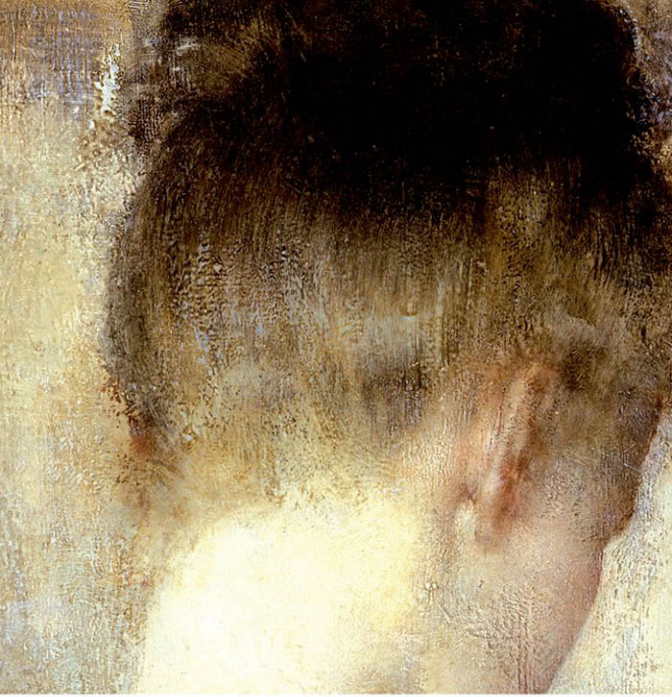

Mary Elizabeth Braddon

# Lady Audley's Secret

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

# LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET

MARY ELIZABETH BRADDON was born in London in October 1835, the youngest daughter of Henry Braddon (a feckless solicitor and writer on sporting subjects) and Fanny White, his Irish wife, who left him when Mary was 4 years old and brought her daughter up alone. In 1856 Braddon began producing magazine stories in an unsuccessful attempt to augment the family income, and in 1857, using the name Mary Seyton, she began a brief career as an actress, an experience on which she was to draw in several of her novels. In 1860 she wrote her first novel, *Three Times Dead* (later published as *The Trail of the Serpent*)—and met the publisher John Maxwell. From this point onwards Braddon's life and career became intertwined with Maxwell's. The first of their children was born in 1862 (they married in 1874, following the death of Maxwell's first wife), the year in which she had her first commercial success with *Lady Audley's Secret*. Partly as a result of the precariousness of Maxwell's publishing ventures, Braddon continued to produce fiction at an extraordinary rate throughout the rest of the nineteenth century as well as 'conducting' several magazines, including *Belgravia* (1866–76). One of the most notorious sensation novelists of the 1860s, Braddon later developed the satirical talents evident in some of her earlier work to produce sharply observed novels of contemporary social life. Several of Braddon's novels were adapted for the stage, and *Aurora Floyd* was made into a silent film in 1913. The last of her eighty novels was published posthumously in 1916, following her death in February 1915.

LYN PYKETT is Professor Emerita in the Department of English and Creative Writing at Aberystwyth University. She has published widely on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century literature and culture. Her books include *Emily Brontë* (1989), *The Improper Feminine: The Women's Sensation Novel and the New Woman Writing* (1992), *The Sensation Novel from 'The Woman in White' to 'The Moonstone'* (1994), *Engendering Fictions: The English Novel in the Early Twentieth Century* (1995), *Charles Dickens* (2002) and *Wilkie Collins* (2005) for the Oxford 'Authors in Context' series. She is also the editor of *Wilkie Collins: Contemporary Critical Essays* (1998).

## OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

*For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics have brought readers closer to the world's great literature. Now with over 700 titles—from the 4,000-year-old myths of Mesopotamia to the twentieth century's greatest novels—the series makes available lesser-known as well as celebrated writing.*

*The pocket-sized hardbacks of the early years contained introductions by Virginia Woolf, T. S. Eliot, Graham Greene, and other literary figures which enriched the experience of reading. Today the series is recognized for its fine scholarship and reliability in texts that span world literature, drama and poetry, religion, philosophy and politics. Each edition includes perceptive commentary and essential background information to meet the changing needs of readers.*

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

MARY ELIZABETH BRADDON

# *Lady Audley's Secret*

*Edited with an Introduction and Notes by*
LYN PYKETT

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide in

Oxford New York

Auckland Cape Town Dar es Salaam Hong Kong Karachi
Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Nairobi
New Delhi Shanghai Taipei Toronto

With offices in

Argentina Austria Brazil Chile Czech Republic France Greece
Guatemala Hungary Italy Japan Poland Portugal Singapore
South Korea Switzerland Thailand Turkey Ukraine Vietnam

Oxford is a registered trade mark of Oxford University Press
in the UK and in certain other countries

Published in the United States
by Oxford University Press Inc., New York



First published as a World's Classics paperback 1987
Reissued as an Oxford World's Classics paperback 1998, 2008
New edition 2012



British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Data available

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Library of Congress Control Number: 2011934700

Typeset by Cenveo, Bangalore, India
Printed in Great Britain
on acid-free paper by
Clays Ltd, St Ives plc

ISBN 978-0-19-957703-3

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

# CONTENTS

*This page intentionally left blank*

# INTRODUCTION

*Lady Audley's Secret* was one of the publishing sensations of the 1860s. An immediate best-seller when it appeared in three-volume form in 1862, it was also one of the best-selling novels of the nineteenth century. However, book sales figures do not tell the whole story. In the early 1860s Braddon's novel reached a wide and diverse audience through its serialization in three magazines aimed at different kinds of readership. In addition its plot and main characters were known to many who had not read the novel in any form through the numerous stage adaptations which appeared from 1862 and were frequently revived throughout the century. Given its initial success and its continuing circulation in nineteenth-century culture it is, perhaps, unsurprising to discover that in 1899 *Lady Audley's Secret* was selected as one of the *Daily Telegraph*'s 100 best novels of the nineteenth century by the paper's outgoing and incoming editors Sir Edwin Arnold and W. L. Courtney and H. D. Traill (the satirical poet, biographer, literary journalist, and sometime political *Telegraph* leader writer). By the middle of the twentieth century, when Braddon was dismissed (when remembered at all) as merely the erstwhile favourite of the circulating library, most novel readers would have been as surprised by the inclusion of *Lady Audley's Secret* in the *Telegraph*'s list as they would have been by about half of the other titles found there. However, since the 1970s, a renewed focus on women writers and a new interest in popular nineteenth-century cultural forms such as the sensation novel and the crime novel have returned *Lady Audley's Secret* to something of the prominence and popularity that it enjoyed in the nineteenth century. Now a fixture on many university and college courses and the subject of much lively debate and reinterpretation, Braddon's best-seller is also, once again, reaching a large and diverse audience through new paperback editions and adaptations for stage, television, and radio. Like their nineteenth-century counterparts, twenty-first-century audiences continue to be thrilled by Braddon's tale of bigamy, murder, impersonation, and blackmail and its fascinating unravelling of the secrets of the sweetly smiling, golden-haired heroine who is not what she seems, and who becomes engaged in an increasingly desperate cat and mouse game with her husband's nephew.

## *Mary Elizabeth Braddon: Queen of the Circulating Library*

Mary Elizabeth Braddon was born in Soho in London in October 1835, the third child and second daughter of Henry Braddon, an unsuccessful solicitor who came from Cornwall, and his English-educated Irish wife, Fanny White. Henry Braddon's financial unreliability as well as his wife's discovery of his unfaithfulness led to her parents' separation when Braddon was only 4. She then lived with her mother in a variety of rented houses in St Leonards-on-Sea in Sussex and subsequently in various parts of London, finally settling in the south London suburb of Camberwell. She saw relatively little of her older siblings, who went away to school with the financial support of their father's family. Braddon herself briefly attended three different schools, but was mainly educated at home by her mother to whom she was very close and who introduced her 'to the great world of imaginative literature'.[1] As well as being formed by her mother's 'cultivated mind . . . and . . . natural taste for what was best in the literature of the time',[2] and especially by her love of Shakespeare and Scott, Braddon's literary tastes were also shaped by her mother's cook, Sarah Hobbes, who introduced her to the popular fiction of the *Family Herald* and *Reynold's Magazine* and also to condensed editions of popular novels such as the historical romance *The Last Days of Pompeii* by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, whom Braddon was later to adopt as her literary mentor. A keen, precocious, and eclectic reader, Braddon soon took up the pen herself. Between the ages of 8 and 11 she began 'a historical novel on the siege of Calais—an Eastern story suggested by passionate love of Miss Pardoe's Turkish tales and Byron's "Bride of Abydos" ', 'a story of the Hartz Mountains, with audacious flights in German diablerie', and a domestic story. This was followed by a 'sentimental period, in which my unfinished novels assumed a more ambitious form . . . modelled chiefly upon Jane Eyre, with occasional tentative imitations of Thackeray. Stories of gentle hearts that loved in vain, always ending in renunciation'.[3]

The young Braddon and her mother were also devotees of the theatre, and when they needed to supplement their precarious income

[1] Clive Holland, 'Fifty Years of Novel Writing', *Pall Mall Magazine*, 14 (1911), 697–709: 702.

[2] Ibid.

[3] M. E. Braddon, 'My First Novel: *The Trail of the Serpent*', *Idler*, 3 (1893), 19–30: 20 and 23.

in the early 1850s, Mary turned to the stage. Using the stage name 'Mary Seyton', she acted professionally in provincial theatres from the autumn of 1852,[4] mainly playing minor roles in comedies. After making her London debut in 1856, she soon returned to the provincial circuit and retired from the stage completely at the end of 1859. Braddon's theatrical interests and her personal experience of the professional theatre were important in shaping her development as a novelist. Her plots and character types were clearly influenced by the stage repertoire and some of the sensational scenes and dramatic tableaux in her novels, including *Lady Audley's Secret*, clearly have a theatrical quality. Moreover, her familiarity with the writing practices of popular English dramatists, especially their penchant for recycling the plots of little-known French melodramas, came in very useful when she needed material for her fiction.

