



**Gothic Chapbooks,
Bluebooks and Shilling
Shockers, 1797–1830**

Franz J. Potter

GOTHIC LITERARY STUDIES

GOTHIC CHAPBOOKS, BLUEBOOKS AND
SHILLING SHOCKERS, 1797–1830

SERIES PREFACE

Gothic Literary Studies is dedicated to publishing groundbreaking scholarship on Gothic in literature and film. The Gothic, which has been subjected to a variety of critical and theoretical approaches, is a form which plays an important role in our understanding of literary, intellectual and cultural histories. The series seeks to promote challenging and innovative approaches to Gothic which question any aspect of the Gothic tradition or perceived critical orthodoxy. Volumes in the series explore how issues such as gender, religion, nation and sexuality have shaped our view of the Gothic tradition. Both academically rigorous and informed by the latest developments in critical theory, the series provides an important focus for scholarly developments in Gothic studies, literary studies, cultural studies and critical theory. The series will be of interest to students of all levels and to scholars and teachers of the Gothic and literary and cultural histories.

SERIES EDITORS

Andrew Smith, University of Sheffield

Benjamin F. Fisher, University of Mississippi

EDITORIAL BOARD

Kent Ljungquist, Worcester Polytechnic Institute Massachusetts

Richard Fusco, St Joseph's University, Philadelphia

David Punter, University of Bristol

Chris Baldick, University of London

Angela Wright, University of Sheffield

Jerrold E. Hogle, University of Arizona

For all titles in the Gothic Literary Studies series

visit www.uwp.co.uk

*Gothic Chapbooks, Bluebooks and
Shilling Shockers, 1797–1830*

Franz J. Potter



UNIVERSITY OF WALES PRESS

2021

© Franz J. Potter, 2021

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any material form (including photocopying or storing it in any medium by electronic means and whether or not transiently or incidentally to some other use of this publication) without the written permission of the copyright owner. Applications for the copyright owner's written permission to reproduce any part of this publication should be addressed to the University of Wales Press, University Registry, King Edward VII Avenue, Cardiff CF10 3NS.

www.uwp.co.uk

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-78683-670-0

e-ISBN 978-1-78683-671-7

The right of Franz J. Potter to be identified as authors of this work has been asserted by them in accordance with sections 77 and 79 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.



Typeset in Wales by Eira Fenn Gaunt, Pentyrch, Cardiff

Printed by CPI Antony Rowe, Melksham

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	vii
List of illustrations	ix
List of figures	xi
Introduction	1
1 Chapbooks, Bluebooks and Shilling Shockers	11
2 The Rise of the Gothic Chapbook: Simon Fisher, Thomas Hurst and The Monk, 1797–1801	29
3 The Art of Marketing: Ann Lemoine and John Roe	51
4 The Golden Age of the Shilling Shocker: Thomas Tegg and the Chapbook Magazines	71
5 The Profiteers: Isaac Crookenden and Sarah Wilkinson	89
6 The Decline of the Gothic Pamphlet	111
Notes	137
Appendix: Gothic Pamphlets	157
Bibliography	239
Index	245

This page intentionally left blank

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project would not be possible if not for the continued support from my family. I am grateful to my wife, Serena, who has been patient and understanding about my predilection, and my daughters MaCall and Eloise, who have always encouraged me 'to finish it already'.

I would also like to thank my chair, Janet Baker, for her continued encouragement and support. National University has been particularly generous with financial support for both travel and research. Their assistance allowed me to attend and present my findings at both the PAMLA and International Gothic Association conferences over the years and is much appreciated.

The staff at the British Library, UCLA, City of Westminster Archives and National University Library were particularly helpful in locating resources, rare chapbooks and various documents. I would also like to thank Wendy Fall for her wonderful images of gothic pamphlets that she has collected, some of which are included in this work.

Finally, this book is dedicated to the memory of Sarah Wilkinson, whose struggle to support herself in the face of misfortune and tragedy continues to inspire.

This page intentionally left blank

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Plate 1: Frontispiece of *The Black Forest; or, The Cavern of Horrors. A Gothic Romance*. Photo by Wendy Fall from the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia.

Plate 2: Frontispiece of *The Solemn Warning; or, The Predictions Verified. A Romance*. Photo by Wendy Fall from the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia.

Plate 3: Frontispiece of *The Pirate; or, The Sisters of Burgh Westra*. Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University Library.

