### Retail Prices of Reading Materials, 1814-1835

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Price Range</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cheap Weekly Magazines</td>
<td>1.5d.-6d. (Mirror of Literature, 1822)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political tracts</td>
<td>2d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheap Non-Fiction</td>
<td>6d. per part</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Magazine</td>
<td>6d.-1s.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daily Newspapers</td>
<td>7d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recycled</td>
<td>1d.-3d. Illegally hired/lent to multiple readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-prints (Literature)</td>
<td>1s-12s. (Shakespeare's plays)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Periodicals</td>
<td>2s. (Fraser’s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Magazines</td>
<td>2s.6d.-4s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbered Series (Fiction)</td>
<td>2s.-5s. per weekly installment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poetry Volume</td>
<td>5s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Periodicals</td>
<td>6s. (Quarterly Review, Edinburgh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary Annual</td>
<td>12s.-£3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Volume Novel</td>
<td>15-21s. (1814-1823)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serialized Novel</td>
<td>20s. total for parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Novel</td>
<td>21s. complete vol. (Pickwick Papers, 1836)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulating Library</td>
<td>35s. (per year for unlimited access)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**“Reading the News” from 1830 Friendship’s Offering.** Accompanies prose by Charles Knight, publisher of The Penny Magazine (1832) and The Monthly Review (1826). Reacts to communal reading though Knight is champion of producing working-class materials.

Booklets of poetry, Bible stories and simple allegories: 1) theological meaning, 2) tales of fictional instruction, 3) designed to inculcate homely virtues and habits of sound living. Attempting to introduce Christianity to working class/poor. Considered wholesome reading material for poor to encourage attaining or maintaining respectability in poverty.

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Luxury of illustrations denotes financial class of the reader.
Both the working and middle classes could afford only a few books a year. However, the increased availability and cheap price of newspapers afforded an opportunity for the lower working classes (unskilled laborers) to access reading materials – whether as the original consumer or as the tenth reader.

### Types of Early 19th-Century Reading Materials

1. **Didactic pamphlets**
   - More’s *Cheap Repository Tracts*
2. **Fiction**
   - Radcliffe, Scott’s *Waverley* (1814)
3. **Serialized Fiction**
   - Dickens’ *Pickwick Papers* (1836)
   - *Master Humphrey’s Clock* (1840)
4. **Silver-Fork novels**
   - Lister’s *Granby*
5. **Poetry Volumes**
   - Charlotte Smith, Hannah More, Scott, Byron, Landon, Hemans
6. **Non-Fiction Personal Narr**
   - Equiano’s *Interesting Narrative* (1789)
   - Wollstonecraft’s & Williams’ *Letters*
7. **Juvenile Literature**
   - Barbauld & Wollstonecraft
8. **Conduct Manuals**
   - Wollstonecraft & lots of others until 1820
9. **Textbooks & Reference**
   - Cobbett’s *Grammar of the English Language* (1818)
10. **Two & Threepenny Weekly & Daily Newspapers**
    - Limbird’s *Mirror of Literature* (1822), *Penny Magazine* (1832),
    - Nic Nacs, Diorama, Freebooters, Batatelles & 60 others
11. **Monthly & Quarterly Mag**
    - *Town and Country Magazine* & *Fraser’s Magazine*
12. **Review Periodicals**
    - *Quarterly Review* (6s.), *Analytical Review*, *The Literary Gazette*,
    - *Monthly Review*, *The Gentleman’s Magazine*
13. **Art Periodicals**
    - Ackermann’s *Repository of Arts*
14. **Women’s Periodicals**
    - *The Ladies Diary*, *Lady's Monthly Museum* & *The Lady's Magazine*
15. **Literary Annuals**
    - *Forget Me Not* (1823)
16. **Class Re-Prints**
    - *The Family Shakespeare* (expurgated, 1818)
    - Shakespeare’s plays (12s., 1825)

### Theatrical Journalism & Temperance Periodicals

#### Some Useful Information

**Book production** (excluding periodicals and newspapers)

- 440% rise from 18th Century
- Producing printed materials less labor intensive
- Innovations in setting type, creating paper & printing multiple copies
- Division of bookselling from printing (Kilgour 112)

**Income**

- Middle-class family (not factory worker) weekly income 48s., or roughly £125 a year
- Beneficed clergyman £300 to £400
- Officer of the line £200 to £400 (Altick 276)

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2 These authors, titles and dates were amassed from primary research of newspapers, periodicals and printed materials 1789-1860. Some references were taken from J.R. de J. Jackson’s enumerative bibliography, *Romantic Poetry by Women*, Richard Altick’s appendices in *The English Common Reader* (381-96) and “On Cheap Periodical Literature” in *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, June 1825 (483-86).
The Romantic Novel

- Romanticism is a movement in art and literature that began in Europe in the late 18th century and was most influential in the first half of the 19th century.
- Romanticism fosters a return to nature and also values the imagination over reason and emotion over intellect.
- One strain of the Romantic is the Gothic with its emphasis on tales of horror and the supernatural.

The Victorian Novel

- The Victorian Age is marked roughly by the reign of Queen Victoria of England from 1837-1901.
- The Victorian reading public firmly established the novel as the dominant literary form of the era. The novel is the most distinctive and lasting literary achievement of Victorian literature.
- Earlier in the century Sir Walter Scott had created a large novel-reading public and had made the novel respectable. He had also strengthened the tradition of the 3-volume novel.
- The publication of novels in monthly installments enabled even the poor to purchase them.
- The novelists of the Victorian era:
  - accepted middle class values
  - treated the problem of the individual's adjustment to his society
  - emphasized well-rounded middle-class characters
  - portrayed the hero as a rational man of virtue
  - believed that human nature is fundamentally good and lapses are errors of judgment corrected by maturation

- The Victorian novel appealed to readers because of its:
  - realism
  - impulse to describe the everyday world the reader could recognize
  - introduction of characters who were blends of virtue and vice
  - attempts to display the natural growth of personality
  - expressions of emotion: love, humor, suspense, melodrama, pathos (deathbed scenes)
  - moral earnestness and wholesomeness, including crusades against social evils and self-censorship to acknowledge the standard morality of the times

- The Victorian novel featured several developments in narrative technique:
  - full description and exposition
  - authorial essays
  - multiplotting featuring several central characters
  - issuing novels in serial installments led novelists to become adept at subclimaxes

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3 from http://www.nvcc.edu/home/ataormina/novels/history/19thcent.htm

4 Ibid.