf of each gathering, or the dust wrapper, would have the special signature of that fascicle. A part might end in mid-chapter, mid-paragraph, even mid-sentence, the catchword for the next part dangling below the final line. When all the gatherings were printed and distributed, the buyer would take the fascicles to his bookseller or bookbinder to be appropriately encased. Some customers were wealthy, and had their own binding styles for their gentlemen’s libraries. But others might be less affluent: number books sold for as little as a farthing a part. The advertisements repeatedly insist that “the Design of publishing Books in this manner Weekly is to lighten the Expence of them.”<sup>4</sup>

Though the relationship between cheap books and a wider reading public is undoubtedly reciprocal, there is no doubt that the availability of number books encouraged reading.<sup>5</sup> It became possible, even easy, for middle and lower class Englishmen to buy and read books, and the range of their interests was enormous: biographies, translations, collections of songs, jest books, and treatises on mathematics, topography, astronomy, architecture, officinal herbs, painting, and calligraphy.<sup>6</sup> Prior to 1725 only a score of books was issued in consecutive parts; the boom began around 1732, and continued throughout the rest of the century.

After 1732, publishers tended to the weekly, rather than monthly, issue, lowering costs and increasing cash flow. Regularity of purchase, a key to the success of serial publication, was encouraged by every possible means. On those rare occasions when some unavoidable delay occurred, proprietors usually inserted an elaborate notice in newspapers, or carried some announcement within the shop or the window. Advertisement was an integral part of selling serials: the first notices “had to be detailed, explicit, and if possible enticing,”<sup>7</sup> in order to establish the habit of buying. The most exciting features of the work were stressed, as in modern movie posters.<sup>8</sup> Descriptive details of the contents were often set forth in eye-catching type on the covers or dust wrappers; sometimes the whole prospectus was reproduced. Anything that would bring the potential customer into the store to buy the first few numbers might be tried: there is an apocryphal story that over twenty thousand copies of Smollett’s *History of England* were sold because the publisher tipped every parish clerk in the kingdom a half-crown to scatter prospectuses in the pews.<sup>9</sup>

Though parts publication was sometimes “a paltry money-grubbing enterprise undertaken by a handful of book pirates on the outer fringes of the publishing business,”<sup>10</sup> there were also eminently respectable publishers; and fine editions of important works were distributed to a much wider

readership than were the single-volume bound versions.<sup>11</sup> For the publishers, who sometimes combined into “congers” to bear the costs and share the profits of a particularly expensive work, the rewards could be enormous.<sup>12</sup> Seldom did the authors or translators benefit from these huge profits, however; most had sold their copyrights outright, or were already dead.

A second kind of serial, created by publishing or republishing standard works—notably the Bible and *Pilgrim's Progress*—in cheap part reprints, for sale or even free distribution by various organizations, was immensely popular in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These works, often crudely printed with clumsy wood block cuts sometimes picked at random from the printer's stock, were distributed weekly or monthly, chiefly to the lower middle and lower classes, for whom they supplied instruction in reading and writing, moral and religious training, political propaganda, and entertainment. Illustrations, particularly colored plates, made a strong appeal. John Kitto, the Biblical scholar, and Thomas Carter, in his *Memoirs of a Working Man*, both record the powerful effect which illustrations produced, exciting their imagination and stimulating them to become book purchasers.<sup>13</sup>

Trade in these items was especially brisk in the provinces.<sup>14</sup> By the first decades of the nineteenth century, provincial distribution networks were doing a lively business in improving tracts, like Hannah More's, political propaganda, like Cobbett's, and the first spate of self-help books. Number reprints were often, like fascicles, discrete divisions only in a bookmaking sense: flimsy and cheap, they were seldom bound, and only infrequently preserved.

Magazines and newspapers are a third form of serial publication, differing from serials (which have sequential page numbering and a consecutive narrative) by repeating the pagination in each issue and keeping the contents of each discrete.<sup>15</sup> In the early eighteenth century, bona fide newspapers often swelled their contents by installment printing of books, sometimes pirated. This practice may have related to a loophole in the Act of 10 Anne, cap. 19, which allowed publishers to avoid much of the stamp tax if they printed a sheet and a half of letterpress rather than a single sheet. However, fiction in installments must have been popular, for it was often featured on page one, and the practice continued even after the tax anomaly was corrected in 1725 by 11 George I, cap. 8.<sup>16</sup>

Fiction in journals was cheaper than the same fiction in book form. Some novels were pirated almost as soon as they came off the press; most were sub-literary; almost none were written or translated for installment printing.<sup>17</sup> The stories were considered filler, and stopped at any point necessary to fill the issue, even in mid-sentence.<sup>18</sup> After 1725, publishers devised further ingenious schemes to avoid taxes; repeated efforts by Parliament to curtail these schemes led to the passage in 1743 of 16 George II, cap. 26,

which put teeth into the statutes respecting stamped papers by specifying stiff penalties for their violation.<sup>19</sup>

After a corpus of fiction developed, standard reprints in magazines became popular: *The Novelist's Magazine*, and *The New Novelist's Magazine*, twenty-five volumes together, 1780-1787, reprinted Fielding, Richardson, Smollett, and others, accompanying the text with fine plates by Stothard, Burney, and Corbould.<sup>20</sup> Printed in octavo double columns and stitched into small numbers retailing for 6d. each, *The Novelist's Magazine* achieved a sale of some twelve thousand copies every week.<sup>21</sup>

The widespread publication of original essays and short stories and the reprinting of standard literature and Gothic fiction in numbers were encouraged by 60 George III, cap. 9 (1819), which redefined a periodical in ways that made it possible for monthly magazines to begin publishing new material without paying stamp duty, and also exempted from duty all part issues of works originally published in book form.<sup>22</sup> Captain Marryat's *Metropolitan Magazine* (1831-1850) was the first to make a regular feature of original serial stories which, by the 1840s, were often the most important feature of all the half-crown monthly magazines.<sup>23</sup> Dickens was an avid reader of the lower range of such publications as a boy, consuming the weekly *Penny* and *Saturday* magazines, and later recalling that

I used, when I was at school, to take in the *Terrific Register*, making myself unspeakably miserable, and frightening my very wits out of my head, for the small charge of a penny weekly; which considering that there was an illustration to every number, in which there was always a pool of blood, and at least one body, was cheap.<sup>24</sup>

Closely related to newspapers and magazines, original prose fiction in parts constitutes a fourth form of serial fiction. Reprints of fiction in parts occur as early as Richard Bentley's fifty "modern novels," commenced in 1692 in serial installments; in the 1720s the *Monthly Amusement* ran a novel in each shilling number.<sup>25</sup> Edward Ward's *The London Spy*, eighteen parts beginning November 1698, was a "Monthly Journal" recounting in the first person what purported to be actual experiences of the author. The installments ran to four sheets each, for 6d.; and an "essential continuity is easily perceived in the well sustained sprightliness of style and the consistent point of view."<sup>26</sup> But each part is separate, with distinctive signature and pagination. Nonetheless, "*The London Spy* is just as much a 'book' as *The Pickwick Papers*, which was issued in much the same way 140 years later," R. M. Wiles concludes.<sup>27</sup> If Ward's work is the first number fiction, it did not spawn many successors; before 1750, virtually nothing of importance in prose fiction was published in numbers. Except for a few fictitious and usually salacious autobiographies, original prose fiction in serial parts virtually disappeared until Smollett published *Sir Launcelot Greaves* in his *British Magazine* between January 1760 and December 1761. Smollett's novel broke new ground in several ways: it was the first large piece of original fiction written

expressly for publication in a magazine; it was conceived and written for installment publication—the beginning having been printed before the end was written; it was a new work by a novelist of established reputation; it marks the pinnacle of achievement for miscellany fiction from 1740 on; and in composing it Smollett paid marked attention to the requirements of serial publication, notably the organization of chapters. However, Smollett's novel appeared in a magazine; not in independent, discrete parts.

