

Novel/magazine interfaces: the “long” serialisation of Wilkie Collins’s *Armadale*

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The serialisation of novels within magazines during the nineteenth century created a textual interface or dialogue between two reading experiences: the long-running serial was contained and contextualised by the overarching magazine series. The relationship between the magazine and the serialised novel has been explored in a number of studies (Hughes and Lund, *The Victorian Serial*; Hughes and Lund *Victorian Publishing* 11–34 and 96–123; Turner; Wynne; Delafield *Serialization*) that demonstrate how the serial was accommodated in a timeframe of reading at intervals whilst being horizontally integrated into the forward-moving periodical. This article draws on these previous studies, and particularly Wynne on *Armadale* (145–65), as well as my own work on women’s diaries (Delafield, *Women’s Diaries* 101–18). The paper analyses the appearance of Wilkie Collins’s *Armadale* in *Cornhill Magazine* (November 1864 to June 1866) as an illustration of serialisation at the novel/magazine interface. *Armadale* as a serial demonstrates the impact of these textual interfaces but, as a function of periodical publication, the novel’s interface with the *Cornhill* extended either side of its appearance in the magazine, creating a “long” serialisation.

The article first examines *Armadale*’s delayed appearance and its consequences for the *Cornhill*. A context for the serial was created before *Armadale* was even written when the anticipated Collins novel was initially substituted by the *Cornhill*’s first sensation serial, written by the magazine’s co-editor Frederick Greenwood. The article next reviews how Collins’s experience as a writer of weekly serials in magazines was reinvented for the *Cornhill*’s monthly format. Thirdly, the article explores the positioning of Collins’s serial and of the other serials that were running in the magazine during the serialisation of *Armadale*. *Armadale* the novel may have unfolded over twenty magazine-publishing months but *Armadale* the magazine serial effectively extended over some three and a half years, from the commencement in November 1863 of the substitute serial *Margaret Denzil’s History* to the conclusion of Trollope’s sister serial *The Claverings* in May 1867.

In March 1863, George Smith, publisher of *Cornhill Magazine* and manager of the publishing house of Smith Elder, faced a serious editorial problem when a celebrity author failed to deliver a contracted novel due for serialisation in the magazine. Since taking over as proprietor of Smith Elder in 1846 (Glynn 45), Smith had weathered financial scandal within the company (Glynn 45–7) and then, in January 1860, engineered one of the most successful magazine launches ever. Smith had also published Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* (1847) and managed the fallout from Elizabeth Gaskell’s *Life of Brontë* (1857). He had persuaded Gaskell to keep *Cousin Phillis*, her perfectly formed short novel, down to only four instalments (Gaskell, *Further Letters* 259–60 10 December 1863). He had dealt with the resignation of Thackeray as editor in March 1862 by taking on G.H. Lewes as an editorial partner and had secured George Eliot’s *Romola* as a serial to appear in the *Cornhill* alongside Anthony Trollope’s next Barseshire novel *The Small House at Allington*. In March 1863, these two serials were running in the *Cornhill* and the payments made for them illustrate the stratification of fiction within the magazine. After an initial offer of £10,000 (Law, *Serializing Fiction* 24), *Romola* cost Smith £7,000 (Glynn 137–8) because Eliot’s artistic

decisions about the division of the serial caused a reduction in the number of planned instalments from 16 to 12 (Lee xxix–xxx). Finally the serial appeared in 14 instalments (July 1862 to August 1863), and Eliot presented her short story “Brother Jacob” to Smith for later publication in the magazine (July 1864). Contingency was required to meet the publication schedule as well as the needs of the authors publishing in the magazine. *The Small House at Allington* (September 1862 to April 1864), already complete at its commencement for division into numbers, would comprise four more instalments than *Romola* but cost only half as much at £3,500.

Smith’s 1863 editorial problem arose from contracted payments already promised to celebrity author Wilkie Collins. Smith had rectified his uncharacteristic oversight in bidding too little for the volume edition of Collins’s *The Woman in White* (Glynn 142–3) by offering £250 per instalment for the next-but-one Collins blockbuster, *Armada*. This still unnamed and unwritten serial, was however, being delayed by Collins’s ill-health (Sutherland, “Introduction” xxix–xxx), leaving Smith with a gap to fill once *Romola* had concluded. *Armada* was finally serialised in the *Cornhill* in twenty parts from November 1864 to June 1866, some two years behind schedule (Glynn 143). This delay in the serial’s publication created new interfaces, both planned and unplanned, in the editing of *Cornhill Magazine*.