Plate 4: Frontispiece of *The Cavern of Horrors; or, Miseries of Miranda. A Neapolitan Tale*. Photo by Wendy Fall from the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia.

Plate 5: Frontispiece of *The Bleeding Nun of the Castle of Lindenberg; or, The History of Raymond & Agnes*. Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University Library.

This page intentionally left blank

LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1.1 Gothic Pamphlets, 1797–1828
- Figure 1.2 Gothic Pamphlets and Novels, 1800–28
- Figure 1.3 Gothic Pamphlets, 1797–1810
- Figure 1.4 Gothic Pamphlets, 1811–28
- Figure 1.5 Gothic Pamphlets by Publisher
- Figure 1.6 Gothic Pamphlets by Author
- Figure 1.7 Adaptations v. Original
- Figure 3.1 Lemoine's Gothic Pamphlets
- Figure 4.1 Tegg's Gothic Pamphlets
- Figure 5.1 Wilkinson's Publishers

This page intentionally left blank

Introduction

Yet today, nearly two centuries later, the bluebook phenomenon is forgotten almost as if it never existed: ignored in most works about eighteenth and nineteenth century literature and only briefly appraised in studies of the Gothic novel.

(Peter Haining, *Tales from the Gothic Bluebook*, 1978)

A full-length study of the gothic chapbook is long overdue. For far too long, the chapbook has been a pariah in gothic studies: an ephemeral branch of the gothic, a derivative of 'legitimate' novels, and at best considered an aberration of the Gothic. However, as William Watt noted in the first and only study of the gothic chapbook, *Shilling Shockers of the Gothic School* (1932),

[t]o gain a complete picture of a literary fashion which attracted the readers of any definite time, we must pierce the oblivion which has obscured the evanescent productions of Grub Street. Much as we are inclined to decry the struggling hacks who have sacrificed literary standards on the altar of their own financial needs, we cannot deny their importance for the study of the tastes of a large body of readers.¹

Watt's study, appropriately the size and length of a chapbook, provided one of the first serious appraisals of the maligned and much-derided gothic short tale of terror. Nevertheless, the study offered merely a cursory survey of the gothic chapbook's salacious features and an all too brief glance at the 'struggling hacks' who wrote them and their rapacious readers.

Literary and historical studies of gothic fiction have long focused on their development as a noxious offspring of the novel rather

than a legitimate downmarket manifestation. Critical works such as Joyce Tompkins's *The Popular Novel in England, 1770–1800* (1932), Montague Summers's *The Gothic Quest* (1938) and *A Gothic Bibliography* (1940), Frederick S. Frank's *The First Gothics: A Critical Guide to the English Gothic Novel* (1987) and David Punter's *The Literature of Terror* (1996) provided important but only cursory discussions of the chapbook, often as the symptom or cause of their eventual decline. For instance, '[t]he chapbooks represent Gothicism in its most decadent and rampant phase', declared Frederick S. Frank in *The First Gothics*, 'bringing down upon the Gothic novel widespread critical denunciation and ridicule.'² As such, the gothic chapbook has been historically overlooked or marginalised by many literary historians.

However, the 'decadence' of the gothic novel should not be laid only at the feet of the lowly chapbook. In fact, these short tales of terror are more than just a footnote; they are part of the aggregate, and one worth investigating. Just as one cannot understand the gothic's impact without examining the social, political, and economic context in which they were written, we need to broaden our view of the literary gothic to consider those downmarket productions that targeted a growing readership.

Fortunately, contemporary gothic scholarship has increasingly integrated gothic chapbooks and bluebooks into the larger literary narrative. *The Handbook of the Gothic* (2010), *The Encyclopedia of Romantic Literature* (2012) and *The Palgrave Handbook to Horror Literature* (2018) now have entries on them and the authors who penned them. Diane Long Hoeveler wrote extensively about the gothic chapbook in *Gothic Riffs: Secularizing the Uncanny in the European Imaginary, 1780–1820* (2010), in which she explored the 'collateral gothic', including chapbooks, ballads and dramas. Likewise, in *The Gothic Ideology: Religious Hysteria and Anti-Catholicism in British Popular Fiction, 1780–1880* (2014) she surveyed manifestations of anti-Catholicism in the popular media and particularly in chapbooks. In *The History of Gothic Publishing, 1800–1835* (2005), I began to trace the production of the chapbook in relation to the gothic novel, but I only scratched the surface of an industry that was active from at least 1797 to 1828.