"During the years that follow the death of Smollett," J. M. S. Tompkins observes, "the two chief facts about the novel are its popularity as a form of entertainment and its inferiority as a form of art."<sup>28</sup> Sub-literary species abounded, in magazines, reprints, and cheap editions; Gothic fiction appeared in bound volumes. But original fiction of good quality issued in parts disappears from view.

The "series," hard to distinguish from other kinds of serials, was employed for works that could be contained within one or two gatherings. In the eighteenth century, plays came out weekly or monthly in quarto series produced by William Feales, Jacob Tonson, and Robert Walker. Each play would be complete, sometimes with specially engraved frontispieces and all prologues and epilogues; and the publisher would run through a playwright's entire canon, issuing, say, one of Shakespeare's plays every Thursday.<sup>29</sup> Such series possessed one distinct commercial advantage: they encouraged buyers to complete the run of an author's work, purchasing even those minor or unpopular titles that would otherwise be ignored. In the 1830s, Chapman and Hall's series *The Library of Fiction* published original as well as reprinted stories, but the main thrust for the novel in series was not original work in parts, but reprint series like Bentley's and Colburn's.<sup>30</sup>

The serial format of *Pickwick Papers* was shaped by yet another influence, derived in the first place not from the letterpress, but from popular illustrations. From Hogarth forward, there had been a market, especially in the city, for series of prints which told stories, on the order of *Marriage à la Mode* or *A Rake's Progress*. The strip narrative, often a progress, became popular in Europe as well as England, and series were done by such artists as Chodowiecki, John Hamilton Mortimer, James Northcote, George Morland, and Johann Heinrich Ramberg.<sup>31</sup> Instead of supplying a set of six or eight plates, post-Hogarthian caricaturists, appealing to a less affluent audience, often went back to an earlier, more demotic tradition, of multiple scenes in a single illustration. Even though the resulting spaces were cramped, these cheap prints seem to have been more successful than the post-Hogarthian "high art" progresses. Cruikshank worked extensively in this mode in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, composing plates with one, two, and three divisions, and progresses of six and eight plates. The well-known shops of such print-sellers as Hone, Tegg, Fairburn, and G. Humphrey were decorated with caricatures and progresses, which the

populace of London scrutinized with care and relish; it is clear that the response was lively and widespread from the various places in which reference to these prints would turn up—from Mayfair drawing rooms and the Commons to Billingsgate and cheap fiction.<sup>32</sup>

In 1820 Pierce Egan hit on a scheme for issuing colored plates, etched by the Cruikshank brothers once a month, along with letterpress leading up to the big scene, until the story of *Life in London; or, the Day and Night Scenes of Jerry Hawthorn, Esq., and his Elegant Friend Corinthian Tom, Accompanied by Bob Logic, the Oxonian, in their Rambles and Sprees through the Metropolis* was completed in twelve numbers (October 1820 to July 1821). Whether the lively plates, the flash letterpress, or the mode of publication was responsible is difficult to determine, but the combination proved irresistible, and Tom and Jerry's adventures were widely purchased, imitated, dramatized, plagiarized, and extended in sequels.

Thus more than a century's experience with serials of various kinds had taught English publishers many lessons. Cheapening books enlarged the potential pool of customers. Serial issue could substantially lower the costs even of expensive, illustrated works. Periodical issuance of books in progress recirculated a publisher's cash flow: each part financed the next. Advertising was a key to success, and regularity of publication a key to establishing the customer's all-important habit of coming to his bookseller frequently. Provincial distribution networks could be highly profitable adjuncts to urban trade. Illustrations often more than recouped their cost by inducing readers to buy. Resourcefulness in circumventing tax laws could lead to profitable innovations in publishing and distribution. Fiction in magazines became a staple of many households, and could establish the habit of reading early in life. Reprints of standard works of fiction whetted the appetite for more. Works that exploited contemporary events and settings, like Newgate series or political caricatures, found a sure audience among city-dwellers. Cheap series persuaded many middle-class households to buy the complete works of an author, even copies of otherwise uncommercial books. But though these and other lessons had been learned in specific circumstances, no one had put all of them together in a form of writing, publishing, and distributing that would take full advantage of the potential mass market.

## II

Technological innovations, proceeding alongside the development of parts publication, assisted in the revolution that was to come. The nineteenth century saw the introduction of more radical changes in book production than in the whole previous history of printing, and the first thirty-five years were probably more revolutionary than the preceding three hundred and fifty.<sup>33</sup> It may be true, as Michael Twyman observes, that "the most original aspects of printing since 1800, both from the design and technical stand-

points, are seen in jobbing and periodical printing,"<sup>34</sup> among the firms which produced the countless forms, advertisements, letterheads, and government documents that the rapidly expanding bureaucracies demanded. But several improvements in printing and book production had important effects on the manufacture of cheap fiction.

A major stumbling-block in the way of producing mass inexpensive literature was the supply of paper. Until 1803 it was impossible for any paper-making process to yield more than a few thousand sheets at any one time. Publishers could not issue large editions, nor could they be ready quickly for huge reprints, since it took the paper-makers five to six weeks to manufacture a new order. In 1803, Gamble and Donkin completed a prototype of the Fourdrinier cylindrical paper-making machine, for endless web production.<sup>35</sup> By 1837, the Fourdrinier process was perfected and established commercially; what it meant to one large-scale publisher of inexpensive books is described by Charles Knight, in a statement to a committee of the House of Commons in that year:

The supply [from these machines, two hundred and eighty of them at six miles of paper each made over sixteen hundred miles of paper in one day] is such as to enable one with perfect ease to meet the demand, however large, without keeping any stock in hand: for example; I use about 1,500 reams of paper per month; unless this machine had been invented, I could not have gone into the market with the certainty of purchasing 1,500 reams of paper for the month's consumption; and I should have been obliged to have kept two or three months' consumption to have insured a regular periodical supply; that amounts to a large saving to a person engaged in publication.<sup>36</sup>

The new paper-making processes also produced larger paper sizes, enabling printers to impress thirty-two pages rather than sixteen at one time. There was an additional saving since taxes were assessed *per sheet*, regardless of the number of printed pages that sheet yielded. So doubling the size of the sheet halved the printing time and the taxes.<sup>37</sup>