Cornhill Magazine was launched with a prospectus as a literary family magazine (Schmidt; Maunder; Delafield, *Serialization* 58–60, 81–2). Marie Warmbold has suggested that there was such a universe as “*Cornhill* country” (138) created through the early issues of the magazine by Trollope, Thackeray and Smith. Collins was a member of the same social circle as these writers and editors but was a staff writer for Dickens’s *Household Words* and *All the Year Round* where he had already produced three serials. *The Dead Secret* had appeared in *Household Words* (1857); *The Woman in White* (1860) and *No Name* (1862) in *All the Year Round*. Dickens’s periodicals were, of course, two-penny weekly publications whereas *Cornhill Magazine* was a shilling monthly. The *Cornhill*’s issues of 128 pages were set up to carry two substantial works of fiction that were designed to retain readers’ interest through sequences of overlapping and rotation within the magazine.

A sensation novel was expected from Collins in the wake of his popular success with *The Woman in White* in *All the Year Round*. Collins told his mother in a letter dated 31 July 1861 that that he was very excited to be commissioned for the *Cornhill* and especially by his £5,000 fee (Collins, *Letters* 197–8). Collins researched the locations for the novel in Germany, Norfolk and the Isle of Man during the time when he was unable to deliver the manuscript because of his ill-health (Peters 260–61; 267). Collins told one correspondent (5 October 1865) that “the characters themselves were all marshalled in their places, before a line of ‘*Armada*’ was written” (Collins, *Letters* 259). He announced that he had finished the novel on 12 April 1866 only six weeks before the final *Cornhill* instalment appeared. He then wrote to his mother from Paris, “Miss Gwilt’s death quite upset me” (Collins, *Letters* 275 22 April 1866). *Armada* has been described as a “quasi epic novel” (Caracciolo 166), as a “radical dislocation of imperial and domestic authority” (Pal-Lapinski 105) and as a representation of “homosexual panic” (Buchanan and Cox 319). The plot of the novel is both complex and highly patterned, and narrated partly through letters and a diary, the style used by Collins in *The Woman in White*. Overall, it concerns the fateful interaction between two men called Allan Armadale and a female criminal called Lydia Gwilt.

In the novel, a letter written by a dying man is left as evidence for his son and a warning for the future. The dying man has taken the name Allan Armadale to gain an inheritance but the original heir has in turn impersonated him in order to marry his intended wife. This now

dying Armadale has murdered the impersonator, leaving a widow who then bears a son also called Allan Armadale. The older of the sons in this second generation runs away from home and changes his name to Ozias Midwinter. When the two men from the younger generation meet up, Armadale has fortuitously inherited the family estate in Norfolk and also offended his neighbours. He makes Midwinter his steward and it is at this point that the letter about past events comes to light. The information in it is reinforced by the experience of a dream Armadale recounts to his friend and also by their strange discovery of the shipwreck on which the murder took place twenty years before.

As a 12 year old servant girl, the novel's villainous anti-heroine Lydia Gwilt has forged the letter that promoted Armadale's father's impersonation. Gwilt has already returned once to blackmail Armadale's mother during a time of secluded existence under the care of a kindly clergyman called Decimus Brock. Brock is a significant member of the novel's large cast who also helps with some of the early narration. Gwilt is by far the most interesting character in the novel but the reader has to believe that she has so manipulated her appearance as to appear only a little older than the 20-year old men she deceives when she appears again as a governess to Allan's tenant's daughter, Neelie Milroy, who is planning to be Allan's wife. After a number of twists and turns, Lydia marries Midwinter because she actually loves him but he suffers from bouts of melancholy and, in her view, neglects her. When Armadale comes to visit them in Naples, Gwilt revives her original plot to gain an inheritance by claiming to be Allan's widow. To affect his death, she persuades Armadale to travel by boat with Manuel, one of her previous conspirators, and Allan is initially reported drowned. Both Midwinter and Armadale, however, end up at the Sanatorium of Dr Downward who provides Gwilt with the means for murder by poisoned gas that is pumped into a room from the contents of a purple flask. When Midwinter suspects a deception, he swaps rooms with Armadale. Lydia then rescues her husband from her own plot and dies in his place leaving Armadale to marry Neelie and Midwinter to become a writer.