While access to gothic chapbooks continues to increase, the fundamental problem remains a lack of specific information about

the practices of the publishing and printing industry that produced them. To this end, *Gothic Chapbooks, Bluebooks and Shilling Shockers* focuses on the origins of gothic chapbooks, examining their predecessors in the magazines and their migration to chapbooks. The second chapter focuses on their rise, and those publishers and booksellers involved in their development. It explores the collaboration of Simon Fisher and Thomas Hurst, who pioneered the gothic chapbook, and examines the role of booksellers and circulating library proprietors in the dissemination of these titles. It also surveys the early network of publishers and booksellers instrumental in the development.

Gothic Chapbooks, Bluebooks and Shilling Shockers examines two significant aspects of the gothic chapbook trade. The first is an empirical and statistical analysis focusing on the publishers, printers and circulating libraries (including readers), bringing them together to account for the whole. It is based on a checklist of four hundred gothic chapbooks, bluebooks and shilling shockers. The checklist was assessed against the excellent bibliographies of gothic chapbooks including Angela Koch's "'The Absolute Horror of Horrors" Revised: A Bibliographical Checklist of Early-Nineteenth-Century Gothic Bluebooks' (2002), Frederick Frank's *The First Gothics: A Critical Guide to the English Gothic Novel* (1987), 'Gothic Archive Chapbooks', a digital collection of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British gothic chapbooks established by Diane Long Hoeveler and now directed by Wendy Fall, as well as the bibliography of gothic chapbooks from my book *The History of Gothic Publishing, 1800–1835: Exhuming the Trade* (2005). I have read or viewed most of the titles when available, and those not individually assessed were included only if multiple sources confirmed a physical copy. The checklist, which is in the appendix, contains the full title, author, publisher, year of publication, series (if any) and library where it can be accessed. This list then provides a sizeable primary bibliography, a baseline to measure the gothic chapbook industry and its reception.

The opening chapter offers a broad overview of the entire study from the number of chapbooks, bluebooks and shilling shockers that were in circulation as well as the publishers who issued them, and the 'hack' writers who created them. It also addresses one unexpected barrier to a better understanding of these short tales of

terror: the label of ‘chapbook.’ Readers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries certainly did not refer to these publications as chapbooks, which was first used in 1824, to describe what we now broadly categorise as gothic chapbooks. Traditionally, the chapbook was an important means for the propagation of popular culture, but it was one exclusively associated with the lower classes. Consequently, when applying the term chapbook to these productions, it implies that they were created specifically for working-class readers, and that therefore their literary value, if any, is disputable. This categorisation, though, has allowed these tales of terror to be consistently overlooked and marginalised. However, it has been observed that ‘the original chapbooks were succeeded by “bluebooks” of a slightly higher order’, and circulating libraries replaced chapmen.³ These ‘higher-order’ publications were more commonly known as either books or pamphlets, and, as such, they were commonly not only found in circulating libraries but sold individually by booksellers, bookbinders, stationers and other shops. Circulating libraries often contained a ‘Pamphlets’ section which offered readers a wide range of materials, taking in such diverse publications as *Beetham’s Lecture on Heads*, *Bingfield’s Voyages and Travels*, *Gothic Story, or Castle of Montreuil* and *Windham’s Speech on the Peace*.⁴ William Fish’s catalogue for his Circulating Library (an offshoot of his Music Circulating Library) at 38 London Lane in Norwich, for example, did not differentiate between gothic pamphlets and popular novels and romances. He stocked both Stephen Cullen’s *Haunted Priory; or The Fortunes of the House of Rayo* (item 836) and Ann Radcliffe’s *The Italian; or, The Confessional of the Black Penitents* (item 955) alongside *The Wandering Spirit; or, The Memoirs of the House of Morno* (item 1968) and *The Midnight Assassin; or, Confession of the Monk Rinaldi* (item 1980), the latter being individual pamphlets which also appeared in *The Marvellous Magazine, or Compendium of Prodigies* (item 1118).⁵ Readers could, after all, choose a novel, play or pamphlet for a penny per night and histories, poetry and magazines for twopence per night.

The second aspect of this study consists of biographical case studies that illustrate the mechanism of the gothic chapbook trade. Figures such as Simon Fisher, Thomas Hurst, Ann Lemoine, Thomas Tegg, Sarah Wilkinson and Isaac Crookenden exemplify the individuals

that participated and sustained gothic chapbook production. These figures are viewed in the historical context of their trade and in order to bring forward new voices from the period to better characterise a genre which is more diverse than it is currently represented.