Printing also speeded up. In the eighteenth century, before the introduction of the Stanhope press, "the only machinery in use," as Balzac notes at the start of *Illusions Perdues*,

was the primitive wooden invention to which the language owes a figure of speech—"the press groans" was no mere rhetorical expression in those days. Leather ink balls were still in use in old-fashioned printing-houses; the pressmen dabbed the ink by hand on the characters, and the moveable table on which the form of type was placed in readiness for the sheet of paper, being made of marble, literally deserved its name of "impression-stone."<sup>38</sup>

At the turn of the century Stanhope's iron printing press was tested at Bulmer's and in 1804 the first book printed by his stereotype process appeared.<sup>39</sup> In 1811 Friedrich Koenig patented a steam-powered cylindrical press, "an invention," according to *The Times*, "only second to that of Gutenberg himself."<sup>40</sup> Whereas printing *The Times* on a large iron hand

press yielded only a hundred and fifty copies per hour, by 1816 Koenig's double-cylinder steam press produced six times the quantity, effecting dramatic savings.<sup>41</sup> The evolution of Stanhope's machine was much more rapid and its adoption more widespread than was the case with Church's composing machine, patented in 1822. Because labor was cheap and hand compositors vehement in their opposition to machinery, and because the early composing machines were not particularly efficient (lines still had to be justified and type distributed by hand), mechanization of composition did not advance much until later in the nineteenth century.<sup>42</sup>

Now that the printers could get larger supplies of paper faster, and print more quickly, they had the technical capacity to issue much larger editions. Larger in both senses, since the iron presses could print over a much larger surface.<sup>43</sup> But long works, and large printings, were still expensive, especially if the standing type had to be kept for a long period of time for possible reprintings. Stereotyping had long been known as a solution to this, and other, problems, but not until the nineteenth century did it become economically attractive.<sup>44</sup> Molds for type existed as early as the sixteenth century, and in the late eighteenth additional improvements were patented. Earl Stanhope, Andrew Wilson, Applegarth, and Brunel worked on stereotyping in the early nineteenth century; and the most considerable alteration occurred in 1846, when papier mâché was substituted for plaster to make the molds.<sup>45</sup> The restrictive practices of the Stationers' Company hindered the use of stereotypes until the 1800s, but by 1828 Clowes had nearly eight hundred tons of stereotype plate, worth £200,000, and this stock more than doubled during the next fifteen years.<sup>46</sup> Still, even in 1840 stereotyping was not profitable except for large printing orders; but it was just the answer to the peculiar demands of serial publication, where big initial printings might be followed, after many months, by reprints of the individual parts as the publishers made up completed runs to bind and sell in volume form.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, once stereotype was made, the printers need only make up enough copies to meet the immediate demand. The moveable type could be distributed, yet the warehouse need not be filled with huge advance printings. Printers tied up less of their capital but retained flexibility to respond to anticipated sales. Of course, the use of stereotype plates led to bibliographical nightmares; editions, issues, and states become formidably complicated to distinguish.<sup>48</sup> The leisurely world of eighteenth-century printing (leisurely, at least in retrospect) fades, and the hand-made quality of books disappears; in their places emerges a dynamic, high-pressure, increasingly mechanized, quickly responsive commercial enterprise.

Photographic processes were first used in making illustrations as early as 1826, but not until the second half of the nineteenth century did collotype, photo-etched line-blocks, half-tone, and photogravure become perfected and commercially viable.<sup>49</sup> Illustration, in the first half-century, was largely



done by hand, with the assistance of a few instruments like the roulette which produced an endless series of parallel lines. Bewick perfected and sophisticated wood-block engraving—that is, cutting into the end-grain of the wooden block with a graver, following an outline either drawn directly on a thin wash of Chinese white, or chalked on the block by tracing it over transfer paper. Under Bewick's hands, and in those of his successors John Jackson and William Harvey, wood engraving achieved a high state of development and art. But it was comparatively an expensive and time-consuming process. In London in 1827 there were no more than twenty woodcutters; they were artists, receiving artists' wages, so that it cost more than £200 for the illustrations to Charles Knight's *Library of Entertaining Knowledge*.<sup>50</sup> Copperplate was even more costly, and could be used only on expensive books.

Alternatives were being explored in the early 1830s. In *Sketches by Boz*, Cruikshank used copper plates faced with steel; Seymour and Browne struggled with polished steel plates, whose surfaces, in the first numbers of *Pickwick*, had a tendency to break down early in the printing. The steel-plate process, though patented in 1810, was not used commercially until the 1820s.<sup>51</sup> It was never possible during Dickens's lifetime to discover a metal plate that would hold up through a substantial printing run; consequently duplicate steels were the rule after the ninth number of *Pickwick*. Woodblocks were used for *Master Humphrey's Clock*; though they could withstand up to a hundred thousand impressions, as they were cut (on the whole skillfully) by a hand other than the designing artist's, they lacked the character and freedom of the original. Electrotyping,<sup>52</sup> glyphotography, and lithography were other methods tried out for large-scale printings, though they were little used in Dickens's works. It is interesting to speculate what would have been the appearance of Dickens's work twenty years earlier, when woodblock and copperplate were the only processes perfected. There is no question that the mechanical advances and limitations in block-making significantly affected the shape of his serial fiction.

Hand-printed books published in small editions for the urban middle class and the country gentry did not require elaborate or sophisticated commercial establishments. But as the market grew, the need for capital grew, too: inventory, warehousing, distribution, advertising, all became more significant items in the expenses of book production. Most important, the introduction of machinery required capital, and its efficient use required that books be printed in larger numbers and more frequently. In the decades on either side of the turn of the century, partly prompted by disruptions to the competition on the continent during the Napoleonic Wars, certain English booksellers began to amass sufficient capital to bear the whole risk themselves, instead of dividing into congers. Murray, Cadell & Davies, Blackwood, and Constable all began publishing on their own.<sup>53</sup> At

the same time, the amalgam of activities in which the eighteenth-century bookseller might have been engaged—publisher, printer, stationer, retailer, financier, print seller, agent, editor, newspaper proprietor, and public relations director—began to be subdivided. The nineteenth century ushered in the age of the specialist publisher, who initiated, financed, produced, advertised, wholesaled, and accounted for his works, but who did not necessarily print, bind, or retail them.<sup>54</sup> Printing and binding, publishing newspapers, selling stationery or books, became separate businesses, and the capital that had once been spread over all aspects of book production became consolidated in specialized areas.

Several other critical developments not directly related to printing have been sufficiently detailed in Richard Altick's masterly study of *The English Common Reader*. The sheer increase in population; the rise of urban centers, real wages, and the middle (and especially professional) class; the steady spread of literacy; the impulses to self-improvement, both spiritual and material; the expansion of leisure time; the rapid improvement in transportation, yielding wider markets, first within England and, by mid-century, around the world: all these forces converged to create a rapidly expanding reading and book-buying public. *Book-buying* is, of course, the key: it is far preferable from many standpoints, though the readership is the same, to have fifty copies of a book sold, with two readers apiece, than one copy in a library which can be read by a hundred. And *buying* is the key to serial fiction, for whereas three-deckers were designed for the convenience of circulating libraries, serial fiction put the ownership of novels within the means of the middle class. Dickens was the first novelist really to *belong* to the people of England, and they loved him all the more because he was, so to speak, a resident in their homes.