Braddon's attempt at a theatrical career was both bold and unconventional given that in the mid-nineteenth century professional actresses were still regarded as rather scandalous creatures and acting was considered to be an unsuitable job for a middle-class woman. As Braddon later recalled it was 'a thing to be spoken of with bated breath, the lapse of a lost soul, the fall from Porchester Terrace to the bottomless pit'.[5] The scandalous aura of her earlier stage career was to colour Braddon's later reception as a novelist by some critics, who were wont to make rather snide jeers about her social background and familiarity with the repertoire of the popular theatre. In fact her life as a jobbing actress seems to have been extremely respectable as she was constantly chaperoned by her mother who ensured that they lived a relatively genteel life in respectable lodgings.

During her period on the stage Braddon wrote several plays, finally succeeding in staging *The Loves of Arcadia* at London's Strand Theatre in 1860. She also continued to write poems, some of which were published in provincial newspapers in Brighton and Beverley (Yorkshire), where she had acted. Her modest success as a poet (as well as her personal charms) attracted the patronage of John Gilby, a racehorse owner and trainer from Beverley. Gilby facilitated Braddon's

[4] See Jennifer Carnell, *The Literary Lives of M. E. Braddon* (Hastings: The Sensation Press, 2000), ch. 1.

[5] M. E. Braddon, 'The Woman I Remember', in T. Catling (ed.), *The Press Album* (London: John Murray, 1909), 5, cited in Robert Lee Wolff, *Sensational Victorian: The Life and Fiction of Mary Elizabeth Braddon* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1979), 45.

departure from the stage by paying her a salary so that she could work on a volume of poetry (*Garibaldi and Other Poems*, published in 1861). Rather more important for her future career was a commission from a Beverley printer to write a serial in penny weekly parts in the style of Charles Dickens and G. M. W. Reynolds (author of the sensational *Mysteries of London*): Braddon's serial *Three Times Dead* appeared in 1860. Most important, however, was her meeting in April 1860 with the publisher and magazine proprietor John Maxwell, with whom she was to live and work until his death in 1895. Maxwell began publishing Braddon's stories in *The Welcome Guest*, a weekly magazine which he had recently bought from its founder Henry Vizetelly. He also reissued *Three Times Dead* in volume form, with the new title of *The Trail of the Serpent*. Maxwell later boasted that thanks to his marketing efforts this novel sold one thousand copies in the first week after it was reissued. By the spring of 1861 Braddon had embarked on a career as a professional fiction writer and she was also living with the married Maxwell as his wife. By early summer she was pregnant with the first of the six illegitimate children they were to have before they were able to marry in 1874, following the death of Maxwell's wife who had spent many years in a lunatic asylum. The similarities between Braddon's 'irregular' liaison with Maxwell and the circumstances of some of her fictional characters did not go unremarked by hostile reviewers.

Braddon's liaison with Maxwell inaugurated a period of intensive literary production (overproduction, her critics argued) which, apart from her breakdown following her mother's death in 1868, continued unabated until her death in 1915. In 1861 she had at least five serials appearing anonymously or pseudonymously in four different magazines. *Ralph the Bailiff*, a novelette featuring bigamy, blackmail, and ghostly spectres, ran in *St James's Magazine*, and *The Lady Lisle*, in which kidnapping and impersonation are used in a plot to defraud a baronet of his inheritance, appeared in Maxwell's *The Welcome Guest*. *The Black Band; or, The Mysteries of Midnight* (set in the criminal and political underworld of London) and an anti-slavery novel, *The Octoroon; or, the Lily of Louisiana*, began serialization in Maxwell's *Halfpenny Journal: A Magazine for All Who Can Read*, a new publication aimed at the urban working class, edited by Braddon's mother. Then, in July 1861, Braddon stepped into the breach when another author failed to deliver a serial promised for another new Maxwell

weekly, *Robin Goodfellow*, and *Lady Audley's Secret* began its serial run. A full-page advertisement for the new magazine which appeared in the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* in June 1861 had signalled *Robin Goodfellow*'s intention to 'elbow [its] way' in the increasingly crowded journal marketplace by striving 'to provide, for the recreation and instruction of . . . readers, the best Novels and Tales—the ablest social essays—the raciest and most truthful Sketches of life and manners that the Literature of this age can produce, or that the money of the Proprietor can purchase'. Despite this bold prospectus and the popularity of the first eighteen chapters of *Lady Audley*, *Robin Goodfellow* failed to elbow its way amongst the competition and folded in September 1861. By popular demand *Lady Audley* began its run again in the launch issue of a new monthly, the *Sixpenny Magazine* (published by Ward and Lock)—whose strapline was 'QUALITY, QUANTITY AND CHEAPNESS'—at the same time (January 1862) that the serialization of *Aurora Floyd* began in *Temple Bar*, another Maxwell monthly, which was aimed at the comfortable middle classes. Struck by the success of the serializations of *Lady Audley* and *Aurora Floyd*, Tinsley Brothers, prominent publishers of fiction, published a three-volume version of *Lady Audley* over the signature of M. E. Braddon in October 1862, shortly before the end of its second serial run (December). Priced at thirty-one shillings and sixpence (that is to say about five times the weekly wage of a London labourer in 1860), it was, like most three-volume novels, aimed largely at the circulating libraries.[6] *Lady Audley's Secret* was a publishing sensation: a runaway success with readers of all classes it was also the subject of fierce debate and attack by critics writing in some of the more heavyweight periodicals.

For several years after the double success of *Lady Audley's Secret* and *Aurora Floyd*, Braddon continued to supply at least three literary

[6] Dominated by Mudie's (founded in 1842) and W. H. Smith (founded in 1860), circulating libraries lent out books by the volume to members able to afford the annual subscription. Their owners exerted an extraordinary influence on the success or failure of a particular novel. Their notions of morality and 'respectable reading' exercised a particularly strong influence on the nature of fiction in the mid-nineteenth century, inducing many novelists to practise a form of self-censorship. Smith also owned a chain of bookstalls on railway stations, a very important means of distributing fiction in the 1860s. In fact the rise of the sensation novel was seen by many nineteenth-century commentators as part of the growth of 'railway reading', and the need to provide commuters and other passengers with fast-paced fiction to divert them on their journey.

markets. Under the mask of anonymity she produced thrilling, melodramatic tales for the lower-class readers of the 'penny bloods', while 'M. E. Braddon' was the acknowledged author of literary, but also sensational and thrilling, tales of upper-middle-class life for the more affluent and better educated readers of sixpenny weeklies and shilling monthly magazines, as well as of social novels which she regarded as more 'artistic' and serious. The 1860s was a boom period for middle-class magazine fiction and Braddon kept this market well supplied with at least two serials each year in a range of periodicals. Most of them used elements of the sensation formula that had brought her initial success with *Lady Audley*: bigamy, murder, disguise or impersonation, madness, blackmail, fraud, theft, kidnapping or incarceration, and inheritance plots. Braddon also sought to transcend the sensation formula, and to 'write for Fame & do something more worthy to be laid upon your altar', as she put it in a letter to Edward Bulwer Lytton in 1863.[7] Early examples include *The Doctor's Wife*, which adapts the plot of Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* for an English middlebrow audience, and *The Lady's Mile*, a realist novel of social critique. Braddon was a genuine enthusiast for French fiction, about which she was quite knowledgeable. She admired Flaubert's ability 'to make manifest a scene and an atmosphere in a few lines—almost a few words',[8] and Honoré de Balzac's mastery of detail and mixing of social criticism and melodrama in his 'morbid-anatomy school' of fiction.[9] She was also an early reader of the French naturalist author Émile Zola, whose fiction influenced some of her novels of the early 1880s—for example, *The Golden Calf* (1883).

Braddon took the same path trod by many successful professional women writers in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Following her initial success as a sensation novelist she consolidated her reputation and position in the marketplace by editing a literary magazine, *Belgravia*, from 1866 until 1876. Like *Argosy*—owned and edited (from 1867) by Ellen Wood, the author of the best-seller *East Lynne* which appeared at the same time as *Lady Audley*—*Belgravia* (owned by Maxwell and aimed at a middle-class readership) was a vehicle

[7] Quoted in Wolff, *Sensational Victorian*, 135.
[8] Letter to Bulwer Lytton, quoted ibid. 162.
[9] Letter to Edmund Yates, quoted ibid. 137.

for its editor's own serialized fiction, some of it published under Braddon's pseudonym of Babington White. Braddon also used the magazine to launch a vigorous defence of popular fiction—particularly the sensation novel—against its critics, especially in two essays she commissioned from George Augustus Sala—'The Cant of Modern Criticism' (November 1867, pp. 45–55) and 'On the Sensational in Literature and Art' (February 1868, pp. 449–58).[10]

Braddon sought to keep pace with changing publication practices in the second half of the nineteenth century. Quick to exploit new markets, she was one of the first best-selling authors to sign up with W. F. Tillotson, who, in the 1870s, pioneered the syndication of fiction in British weekly newspapers prior to book publication,[11] and in the early 1880s her novels were also syndicated in the USA. She also continued to produce serial fiction for metropolitan magazines such as *All the Year Round* and the *Whitehall Review*. More carefully written and revised than the newspaper novels, the novels first serialized in magazines were sometimes treated more positively by reviewers. For example, her 1875/6 *Belgravia* serial *Joshua Haggard's Daughter* (published in volume form as *Joshua Haggard*) was reviewed positively by the *Athenaeum* as a realist novel, influenced by George Eliot, which relied for its effects on 'analysis of character rather than . . . complication of incident'.[12]

In the 1890s Braddon resisted the demise of the three-volume format that had served her so well throughout her career, but when it came in the mid-1890s she rapidly produced three single-volume novels: *London Pride* (1896), *Under Love's Rule* (1897), and *Rough Justice* (1898). She adapted to the changed literary marketplace of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by writing more tersely and focusing more closely on character: 'Less detail of heroines is wanted now and more character study', she noted: 'Readers are not

[10] For further discussion of Braddon's campaign against the anti-sensationalists see Solveig Robinson, 'Editing *Belgravia*: M. E. Braddon's Defense of "Light Literature"', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 28 (1995), 109–22; Jennifer Phegley, *Educating the Proper Woman Reader: Victorian Family Literary Magazines and the Cultural Health of the Nation* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2004).