This study also provides a better means to analyse the extent of the gothic chapbook trade and observe some of the significant trends in production and reception. Significantly, it examines the individual publishers who were actively engaged in the production of gothic chapbooks. This is crucial, as the gothic chapbook has been traditionally associated, if not defined, by two well-known printer-publishers, Thomas Tegg and Ann Lemoine and their 'disreputable' wares. As we will see in chapter 4, Thomas Tegg's long and notorious career as a bookseller, auctioneer, publisher and purveyor of gothic chapbooks is well documented. It has been described in considerable detail in Thomas Rees's *Reminiscences of Literary London from 1779–1853*. Fortunately, Tegg has undergone a contemporary appraisal in James J. Barnes and Patience P. Barnes's 'Reassessing the Reputation of Thomas Tegg, London Publisher, 1776–1846' (2000), which reconsiders the publisher's controversial business practices. Likewise, Ann Lemoine's significance as a publisher of chapbooks has been investigated in Roy Bearden-White's insightful book *How the Wind Sits: The History of Henry and Ann Lemoine, Chapbook Writers and Publishers of the Late Eighteenth Century* (2017), which provides an overview of her business. In chapter 3, I discuss Lemoine's role not only as a female publisher in a male-dominated industry but also her influence and impact on the development of the gothic chapbook as a product. Notwithstanding their contributions to the industry, Tegg and Lemoine were just two among a number of publishers who invested capital in the expanding marketplace. In fact, no less than forty-one different publishers produced at least one gothic chapbook during this period. However, unfortunately information on these other publishers – most of whom had short-lived careers – is nominal at best. In the past, in the absence of a comprehensive catalogue of titles, it was not possible to determine precisely the size and scope of the gothic chapbook trade, and whether certain publishers dominated; nor could we determine if their publications are typical of the whole industry. Even now, our understanding of the publishing history of gothic

chapbooks is inadequate, both in terms of those who produced them and the number of such publications. This study reveals that the gothic chapbook trade actually involved a relatively small number of publishers who actively produced titles specifically to capitalise on the popularity of the gothic novel.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, the gothic chapbook was still evolving. Chapter 3 looks specifically at the role of the publisher Ann Lemoine in this expanding market and the dissemination of the gothic. While printers Susan Bailey and Ann Kemmish both participated in the production of gothic chapbooks, it was Lemoine who played a significant role in both the production and marketing of these tales. Of particular interest was her long-term collaboration with the copper printer John Roe, who was instrumental in the introduction of aquatint prints in gothic chapbooks, beginning with *The Black Forest; or the Cavern of Horrors* in 1802. While chapbooks traditionally used woodcut and etching for illustrations (see Plate 1), Lemoine's use of aquatint frontispieces marked a shift not only in the production and manufacturing; it also underscored a broad effort to market these tales to middle-class readers. In the same way, her full-length collections of chapbooks such as *Wild Roses; or Cottage Tales* (n.d.) and *English Nights Entertainments* (1802), as well as her *Tell-Tale Magazine*, facilitated the shift from individual to more significant collections of thematically analogous chapbooks.

Entering the gothic marketplace just after Lemoine, Thomas Tegg's impact on the development of the gothic chapbook, and particularly the creation of *The Marvellous Magazine*, dramatically increased the visibility of the chapbook in the broader book market. While remembered primarily for recycling and plagiarising gothic novels, it was Tegg's business acumen, and above all his role in the distribution of chapbooks, that proved central to the expansion of the gothic chapbook marketplace not only in London but throughout the provinces. Tegg's distribution network, principally in the country, allowed chapbooks, novels, magazines and caricature prints to reach shops, booksellers, circulating libraries and stationers further afield. Indeed, it was this network that contributed to the rapid proliferation of gothic chapbooks from 1802 onwards.