### III

When Edward Chapman and William Hall joined together in the early months of 1830 to commence a bookselling establishment, they undoubtedly knew, at least in a general way, something of the history of publishing which I have summarized. Chapman, son of a Richmond solicitor, was "a quiet and retiring man, full of information, and had such a broad, just mind that it was a great privilege to hear his judgment upon any subject." One of his daughters described him as "truth and sincerity."<sup>55</sup> Perhaps something of his breadth of view and knowledge is contained in the firm's first venture, *Chat of the Week; or, Compendium of all Topics of Public Interest, Original and Select*, a sixpenny weekly of extracts with "no limits as to subject,"<sup>56</sup> which began on June 5, 1830. Hall, on the other hand, was universally characterized as "brisk, and a good business man"; he could run up figures like lightning, and all "the young men they employed stood in awe of him."<sup>57</sup> He would have perceived instantly the advantageous loca-

tion which was available in the Strand, at No. 186: a pleasant, double-fronted house, it was proximate to the publishing and printing worlds on an attractive and busy street along which hundreds of potential customers would pass each day. And so the lease was taken, and Chapman and Hall commenced business.

Initially they were booksellers only, and their early ventures outside retailing were, according to John Forster, "ingenious rather than important."<sup>58</sup> By midsummer, as we have seen, they had inaugurated a weekly periodical, hoping no doubt that the customers who entered the shop each Saturday for *Chat* might be lured into further purchases. Obviously someone (Hall?) recognized early the value of serials in establishing a habit of buying, for they also connected themselves quickly to an on-going serial publication, Gorton's new *Topographical Dictionary*, which was scheduled for forty-two monthly parts, each consisting of forty pages of "closely printed" letterpress and a quarto map, 1s. plain, 1s. 6d. colored.<sup>59</sup> Chapman and Hall's first publication ventures, then, involved two of the kinds of serials we have already discussed, and were taken up in association with other booksellers, so that they prudently avoided the whole risk.

Arthur Waugh's account of the early years of the firm says little about the period between 1831 and 1834, when the first *Athenaeum* announcement for a Chapman and Hall book appears. This silence is not surprising, for in 1831 one of the periodic depressions that hit the book trade must have affected the fledgling entrepreneurs. Caused by the death of George IV, the fall of Wellington's government, tight money, agitation over the Reform Bill, agricultural distress, and a widespread distrust of potentially inflammatory printed matter, the depression in the book trade was both severe and general. In London, six hundred printers were jobless because publishers were holding back on long-promised books, while in Scotland, according to Wordsworth, "the bookselling trade was in a deplorable state, . . . nothing was saleable but newspapers on the Revolutionary side."<sup>60</sup> Still, the very appeal made to the masses by such newspapers and political pamphlets as Cobbett's encouraged literacy, and as the effects of the temporary civil, political, and economic dislocations of 1830-1831 moderated, booksellers began once again to issue new works. Prudently contracting to the retail end for the duration of the slump, by 1834 Chapman and Hall were once more offering such perishable commodities as *Scenes and Recollections of Fly-Fishing* and *The Book of Science*.

The following year, Chapman and Hall issued *The Squib Annual*, a flossy book for the Christmas trade with illustrations by the popular Robert Seymour, political caricaturist and humorous illustrator. In the course of discussion about that book, Seymour broached the idea of drawing plates for a series of cockney sporting scenes, to be issued with accompanying letterpress written to order.<sup>61</sup> Accepting the suggestion, Edward Chapman

urged that the plates come out monthly. Seymour agreed, and Chapman and Hall then attempted, without success, to find someone to compose the text. The commission was hardly a flattering one. While comic plates with letterpress were eminently commercial in the 1830s, credit and cash most often went to the illustrator, not the author, who usually took his direction from plates already designed. In March 1836, Thackeray, readying his first separate publication, a series of lithographed caricatures, told his publisher John Mitchell, "I do not know whether you propose to publish any letter-press with the drawing, will you allow me to see it, before its appearance."<sup>62</sup> If a fledgling artist like Thackeray, desperately hard up for money, can have taken such a casual attitude towards the letterpress of his maiden venture, then clearly no ambitious writer, with a strong sense of his own priorities, was likely to be eager to accept such a menial assignment.

After trying out several other authors, William Hall approached Dickens. Writing about the origins of *Pickwick* for the Cheap Edition in 1847, Dickens confessed that at the time of Hall's proposal he dimly recalled "certain interminable novels in [serial] form, which used . . . to be carried about the country by pedlars, and over some of which I remember to have shed innumerable tears, before I served my apprenticeship to Life."<sup>63</sup> Apart from *Launcelot Greaves*, which Dickens knew, the literary merit of those works was negligible. But the public was getting used to buying these serial installments of brightly illustrated escapades, whether concerning portly butchers or young scapegraces. *Tom Cringle's Log*, by Michael Scott, had recently appeared in parts, along with various works by Theodore Hook which viewed with amusement the pretensions to gentility of a harassed and rising middle class.<sup>64</sup>

Surprisingly, Dickens did accept the firm's offer to provide a sheet and a half of letterpress, monthly, "for a book illustrative of manners and life in the Country."<sup>65</sup> Though ambitious and possessing a strong sense of his own priorities, Dickens was also poor, eager to get married, and energetic. Hall's offer of nine guineas a sheet or £14.3.6 for the sheet and a half, payable on publication day each month, would provide a regular stipend, permit him at last to marry, and offer a vehicle for mounting a further assault on the reading public. Caught up in his own visions of future glory, Dickens did not hear very clearly Hall's references to Robert Seymour, who, in priority and fame, was the senior partner in the proposed venture. To his fiancée Catherine, Dickens reported: "They (Chapman and Hall) have made me an offer of £14 a month to write and edit a new publication they contemplate, entirely by myself. . . ."<sup>66</sup> What "write and edit" means is not clear, either: Dickens was addicted at this time to legal-sounding double phrases, like "devise and bequeath," which he absorbed in Parliament and had copied over and over again as a clerk with Ellis and Blackmore. Perhaps he had in mind something like the monthly *Library of Fiction*, which

contained original and reprinted material, or like the future *Bentley's Miscellany*, for which he was to "write and edit" ten months later. Or perhaps he had already planned to appear in the guise of an "editor" of the *Posthumous Papers*, like Carlyle in *Sartor Resartus* which ran in *Fraser's* from November 1833 to August 1834.

In any case, Chapman and Hall were thinking in terms of yet another serial publication to wed hack letterpress with humorous plates. A monthly periodical of twenty-four pages, with four plates plus a colored wrapper design, would have to sell around two thousand copies to yield a profit. Fixed costs included Dickens's stipend of £14.3.6 plus Seymour's remuneration for the plates (variously estimated at £6 or £20) and wrapper design. A sizeable proportion of the total expenses, perhaps as much as one-half, would come from the illustrations (including the special paper for the plates and the cost of the steels); to the publishers, the venture was undoubtedly conceived as a partnership between an illustrator who sold them copyright in the plates and a writer who sold them copyright in the text. In both cases, Chapman and Hall owned the copyright outright, bore all the expenses of publication, guaranteed the contributors their monthly stipends regardless of their profit and loss statements, and expected to reap whatever gains might be forthcoming from a large sale. Seymour's name was good among the London public, and Boz was an increasingly popular cognomen, so the prospects seemed favorable. If a great success was achieved, Chapman and Hall promised Dickens in writing "to increase the amount in a proportionate degree."<sup>67</sup> The adjective was deliberately vague; the details were left to be worked out during the serial run.