The serial ran for nearly 600 pages in *Cornhill* and the physical substitutions that drove the plot culminated in a textual substitution when Lydia's final explanatory note to Midwinter was written on the blank page of a letter from Mr Brock. Her textual interventions in the *Cornhill* had previously appeared in her infamous diary but this volume had run out of pages in the penultimate instalment of the novel. In the reused text and context of Brock's letter, Gwilt announced: "I have never been a happy woman" (CM 174). This line was then used as an epigraph for the volume edition of the novel (Sutherland xxxii) possibly in an attempt by Smith Elder to mollify potential critics. In *Cornhill*, however, Lydia once more hijacked the text by substituting herself for a repentant woman.

The serial's contemporary reception did not immediately repay George Smith for his outlay. The work of a celebrity author did not help to arrest the *Cornhill*'s drop in circulation that was in any case experienced by many magazines at a time of increased competition for readership (Law, "The Serial Publication" 11). John Sutherland has demonstrated that the circulation of *Cornhill Magazine* was approximately 41,000 in 1864 and that this dropped by 15% or so to 36,000 during the serialisation of *Armadale* (*Cornhill's Sales* 107; Glynn 143). Sutherland has suggested that Smith was made nervous by a backlash against sensation fiction following Henry Mansel's *Quarterly Review* denunciation in April 1863 ("Introduction" xxiii). Wynne, on the other hand, highlights the reaction of the critics to Collins's intervening serial *No Name* (33), serialised in *All the Year Round* (15 March 1862–17 January 1863). When *Armadale* was reprinted in two volumes with illustrations by Smith Elder in 1866, *The Westminster Review* complained that the novel had "the literary power of

a police report" ("Belles Lettres" 270) and the *Saturday Review* described the plot as "a lurid labyrinth of improbabilities" ("Armada" 726). *The Athenaeum* objected to Collins's "diseased invention" with characters who were "vermin" and "obscene birds of the night" (Chorley 732–3). Some of these reviewers, especially H. F. Chorley in *The Athenaeum* and the *Saturday Review* in general, were always critical of Collins but *Armada* clearly offered enough interest through its plot and its contribution to the debates about sensation fiction to generate public discussion both at the time of volume publication and in retrospectives of Collins's career after his death in 1889 (Lang 27). As a serial within a magazine, however, *Armada* presents distinct differences that were glossed over by these opinions of the volume edition. Other discourses were in play around the novel that relate both to its appearance in and absence from the magazine.

In August 1863, *Romola* finished ahead of time but 20 instalments of the reliable Trollope's *The Small House at Allington* continued up to April 1864. Thackeray was also writing a new serial to be called *Denis Duval* but had produced only eight chapters when he died unexpectedly on Christmas Eve 1863. By this time, however, Smith had lighted on a solution to Collins's delay by asking his sub-editor Frederick Greenwood, who had been working with him since Thackeray's departure, to produce a serial in twelve parts which in the event lasted up to the moment when *Armada* first appeared.

Margaret Denzil's History carried the burden of substituting for the expensive blockbuster. The novel was written by and about a woman with a history as dubious as Lydia Gwilt's. The story, with its various complications about Margaret's parenthood, was clearly written as a sensation novel in spite of any concerns about the critical climate for sensation. John Denzil was used as an internal editor of the text as Collins had already employed Walter Hartright in *The Woman in White*. In addition, the eponymous heroine wrote and presented her own first-person story or "history" speaking directly to readers as Lydia would in her written diary. Like Lydia, Margaret was also a bigamist. Lydia's complex plotting and exploitation of technology were shared in *Margaret Denzil's History* with another woman called Mercy Denzil who disguised herself as a male doctor and effectively rose from the dead to ruin Margaret's life and render her baby illegitimate. When the readers of *Cornhill Magazine* found out that the Denzils' marriage was bigamous in the eighth instalment of the serial in July 1864, this emphasised the effect of a fallen woman writing her own story, somehow made safe by serialisation within a family magazine. With this precedent and the protection of being embedded in the magazine, Collins was following this model when he had Lydia write a diary that spoke directly to the family readership of the *Cornhill*. When *Margaret Denzil's History* was re-published in its volume edition, the Denzils' bigamous relationship was not disclosed until the final chapter of the novel in what appears to have been a substantial revision of the serialised text (Delafield, "What tangled history" 110–12). The fact that *Margaret Denzil's History* was a contingent piece of writing that had to be so revised suggests that serialisation in a magazine allowed freedoms of narrative style that were not deemed feasible in the volume version. Textual substitution is, however, the key to understanding how the serialisation of *Armada* operated and how the readership was prepared for Smith's expensive and extensive commission. There is evidence that Greenwood was paid only £25 a month to include editing the *Cornhill* as well as serial-writing (Glynn 138) but his role was important in paving the way for *Armada* within the magazine.