While the publisher was instrumental in the production and dissemination, the author's role in this process is surprisingly far

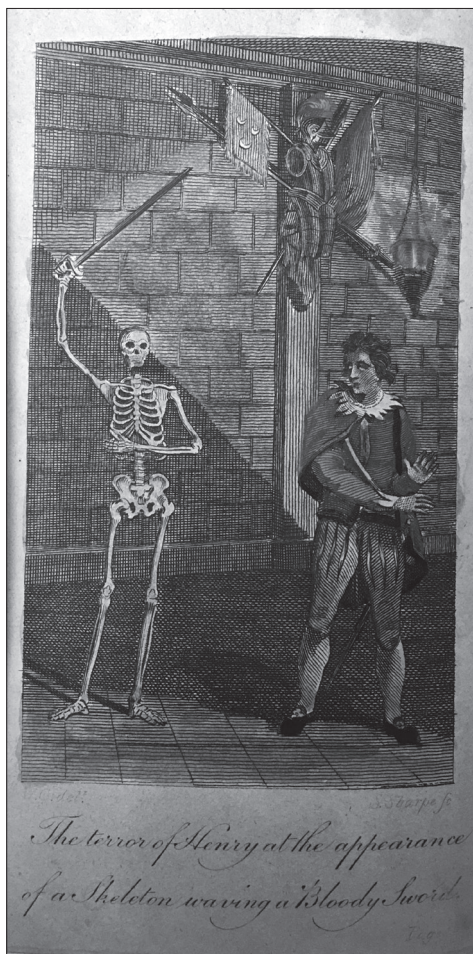


Plate 1: Frontispiece of *The Black Forest; or, The Cavern of Horrors*.
A Gothic Romance. Photo by Wendy Fall from the Albert and
Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia.

less understood. The majority of gothic chapbooks were written anonymously, but there were some authors who not only claimed authorship but exploited the rising demand for short tales of terror. Sarah Wilkinson, for example, was the author of at least sixty-three

gothic chapbooks and actively sold her work to at least twenty-five different publishers in order to provide for her family. She regularly wrote original tales for publication and was commissioned by publishers to redact, abridge or adapt specific novels and dramas to capitalise on their popularity. Authors such as Wilkinson demonstrate how publishers and authors directly responded to shifting reader interest in an effort to maintain the gothic chapbook trade. Another author of interest, Isaac Crookenden, was a schoolmaster who penned numerous chapbooks and was the publishing rival of Wilkinson. Crookenden's principal objective in writing was not strictly monetary, but an overwhelmingly moral or pious didacticism. His narratives focused primarily on family secrets and the horrors of incest. As long as gothic chapbooks were in demand, opportunistic writers and desperate hacks were willing to supply any publisher keen to invest in the gothic marketplace.

The decline of the gothic marketplace is the focus of the last chapter of this study. It explores the waning interest in the gothic chapbook and pamphlet after 1820 and publishers' shift to children's books and periodicals. Hodgson & Co., John Arliss, Dean & Munday and several others continued to produce gothic chapbooks well into the 1820s, including popular adaptations of Sir Walter Scott's Waverley novels. However, consumer interest was not enough to sustain the market. The chapter traces, in part, the publishers' reaction to the shifting interest and how they reacted to the influx of cheap editions. Some publishers turned their attention to periodicals, including Dean & Munday, who produced *The Ladies' Monthly Museum*, and John Arliss, publisher of the *Pocket Magazine* (1818–24). More significantly, these same publishers shifted their focus to children's books and the quickly expanding market in them.

Finally, I have included an appendix which contains a primary bibliography of gothic chapbooks. Such information is necessary when discussing a statistical study, as it allows the reader access to specific examples. Each entry includes the author, title, imprint and date of publication. If the chapbook was an adaptation of a novel or drama, the original source is included; likewise, if it was part of a series or collection, that information is provided as well. Finally, the physical location of the chapbook is indicated. Fortunately, at least 146 gothic chapbooks are also available online, and that number

Introduction

continues to increase. A significant number of these are located in academic and other libraries around the world including the British Library, New York Public Library, University of California, Los Angeles and the University of Virginia's Sadleir-Black Collection.

This page intentionally left blank

Chapbooks, Bluebooks and Shilling Shockers



Horror, sensibility, shadowy terror, and the raucous equipment of the haunted castle were all crammed into the compressed Gothic, then thrust all at once upon that type of reader who has neither the time nor the taste for a leisurely Gothic experience.

(Frederick S. Frank, *The First Gothics*)

Perhaps the best place to begin this study is near Brentford at the height of the gothic chapbook's popularity in 1803. It was there that the youthful Percy Bysshe Shelley, who (if we are to trust Thomas Medwin) not only read, but avidly devoured those 'stories of haunted castles, bandits, murders, and other grim personages – a most exciting and interesting food for boys' minds' under the rose bushes at Sion House Academy.¹ Shelley, like countless readers before and after him, had discovered these short tales of terror in their local bookshops and circulating libraries stocked alongside a growing selection of gothic romances and novels. While lengthy and expensive gothic novels were often out of reach for many common readers, chapbooks and pamphlets could easily be obtained from a circulating library for a penny a night or purchased at the booksellers for a sixpence or a shilling.