Thus the three participants, Seymour, Dickens, and Chapman and Hall, all with slightly different conceptions of their joint project, went on with preparations for its commencement. Dickens finally finished writing the first two numbers; asked, and received, a slight advance on his stipend so that he could get married; and went off to Chalk on his honeymoon. Chapman and Hall prepared an initial press-run of a thousand copies of Part I, and placed advertisements which were as detailed, explicit, and enticing as Dickens could make them, in *The Times*, the *Athenaeum*, and the *Morning Chronicle*. Cautious men, who may have detected a certain reluctance on the part of booksellers and the general public to subscribe in advance for this new periodical, they ordered the bindery to do up only four hundred copies, which Mr. Aked, the foreman, executed himself in one evening after the rest of the staff had left. Seymour labored away at the illustrations, getting into difficulties over the tendency of the steel surfaces to crumble, and hastily etching a duplicate set of plates when all his efforts to rebite and repair the original ones failed to halt their disintegration.

It was not an auspicious beginning. Despite polite notices, sales were so poor that the printing run for Part II was reduced to five hundred copies.

Then Seymour committed suicide, and the surviving participants had to decide on a future course of action. Here was a new firm, lately returned to publishing on its own account after weathering a severe depression in the book trade, faced with a losing serial from which the more important contributor had just violently resigned. It is to their eternal credit and fame that, inspired by Dickens's runaway enthusiasm, they decided to continue, on an "improved plan" of thirty-two pages of letterpress, and two illustrations, per month. At a single stroke, as I have argued elsewhere, something permanent and novel-like (Chesteron called *Pickwick* "something nobler than a novel"<sup>68</sup>) was created out of something ephemeral and episodic: with sixteen pages between pictures, Dickens could expand his scenes and amplify his characterizations in ways he could not when he had to invent a new comic climax every six pages. And the costs of production radically shifted in favor of the author and away from the illustrator: two plates could be printed on a single sheet and later be divided, there were half as many steels to provide, and illustrators of less repute than Seymour could settle for less (R. W. Buss, who unsuccessfully illustrated Part III, received only £6.10.0). Dickens, on the other hand, asked for a raise, not only to include the extra letterpress, which would bring him to eighteen guineas for two sheets monthly, but also a general raise of two additional guineas, to £21.0.0. The publishers, deciding to be hanged for sheep rather than sheepishness, agreed.

Something had to be done about sales, which, even with Number III, where the printing order was put back to a thousand, were still too anemic to support the costs. Charles Tilt, a neighboring bookseller and publisher, suggested sending copies out to provincial booksellers "on sale or return." From this suggestion, we can infer that up to 1836 Chapman and Hall had not acquired a very extensive network of regional booksellers to help in working off their stock. Tilt's idea was a good one, as it turned out, but the initial results were unpromising: out of fifteen hundred copies dispatched, an average of only fifty per number were sold. Chapman and Hall were out the costs of reprinting the numbers, an expense which only added to what must have been a deficit balance. On the other hand, sales in the suburbs around London may have been brisker; years later Charles Knight recalled one pedlar who, though taking undue credit for *Pickwick's* success, exemplifies the kind of salesmanship that must have rescued many cheap works from disaster:

There was an old man of the name of Knox who used to carry about new periodical works to suburban shops, and by this means, at a time when there was far less activity amongst small retail booksellers, he would in some degree force a sale of a new serial work. Three or four numbers of the "Pickwick Papers" had been published when the pedestrian dealer, who saved the little shop-keeper the trouble of going to the Row on a Magazine-day, shewed me a large bundle of shilling parts which he had just purchased of Messrs. Chapman and Hall. With a pardonable vanity he ascribed much of the success of "Pick-

wick" to his own indefatigable exertions, for he was not content with providing a supply for the first of the month, but went again and again the round of the suburbs from Whitechapel to Chelsea. Mr. Dickens's first great venture was very soon beyond the necessity of any extra trade exertion, to command a sale much larger than any work of fiction had previously attained; not even excepting the *Waverley Novels* in their cheaper form.<sup>69</sup>

By the end of *Pickwick's* run, people in Edinburgh or Glasgow, or even in a remote hamlet like the one where Mary Russell Mitford was virtually imprisoned, were reading *Pickwick* at the same time as people in London. The lag between the city and the country was eliminated, and *Pickwick* parts—more, I suspect, even than Scott's or Byron's new works—achieved an instant island-wide circulation. (Visiting in Ireland, Emily Jephson had not heard of *Pickwick*, more than half way through its initial run, so perhaps in publication as in other things Ireland was still neglected.) Though there are only a few indications of the procedures which Chapman and Hall used to maintain this network of dealers, its importance in contributing to Dickens's popularity and profitability must not be underestimated.

Three advantages of serial publication rapidly became apparent, as, after the fourth number, sales began to rise. The first is our familiar one of habit. Chapman and Hall were careful to insert notices in the newspapers and journals towards the end of each month reminding the public that the next installment was forthcoming. When, after Mary Hogarth's death on May 7, 1837, Dickens found that he could not finish his installment for June, notices were sent out everywhere, an announcement was included in the June *Bentley's Miscellany*, and the July *Pickwick* (XV) contained a further explanation, intended to scotch rumors that Dickens was mad or dead or both.

Second, original serial fiction encouraged multiple reviews, which in turn stimulated more buyers. How could a reviewer do more than comment in a general way on the progress of the story, and excerpt a few choice passages, until the novel was completed? And so, month after month, journals commented briefly on Dickens's story, and month by month more people were drawn to buy the flimsy paper parts. It became topical matter, almost like news; people asked themselves, "What were the Pickwickians doing last month?" and hastened to their booksellers to find out.

Third, the very periodicity of the serial made it appropriate, like a newspaper or magazine, for advertising. As early as the third number, Chapman and Hall were inserting notices of their other publications, and permitting other advertisers, possibly for a small fee, to have their printed circulars stitched in. In *Pickwick* IV appears the first *Pickwick* Advertiser, a four-page quarto insert extolling the publications of Charles Tilt, John Macrone, John Murray, and Richard Bentley. In time, this Advertiser swelled to a maximum of twenty-four pages, and there were other inserts as well, the largest number (seven, totaling twenty-six pages) occurring in the July 1837 number, and probably representing backlog caused by its postponement at

Mary's death. The relation of the Advertiser to sales is not exactly parallel; merchants tended to take space in certain seasons (Christmas, for instance) and not in others (August). But the phenomenal popularity of *Pickwick* did contribute to the coffers of Chapman and Hall.