[11] See Jennifer Carnell and Graham Law, '"Our Author": Braddon in the Provincial Weeklies', in Marlene Tromp, Pamela Gilbert, and Aeron Haynie (eds.), *Beyond Sensation: Mary Elizabeth Braddon in Context* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000).

[12] Quoted in Wolff, *Sensational Victorian*, 275.

satisfied with incidents alone; they like to see character evolve as events move'.[13]

## Lady Audley's Secret

*This section and the two following refer to aspects of the novel's characters and plot which some readers may prefer not to know before enjoying their own reading of the story.*

*Lady Audley's Secret* begins with a chapter simply entitled 'Lucy', but its opening pages offer a description not of the female protagonist named in its title, but of the 'noble' (p. 8) house and gardens of Audley Court and its owner, the 56-year-old Sir Michael Audley who has recently married a young wife, the Lucy of the chapter's title. The rest of the opening chapter deftly sketches in the narrative of the meeting and courtship of the ageing nobleman and the 'amiable' (p. 11) Lucy, about whom nothing was known except that she had answered an advertisement for a governess to a neighbouring family. The narrative then switches to a passenger on a Liverpool-bound ship, George Talboys, who is returning to the wife and child whom he had left three and a half years earlier in order to seek his fortune in the Australian goldfields. Chapter III returns the reader to Audley Court, but this time the focus is on a servant of the house, Lady Audley's maid Phœbe, who with her cousin and future husband, Luke, marvels resentfully at Miss Graham's rapid transition from being 'but a servant like me' (p. 29) to her present position as the wife of a baronet and mistress of Audley Court. The envious pair secretly enter Lucy's boudoir to admire the luxurious objects with which her husband has showered her, but are more intrigued by the mundane but mysterious contents of a secret drawer which they discover. The scene immediately shifts to London and an idle young barrister, Robert Audley, Sir Michael's nephew, who, in one of those extraordinary coincidences so beloved of Victorian novelists, finds himself reunited with his dearest schoolfriend George Talboys, when he literally bumps into him in the street. Together they read the announcement of the death of George's wife in an obituary notice in *The Times*, and together they visit the grave of Helen Talboys on the Isle of Wight. Thus ends the fifth chapter of the novel (and the second episode of the serialization in the

[13] 'Miss Braddon at Home', *Daily Telegraph*, 4 Oct. 1913, p. 9.

*London Journal*). What is the connection between George and Helen Talboys (née Maldon) and Sir Michael and Lady Audley (née Graham)? Who is Lucy Graham and what was her history before she arrived as a governess in Essex? What is the significance of the contents of the secret drawer, and to what use will Phœbe and Luke put their discovery? As the novel unfolds the questions and mysteries proliferate—what is the meaning of George's disappearance, and is Robert correct to suspect Lady Audley's involvement in it? Robert sets out to resolve these mysteries and to uncover Lady Audley's secret or secrets. Lady Audley does her best both to outwit him and to control the servants who seek to blackmail her, in order to maintain her position as a baronet's pampered wife. If they agree with her on nothing else, most readers will agree with the nineteenth-century critic Margaret Oliphant that in *Lady Audley's Secret* 'Miss Braddon proved that she can invent a story'.[14]

When it first appeared *Lady Audley's Secret* was greeted (or condemned, according to taste) as belonging to a new kind of fiction, in which, like Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White*, '[t]here is a secret, generally a crime, to be discovered'.[15] Before long *Lady Audley's Secret* was being linked to *The Woman in White* as an example of the sensation novel, a type of fiction which many credited Collins with either inventing or reviving.[16] A hybrid form which combined realism, melodrama, romance, and the domestic, the sensation novel had its origins in the Gothic novel of the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the Newgate novel of the earlier nineteenth century. However, unlike the Gothic, which usually dealt with aristocratic intrigues in exotic foreign and/or historical settings, or the Newgate tales of urban, criminal low-life, sensation novels focused on apparently ordinary middle-class families or members of the landed gentry in the English countryside or suburbs. Henry James claimed that Braddon invented the sensation novel in *Lady Audley's Secret* by building on Wilkie Collins's introduction 'into fiction of those most mysterious of mysteries, the mysteries that are at our own doors'. Writers like Braddon, James argued, gave 'a new impetus to the literature of horrors' by treating readers to the 'terrors of the cheerful

[14] [Margaret Oliphant], 'Novels', *Blackwoods*, 102 (1867), 257–80: 263.

[15] Unsigned review of *Lady Audley's Secret* by E. S. Dallas, *The Times*, 18 Nov. 1862, p. 4.

[16] See [Margaret Oliphant], 'Sensational Novels', *Blackwoods*, 91 (1862), 564–80.

country house, or the London lodgings'.[17] The narrator of *Lady Audley's Secret* underlines this point:

> We hear every day of murders committed in the country. Brutal and treacherous murders; slow, protracted agonies from poisons administered by some kindred hand; sudden and violent deaths . . . inflicted with a stake cut from some spreading oak, whose very shadow promised—peace. . . . No crime has ever been committed in the worst rookeries about Seven Dials that has not been also done in the face of that sweet rustic calm which still, in spite of all, we look on with a tender, half-mournful yearning, and associate with—Peace. (p. 51)

In this novel it is the apparently cheerful country house, Audley Court, which is the scene of disruption, violence, and intrigue. The Audley Court to which the reader is introduced in the novel's opening pages as a 'glorious old place', a 'noble place', some eleven centuries in the making, the equal of which 'was not elsewhere to be met with throughout the county of Essex' (p. 8), is, in fact, already (unknowingly) a crime scene, and during the course of the narrative further crimes, some of them violent, are committed there or in its rural environs.

In its narrative of Audley Court and its inmates, *Lady Audley's Secret*, like many sensation novels, challenged deeply held beliefs (or wishes) about the English country house, the sanctity of the home, and domestic peace. It also exploited contemporary anxieties about domestic privacy, and, in particular about the role of servants in disrupting or breaching that privacy, through eavesdropping, spying, and gossip. As Anthea Trodd noted in *Domestic Crime in the Victorian Novel*, the mid-nineteenth-century householder's 'outraged sense of routine invasion of privacy by his domestic staff expressed itself in the production of crime plots in which servants, so often inconspicuous in other kinds of fiction, routinely play highly visible and sinister roles'.[18] In Braddon's novel, the peace and order of Audley Court is disturbed by a woman who had previously occupied the uneasy social position of governess, a role which was akin to that of a superior family servant, and also by the servants who spy on her and her doings when she becomes the mistress of a household. Lady Audley is shown as being acutely aware of the servant's ability to come and go without

[17] Henry James, 'Miss Braddon', *The Nation*, 9 Nov. 1865, p. 594.

[18] Anthea Trodd, *Domestic Crime in the Victorian Novel* (London: Macmillan, 1989), 7–8.

notice, both in her use of her maid Phœbe to further some of her plans, and in a passage in the novel's third volume in which the increasingly beleaguered protagonist seeks to obtain space for manoeuvre by dispensing with the services of her new maid (Martin) for the evening:

> Amongst all privileged spies, a lady's-maid has the highest privileges . . . She has a hundred methods for the finding out of her mistress's secrets. She knows by the manner in which her victim jerks her head from under the hair-brush . . . what hidden tortures are racking her breast—what secret perplexities are bewildering her brain. (p. 286)

Perhaps even more important than its challenging of, or playing into, contemporary ideas and anxieties about domestic peace and privacy, was the way in which *Lady Audley's Secret* also disturbed accepted views of the priestess of the domestic temple in its portrayal of its eponymous heroine/villain. Indeed, several contemporary commentators asserted that Braddon set a trend by creating a new kind of fictional heroine, who possessed the appearance and outward demeanour of the domestic novel's angel in the house, but who is nevertheless a kind of fiend—'the lovely lady with fishy extremities'.[19] Oliphant accused Braddon of being the 'inventor of the fair-haired demon of modern fiction':

> Wicked women used to be brunettes long ago, now they are the daintiest, softest, prettiest of blonde creatures; and this change has been wrought by Lady Audley, and her influence on contemporary novels.[20]

Much critical commentary on Braddon's early novels and on the sensation novel more generally focused on their creation of wilful, 'high strung', heroines who were 'full of passion, purpose, and movement' and 'very liable to error', a version of femininity which, in the view of E. S. Dallas, resulted from the new tendency to give 'the heroines . . . the first place'.[21] Moreover, female sensation novelists were regularly taken to task for focusing on the physical charms and, more alarmingly, the physical feelings of their heroines. For example, Margaret Oliphant accused Braddon of being the leading exponent of the sensational school, which offerered 'a very fleshly and unlovely record' of 'the feminine soul', with its presentation of women 'driven wild with love . . . women who marry their grooms in fits of sensual