Shelley's schoolboy predilection underscores the growing number of gothic chapbooks that had already been issued by several publishers by 1803. Their proliferation was, in part, driven by the popularity

of works by Ann Radcliffe, Matthew Lewis, Eliza Parsons and Regina Maria Roche, which had culminated in an outpouring of copious amounts of both good and poor imitations. As a consequence, ‘the cheaper presses began to pour out in undiminished spate legions upon legions of “bluebooks”’, Montague Summers once explained, ‘which were the lineal descendants of the earlier chapbooks, and which were bought in infinity by exactly the same class of purchaser.’² Summers’s generalised description of the origins of the gothic chapbook has regrettably led other scholars to view those who published gothic chapbooks as merely part of a ‘subliterary industry dominated by profiteers who knew how to see these shortened Gothic novels as a lucrative trade, not as an art’.³ On the surface, it is straightforward to associate the rise of the gothic chapbook with the popularity of the novel, as it offers a convenient and tangible validation of the gothic’s immediate commercial and cultural impact. It is that very association that led to the marginalisation of these short tales of terror, because they were produced by the ‘cheaper presses’ or by ‘profiteers’, despite the same critique of the gothic novel in relationship to Minerva Press’s downmarket reputation or James Fletcher Hughes’s exceptionally sensational ‘trash’ novels. Notwithstanding that reputation as merely a by-product or, worse, a derivative of ‘proper’ gothic novels, the genesis of the gothic chapbook was firmly rooted in popular magazines of the late eighteenth century.

The Early Predecessors of Gothic Chapbooks

The gothic chapbook can be traced directly to the prominence and pervasiveness of serialised or abridged gothic novels as well as short gothic tales in the magazines. As Robert Mayo observed, ‘a certain amount of Gothic fiction found in the magazines is not new, but borrowed from other magazines, or abridged, excerpted, or freely adapted from books.’⁴ A cursory glance at the types of tales located in these periodicals reveals that a common feature was indeed the serialised gothic novel. Clara Reeve’s *Old English Baron* (1777), for example, was serialised in the *Berwick Museum, or Monthly Literary Intelligencer* in 1793, the same year that George Moore’s *Grasville Abbey* first appeared in the *Lady’s Magazine*. The anonymous *Schabracco*,

A Romance (12,500 words) appeared in four parts in the *Lady's Monthly Museum, or Polite Repository of Amusement and Instruction* from August to November 1798. Intriguingly, some serialised novels in periodicals were abandoned mid-story, like Juvenis's *The Castle on the Clift* [*sic*] which appeared in three parts from November 1798 to March 1799 before abruptly discontinuing, leaving a fragmented gothic novel.⁵

The pervasiveness of the gothic in periodicals is even more evident with gothic tales which appeared in manifold periodicals including *Lady's Magazine* (1770–1818), *Belle Assemblée, or Bell's Court and Fashionable Magazine* (1806–32), and *Lady's Monthly Museum, or Polite Repository of Amusement and Instruction* (1798–1832) amongst others. Robert Mayo argued that 'the Gothic short stories of the monthlies belong to this class of fiction, and while they undoubtedly tried to be blood-curdling they were usually careful not to violate decorum or to offend the moral sense', and he viewed these polite didactic features as symptomatic of the periodicals themselves. In other words, while the gothic tales in periodicals did utilise horror, it was always with considerable constraint so as not to offend the sensibilities of their readers.⁶

On the whole, there are two types of gothic short stories: tales and fragments. Each is an abbreviated form of the gothic, and the only difference is the length, as the tale is typically the longer of the two. Consequently, the term gothic tale is applied equally to short stories, novelettes, fragments and even serial romances. Tales such as *The Castle of Costanzo* (1784) and *The Two Monks* (1798), which appeared in the *Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure* and *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, highlight Mayo's assertion that gothic tales enjoyed 'considerable popularity from 1790–1820'.⁷