Unlike Greenwood, Collins had already written for periodicals and had honed his skills as a weekly serial writer. He had adapted himself to serialisation in his exploitation of the magazine format with a structured plot and dramatic curtain lines. Collins exploited the

monthly format in his use of structure within the instalments. The weekly serial unfolded with a relentless onward momentum, the monthly format read more as a novel ready to be divided for publication into two or three volumes. However, Collins's structure disrupted this pattern. Prior to *Armadale*, the Greenwood and Trollope serials in *Cornhill Magazine* unfolded in what were usually three-chapter instalments in a linear successively-numbered direction: *Margaret Denzil's History* from Chapter 1 to 37 and *The Small House at Allington* from 1 to 60. Both novels were split into two volumes for republication outside the periodical. *Armadale*, however, began with three chapters of "Book the First" that was later to be renamed the "Prologue". "Book the Second" followed, in five chapters spread over the next three instalments, challenging the *Cornhill* pattern of three chapters per instalment established by Thackeray and Trollope. Chapter 1 of "Book the Second" entitled "The Mystery of Ozias Midwinter" was one thirty-page instalment. Where Trollope would have supplied 24 pages in three chapters for his *Cornhill* serials *Framley Parsonage* and *The Small House*, *Armadale's* two other "Book the Second" instalments of thirty pages each were pairs of chapters. George Eliot had been allotted thirty pages for the instalments of *Romola* but these had unfolded serially in groups of 4 to 6 chapters in the established *Cornhill* fashion. Although "Book the Third" of *Armadale* proceeded more conventionally with five instalments of two to three chapters, the August 1865 instalment consisted of one chapter of "Book the Third" called "Exit" and the first two of "Book the Fourth", all three in one instalment.

John Sutherland's investigation of the manuscript of the novel suggests that Collins was attuned to his allotted page lengths ("Introduction" xxxiv) but his text was obviously challenging the organisation of the periodical in other ways. "Book the Fourth" of the serial of *Armadale* contained thirteen chapters, two of which were entitled "Miss Gwilt's Diary", with the "Diary" comprising about one third of the text of this "Book" (Delafield, *Women's Diaries* 140–45). The factual naming of these chapters advertised their format and also the impropriety of access to the private document that caused the serial to be moved to the midpoint of the magazine. As a counterweight, however, the other chapter titles in "Book the Fourth" displayed the symmetry of naming that was a mark of the established Trollope/Thackeray approach. Pedgift is the family lawyer and in October 1865 Chapters 5 and 6 of "Book the Fourth" were entitled "Pedgift's Remedy" and "Pedgift's Postscript". In November, the two chapters were "She Comes Between Them" and "She Knows the Truth", the latter of which represented the significant handover to the diary for December 1865. In November, Lydia turned from a letter she was writing in "She Knows the Truth" to ask her diary whether she should confide in her accomplice Mother Oldershaw. "Wait a little, till I have asked my diary whether I can safely tell you?" (CM 12 603) was the curtain line for the instalment. Oldershaw was a procuress and abortionist, and magazine readers were being asked to substitute for her in the text by themselves becoming Lydia's confidants. In Chapters 10 and 14 of "Book the Fourth", there was no other voice within the serial since these chapters stood alone and the diary was the sole narrator in the instalments for December 1865 and February 1866.