The consequences of this success had to be worked out month by month. At first, Chapman and Hall found the expenses of printing the next month, while reprinting the earlier numbers (twenty times in the first eighteen months), so great that they could not afford to pay Dickens until after the receipts for the current number came in. At the same time, Dickens found himself committed to multiple deadlines, and repeatedly fell behind in submitting his copy. Both these problems got straightened out by the end of 1836: as sales of the current numbers increased, Chapman and Hall's cash flow improved; and they renegotiated their agreement with Dickens so as to pay him on the eighth of the succeeding month, rather than on publication day. That helped a lot. Dickens promised to reform himself, and though he was signing agreements with Bentley to "write and edit" the *Miscellany* at the very same time he was apologizing to Chapman and Hall about his tardiness, he did at last work off some of the galling obligations.

By the turn of the year it was clear that *Pickwick* was a gold mine. Beginning with Part IX, the installments had to be printed from stereotype as well as movable type. By Part X, Hablot Knight Browne ("Phiz"), the third and final illustrator, had to make duplicate steels, as one set would not hold up under the increased press runs. Sales were at fourteen thousand copies in February 1838; twenty thousand in May; twenty-six thousand in September; twenty-nine thousand in October; and reached nearly forty thousand within a few weeks of the novel's completion in November. On the numbers alone, Chapman and Hall cleared £14,000.

#### IV

Such magnitude of success causes problems, especially when it is unanticipated and unprecedented. The initial agreement between Chapman and Hall and Dickens provided for outright purchase of copyright in return for a specified rate of pay per printed page. Anticipating some increase in sales, the publishers had mentioned the possibility of a raise in that rate of payment if the venture proved successful; moreover, when the amount of letterpress was increased, they did increase Dickens's pay scale, by a guinea a sheet. But as the venture progressed, it proved more and more lucrative. There was no legal obligation on Chapman and Hall's part to give Dickens further increases, though he had hopefully anticipated additional raises in proposing the new rate of twenty guineas per number in April 1836: "If the Work should be very *successful*, after the period I have mentioned, I apprehend you would have no objection to go a little further."<sup>70</sup>



But if no legal obligation prevailed, there certainly were sound business reasons for keeping Dickens happy. He was, after all, still in mid-book. The future success of *Pickwick* depended on his continuing in a pleasant frame of mind. So in March 1837, anticipating the anniversary of the first installment, Chapman and Hall presented Dickens with a bonus of £500, and in early April they gave him a celebratory banquet. Further, Chapman repeatedly urged Dickens, who had extensive financial obligations to his wife, new child, sister-in-law, and occasionally to his mother, father, and brother, to look upon him as his banker whenever he was short. This offer was accepted on more than one occasion, especially when Dickens found himself strapped for funeral expenses after Mary's sudden death. Chapman and Hall continued to behave thoughtfully and generously towards their prodigy; in July Dickens received from them a set of Pickwickian punch ladles. This last instance of their regard prompted him to write: "It is indeed a pleasure to be connected with such men (I was going to say booksellers) as you, and I do most unaffectedly and sincerely assure you that my whole endeavours at this moment are directed to perpetuating our most pleasant and friendly association."<sup>71</sup>

Admirable sentiments, but not entirely candid, as both parties knew. Dickens was very much embroiled in the affairs of another publisher, Richard Bentley, for whom he was now concurrently editing a monthly magazine and planning to write several novels. Further, Dickens had repeatedly demonstrated over the past eighteen months a propensity for seeking the most favorable contract, regardless of sentiment. Looking ahead to the termination of *Pickwick* in November, Chapman and Hall were eager to secure Dickens's written agreement for a new serial, of the same kind, to commence shortly afterwards. As early as October of 1836 Chapman and Hall had discussed with Dickens a sequel to *Pickwick*.<sup>72</sup> After all, they had hit upon a very successful formula, their printing and distribution machinery was all set up, and it made sense to capitalize right away on Boz's phenomenal popularity and their equally phenomenal format. So in August 1837 they instructed counsel to draw up papers giving Dickens £2000 for *Pickwick*, a substantial further raise which brought his remuneration from the initial £14.3.6 to £100 per part. In return, Dickens was to agree to furnish them with copy for a new novel right away.

One evidence of the good feeling then existing between Dickens and his publishers was his "semi-business Pickwickian celebration"<sup>73</sup> held at the conclusion of the novel's serial run. Dickens asked John Francis Degex, Swiss immigrant landlord of the Prince of Wales Hotel in Leicester Place, to supply the feast, and began planning for it as early as October 30, when he wrote to invite Ainsworth. Guests at the dinner, postponed from November 14 to 18, included Talfourd, who served as Vice-Chairman of the evening, Forster, by now Dickens's literary adviser, Ainsworth, with whom Dickens

was shortly to project a book "to illustrate ancient and modern London in a *Pickwick* form,"<sup>74</sup> Jerdan, Browne, Samuel Lover, Chapman, Hall, John Dickens, and Macready, who noted in his diary that "We were detained long for dinner, but the day was interesting."<sup>75</sup> Thomas Hill and George Cruikshank could not make it; Hicks, foreman for Bradbury and Evans, and the two partners of the printing firm probably rounded out the guest list. Dickens himself took the chair. Jerdan mentioned (inaccurately) "that pleasant and uncommon fact . . . that there never had been a line of written agreement," that all participants had proceeded on "simple verbal assurances," and that "there had never arisen a word to interrupt the complete satisfaction of everyone." Just before Talfourd's toast after a capital dinner, Degex brought in his *chef d'oeuvre*, "a glittering temple of confectionary," topped by a canopy under "which stood a little figure of the illustrious Mr. *Pickwick*." Talfourd then "proposed Dickens's health in a very good speech," according to Macready, and "Dickens replied—under strong emotion—most admirably." Chapman and Hall presented their author with a set of silver "apostle" spoons, with characters from *Pickwick* substituted for the apostles on the handles. The evening ended in high spirits and uniform good feelings, which were dissipated neither by the bill of £41.7.0 which Dickens subsequently paid, nor by the terms of the two contracts which had been hammered out that very day.

An additional advantage of serial publication became apparent shortly after the final double number was issued. Since each part had more or less financed the next, when the final part was published and sold, the book was virtually paid for. Thereafter, any sales were almost pure profit. Further, many people wanted back parts to make up complete sets; others simply wanted the novel in bound form. Thus *Pickwick* continued to have a strong sale even after its serial run was completed. Because of the nature of their original agreement with Dickens, Chapman and Hall were the sole beneficiaries of this additional remuneration; once Dickens completed the text for the twentieth part, he had no more financial interest in *Pickwick*'s sales. And yet, in all fairness, it was his genius which created that demand, and it was in the publishers' interest to keep him with the firm. What could be done?

Indeed, the kind of clout that *Pickwick* developed, and the relationship in that novel of process to end, necessitated the reworking of publisher-author arrangements. Was the copyright the right to the text, in whatever form it was published, or was it more narrowly restricted to copyright of the serial edition and editions bound from serial numbers? If stereotypes are made, how does one determine or limit the size of the edition for which copyright is sold? One solution to these problems is to make the author share in the work, and this is the solution which Chapman and Hall reached with regard to *Pickwick*.