Like tales, abridgements of popular gothic novels were prevalent in magazines. The first to appear was a 1765 redacted version of Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), which appeared in *Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*; and *The New Wonderful Magazine* reprinted the same version in 1794. Some magazines printed extracts and summaries of other gothic novels, including Lewis's *The Monk in the Monthly Mirror* (1798) and Radcliffe's *The Italian* (1797). These extracts ranged in length anywhere from 1,000 to 10,000 words, often offering readers entire sections or even

important inset tales. Another method of extracting and summarising a novel was to offer a ‘review’. These often contained significantly extended passages, for example, the *Analytical Review* of Radcliffe’s *The Mysteries of Udolpho* in 1794 contained 1,400 words, not including the commentary.⁸

The amount of abridgements and extracts, particularly of gothic tales in periodicals, is worth considering. Critics of the gothic chapbook and pamphlet often point to the abridgements of gothic novels as evidence of what Frank describes as ‘an arrant act of Gothic plundering’,⁹ concluding that ‘[a]lmost all of the hundreds of blue-books published during this period are pirated abridgements of full-length Gothic novels’.¹⁰ However, Frank’s use of ‘pirated abridgements’ is problematic as it does not take into account the evolving copyright laws, nor does it consider the critical role ‘abridgements’ played during this period.

With the passage of Parliament’s Statute of Anne in 1710, England’s first copyright law provided publishers and booksellers with their first clear-cut protection – twenty-one years for old books and twenty-eight on newly published material, ‘for securing the Property of Copies of Books to the rightful owners thereof’.¹¹ While the Act of 1710 prohibited the pirating and reprinting of books in their entirety, it was ambiguous about abridgements or translations. It was not until *Gyles v. Wilcox* in 1741 that the legality of abridging a copyrighted book was finally clarified.¹² In establishing the ruling principle, Lord Chancellor Hardwicke argued that shortened books were ‘a mere evasion of the statute, and cannot be called an abridgement’. Instead, he reasoned that the statute was

not to be carried so far as to restrain persons from making a real and fair abridgement, for abridgements may with great propriety be called a new book, because not only the paper and print, but the invention, learning, and judgment of the author is shewn in them, and in many cases are extremely useful . . .¹³

The statute was further clarified in *Strahan v. Newberry* in 1774 wherein Lord Chancellor Apsley likewise argued: ‘the act of abridgement is an act of understanding, employed in carrying a large work into a smaller compass and rendering it less expensive, and more

convenient both to the time and use of the reader.¹⁴ It was because of this assertion that periodicals readily used the right to abridge or print extracts from any literary work notwithstanding copyright.¹⁵ Consequently, after 1774 abridgements flooded the marketplace. This offered publishers several opportunities, including reprinting novels in a redacted or abridged form, printing extracts which could range between 500 and 20,000 words, or reprinting shorter pieces such as inset tales from novels in their entirety (since they were considered to be parts of books). After all, periodicals were fundamentally anthologies of general information, fashion, letters, biographies, poetry and fiction assembled by the publisher with specific readers in mind.

It is from these popular periodicals that the earliest examples of what would eventually become the gothic chapbook emerged. The first was a small pamphlet of twenty-eight pages of popular tales selected by the publisher George Nicholson (1760–1825), simply titled *Romances* (also printed as *Gothic Stories*) from various magazines, containing Mrs Barbauld's well-known tale 'Sir Bertrand' (1773) (though attributed to Dr Akins); 'Sir Gawen' by Dr Nathan Drake, from *The Speculator* in 1790; and 'Edwin', which first appeared in the *Universal Magazine* in 1797.¹⁶ The stories, all supernatural in nature, offered readers three different species of what Nicholson describes as 'gothic superstition', where mystery mingled more with horror than terror.¹⁷ The pamphlet initially appeared in his sizeable series *The Literary Miscellany, or, Selections and Extracts, Classical and Scientific, with Originals in Prose and Verse*, which eventually consisted of twenty-four volumes of entertaining stories and instruction. The individual chapbooks were available at the reasonable price of fourpence-halfpenny at various bookshops throughout London including H. D. Symonds in Paternoster Row, the well-known Champante & Whitrow in Aldgate and Lackington, Allen, & Co., Finsbury Square.

Nicholson's short pamphlet highlighted an emerging market for gothic tales, fragments and even novelettes from the downmarket magazines. Publishers could recycle material from the magazines, as the *Strahan v. Newberry* ruling in 1774 allowed the use of extracts and abridgements of literary works for readers who did not have access to magazines or circulating libraries. While some of those