[19] [Dallas], *The Times*, 18 Nov. 1862, p. 4.
[20] [Oliphant], 'Novels', 264.
[21] [Dallas], *The Times*, 18 Nov. 1862, p. 4.

passion . . . who give and receive burning kisses . . . and live in a voluptuous dream'.[22] In fact the reader of *Lady Audley's Secret* will look in vain for such scenes. Its heroine's voluptuous dreams are of the caress of furs, the glitter of jewels, and the possession of other costly objects rather than of grooms or dragoons, and she is most passionate when defending the social position and material trappings which accompany a loveless marriage to a baronet. As Lady Audley explains to Sir Michael following her unmasking:

> The common temptations that assail and shipwreck some women had no terror for me . . . The mad folly that the world calls love had never any part in my madness, and here at least extremes met and the vice of heartlessness became the virtue of constancy. (p. 301)

Braddon tends to portray her heroine/villain less as a desiring subject than as an object, who is displayed amidst other objects. In one such tableau the narrator envisages her protagonist as the subject of an imaginary Pre-Raphaelite painting:

> If Mr Holman Hunt could have peeped into the pretty boudoir, I think the picture would have been photographed upon his brain to be reproduced . . . [on canvas] for the glorification of the pre-Raphaelite brotherhood. My lady in that half-recumbent attitude, with her elbow resting on one knee, and her perfect chin supported by her hand, the rich folds of drapery falling away in long undulating lines from the exquisite outline of her figure . . . Beautiful in herself, but made bewilderingly beautiful by the gorgeous surroundings which adorn the shrine of her loveliness. Drinking-cups of gold and ivory . . . cabinets of buhl and porcelain . . . (p. 251)

This imaginary portrait in the Pre-Raphaelite style (which was still distinctively modern in 1861–2) picks up an earlier description of a portrait of Lady Audley which George Talboys and Robert Audley view when, in a parodic referencing of Gothic conventions, they gain access via a secret passage to her boudoir (also described in lavish detail). In this earlier scene the reader is positioned as looking over the shoulder of a stunned George, who silently stares at the unfinished portrait for fifteen minutes. However, the reader sees the portrait through the eyes of the narrator, whose 'reading' of it at once explains, satirizes, and appropriates the Pre-Raphaelite gaze

[22] [Oliphant], 'Novels', 259.

and aesthetic. This scene portrays two kinds of revelation: George's blank stare, as the reader later discovers, reveals to him that Lady Audley is not who she claims to be; the narrator's commentary emphasizes how the portrait reveals that she is not who or what she appears to be, by unmasking her inner identity as that of a 'beautiful fiend' (p. 65).

The repulsive attractiveness of Lady Audley, a character who is simultaneously villain and victim, schemer and schemed against, was one of the reasons that some early reviewers greeted Braddon's novel as 'one of the most noxious books of modern times'.[23] For many critics the book's noxiousness derived from the way in which Braddon satirized the domestic feminine ideal both by exaggerating it and by showing that it is a role that can be played. By representing Lucy as an actress and a chameleon, Braddon also plays on contemporary fears and fantasies about feminine duplicity. Regarded by most who meet her as the embodiment of childlike, genteel femininity, Lucy is revealed by the narrative to be a scheming, resourceful, self-fashioning woman, who is capable of committing extreme acts in order to hang on to the prize recommended to all middle-class girls: a socially acceptable and financially secure marriage. When she is finally unmasked, Lucy openly articulates the usually unspoken credo of the marriage market.

> I had learnt that which in some indefinite manner or other *every schoolgirl learns sooner or later*—I learned that my ultimate fate in life depended upon my marriage, and I concluded that if I was indeed prettier than my schoolfellows, I ought to marry better than any of them. (p. 298, emphasis added)

The task of unmasking Lady Audley's secrets is given to Robert Audley, a familiar type in the sensation novel, and one which indicates the genre's interest in the construction of gender and class identities. Like several of Wilkie Collins's heroes (including Walter Hartright in *The Woman in White* and Franklin Blake in *The Moonstone*), Robert begins the novel as both morally ambivalent and lacking a clear social role and masculine identity. Supposedly engaged in reading for the Bar, he actually spends his time in a state of aristocratic indolence, reading racy French novels—a taste in reading

[23] [W. Fraser Rae], 'Sensation Novelists: Miss Braddon', *North British Review*, 43 (1865), 180–204: 183.

which so often in Victorian fiction signals a lack of moral and national fibre and manliness. As is frequently the case in the sensation novel a detective quest becomes the hero's route to a properly masculine social identity. In this novel Robert's quest is to solve the mystery of the disappearance of his friend George Talboys and its connection to Lady Audley. During the course of the narrative Robert is transformed from an aristocratic *flâneur* with a 'listless, dawdling, indifferent, irresolute manner' (p. 33) to the purposeful head of a Victorian bourgeois family who has embraced the work ethic and discovered a vocation by developing the forensic legal skills of assembling evidence and building a compelling case against his aunt. Initially presented as a man who neither understands nor particularly likes women, Robert is set on his journey to a properly socialized bourgeois masculinity by his fascination with a woman whose impersonation of the feminine ideal masks her ruthlessness. He is further propelled on this journey by another woman—Clara Talboys—whose apparent embodiment of the quiet, passive feminine ideal masks a female determination and resoluteness which is more socially acceptable than Lady Audley's. In Braddon's narrative Clara's close physical resemblance to her brother acts as a constant spur to Robert to resolve the mystery of George's disappearance. For several recent critics, however, the novel's insistence on Robert's powerful sense of Clara's physical resemblance to her brother suggests that she is a vehicle for Robert's displaced homoerotic attachment to George.

Reversing an important plot element of *The Woman in White*, Braddon gives her hero the role which Collins assigned to his villains. In *The Woman in White* Sir Percival Glyde and his co-conspirator Count Fosco consign vulnerable and victimized women to lunatic asylums in order to gain control of their wealth or prevent them from telling their secrets, and Collins's hero, Walter Hartright, rescues the misused women and restores to them the identities which had been stolen from them. In Braddon's novel, on the other hand, it is the hero who incarcerates a woman in a lunatic asylum in order to prevent the public disclosure of her own secrets. Having carefully uncovered Lucy's secrets Robert suppresses them in order to preserve the reputation of his uncle's family. Moreover, having stripped away the layers of the different identities which Lucy has adopted, he gives her yet another false identity as Madame Taylor, a certified mad woman.

Is Lady Audley in fact mad? The novel blurs the issue. Her almost obsessive devotion to the fine things which her marriage to Sir Michael has brought her, and the murderous deviousness with which she seeks to hang on to them and to the social trappings of her marriage could easily be seen as signs of monomania or madness. Similarly, her erratic, 'unwomanly' behaviour might be attributable either to puerperal fever, or to the nervous hysteria to which all women were prone according to many Victorian medical practitioners and theorists. Alternatively her deviousness and violence might be rooted in the insanity she latterly claims she has inherited from her mother, another simpering, childlike woman who ended her days in an asylum. At the very least, Dr Mosgrave's rapid recanting of his initial advice to Robert that the 'lady is not mad . . . She has the cunning of madness, with the prudence of intelligence' (p. 323), suggests something of the way in which madness was used to label and manage dangerous, disruptive femininity in the nineteenth century.

Having used Lady Audley both to challenge contemporary ideas of femininity and domesticity and to explore and exploit contemporary anxieties about them, Braddon's novel, like many sensation novels, expels its disruptive heroine and restores domestic peace and order by the end of the final volume. However, *Lady Audley's Secret* complicates this pattern by combining elegy and parody: by the end of the novel the noble aristocratic house of Audley Court is closed up and left to the ravages of time, and its former mistress is closed up and left to expire in a Belgian *maison de santé*, whilst domestic peace has migrated to the bourgeois household in the exaggerated or parodic form of the fairy cottage above Teddington Lock which Robert and Clara share with their children and with George and his son.

## Lady Audley's Secret *and the Sensation Novel*

According to the current opinions of our journals, 'sensation' sermons, 'sensation' novels, 'sensation' histories, 'sensation' magazines, 'sensation' pictures, and, in fact, sensational amusements of every kind are the only intellectual food upon which the British public now fatten.[24]

As noted earlier, from the moment it was first published in volume form, the reviewers for the more upmarket newspapers and periodicals

[24] 'Sensation', *Literary Times*, 9 May 1863, pp. 102–3: 102.

categorized *Lady Audley's Secret* as a sensation novel, a development in fiction which caused a great deal of consternation amongst the more conservative critics and cultural commentators in the early 1860s. The sensation label was to stick to Braddon throughout her long and varied career: she was always best known as the author of *Lady Audley's Secret* and this novel and its childlike, golden-haired, anti-heroine continued to be synonymous with sensation. What were the main characteristics of sensation fiction, and why did it cause such consternation amongst the critical gatekeepers in the mid-nineteenth century?