The contract, witnessed by William Chapman acting for the firm and Charles Molloy acting for Dickens, and finally signed two days after the *Pickwick* banquet, was a complex instrument which attempted to deal with some of these issues. Dickens confirmed that he had previously assigned to Chapman and Hall "the exclusive licence of printing and publishing for their own use the said Work during the term of Five years from the first day of November" 1837;<sup>76</sup> "the gains and profits which can or may be made" by the publication and sale of *Pickwick* belonged, during this period, to Chapman and Hall exclusively. At the same time, Dickens confirmed that he had given Chapman and Hall "two thirds of the whole Copyright." In fact, Chapman and Hall were giving Dickens one-third copyright, after five years. The provisions for Dickens's buying in after November 1, 1842 were spelled out in detail: he was then "at liberty if he [or if his executors, administrators, or assigns] shall think fit so to do to purchase one third part of the stock and printed Copies of the said Book or Work and of the Engravings published therewith." (Clearly Chapman and Hall believed that they had the rights to Seymour's, Buss's, and Browne's plates too.) Chapman and Hall were compelled to sell this stock to Dickens at cost price. Should either party wish to dispose of his share in the copyright, he must first offer it to the other party at a price which, if necessary, would be arbitrated by a third party. Two other provisions were important. So long as they owned the two-thirds of the copyright, Chapman and Hall retained the right to publish the book, and should "be allowed and receive all such charges as are justly and usually made by and allowed to the publishers of Works according to the custom of the trade of Publishers." In effect, that meant that they were allowed to recoup all their costs, and to take a commission on sales, before any division of profits. (The division of profits did not begin of course until Dickens came into his share of the copyright, and had paid for his share of the stock.) The second provision somewhat limited their freedom to publish, and was directly inspired by the success of the format in which *Pickwick* had first appeared: Chapman and Hall would automatically forfeit their copyright if they printed the book "in any other form or at any less price than the form and price in and at which the same has hitherto been published and sold," or if they printed, published, or sold any selection or abridgement, without the previous consent in writing of the author.

In effect, Dickens leased back to Chapman and Hall for five years the one-third interest in the copyright of *Pickwick* which they had given him. He was not originally a partner in the venture; had it lost money, he would not have been liable. On the other hand, even with the two-thirds of the copyright Chapman and Hall retained permanently there were constraints on their movements. They might sell the novel in a more expensive format (and they did, binding the parts in cloth for 21s., half morocco for 24s. 6d., or full morocco with gilt leaves for 26s. 6d.) but not a less expensive one. They were

thus encouraged to work their copyright only within the existing formats, since at the time there seemed no point in bringing out a freshly printed deluxe edition.

Making Dickens a partner in the copyright entangled him in his publishers' affairs, and created the need for elaborate contracts spelling out how each was to sell out to the other should one side wish to dissolve the relationship. Potentially, such agreements could involve Dickens in losses, as well as gains, although with *Pickwick* only profits were divided. Ownership of a third of *Pickwick* was, in this case, both a recognition of Dickens's contribution to its success and a bribe, for above all Chapman and Hall wanted him to write another blockbuster. Had the consideration been for *Pickwick* alone, Hall might well have urged that in law they had no further obligation to their author beyond paying him his stipend per sheet, and giving him some "proportionate" increase as sales mounted. But on the horizon loomed the promise of another rainbow, and another pot of gold; and only Dickens could lead them to it. The contract for *Nicholas Nickleby* (April 1838-October 1839) was tied to that executed at the termination of *Pickwick*; Dickens's signature on it could not be obtained until he was happy about the completed work.

Thus accidentally in *Pickwick* Dickens and Chapman and Hall hit upon an arrangement for issuing original works of fiction in serial parts that revolutionized nineteenth-century publishing, distribution, bookselling, author-publisher relations, copyright provisions, and of course fiction itself.<sup>77</sup> There are many instances of other authors, such as Lever, Surtees, and Thackeray, specifying a contract similar to *Pickwick's*.<sup>78</sup> The thirty-two page, two-illustration part became a standard to which the public rapidly became accustomed. And publishers, quick to sense a profitable new line, unabashedly imitated *Pickwick's* format. The unlikeliest material was thought adaptable to the serial's Procrustean bed. Routledge told William Howard Russell, the great *Times* war correspondent, that he would earn much more money if he would chop up his history of the war into monthly parts:

The form we should suggest should be Demy Octavo like Dickens's works, to appear in shilling monthly parts, with illustrations either from photographs or from artists who have been there. But this you can decide; we merely suggest what we think would be the most popular form, and for remuneration we should propose that you should receive a certain sum per copy. This in all cases when a large sum is expected is the best for the author, it being a property so long as the book sells. . . .<sup>79</sup>

In 1837 Dickens did not yet own any of his property, and did not receive "a certain sum per copy." Though apparently content with the arrangements that had been hammered out at the conclusion of *Pickwick*, he was shortly to realize by how far they fell short of fairly remunerating him for the exten-

sive and protracted popularity which his fiction and format obtained. In time he came to feel injured, even by the *Pickwick* arrangements, and determined to do better, to share even more largely in the publication and profits of his serials.

## NOTES

I wish to record my deep indebtedness to Ms. Jean Eros for her assistance in every step of the development of this essay.

1. *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, ed. Madeline House, Graham Storey, and Kathleen Tillotson, The Pilgrim Edition, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965, 1969, and 1974), I, 189; hereafter cited as *PLetters*.

2. *Charles Dickens: His Tragedy and Triumph* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1952), p. 156.

3. *Serial Publication in England before 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), p. 3.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

5. "This Method of Weekly Publication," the *Grub-Street Journal* declared on October 26, 1732, "allured Multitudes to peruse Books, into which they would otherwise never have looked." *Ibid.*, *half-title*, p. 2, and p. 260.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 238.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 207.

8. John Wilford's announcement of the third number of *Select Trials at the Sessions-House in the Old Bailey* (1734), issued in 6d. fortnightly numbers, proclaimed:

This Number . . . contains the remarkable Trials of George Duffus for Sodomy; Mary Harvey and Ann Parker for privately stealing Money from Dr. Cassel; Butler Fox for robbing Sir Edward Lawrence on the Highway . . .; Christopher Kraft for ravishing Sarah Pearse; George Nicholas for forging a Bank Note; James Shaw and Richard Norton for Robbery and Murder, &c.

*Ibid.*, p. 207, from *The Daily Advertiser* for May 11, 1734.

9. Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 56 and *fn.* 68.

10. Wiles, *Serial Publication*, p. 4.

11. Herman Moll's *Atlas Geographus*, the first number book compiled expressly for publication in monthly parts, extended to five volumes and took nine years to complete, 1708-1717. The geographically and socially diversified subscription list included "Michael Johnson, Book-seller, in Litchfield," and "Alexander Pope, Gent." *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.

12. For example, the *Grub-Street Journal* of September 19, 1734, reported "that the Knaptons were expected to clear between eight and ten thousand pounds by their publication—first in monthly and then in weekly numbers—of Rapin's *History of England* in the English translation by Nicholas Tindal, in spite of the fact that a rival translation by John Kelly was at the same time being published in numbers by J. Mechell." *Ibid.*, p. 5.