In December, the instalment remained within bounds at 26 pages although the accompanying instalment of *Wives and Daughters* by Gaskell was 47 pages long (CM 12 641–678), nearly twice as much as was usually programmed. In February, Gwilt signed off by announcing her "great victory" over herself: "I close and lock this book, never to write in it, never to open it again" (CM 13 209). In this issue of the magazine, there was no effusive Gaskell instalment to accompany the single chapter instalment of *Armadale*. Rather, by contrast with Gwilt's impassioned and argumentative writing to herself, there was the neatly produced and

contained opening of the already written Trollope serial *The Claverings*. The following *Armada* instalment in March further heightened the textual drama when the last chapter of “Book the Fourth” was called “The Wedding Day” but consisted almost solely of the spy Young Bashwood revealing Gwilt’s true career to his father. The wedding of Midwinter and Gwilt took place offstage. Readers of the serial, however, would have already been able to see that Gwilt would return to her “second self” (CM 13 339) in the diary because the first chapter of “Book the Fifth” appeared in March along with “The Wedding Day”. In fact the three chapters of “Book the Fifth” carrying over into April were narrated only through the diary, and the chapter divisions were in conflict with the instalment divisions, contrasting once again with the neatly packaged three-chapter segments of *The Claverings*. These Trollope instalments continued in their apparently regimented way to open the issue of the *Cornhill* for the last five instalments of *Armada*, providing a rational boundary to the textual disruptions within. In March, Chapter 1 of “Book the Fifth” was the second chapter of the instalment and this continued, re-titled “Miss Gwilt’s Diary (Continued)”, into April. The further two chapters in April were “The Diary Continued” and “The Diary Broken Off”, balanced in title by contrast with the jagged debates in the text and the wildness of the plot developments. In this case the diary “breaks off” with the recognition of the voice of Dr Downward at the Sanatorium but the chapter itself continued into May where “Chapter 3 The Diary Broken Off (Continued)” comprised two-thirds of the next instalment in the magazine.

When Gwilt’s diary was finally broken off for good in the May 1866 instalment, the next two chapters in May were part of “Book the Last” signalling a future finality for the serial that would not, however, conclude until the following month. The titles of the chapters called “At the Terminus” and “In the House” once again offered balance. The novel’s final instalment appeared in June and contained the third and last chapter of “Book the Last” called “The Purple Flask”. This was the last chapter of the novel proper and occupied 32 of 38 pages, with nearly 85% of the space allotted to the serial. There were then two separate chapters outside “Book the Last” entitled “Epilogue”. Chapter 1 of the Epilogue was in the form of a letter from the lawyer Pedgift to his son, echoing the earlier “Pedgift’s Postscript”. The true epilogue was supplied in the next chapter, named “Midwinter”, and took the form of a brief conversation between the two Armadales as they part on the eve of Allan’s wedding day. Midwinter rather surprisingly invokes God’s mercy and wisdom: “The first light of the new day met him as he looked out, and rested tenderly on his face” (CM 13 720). Midwinter stands in for the now deceased clergyman Brock, with a reminder that the text of Brock’s last letter was invaded or substituted by Lydia to form her suicide note. In this issue of the *Cornhill*, there then followed a short story by Thackeray’s daughter Anne updating the tale of Cinderella (CM 13 721–42) and a guide to The National Portrait Exhibition (CM 13 743–60). As the serial closed, *Cornhill* used the close of its issue and of its Volume 13 to restore textual and contextual normality.

The serialised *Armada* was testing the boundaries and rules of the evolved *Cornhill* with 30-page chapters, single chapter instalments, four and more chapters in the form of letters, and five told in the form of a criminal woman’s diary. There were chapters overrunning between instalments, continuing, broken off and narrated from offstage (in the case of “The Wedding Day”). Collins was deploying and enhancing his experience of the workings of a serial, and John Sutherland, in his edition, has traced the manuscript updates made in seeking good curtain lines and adapting the length of instalments (Collins, *Armada* 681–710). Catherine Peters follows Collins’s ill-health during the composition but has established that he worked about three months ahead of the magazine’s publishing schedule (268–70). Where Mansel had allied sensation with serialisation as “spasmodic” reading (483), Collins’s text

used a new level of disruption within the genre. *Armada* challenged the organisation of the *Cornhill*, and reading the interfaces between serial and magazine highlights the planned disruption that became part of the sensation reading experience.