As described by contemporary reviewers in the heavyweight press in the 1860s, sensation novels were novels with a secret. Typically, the sensation narrative was a 'long and intricately inwrought chain of circumstance',[25] which was ravelled and unravelled, so as to keep the reader guessing. These complicated narratives which sought to defer the disclosure of their mysteries for as long as possible were usually built around characters (like Lady Audley) whose apparently ordinary, respectable appearance and social position masked a secret about their true nature, their past actions, or their heritage. Sensation novels also revolved around crimes and their detection—indeed many later critics have claimed sensation novels as early examples of detective fiction. The crimes most commonly found at the heart of the sensation novel are bigamy, murder, blackmail, fraud, forgery (especially of wills), impersonation, kidnapping, and wrongful imprisonment. Crimes against or within the family and other family secrets were particularly prominent: as well as bigamy, adultery (or the suspicion of it), the legitimacy or illegitimacy of children, and questions of inheritance all loomed large. Bigamy—whether the intentional bigamy of the woman who marries Sir Michael Audley not knowing whether her first husband is alive or dead, or the inadvertent bigamy of Aurora Floyd, who remarries in the belief that her first husband (whom she had married in secret) was dead—was such a prominent feature of sensation novels that 'Bigamy Novels' were identified as 'an entire sub-class in this branch of literature' (i.e. sensation fiction).[26]

Above all, however, sensation novels were seen by both their critics and their devotees as exciting page-turners, which aimed to shock,

[25] Thomas Hardy, *Desperate Remedies* (1871), ch. 1.
[26] H. L. Mansel, 'Sensation Novels', *Quarterly Review*, 113 (1863), 481–514: 495.

thrill, and surprise, relying for their effects on 'incident' and fast-paced and intricate plotting rather than on the detailed and psychologically realistic portrayal and development of character. Some commentators welcomed the sensation novel as an injection of a new energy into a novel market which they thought had become dull and domestic (for example, courtship novels ending in marriage) and/or too preoccupied with social problems in the 1840s and 1850s (for example 'Condition-of-England' novels such as Benjamin Disraeli's *Sybil* and Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South*). Others deplored what they saw as sensation fiction's racy and 'unpleasant' subject matter, and its preoccupation with producing a bodily response in the reader. Sensation novels achieved their effects, it was asserted, by 'preaching to the nerves',[27] 'drugging thought and reason, and stimulating the attention through the lower and more animal instincts',[28] and, as a consequence, 'destroying Conventional Moralities, and generally Unfitting the Public for the Prosaic avocations of Life'.[29] Sensation novels like *Lady Audley's Secret* were condemned as both evidence and cause of a widespread moral degeneration. As Oxford philosophy professor Henry Mansel put it in a much-quoted and often-imitated review of twenty-four sensation novels in the conservative *Quarterly Review*:

> Excitement . . . alone seems to be the great end to which [sensation novelists] aim . . . And as excitement, even when harmless in kind, cannot be produced without becoming morbid in degree, works of this class manifest themselves as belonging . . . to some extent, to the morbid phenomena of literature—indications of a widespread corruption, of which they are in part both the effect and the cause; called into existence to supply the cravings of a diseased appetite, and contributing themselves to foster the disease, and to stimulate the want that they supply.[30]

Sensation fiction was regarded as both the symptom and agent of cultural as well as moral decline. Many critics associated its advent and success with changes in the literary marketplace resulting from what they saw as an alarming growth of literacy and consequent

[27] Ibid. 481.

[28] 'Our Female Sensation Novelists', *Christian Remembrancer*, 46 (1864), 209–36: 210.

[29] *The Sensation Times*, quoted by K.Tillotson, in her introduction to *The Woman in White* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969), p. xiii.

[30] [Mansel], 'Sensation Novels', 481.

expansion of the reading public: a rapid, exponential growth in weekly and monthly magazines publishing serial fiction, the expansion of the circulating libraries, and the rise of railway bookstalls selling cheap paperback novels to divert commuters and other travellers on their train journeys. Like *Lady Audley's Secret* many sensation novels were marketed in a range of different formats and at different prices to reach different audiences. Thus, when W. Fraser Rae complained that novelists like Braddon had succeeded in making the 'literature of the kitchen the favourite reading of the drawing room'[31] he was expressing a more widespread anxiety among middle-class commentators that not only did sensation novelists adapt the fast-paced and melodramatic narratives enjoyed by lower-class readers for a more affluent and higher-class readership, but that they also produced a form of fiction that was read simultaneously by both classes. These anxieties about the promiscuous mingling of readerships were part of a wider anxiety about the erosion of social boundaries in an age of rapid social change.

Many reviewers explicitly linked sensation novels to social change and disruption. As the *Christian Remembrancer* noted:

> The 'sensation novel' of our time, however extravagant and unnatural . . . is a sign of the times—the evidence of a certain turn of thought and action, of an impatience of old restraints, and a craving for some fundamental change in the workings of society.[32]

Margaret Oliphant saw sensation novels such as *Lady Audley's Secret* as the product and expression of an age which, far from being the age of peace and progress as proclaimed in the year of the first Great Exhibition in 1851, had turned out instead to be an age of 'events' such as the American Civil War.[33] Above all sensation novels were associated with the modern. They were 'tales of our own times' whose 'electrifying' effects derived from their being set 'in our own days and among the people we are in the habit of meeting'.[34] The murderers, forgers, bigamists, and adulterers of the sensation novel were, as the *Saturday Review* put it, 'people like ourselves, such as we might meet any day in the street'.[35] Sensation novels were so up-to-date that they

[31] [Rae], 'Sensation Novelists', 183.
[32] 'Our Female Sensation Novelists', 210.
[33] See [Oliphant], 'Sensational Novels', 565.
[34] [Mansel], 'Sensation Novels', 486.
[35] 'Novels and Life', *Saturday Review*, 13 Feb. 1864, p. 189.

often took their plots from newspapers, particularly the sensational reporting of crimes and their detection, murder trials, and the proceedings of the divorce courts created by the Divorce Reform Act of 1857 which provided many tales of marital misfortunes and misdeeds. As Mansel put it:

> From vice to crime, from the divorce court to the police-court is but a single step . . . Let [the sensation novelist] only keep an eye on the criminal reports of the daily newspapers, marking the cases which are . . . become a nine-days' wonder . . . and he has the outline of his story not only ready-made, but approved beforehand as of the true sensation cast.[36]

The plots and preoccupations of sensation novels were also informed by newspaper reports of prominent bigamy cases, such as the Yelverton bigamy-divorce case, in which Maria Theresa Longworth sought to invalidate the marriage of Major Charles Yelverton to a Mrs Forbes by proving that she herself was the Major's lawful wife.[37] Such cases highlighted the chaotic state of British marriage laws and customs, a state of affairs which Wilkie Collins explored and exposed, as well as exploiting it for narrative complications, most notably in *Man and Wife* (1870). Other press reports and campaigns which fed into the sensation novel included those concerning women's property rights, the changing social and familial roles of (middle- and upper-class) women, the plight of fallen women, the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness, and reports of cases of the wrongful confinement of the unruly or vulnerable in lunatic asylums. Several of these preoccupations find their way into *Lady Audley's Secret*.

The sensation novel was both a product and a symptom of Victorian modernity. The product of a machine age, it was criticized for being merely a form of mechanical reproduction: 'A commercial atmosphere floats around works of this class, redolent of the manufactory and the shop,' Henry Mansel asserted, '[t]he public want novels and novels must be made—so many yards of printed stuff, sensation pattern, to be ready by the beginning of the season'.[38] It was also the product of an age of rapid communication in which the railways,

[36] [Mansel], 'Sensation Novels', 500.

[37] See Rebecca Gill, 'The Imperial Anxieties of a Nineteenth-Century Bigamy Case', *History Workshop Journal*, 57 (2004), 58–78.

[38] [Mansel], 'Sensation Novels', 483.

steam power, and the electric telegraph changed the physical, mental, and social landscape, transforming existing conceptions of time and space. Both the railway and the electric telegraph are exploited by Lady Audley to further her plans and cover her tracks and by Robert Audley in his attempts to catch her out and expose her secrets. Lady Audley sends herself a telegram in order to provide a pretext for absenting herself from Audley Grange at a crucial point in the narrative, and she dashes up to London by train in order to gain entry to Robert's rooms when he is not there. Similarly, as he closes on his quarry, Robert takes advantage of speeded-up communication networks to pursue the information he requires to expose her:

> Robert Audley had requested Clara Talboys to telegraph an answer to his question, in order to avoid the loss of a day in the accomplishment of the investigation he had promised to perform.
>
> The telegraphic answer reached Fig-tree Court before twelve o'clock the next day.
>
> . . . Within an hour of the receipt of this message Mr Audley arrived at King's Cross station, and took his ticket for Wildernsea by an express train that started at a quarter before two.
>
> The shrieking engine bore him on the dreary northward journey, whirling him over the desert wastes of flat meadow-land. (pp. 205–6)

The speed of travel not only changes the relationship between places (diminishing the spaces between them), but it also changes the relationship of the perceiving subject to his surroundings, as he carries his mental distraction with him:

> The knowledge of the purpose of [Robert's] . . . journey blighted every object upon which his absent glances fixed themselves for a moment; only to wander wearily away; only to turn inwards upon that far darker picture always presenting itself to his anxious mind. (p. 206)

The technological revolutions of the nineteenth century, as well as the increasing concentration of the population in large towns and cities, brought about, as one of Wilkie Collins's characters put it, an increase in 'nervous derangement',[39] introducing what later cultural historians have described as a 'modernization of the senses'.[40] The sensation novel is an expression of this modern nervousness. It is also, Nicholas Daly

[39] *Armadale*, bk. 4, ch. 3.