13. Altick, *English Common Reader*, pp. 265-266 and *fn.* 15.

14. Edward Baines of Leeds sold over twenty thousand copies of *History of the Wars of the French Revolution* by reprinting it in sixpenny parts and distributing it through hawkers. *Ibid.*, p. 264 and *fn.* 13.

15. For instance, Roger L'Estrange's *Poor Robin's Memoirs* came out weekly, beginning December 10, 1677; for a penny one got a badly printed single half-sheet narrative about Robin's *Life, Travels, and Adventures*. Here each part is a complete, independent unit, and the seventeen "tomes" are not strictly speaking fascicles at all; but the installments have a cumulative effect, and the contents seem more fiction than reportage (Wiles, *Serial Publication*, pp. 75-76). On the other hand, Henry Care's compilation, *The Weekly Pacquet of Advice from Rome*, 1678 onward, was paginated continuously throughout each of its eventual 240 numbers or five volumes, and a preface and title page to each was printed after the final number in that volume; but it is, by content, more closely related to newspapers than books (*ibid.*, pp. 77-78).

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 31-33.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

18. See the example illustrated facing p. 50 in Wiles.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

20. Graham Pollard, "Serial Fiction," in *New Paths in Book Collecting*, ed. John Carter (London: Constable and Co. Ltd., 1934), p. 257.

21. A. S. Collins, *The Profession of Letters: A Study of the Relation of Author to Patron, Publisher, and Public, 1780-1832* (London: George Routledge and Sons, Ltd., 1928), p. 58.

22. Pollard, "Serial Fiction," p. 258.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 258-259.

24. John Forster, *The Life of Charles Dickens*, ed., annotated, and introduced by J. W. T. Ley (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Co., [1928]), I, iii, 43-44 *fn.*; hereafter cited as Forster by book, chapter, and page.

25. Altick, *English Common Reader*, p. 55.

26. Wiles, *Serial Publication*, p. 81.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *The Popular Novel in England, 1770-1800* (London: Constable & Co. Ltd., 1932), p. 1.

29. Wiles, *Serial Publication*, pp. 19-21.

30. Michael Sadleir, *XIX Century Fiction: A Bibliographical Record*, 2 vols. (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1951; rpt. 1969), II, 91-104 and 112-122.

31. David Kunzle, "Mr. Lambkin: Cruikshank's Strike for Independence," in Robert L. Patten, ed., *George Cruikshank: A Revaluation*, *Princeton University Library Chronicle*, 35 (1973-1974), 169-187; and *The Early Comic Strip: Narrative Strips and Picture Stories in the European Broadsheet from c. 1450 to 1825: History of the Comic Strip*, Vol. I (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1973).

32. Louis James, "An Artist in Time: George Cruikshank in Three Eras," in Patten, *George Cruikshank*, pp. 157-168.

33. John Carter, "Nineteenth-Century English Books: Some Bibliographical Agenda," in *Books and Book-Collectors* (Cleveland and New York: World Publishing Co., 1957), p. 158.

34. *Printing 1770-1970: An Illustrated History of Its Uses and Development in England* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1970), p. 2.

35. Carter, "Nineteenth-Century English Books," p. 157; Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 216.

36. Quoted in Marjorie Plant, *The English Book Trade* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.; and New York: R. R. Bowker Co., [1939]), pp. 329-330.

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 331-332.

38. Honoré de Balzac, *Lost Illusions*, trans. Ellen Marriage, in *Works*, Centenary Edition, Vol. VI (Philadelphia: John D. Morris and Co., n.d.), p. 2.
39. Carter, "Nineteenth-Century English Books," p. 157.
40. Quoted in Percy Muir, *Victorian Illustrated Books* (London: B. T. Batsford, Ltd., 1971), p. 4.
41. Gaskell, *Introduction to Bibliography*, p. 252.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 274 f.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 199.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 201.
45. Plant, *English Book Trade*, p. 301.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 303.
47. Gaskell, *Introduction to Bibliography*, p. 205.
48. Peter L. Shillingsburg, "The First Edition of Thackeray's *Pendennis*," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 66 (1972), 35-49.
49. Carter, "Nineteenth-Century English Books," p. 158.
50. Charles Knight, *The Old Printer and the Modern Press* (London: John Murray, 1854), p. 244; Plant, *English Book Trade*, p. 311.
51. Gaskell, *Introduction to Bibliography*, p. 267, *fn.* 5.
52. *Ibid.*, pp. 266-267; electrotyping was not common in England until the late nineteenth century, but at Harper's in New York all blocks were electrotyped in the forme with the type by 1850.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 297.
54. Carter, "Nineteenth-Century English Books," p. 158.
55. Arthur Waugh, *A Hundred Years of Publishing: Being the Story of Chapman & Hall, Ltd.* (London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd., 1930), pp. 4-5; and letter of Mrs. Gaye, daughter of Chapman, to Waugh, facing p. 4.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 10; see facsimile of Chapman and Hall's first announcement of *Chat*, facing p. 10.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 10; Forster, I, v, 74.
59. Waugh, *Hundred Years of Publishing*, p. 11, and facsimile of advertisement, facing p. 11.
60. Royal A. Gettmann, *A Victorian Publisher: A Study of the Bentley Papers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), pp. 10-11; quotation from A. S. Collins, *Profession of Letters*, p. 260.
61. For a fuller account of these deliberations, and the Seymour family's subsequent claims, see my edition of *The Pickwick Papers* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1972), pp. 11-16 and 919-922.
62. *The Letters and Private Papers of William Makepeace Thackeray*, coll. and ed. by Gordon N. Ray, 4 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1945), I, 300.
63. Preface to the Cheap Edition of *Pickwick*, 1847.
64. Sylvère Monod, *Dickens the Novelist* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968), p. 70, *fn.* 18.
65. *PLetters*, I, 648.
66. *PLetters*, I, 128-129.

67. *PLetters*, I, 648.
68. G. K. Chesterton, *Charles Dickens: A Critical Study* (New York: Dodd Mead & Co., 1906), p. 79.
69. Charles Knight, *Passages of a Working Life during Half a Century: With a Prelude of Early Reminiscences*, 3 vols. (London: Bradbury & Evans, 1864 and 1865), III, 37.
70. *PLetters*, I, 148.
71. *PLetters*, I, 288.
72. See Clause 6 in the Agreement with Richard Bentley for November 4, 1836 (*PLetters*, I, 650).
73. *PLetters*, I, 325.
74. *PLetters*, I, 358, *fn.* 5.
75. *The Diaries of William Charles Macready, 1833-1851*, ed. William Toynbee, 2 vols. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1912), I, 426; and *PLetters*, I, 324-331; see also the letter from William Harrison Ainsworth to James Crossley, November 22, 1837, in S. M. Ellis, *William Harrison Ainsworth and His Friends*, 2 vols. (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1911), I, 330-331.
76. The contract, quoted *passim* in the following discussion, appears in *PLetters*, I, 655-658.
77. Pollard, "Serial Fiction," p. 261.
78. John R. Harvey, *Victorian Novelists and Their Illustrators* (New York: New York University Press, 1971) gives examples of contracts or agreements based on the *Pickwick* model, p. 13.
79. F. A. Mumby, *The House of Routledge, 1834-1934* (London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1934), p. 87.