The third area of serial patterning concerns the ways in which the other serials interacted and interfaced with *Armada*. These interactions affected the *Cornhill* as it was composed over the three and a half year period. This can be demonstrated through an exposition of the rotation and stationing of those serials within what has been described as “the inherently dialogic form of the periodical” (Dawson 222). This section of the article discusses the stationing of *Cornhill* serials and draws out examples of the resulting dialogues between the plots of the novels. The pattern can be followed through the on-line *Cornhill Magazine* “Issues Checklist”.

In her analysis of *Armada*, Deborah Wynne suggests that for the period of the serialisation “none of the three novels [*Armada*, *Wives and Daughters* and *The Claverings*] was privileged in editorial terms” (147) but there is evidence of an interim pattern emerging. In the early years of *Cornhill Magazine*, the pattern established was of allowing two serials appearing each month to flow and overlap, and so to promote the ongoing purchase of the magazine. When the *Cornhill* was first launched, for instance, *Framley Parsonage* continued when Thackeray’s *Lovel the Widower* concluded in June 1860, and Thackeray’s *Philip* reached its fifth instalment in the month after *Framley Parsonage* ended in April 1861 (Delafield, *Serialization* 104–5; Appendix 5). The station of the serials within the magazine was adjusted according to their progression and all might appear in first station at some point depending on the overarching textual arrangement of magazine issues. Only *Romola* (July 1862–August 1863) appeared first for every instalment consecutively. No other serial was fixed as to its station. Elsewhere, the appearance of Eliot’s serial affected the placement of *The Small House at Allington* which remained mid station from January to August 1863 and then opened the magazine from September 1863 to January 1864, latterly covering the early instalments of *Margaret Denzil’s History* before returning to the end (February 1864) or mid station (March to April 1864) for its final instalments. The internal logic and choreography of the magazine issue was ordinarily balanced with the ongoing flow of the magazine from month to month and even year to year.

Armada (November 1864 to June 1866) overlapped with *Wives and Daughters* (August 1864 to January 1866) for fifteen instalments and with *The Claverings* (February 1866 to May 1867) for five, reiterating that outer pattern of promoting the magazine by having serials running on. *Armada* appeared in first station for eight consecutive months against the usual rotational pattern, but from July 1865 onwards it was placed at the mid station. For the remainder of the serialisation, from July 1865 to January 1866, *Wives and Daughters* appeared in first station, and *The Claverings* then led off between February and June. Unlike *The Small House at Allington*, *Armada* did not reassume first station nor did it alternate with *Wives and Daughters* as Trollope’s serials had previously alternated with Thackeray’s.

The rotation of the serials’ stations altered from the established pattern. *Wives and Daughters* had overlapped for its first three instalments with *Margaret Denzil’s History*. Greenwood’s serial was in first station in the middle month (September 1864) but in final station for its closing instalment (October 1864). The editing process was making use of each serial’s status as established or emerging. Like *The Small House* during the serialisation of *Romola*, *Wives and Daughters* appeared in mid-issue until June 1865 for the first eight months of *Armada* after which, it has been suggested, *Armada* was “supplanted” so that *Wives and Daughters* became the “first voice” (Hughes and Lund, *Victorian Publishing* 20) for a further seven

months without interruption (July 1865 to January 1866). *The Claverings* then led off the issue for the last five months until *Armada* concluded. Once *The Claverings* had acted as cover for *Armada*, however, the rotational pattern was restored. *The Claverings* immediately made way in July 1866 for Anne Thackeray's *The Village on the Cliff* and these two serials shared the lead and midpoint stations for seven months as had been the pattern for the first instalments of *Wives and Daughters*. *The Claverings* was the only serial in March and April 1867 and retained the opening station for its three last chapters in May when Lady Verney's *Stone Edge* began. While the *Cornhill* did not lead off with its star author's *Armada* because of adverse reaction to the sensation novel, *Wives and Daughters* was ostentatiously subtitled "An Everyday Story" throughout so that Gaskell's serial could frame Collins's controversial text and contain it until *The Claverings* came along to take on that role. This was a specific approach to textual "privileging" through which *Armada* the popular serial could be hidden in plain sight.