[40] Nicholas Daly, *Literature, Technology and Modernity, 1860–2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 34.

has argued, an attempt to manage it by 'work[ing] to acclimatize its readers to railway time and space . . . through its deployment of nervousness—shown in its characters [and] elicited in its readers'.[41] The sensation novel thus 'provides a species of temporal training' which 'synchronises its readers with industrial modernity'.[42]

## *The Publication, Circulation, and Afterlife of* Lady Audley's Secret

First published in three volumes with an initial print-run of 500, *Lady Audley's Secret* was an immediate success with the middle- and upper-class circulating library audience, and by December 1862 it was in its eighth edition. In March 1863 it was circulated again in serial form, this time with illustrations, to the mainly lower-class readers of the *London Journal*, a penny weekly. Capitalizing on the novel's success, Tinsley's published a six-shilling, one-volume edition in April 1863 and a two-shilling edition in April 1866. Two years later *Lady Audley* was reissued in Ward Lock's Parlour Library series, priced at three shillings and sixpence.[43]

As well as reaching a large and diverse audience of readers in these various different publishing formats in the 1860s, and indeed throughout the nineteenth century (new yellowback editions were still appearing in the 1880s), *Lady Audley's Secret* also became a great stage success. Among the numerous adaptations of Braddon's novel staged in London in 1862 were William E. Suter's (the Queen's Theatre), George Roberts's (the St James Theatre), Colin H. Hazlewood's (the Victoria Theatre), and John Brougham's *Where There's Life There's Hope* (the Strand Theatre). Focusing on the predicament of the heroine and her cat-and-mouse game with Robert Audley, Suter, Hazlewood, and Roberts all omitted the character of Clara Talboys. Hazlewood's, the most frequently revived adaptation, revealed the secret of the heroine's past in a soliloquy at the end of the first scene, relying for its effects on the suspense about when and how her secret will be exposed, rather than on the mystery surrounding Lady Audley. Hazlewood also presented Lady Audley as an adventuress, and a

[41] Ibid. 7.
[42] Ibid. 17.
[43] See Randolph Ivy, 'M. E. Braddon in the 1860s: Clarifications and Corrections', *Library*, 8 (2007), 60–9.

madwoman. Suter was successfully sued for breach of copyright by Braddon and Tinsley Brothers, but this did not prevent his adaptation being successfully staged. In Suter's melodrama Lady Audley, a more violent character than Braddon's original, stabs George before pushing him down the well, and kills herself in the final scene.

These nineteenth-century adaptations of *Lady Audley's Secret* remained a popular part of the stage repertoire well into the twentieth century. There were also a number of new adaptations: in Brian Burton's *Lady Audley's Secret or The Lime Tree Walk*, first performed at the Little Theatre, Leicester (1966), the heroine poisons herself in order to avoid the asylum; in Constance Cox's one-act melodrama (published by Samuel French in 1976), she stabs herself following George's reappearance and Sir Michael's death; Sylvia Freedman's 1991 adaptation (Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith) updated Braddon's narrative for a late twentieth-century audience by allowing Lady Audley to escape from the asylum and adopt a new identity. There has even been a comic, musical melodrama based on Braddon's novel (music by George Goehring, book by Douglas Seale, and lyrics by John Kunz), which had a short run at the Eastside Playhouse Theatre, New York, in 1972.

Like other successful sensation novels, *Lady Audley's Secret* and its various nineteenth-century dramatic adaptations was a valuable plot resource for the makers of early twentieth-century silent movies. Two American-produced versions appeared in 1912 and (under the title *The Secrets of Society*) 1915. The first British silent version in 1920 (directed by Jack Denton) developed the novel's 'back story' in scenes showing the heroine's meeting with and marriage to George and intercutting scenes depicting her progress from the drab, shabby gentility of her home to the splendour of Audley Court with shots of George maintaining a lonely watch by his campfire in Australia. Denton also updated Braddon's heroine, making her a feisty, cigarette-smoking, bobbed-haired new woman, but he followed earlier stage adaptations by making her ultimately a figure of pathos who swallows a handful of pills after seeing what she takes to be George's ghost.

Following its largely feminist-inspired rediscovery in the latter part of the twentieth century *Lady Audley's Secret* has also been dramatized for radio and television. Two different adaptations were broadcast on BBC Radio 4 in 1999 and 2009 respectively. In 2000

ITV and US Public Broadcasting showed an ITV, Carlton Television, and Warner Sisters co-production of an adaptation by Donald Hounam (directed by Betsan Morris Evans). Many Braddon aficionados were displeased by Hounam's transformation of her heroine into a dark-haired beauty with an implausibly sympathetic relationship with her stepdaughter, who helps her to escape from the asylum. Hounam also dispenses with Clara Talboys and emphasizes Robert's infatuation with his aunt, whom he last sees at a railway station with a man—perhaps her third husband?

The numerous adaptations and mediations of *Lady Audley's Secret* in a range of formats and media in the century and a half since it first appeared, together with the wealth of new and diverse critical readings which it has generated in the last thirty years, indicate that Braddon's story continues to exert its fascination; it is likely to divert many more readers, as well as to puzzle, intrigue, and disturb them, well into the twenty-first century.

# NOTE ON THE TEXT

THE text of this edition is the same as that used in David Skilton's previous Oxford World's Classics edition and is set from the 'eighth edition revised', which incorporates the changes which Braddon made for the third edition (referred to below) and corrects a few obvious errors, in some cases after consulting a later one-volume edition.

As noted in my Introduction, *Lady Audley's Secret* has a complicated publication history. It first appeared in weekly instalments in *Robin Goodfellow*, running from 6 July 1861 until 28 September 1861 when the magazine closed. It was then serialized in monthly instalments in the *Sixpenny Magazine* between January and December 1862 (or February 1862 and January 1863, depending on whether one is using the date of the magazine's appearance or the date on its cover). The first three-volume edition was published by Tinsley Brothers in October 1862 and was in its eighth edition by December 1862. Apart from minor corrections and changes to punctuation the only significant alterations occur in the third 'revised' edition, in which Braddon made additions to two chapters in the final volume. In Chapter VI of Volume III ('Buried Alive') she added two passages to the details of the description of Lady Audley's incarceration in the *maison de santé*: the paragraph beginning 'Mr Audley left my lady in a dreary coffee-room' (p. 328), and a shorter passage—'the inmates dine together . . . utmost efforts being exerted to ensure her comfort' (p. 332). Braddon also added approximately three hundred words to the novel's penultimate chapter ('Restored') expanding George's description of his escape from the well: 'George Talboys spoke very briefly . . . yes he told me all' (pp. 377–8). The text of the third 'revised' edition was used for all subsequent editions, including the one-volume editions, and for the serialization which ran in weekly instalments in the *London Journal* in 1863.

The first thirty-two chapters of the serialization in the *Sixpenny Magazine* (i.e. up to and including the first chapter of Volume III) appeared before the first two editions of the three-volume version. The last nine chapters of this serialization, on the other hand, include the changes that Braddon made for the third 'revised' edition. There is one significant difference between the text of the *Sixpenny* serial

and all subsequent versions of the novel. Chapter 13 ('Troubled Dreams') in the *Sixpenny* includes a highly wrought, 'sensational' passage about Robert's dreams that does not appear in any other editions—possibly because it 'gives too much away too soon'.[1] The deleted passage, which occurs between the paragraph beginning 'At one time he was pursuing strange people' (p. 87) and the one-sentence paragraph beginning, 'He started from his dreams' (p. 87), reads as follows:

In another dream he saw the grave of Helen Talboys open, and while he waited, with the cold horror lifting up his hair, to see the dead woman arise and stand before him with her stiff, charnel-house drapery clinging about her frigid limbs, his uncle's wife tripped gaily out of the open grave, dressed in the crimson velvet robes in which the artist had painted her, and with her ringlets flashing like red gold in the unearthly light that shone about her.

But into all these dreams the places he had been in, and the people with whom he had last been concerned, were dimly interwoven—sometimes his uncle; sometimes Alicia; oftenest of all my lady; the trout stream in Essex; the lime-walk at the Court. Once he was walking in the black shadows of this long avenue with Lady Audley hanging on his arm, when suddenly they heard a great knocking in the distance, and his uncle's wife wove her slender arms about him, crying out that it was the day of judgement, and that all wicked secrets must now be told. Looking at her as she shrieked this in his ear, he saw that her face had grown ghastly white, and that her beautiful golden ringlets were changing into serpents and slowly creeping down her fair neck.

Although there are few variations between the text of the serial and volume versions of *Lady Audley's Secret* there are significant differences in its organization. The serial versions in both the *Sixpenny* and the *London Journal* were organized into forty-one chapters, whereas the volume version had forty-two, Braddon having subdivided the *Sixpenny*'s nineteenth chapter to form Chapter XIX of Volume I and Chapter I of Volume II. The concluding paragraph of Chapter 31 of the *Sixpenny* serial became the opening paragraph of the following chapter in the volume version (Volume II Chapter XIII). The serializations also subdivided some chapters across instalments. Thus the

[1] Mary Elizabeth Braddon, *Lady Audley's Secret*, ed. Natalie M. Houston (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2003), 34. As far as I am aware, Houston's edition was the first to note this variant.

*Sixpenny* split its Chapter 38 (3:7) at 'It shone from the window of the cottage in which Luke Marks lay, watched by his wife and mother' (p. 347), starting the next instalment with 'Chapter 38 Continued', beginning 'Mr Dawson lifted the latch' (p. 348). The *London Journal* also split this chapter across instalments, but made its division at the end of the paragraph beginning 'But Clara Talboys had written to him' (p. 348). Because of the length requirements of weekly serialization the *London Journal* divides several of the chapters across instalments, so its readers had a different experience of reading *Lady Audley's Secret* from those who first read the novel in either the *Sixpenny* or the three-volume edition.

## *Note on the Organization of the Serial Versions*

The twelve monthly parts of serial version in the *Sixpenny* were organized as follows (instalment number followed by volume number and chapter number in brackets):

1 (I:I–III); 2 (I:IV–VII); 3 (I:VIII–XII); 4 (I:XIII–XVI); 5 (I:XVII–II:II); 6 (II:III–V); 7 (II:VI–VIII); 8 (II:IX–XI); 9 (II:XII–III:I); 10 (III:II–V); 11 (III:VI–VII [ending at 'wife and mother', p. 348]); 12 (III:VII [starting at 'Mr Dawson lifted the latch', p. 348]—III:X).