The Claverings was a more regimented piece of text than either of its companions, partly because it was already completed and also because Trollope was an experienced writer of *Cornhill* serials by this time. His fiction had appeared in 38 issues of the *Cornhill* out of the first 52 up to April 1864 (Delafield, *Serialization* 169). Collins and Gaskell, however, did not produce neat packages of manuscript under the terms of their agreements. Collins opened *Armada* with four instalments of around 30 pages that he appears to have completed in advance of the serialisation (Peters 267–8). He then continued with eleven instalments at the planned length of between 24 and 28 pages. Then, of the last six instalments, one is 26 pages, three are 29 to 30 and the last two are 38. Gaskell had been contracted to 24-page instalments as evidenced in her letters to Smith (Gaskell, *Letters* 732) but she was soon anxious about these limits (Delafield, "Elizabeth Gaskell" 437). *Wives and Daughters* actually proceeded at the rate of 22 to 29 pages per instalment for twelve instalments before overflowing into four instalments of 33 to 40 pages (August–November) and, as described above, 47 pages in December 1865.

In addition to the editorial management of positioning and page lengths that caused *Armada* to be both hidden and prominent, the serials within *Cornhill Magazine* could also be read in a dialogue with one another as a function of the magazine issue. This paper concludes by drawing attention to examples of the reflexive relationships between fictional content at the novel/magazine interface. Wynne discusses "dual heroines" (151) in her study and the following discussion considers the interfaces within the magazine between parallel heroines and anti-heroines.

When Gwilt first appeared in her adult guise in the second instalment of *Armada*, she was described at a meeting with Brock as "neatly dressed" and wearing a red Paisley shawl (*CM* 10 657). The woman whose rescue from drowning precipitated the death of the previous heirs to Thorpe-Ambrose was described in identical words in the same instalment (665), and Brock and Midwinter reiterated the same description when they discussed these occurrences in the third instalment, "Book the Second" Chapter 2 (*CM* 11 17, 18). In the fourth instalment, Midwinter superstitiously tested Allan by mentioning Lydia's presumed age of 35 in conjunction with the same shawl (139). In the same issue of the magazine, the *Cornhill's* longer fiction was supplemented by a short story called "Tid's Old Red Rag of a Shawl" by the moral writer Henrietta Keddie. In the story, this article of female attire "come originally from a hand-loom of Hindustan" (165) was actively used as a disguise in charades and plays, with Tid acting as Red Riding Hood, Lady Macbeth and even the Duke of Wellington (166). Tid was pictured as the capital on the first page of the story, admiring her shawl by glancing

over own shoulder at its folds (165). By the end of the story, however, the shawl had been revalued as a marker of sacrifice and courage appropriate to the family magazine. At risk to herself, Tid returned to nurse her old employers the Hibberds and the shawl was hung out “as a flag of hope” (181) to tell Tid’s husband that the house was free of diphtheria. Tid herself became reconciled to the traditional role of the happy housewife and the shawl was preserved as a sentimental object. Where Gwilt used this badge of identity to hide in plain sight and then to deceive Brock (*CM* 11 519), the Keddie story re-domesticated the shawl even as it was being used within the parallel sensational plot.

There are interactions between the neat Trollope plot and the disruptive Collins text at the other end of the serialisation of *Armadale*. In the *Cornhill* issue for February 1866, Julia Brabazon in *The Claverings* has “taught herself that romance could not be allowed to a woman in her position” (*CM* 13 149). Julia has jilted Harry Clavering to become Lady Ongar because Harry, the son of a rector who is uncle to Sir Hugh Clavering, is outside the immediate line of any inheritance. That month’s instalment of *Armadale*, “Book the Fourth” Chapter 14 was solely “Miss Gwilt’s Diary” and in it, by contrast with Julia, Gwilt has actually persuaded herself that romantic love is possible after all (*CM* 13 209). In the March issue of the magazine, Gwilt’s diary resumed in Naples, and in the same issue Julia Brabazon was described as merchandise, as she often is in the serial/novel. On her return from Florence as a widow, Julia has “the rich dower of the poor wretch to whom she had sold herself” (*CM* 13 270). Bashwood in *Armadale* has meanwhile heard how Lydia has similarly sold herself to her first husband who has been poisoned, and Gwilt is about to meet her old accomplice with whom she will arrange the murder of Allan. When the diary is finally broken off in May 1866, Lady Ongar in *The Claverings* “had performed her part of the bargain, and now the price was paid to her into her hands” (*CM* 13 533). Julia travels in a veil and a closed carriage (*CM* 13 121) as Lydia does because of her notoriety, and Julia finds that she too has made a poor bargain after all. As Lydia pours from the purple flask to promote her own death, Lady Ongar recognises her “mercenary perfidy” (*CM* 13 643) and Harry meets the scheming Sophie Gordeloup who has attached herself to Julia in the manner of Mother Oldershaw in *Armadale*. The serials are in dialogue within the magazine over the character of women and the actions they must take to survive, and thus, despite its safe textual organisation, *The Claverings* gains some additional vicarious sensation from contiguity and shared space.