The twenty-two weekly parts of serial version in the *London Journal* were organized as follows (instalment number followed by volume number and chapter number in brackets):

1 (I:I–II); 2 (I:III–V); 3 (I:VI–VII); 4 (I:VIII–IX); 5 (I:X–XIII); 6 (I:XIV–XV); 7 (I:XVI–XVIII); 8 (I:XIX–II:II); 9 (II:III–IV [ending at 'any other side', p. 158]); 10 (II:IV [starting at 'Robert Audley's heart sank', p. 158]—II:VII [ending at 'what was he thinking?', p. 186]); 11 (II:VII [starting at 'Robert Audley had been seated', p. 186]—II:VIII); 12 (II:IX–X); 13 (II:XI–XII [ending at 'henceforth motherless', p. 242]); 14 (II:XII [starting at 'Sir Michael Audley rose', p. 242]—II:XIII); 15 (III:I); 16 (III:II); 17 (III:III); 18 (III:IV–V); 19 (III:VI–VII [ending at 'upwards of six miles', p. 341]); 20 (III:VII [starting at 'He had a long time', p. 341]); 21 (III:VIII); 22 (III:IX–X).

# SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY


*Bibliography*

Wolf, Robert L., *Nineteenth-Century Fiction: A Bibliographical Catalogue*, 5 vols. (London and New York, 1981–6).

*Biographies, Memoirs, and Letters*

Braddon, M. E., 'My First Novel: *The Trail of the Serpent*', *Idler*, 3 (1893), 19–30.

—— 'The Woman I Remember', in T. Catling (ed.), *The Press Album* (London: John Murray, 1909).

'Miss Braddon at Home', *Daily Telegraph*, 4 Oct. 1913, p. 9.

Carnell, Jennifer, *The Literary Lives of M. E. Braddon* (Hastings: The Sensation Press, 2000).

Holland, Clive, 'Fifty Years of Novel Writing', *Pall Mall Magazine*, 14 (1911), 697–709.

Maxwell, William M., *Time Gathered* (London: Hutchinson, 1937).

Sadleir, Michael, *Things Past* (London: Constable, 1944).

Wolff, Robert L., 'Devoted Disciple: The Letters of Mary Elizabeth Braddon to Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton, 1862–1873', *Harvard University Library Bulletin*, 22 (1974), 1–35 and 129–61.

—— *Sensational Victorian: The Life and Fiction of Mary Elizabeth Braddon* (New York: Garland, 1979).

*Critical Studies of Braddon and General Studies of Sensation Fiction*

Brantlinger, Patrick, 'What is Sensational about the Sensation Novel?', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 37 (1982), 1–28.

—— *The Reading Lesson: The Threat of Mass Literacy in Nineteenth-Century British Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998).

Casey, Ellen Miller, 'Other People's Prudery: Mary Elizabeth Braddon', in Don Richard Cox (ed.), *Sexuality and Victorian Literature* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984), 72–82.

Cox, Jessica, 'From Page to Screen: Transforming M. E. Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret*', *Journal of Gender Studies*, 14 (2005), 23–31.

Cvetkovich, Ann, *Mixed Feelings: Feminism, Mass Culture and Victorian Sensationalism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992).

Fahnestock, Jeanne, 'Bigamy: The Rise and Fall of a Convention', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 36 (1981), 47–71.

Flint, Kate, *The Woman Reader, 1937–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Garrison, Laurie, *Science, Sexuality and Sensation Novels; The Pleasures of the Senses* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2010).

Gilbert, Pamela, *Disease, Desire and the Body in Victorian Women's Popular Novels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Harrison, Kimberly, and Fantina, Richard (eds.), *Victorian Sensations: Essays on a Scandalous Genre* (Ohio: The Ohio State University Press, 2006).

Hughes, Winifred, *The Maniac in the Cellar: Sensation Novels of the 1860s* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

Loesberg, Jonathan, 'The Ideology of Narrative Form in Sensation Fiction', *Representations*, 13 (1986), 115–38.

Matus, Jill L., *Unstable Bodies: Victorian Representations of Sexuality and Maternity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995).

Palmer, Beth, 'Are the Victorians Still With Us?: Victorian Sensation Fiction and Its Legacies in the Twenty-First Century', *Victorian Studies*, 52 (2009), 86–94.

Phegley, Jennifer, *Educating the Proper Woman Reader: Victorian Family Literary Magazines and the Cultural Health of the Nation* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2004).

Pykett, Lyn, *The 'Improper' Feminine: The Women's Sensation Novel and the New Woman Writing* (London: Routledge, 1992).

—— *The Sensation Novel from 'The Woman in White' to 'The Moonstone'* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1994).

Radford, Andrew, *Victorian Sensation Fiction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

Robinson, Solveig, 'Editing *Belgravia*: M. E. Braddon's Defense of "Light Literature" ', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 28 (1995), 109–22.

Rubery, Matthew, *The Novelty of Newspapers: Victorian Fiction After the Invention of the News* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Showalter, Elaine, *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

Talairach-Vielmas, Laurence, *Moulding the Female Body in Victorian Fairy Tales and Sensation Novels* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

Trodd, Anthea, *Domestic Crime in the Victorian Novel* (London: Macmillan, 1989).

Tromp, Marlene, Gilbert, Pamela, and Haynie, Aeron (eds.), *Beyond Sensation: Mary Elizabeth Braddon in Context* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000).

Wynne, Deborah, *The Sensation Novel and the Victorian Family Magazine* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001).

### *Contemporary Essays and Reviews*

'The Archbishop of York on Works of Fiction', *The Times*, 2 Nov. 1862, p. 9.
'Mrs Wood and Miss Braddon', *Littell's Living Age*, 18 Apr. 1863, pp. 99–103.
'Sensation', *Literary Times*, 9 May 1863, pp. 102–3: 102.
'Our Female Sensation Novelists', *Christian Remembrancer*, 46 (1864), 209–36.
[Dallas, E. S.], '*Lady Audley's Secret*', *The Times*, 18 Nov. 1862, p. 4.
James, Henry, 'Miss Braddon', *The Nation*, 9 Nov. 1865, pp. 593–5.
[Mansel, H. L.], 'Sensation Novels', *Quarterly Review*, 113 (1863), 481–514.
[Oliphant, Margaret], 'Sensational Novels', *Blackwoods*, 91 (1862), 564–80.
—— 'Novels', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 102 (1867), 257–80.
[Rae, W. Fraser], 'Sensation Novelists: Miss Braddon', *North British Review*, 43 (1865), 180–204.
Sala, G. A., 'The Cant of Modern Criticism', *Belgravia: A London Magazine* (Nov. 1867), 45–55.
—— 'On the Sensational in Literature and Art', *Belgravia: A London Magazine* (Feb. 1868), 449–58.

### *Further Reading in Oxford World's Classics*

Braddon, Mary Elizabeth, *Aurora Floyd*, ed. P. D. Edwards.
—— *The Doctor's Wife*, ed. Lyn Pykett.
Collins, Wilkie, *Man and Wife*, ed. Norman Page.
—— *The Moonstone*, ed. John Sutherland.
—— *The Woman in White*, ed. John Sutherland.
Wood, Ellen, *East Lynne*, ed. Elisabeth Jay.

# A CHRONOLOGY OF MARY ELIZABETH BRADDON

| | *Life* | *Historical and Cultural Context* |
|---|---|---|
| 1835 | Born (4 October) in Frith Street, Soho, third child of Henry and Fanny Braddon. | Dickens, *Sketches by Boz* (1st series)<br>Edward Bulwer Lytton, *Rienzi* |
| 1837 | | Death of William IV and accession of Queen Victoria. |
| 1838 | | Anti-Corn Law League founded; publication of Chartist petitions; opening of London–Birmingham railway.<br>Dickens, *Oliver Twist* |
| 1840 | Her parents separate owing to her father's infidelity and financial irresponsibility. | Penny Post introduced; birth of Thomas Hardy; marriage of Victoria and Albert.<br>Darwin, *Voyage of HMS Beagle*<br>Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop* |
| 1842 | | Chartist Riots; founding of Metropolitan Detective Department; opening of Mudie's circulating library. |
| 1845 | Attends Dartmouth Lodge School, Kensington. | Boom in railway speculation.<br>Disraeli, *Sybil*<br>Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*<br>Poe, *Tales of Mystery and Imagination* |
| 1847 | Her brother Edward goes to work in Calcutta in India. | There are now 4,000 miles of telegraph lines in Britain, owned by the Electrical Telegraph Company.<br>Anne Brontë, *Agnes Grey*<br>Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*<br>Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*<br>Thackeray, *Vanity Fair* (serialized 1847–8) |
| 1848 | | Revolutions in Europe; Chartist demonstrations in England; formation of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. |
| 1851 | | Great Exhibition opens at the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park; Australian gold rush.<br>Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor* |