The reciprocity of this interface also operated in the reverse direction in that Trollope gained credence for his final plot twist from the heightened coincidences of the Collins serial. Andrew Lang, writing about the volume edition of *Armadale* in the *Contemporary Review*, objected to the novel as “one tissue of succeeding coincidences” (27). In this retrospective after Collins’s death, Lang deplored the “rough and ready slap-dash” of the plot as signalled by the process that brings about Allan Armadale’s inheritance of the Blanchard family estate at Thorpe-Ambrose: namely “the destruction of three able-bodied heirs in a fortnight, one by accidental chill, two by an avalanche” (27). In *The Claverings*, which was promoted as everyday and realistic, a sickly baby cousin dies and this removes the immediate heir to Sir Hugh Clavering. Sir Hugh then goes on a yachting trip with his new heir, his brother Archie, and they are accidentally drowned. As a result, Harry’s father inherits Clavering Park and Harry becomes the heir after all just as that other yachtsman Allan Armadale has done within *Armadale*. This complex succession could be presented in *The Claverings* as the reality of life expectancy in the 1860s but the more sensational elements of Trollope’s plot device were also diluted in the magazine by the outlandish preceding developments of *Armadale*.

Wives and Daughters offers further life choices for women paralleled within the magazine. Molly Gibson is a type of Cinderella as later reinforced by the Anne Thackeray piece that closes the *Cornhill* after the last instalment of *Armada*. Molly's stepmother, the second Mrs Gibson, and her daughter Cynthia draw parallels with the Oldershaw-Gwilt conspiracy. Mrs Gibson is a monstrous figure who manipulates her needlework and social engagements to get her own way, and Cynthia Gibson has a secret liaison which must be covered up in her pursuit of Roger Hamley. Although *Wives and Daughters* was rigorously and repeatedly described every month in *Cornhill Magazine* as "An Everyday Story", the Hollingford society depicted by Gaskell was reflected also within Collins's Thorpe-Ambrose where social norms were manipulated by Lydia Gwilt. As the two serials unfolded, Gwilt was paralleled in Hollingford by women like Cynthia Gibson and Lady Harriet Cumnor who control appearances for their own gain.

During their serialisation, these novels unfolded in shared textual spaces and at the interfaces of magazine publication. Editing and publishing choices within the magazine contributed to the presentation and meaning of the serials for the original readers. The sensation elements of *Armada* were embedded in the professed "everyday stories" of *Wives and Daughters* and of *The Claverings* as part of the *Cornhill*'s mission to educate and entertain a family readership. Wynne describes the "blurred generic boundaries between sensation and domestic realism" (161) reinforced by the original illustrations in the magazine. Re-reading the circumstances and contingencies, it seems that Smith was committed financially to the degenerate text of *Armada* as well as to its disruptive composition. *Margaret Denzil's History* was initially designed to normalise a textual space for sensation that *The Claverings* then had to neutralise, with a little help from Tid's shawl. This paper suggests that overall the "long" serialisation of *Armada* in *Cornhill Magazine* represents a form of reflexive contiguity that is lost or dismissed from the novel in its later volume form.

One critic has asked "Could Lydia Gwilt have been happy?" (Kale 32) and another observes that Allan Armadale's very name "circulates outside the confines" of his life (Keptanios 31). As this article has demonstrated, the serial effectively circulated outside the confines of the novel since further meaning was generated in the original serialised context by instalments at the novel/magazine interface. Philip O'Neill asserts that *Armada* is a radical text that "does not fit into the realist tradition of literature" with its quest for one uncontested meaning (51). Any novel serialised in a magazine, however, was forever in a contest for meaning at the interface between serial representation and the periodical issue.

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