| | *Life* | *Historical and Cultural Context* |
|---|---|---|
| 1852 | Goes on the provincial stage as 'Mary Seyton'. | Collins, *Basil*<br>Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*<br>Thackeray, *The History of Henry Esmond* |
| 1854 | First meeting with Edward Bulwer Lytton, who had long been her literary hero. | Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava in the Crimean War.<br>Dickens, *Hard Times* |
| 1855 | | Foundation of the Langham Place Group of feminists urging changes in marriage laws. |
| 1856 | London stage debut. | |
| 1857 | Poem by Mary Seyton published in the *Beverley Recorder* (9 May). Her brother Edward Braddon becomes a government magistrate in India. | Matrimonial Causes Act establishes Divorce Court and allows limited access to divorce; Indian Mutiny.<br>Collins, *The Dead Secret*<br>Dickens, *Little Dorrit*<br>Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*<br>Trollope, *Barchester Towers* |
| 1858 | Poem by Mary Seyton published in the *Brighton Herald* (9 January). | Victoria proclaimed Empress of India.<br>Eliot, *Scenes of Clerical Life* |
| 1859 | Gives up the stage; attempts to write a novel entitled *Master Anthony's Record* after reading Thackeray's *Henry Esmond*. | War of Italian liberation.<br>Collins, *The Woman in White* begins serialization in *All the Year Round*.<br>Mrs Beeton's *Book of Household Management*<br>Darwin, *Origin of Species*<br>Eliot, *Adam Bede*<br>Mill, *On Liberty*<br>Samuel Smiles, *Self Help* |
| 1860 | Publishes *Three Times Dead*, her first novel. Her play, *The Loves of Arcadia*, is staged at the Strand Theatre, London. First meets the publisher John Maxwell (b. 1824) in April. | Opening of W. H. Smith's circulating library.<br>Dickens, *Great Expectations* begins serialization in *All the Year Round*.<br>Wood's *East Lynne* begins serialization in the *New Monthly Magazine* (January).<br>Collins, *The Woman in White* (3 vols.)<br>Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss* |
| 1861 | Begins to live with Maxwell, who cannot marry her since his wife is alive, and confined in a lunatic asylum; is stepmother to his five children. *Three Times Dead* reissued as *The Trail of the Serpent*. *Lady Audley's Secret* a great success (1861–2). *The Black Band* (anon.) | Death of Prince Albert; Offences Against the Person Act (which includes provisions on bigamy); beginning of American Civil War.<br>Eliot, *Silas Marner*<br>Wood, *East Lynne* (3 vols.) |

| | *Life* | *Historical and Cultural Context* |
|---|---|---|
| 1862 | Gives birth to Gerald, the first of her six children by Maxwell (five of whom survive infancy).<br>*Aurora Floyd* (1862–3)<br>*Lady Audley's Secret* (3 vols.)<br>*The Lady Lisle* (2 vols.) | London Exposition.<br>Bulwer Lytton, *A Strange Story*<br>Collins, *No Name*<br>Trollope, *Orley Farm* |
| 1863 | Son, Francis, born (January); daughter, Fanny, born (December).<br>*Eleanor's Victory*<br>*John Marchmont's Legacy* | The first (steam-driven) underground train in London; death of Thackeray.<br>Eliot, *Romola*<br>Le Fanu, *The House by the Churchyard*<br>Oliphant, *Salem Chapel*<br>Reade, *Hard Cash*<br>Annie Thomas, *Sir Victor's Choice* |
| 1864 | *The Doctor's Wife*<br>*Henry Dunbar* | First of the Contagious Diseases Acts attempts to control prostitution.<br>Collins, *Armadale* begins serialization in the *Cornhill*.<br>Le Fanu, *Wylder's Hand*; *Uncle Silas*<br>Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*<br>Ouida (Marie Louise de la Ramée), *Held in Bondage; or, Granville De Vigne*<br>Wood, *Lord Oakburn's Daughters*; *Oswald Cray*; *Trevlyn Hold* |
| 1865 | *Only a Clod*<br>*Sir Jasper's Tenant* | End of American Civil War and abolition of slavery in the USA; vicious suppression of a slave revolt in Jamaica by its British governor, Edward Eyre, leads to public outcry in Britain; births of Kipling and Yeats; death of Gaskell.<br>Florence Marryat, *Love's Conflict*; *Woman Against Woman*<br>Ouida, *Strathmore*<br>Wood, *Mildred Arkell* |
| 1866 | Maxwell founds *Belgravia Magazine* for Braddon, and she edits it for a decade. Second son Francis dies; third son, William, born.<br>*The Lady's Mile* | Second Contagious Diseases Act; first petition to parliament for female suffrage.<br>Eliot, *Felix Holt the Radical*<br>Eliza Lynne Linton, *Lizzie Lorton of Grey Rigge*<br>Ouida, *Chandos*<br>Charlotte Riddell, *The Race for Wealth*<br>Wood, *St Martin's Eve* |

| | *Life* | *Historical and Cultural Context* |
|---|---|---|
| 1867 | *Rupert Godwin*<br>*Birds of Prey* | Second Reform Act extends the male franchise, increasing electorate to about 2 million; Paris Exhibition.<br>Broughton, *Not Wisely But Too Well*; *Cometh Up As a Flower*<br>Dickens, *Our Mutual Friend*<br>Tolstoy, *War and Peace*<br>Linton, *Sowing the Wind*<br>Marx, *Das Kapital*<br>Riddell, *Far Above Rubies*<br>Wood, *Lady Adelaide's Quest*; *A Life's Secret* |
| 1868 | Death of sister (October) and mother (1 November), birth of daughter Winifred (Rosie) (December); nervous breakdown complicated by puerperal fever (1868–9).<br>*Dead Sea Fruit*<br>*Charlotte's Inheritance*<br>*Run to Earth* | Last public hanging at Newgate Prison; Report of the Royal Commission on the Laws of Marriage; the first Trades Union Congress.<br>Collins, *The Moonstone*<br>Wood, *Anne Hereford*; *The Red Court Farm* |
| 1869 | | First women's college at Cambridge founded (Girton); Third Contagious Diseases Act.<br>Mill, *On the Subjection of Women* |
| 1870 | Birth of last child, Edward. | Education Act to provide state education for all; Married Women's Property Act; death of Dickens.<br>Collins, *Man and Wife* |
| 1871 | *Fenton's Quest*<br>*The Lovels of Arden* | First Impressionist Exhibition in Paris.<br>Darwin, *Descent of Man*<br>Eliot, *Middlemarch*<br>Hardy, *Desperate Remedies*<br>Meredith, *Harry Richmond*<br>Trollope, *The Eustace Diamonds*<br>Wood, *Dene Hollow* |
| 1872 | *To the Bitter End* | Introduction of Secret Ballot.<br>Collins, *Poor Miss Finch*<br>Wood, *Within the Maze* |
| 1873 | Begins to write for the stage again, with only modest success.<br>*Lucius Davoren*<br>*Milly Darrell* (a collection of stories) | Pater, *Studies in the Renaissance*<br>Wood, *The Master of Greylands* |
| 1874 | Marries Maxwell (2 October) on the death of his first wife (5 September). | Factory Act.<br>Hardy, *Far From the Madding Crowd* |

| | *Life* | *Historical and Cultural Context* |
|---|---|---|
| | *Taken at the Flood* (the first of her novels to be syndicated in a range of British newspapers via Tillotson's Fiction Bureau) | |
| 1875 | *A Strange World*<br>*Hostages to Fortune* | Artisan's Dwelling Act; Public Health Act.<br>Collins, *The Law and the Lady* |
| 1876 | Founds, edits, and writes for the Christmas annual *The Mistletoe Bough*.<br>*Dead Men's Shoes*<br>*Joshua Haggard's Daughter* | Invention of telephone and phonograph.<br>Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*<br>James, *Roderick Hudson*<br>Lombroso, *The Criminal*<br>Riddell, *Above Suspicion*<br>Wood, *Edina* |
| 1880 | *The Story of Barbara*<br>*Just As I Am* | First Anglo-Boer War; deaths of George Eliot and Flaubert.<br>James, *Portrait of a Lady* begins serialization in *Macmillan's Magazine*.<br>Collins, *Jezebel's Daughter*<br>Gissing, *Workers in the Dawn*<br>Ouida, *Moth*s<br>Riddell, *The Mystery in Palace Gardens*<br>Zola, *Nana* |
| 1884 | *Ishmael* | Fabian Society founded; Third Reform Act; birth of D. H. Lawrence.<br>Zola, *Germinal* |
| 1885 | *Wyllard's Weird* | |
| 1887 | | Victoria's Golden Jubilee; Independent Labour Party founded; death of Ellen Wood.<br>Haggard, *She*<br>Hardy, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* |
| 1888 | *The Fatal Three* | Invention of Kodak box camera; death of Arnold; birth of T. S. Eliot.<br>Collins, *The Legacy of Cain* |
| 1889 | *The Day Will Come* | The first electric underground trains run in London; London Dock strike; death of Collins.<br>Gissing, *The Nether World*<br>Shaw, *Fabian Essays in Socialism* |
| 1892 | *The Venetians* | Gissing, *Born in Exile* |
| 1894 | Her brother becomes Prime Minister of Australia. | |

| | *Life* | *Historical and Cultural Context* |
|---|---|---|
| 1895 | Death of John Maxwell (3 March). | Lumière brothers invent the portable motion picture camera; trial of Oscar Wilde.<br>Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*<br>Wells, *The Time Machine* |
| 1896 | Publishes her sixty-ninth novel; 'The Good Lady Ducayne' (a vampire story) appears in *Strand Magazine* (February). | Conrad, *Alamayer's Folly*<br>Wells, *The Island of Doctor Moreau* |
| 1899 | | Boer War (–1902).<br>Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* |
| 1901 | | Death of Victoria, accession of Edward VII. |
| 1904 | Death of brother.<br>*A Lost Eden* | Conrad, *Nostromo* |
| 1907 | *Dead Love Has Chains* | Bennett, *A Grim Smile of the Five Towns* |
| 1910 | *Beyond These Voices* | Death of Edward VII, accession of George V.<br>Bennett, *Clayhanger*<br>Forster, *Howards End* |
| 1913 | *Miranda* | Lawrence, *Sons and Lovers* |
| 1914 | | First World War begins (August).<br>James Joyce, *Dubliners* |
| 1915 | Dies at Richmond (4 February) from a cerebral haemorrhage. | |
| 1916 | *Mary*, her last novel, is published. | |

*This page intentionally left blank*

# LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET