The composition of Elizabeth Gaskell's Cranford makes a story of erratic stops and starts. Amazement at the final coherence of the parts is a proper reaction. The work first appeared in Dickens's periodical, Household Words, between 1851 and 1853. The eight "Cranford" papers were there published at varying intervals, sometimes only a fortnight apart, but on one occasion resuming after a gap of nine months. The extension from the first two papers to a coherent book-length narrative was in large part due to the encouragement and stimulation given to the author by Dickens.

When Dickens in 1850 warmly invited Mrs. Gaskell to contribute to his "new cheap weekly journal of general literature [...] a short tale, or any number of tales" he must have been confident that her tales would strengthen the moral purpose which he announced in the opening number of Household Words, as well as help to increase his profits. One cannot over-emphasize that it was because of the immediate popularity of the first "Cranford" paper and the writer's increasing ability to pull in readers that

*I am grateful to Mrs. Margaret Trevor Jones, great-granddaughter of Elizabeth Gaskell, for permission to quote unpublished Gaskell manuscripts. I acknowledge the courtesy of the following libraries which have allowed me to consult their collections or have assisted by correspondence: The Bodleian; The British Library; The Brotherton Library, University of Leeds; The John Rylands University Library of Manchester; Manchester Central Library; Princeton University Library, Morris L. Parish Collection. I am further indebted to the following institutions which have given permission to refer to and quote from manuscript material in their collections; The Huntington Library, San Marino; The National Library of Scotland; The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York; The Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation, Inc., New York. Detailed acknowledgements will be found in the notes.

1 Household Words, iv – vii (December 1851 – May 1853).
2 W. Dexter (ed.), The Letters of Charles Dickens (3 vols. Bloomsbury, 1938), ii.202 (h). The symbol (h) after a reference indicates that the holograph has been examined and that, in some cases, the text given here is more correct or complete than the printed source referred to in the footnote.
3 Household Words, i, 1 (30 March 1850), 1-2.
Dickens gave her the freedom of his columns for as many "Cranford" papers as she cared to write. Commercial success was rightly his touchstone. When he found a rich vein he exploited it to the utmost.

Mrs. Gaskell had no regrets about the publication of the "Cranford" papers in *Household Words*, except that she "never meant to write more [than one paper], so killed Capt[ain] Brown very much against [her] will". There were no editorial pressures to compress and cram materials into too short an allowance of space, no urgent letters week by week enquiring whether overdue proofs were misplaced in the post. Indeed, Dickens's letters usually conveyed nothing but praise: he found the papers "delightful, and touched in the tenderest and most delicate manner". She could infer, from his silence on the point, that there was no limit to the length or number of the papers; she had a standing invitation to write about Cranford, almost a blank cheque. Through it all she could read his encouragement as an endorsement of the commercial value of her writing.

Although the publication of the "Cranford" papers in *Household Words* was an almost painless matter, there was some friction with Dickens over the text, and over the fee, for the first paper.

On 4 December 1851 Dickens wrote to Mrs. Gaskell:

I write in great haste to tell you that Mr Wills in the utmost consternation has brought me your letter just received (4 o'clock) and that is too late to recall your tale. I was so delighted with it that I put it first in the No (not hearing of any objection to my proposed alteration by return of Post) and the No is now made up and in the Printer's hands. I cannot possibly take the Tale out — it has departed from me.

I am truly concerned for this, but I hope you will not blame me for what I have done in perfect good faith. Any recollection of me from your pen, cannot (as I think you know) be otherwise than truly gratifying to me; but with my name on every page of *Household Words* there would be — or at least I should feel — an impropriety in so mentioning myself. I was particular, in changing the author, to make it Hoods Poems in the most important place — I mean where the Captain is killed — and I hope and trust that the substitution will not be any serious drawback to the

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4 J.A.V. Chapple and A. Pollard (eds), *The Letters of Mrs. Gaskell* (Manchester, 1966), 748.
6 Dexter, ii.364 (h).
paper, in any eyes but yours. I would do anything rather than cause you a minute's vexation arising out of what has given me so much pleasure, and I sincerely beseech you to think better of it, and not to fancy that any shade has been thrown on your charming writing, by the unfortunate but innocent [...]

Dickens's habit was to destroy letters sent to him, and Mrs. Gaskell's side of the correspondence is missing. It is clear enough, however, that she objected so strongly to Dickens's decision to remove her references to his own work, *The Pickwick Papers*, and to himself, Mr. Boz, from her tale of Captain Brown, that she preferred him not to publish an altered text. Because *Household Words* bore on every opening the legend "Conducted by Charles Dickens" with no other attribution of authorship (*North and South* was one of the exceptions), Dickens's sense of propriety was just. Taking into consideration Mrs. Gaskell's eagerness, expressed in November 1851, to have her work published, it seems probable that she tried to recall "Our Society at Cranford" in order to have it published intact elsewhere, not to withhold it from publication altogether.

The publication day of *Household Words* was normally the Wednesday before the Saturday for which the number was dated. The number containing "Our Society at Cranford", dated 13 December 1851, would therefore have been due on sale on 10 December, four clear working days later than Dickens's letter of the fourth to Mrs. Gaskell. Dickens placed "first in the number" that contribution which he thought would best sell the magazine. Perhaps genuine delight and reluctance to lose the "Cranford" papers contributed to his conviction that it was "too late" to alter the number.

Dickens's anxiety to secure further "Cranford" papers caused him to intervene over the head of W.H. Wills, his assistant editor, who usually handled the business side of *Household Words*, including payments to authors, when a disagreement arose over the payments for the first two "Cranford" papers. The pages of the Office Book of *Household Words* were divided into seven columns, thus:

7 Ibid., 361 (h). Corrected date: Dickens wrote "Thursday afternoon, Fifth December".
8 Chapple and Pollard, 172.
9 Held in the Morris L. Parrish Collection, Princeton University Library (h).
"When and where inserted"; "Author's Name"; "Title of article"; "length in Columns"; "Price Paid"; "When Paid"; "Memoranda".

Under these heads the entries for the first two "Cranford" papers read:

December 13 No 90 | Mrs Gaskell | Our Society at Cranford | Nineteen | 10 10 0 | 19 Dec | Ten pound note sent per post in halves 10s due
January 3 No 93 | Mrs Gaskell | A Love Affair at Cranford | Fifteen 1/4 | 9 10 0 | 10 Jan | Enclosed by C.D. 94374 due 10 — 1851 Ten

It seems that Mrs. Gaskell protested that she had not received what was due, and on 24 January 1852 Dickens himself wrote to placate her:

I send you the enclosed, myself, from Mr Wills's book (£9.10.0 Love affair at Cranford; 10/- "balance from last") in order that I may tell you how glad I am that his mistake is rectified, and how anxiously I am looking for your next communication.

If I say more, you'll call it soft sawder. I enforce myself therefore to discreet silence. I suppose I may say, without suspicion, that I am Faithfully yours C.D.??

It was an extraordinary intervention, which shows how highly he valued Mrs. Gaskell's contributions. In February he wrote to her from California, adding a postscript: "O what a lazy woman you are, and where IS that article!" It was 13 March 1852 before "Memory at Cranford" was published, followed on 3 April 1852 by "Visiting at Cranford". During the remainder of 1852 Mrs. Gaskell was busy writing Ruth, which was finished by 20 December, and no more "Cranford" papers were published that year.

On 1 December 1852 Dickens hinted in another postscript: "Cranford ??". During December Mrs. Gaskell prepared a room against the return of one of her daughters, making it "as nice as [she] could for her, — bookshelves, table, inkstand &c, engraving of that beautiful Madonna della Sedia". Polly did not


10 Dexter, ii.372 (h).
11 Ibid., 380 (h).
12 Ibid., 433 (h).
13 Chapple and Pollard, 218.
come home for Christmas, but surely Mrs. Gaskell's thoughts had turned to Cranford again. After an interval of nine months "The Great Cranford Panic", a long paper published in two chapters on 8 January and 15 January 1853, extended the boundaries of Cranford to encompass the magic of Signor Brunoni and the copy of the "Madonna della Sedia" which his Signora carried with her baby across India.

During January and February 1853 Mrs. Gaskell suffered the "painful & stinging" reviews of *Ruth*. She was "in a quiver of pain" and suffered a "'Ruth' fever". There was a further interval of two and a half months before the publication of the last three "Cranford" papers: "Stopped Payment at Cranford" on 2 April, "Friends in Need, at Cranford" on 7 May, and "A Happy Return to Cranford" on 21 May 1853.

During this final period of composition Mrs. Gaskell could see her way through to a conclusion which would enable her to collect the "Cranford" papers and, with few alterations, publish them as a book. She apparently wrote to Dickens enquiring about right of republication, and on 13 April 1853 he replied:

I have joyfully sent the Cranford last received, to the Printer's, as I shall joyfully send its successors yet to come. As to future work, I do assure you that you cannot write too much for Household Words, and have never yet written half enough. [ ... ]

You shall collect Cranford when you please, and publish where you please. [ ... ]

The comparatively tranquil period of composition and publication of the papers in *Household Words* was over, and the author's first problem was the choice of a publisher. She had recently had letters from John Forster praising "the new Cranford sketches" and to him she turned for advice. On 3 May 1853 she wrote:

I was going to write to you today. I should have written sooner, but for a reason, which I will tell you bye and bye. [ ... ] I did not know what

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14 Ibid., 220-21.
15 Ibid., 222.
16 Dexter, ii.457 (h).
17 Letters to E.C.G. dated 9 April 1853 and [ ? April 1853]. Typed transcripts held in Brotherton Collection, University of Leeds.
'Friends in Need' was, at first; you know the HW people always make titles for me. Oh dear! I suppose I must come to the fact about publishing Cranford. About that unlucky letter I wrote to Mr. Chapman, & part of which he repeated to you so falsely, — Well! when I received your first letter, I wrote to him very indignantly, not to say angrily; I don't remember the exact words, but I know it was something to the effect that I would have nothing more to do with him; and of course no communication whatever has passed between us since. Now I would rather go on with him, for many reasons; but there is the one great reason of his falsehood in this instance; and also that after what I said it is very "awkward" to be the first to make advances. For this reason I did not write at once, as I should have done, to thank you for your advice and offers of help. I seldom see the Household Words, and I do not now remember if I have written six or seven Cranford papers, — (they have one, the final number, still unprinted) and I do not know how large a vol it would make, nor in the very least do I know how much would be a fair price for it. All that I must leave to you, tried friend as you are. And whatever you think right I will do, — only for the reason named above I would rather any one else had it than Mr. Chapman. You never say what you thought of the Railway Library suggestion? Mr. Gaskell is so excessively against any change of any kind that I have not liked to reply to a kind of message I had through Miss Brontë; [ ... ]\(^{18}\).

Perhaps "the Railway Library suggestion" was Mrs. Gaskell's own. She may have meant Routledge's Railway Library Series, in particular, but it seems much more likely that she was using the term "railway library" generically, as she did in a letter of 26 November 1857, when the context makes it plain that she was referring to Chapman and Hall's Select Library of Fiction. In view of John Forster's association with Chapman and Hall as a literary adviser it seems inevitable that this house would publish the first edition of Cranford, for which Forster had continually expressed much enthusiasm.

On 11 June 1853 The Athenæum carried a preliminary announce-ment of Cranford\(^{19}\), and publication was announced a week later in this journal and also in The Literary Gazette\(^{20}\): "This day is

\(^{18}\) MS. fragment held in Henry E. Huntington Library. The continuation of this letter is printed by Chapple and Pollard, 230. Full text of Huntington MS. below, Appendix II.

\(^{19}\) The Athenæum, 1337 (11 June 1853), 691.

\(^{20}\) The Literary Gazette, 1900 (18 June 1853), 586.
published, 1 vol. small 8vo. cloth, 7s.6d. CRANFORD. By the Author of “Mary Barton,” “Ruth,” &c. Reprinted from “Household Words.””\textsuperscript{21} On this day also, William Gaskell issued a receipt to Edward Chapman: “for fifteen hundred copies of a work called “Cranford” the sum of One Hundred Pounds”\textsuperscript{22}.

On July 2 1853 Mudie included \textit{Cranford} by Mrs. Gaskell in the advertised list of works recently added to his library\textsuperscript{23}. On 20 August 1853 \textit{The Athenaeum} carried Chapman and Hall’s advertisement: “SECOND EDITION. Just published, small 8vo. cloth, 7s.6d. CRANFORD”\textsuperscript{24}. On 29 October 1853 in \textit{The Atlas} it was described in Chapman and Hall’s advertisement of “New Publications” as “Second Edition. Fcap., 7s.6d.” — presumably in error\textsuperscript{25}. It was a display advertisement which included several sentences quoted from the review in \textit{The Examiner}. On 3 September Mudie’s advertisement of works recently added to his “Select Library” listed a stock of one hundred and fifty copies of \textit{“Cranford, by Mrs. Gaskell”} — the first time she was named as author\textsuperscript{26}. This purchase may be compared with his advertisement in \textit{The Literary Gazette} of 1 October 1853, which listed purchases of \textit{Villette} (250 copies), and \textit{Esmond} (400 copies)\textsuperscript{27}. At this time he was still listing \textit{Ruth}, which in May 1853 he had offered among “Surplus copies of recent Works withdrawn from his Library [ … ] at greatly reduced prices for cash”\textsuperscript{28}.

In America on 15 August 1853 Norton’s \textit{Literary Gazette} listed among new American works published during the month of July: “*Cranford. By the Author of “Mary Barton” (Mrs. Gaskell). 16mo. pp. 329 [Harper & Bros., N.Y.] 60”\textsuperscript{29}. The asterisk indicates that it is a reprint from an English edition. The cost is represented by the “60” ($0.60). The edition was newly set, with American spelling and some minor substantive changes intended,

\textsuperscript{21} \textit{The Athenaeum}, 1338 (18 June 1853), 748.

\textsuperscript{22} Held in the Pierpont Morgan Library Gaskell Collection, MS. 123.

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{The Athenaeum}, 1340 (2 July 1853), 788.

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., 1347 (20 August 1853), 995.

\textsuperscript{25} \textit{The Atlas}, xxxi, 1433 (29 October 1853), 720.

\textsuperscript{26} \textit{The Athenaeum}, 1349 (3 September 1853), 1027.

\textsuperscript{27} \textit{The Literary Gazette}, 1915 (1 October 1853), 946.

\textsuperscript{28} For an account of Mudie’s great influence on the commercial success or failure of a nineteenth century novel, see G.L. Griest, \textit{Mudie’s Circulating Library and the Victorian Novel} (Newton Abbot, 1970).

\textsuperscript{29} \textit{Norton’s Literary Gazette}, iii (15 August 1853), 134.
presumably, to elucidate English obscurities. Harpers did not issue *Cranford* again until 1868, but thereafter more frequently. The gap between 1853 and 1868 is probably a result of the destruction of all their stock by fire in December 1853.

Two letters of February [1854] show that Mrs. Gaskell tried to arrange for the German publishing firm of Tauchnitz to issue *Cranford*. Baron Tauchnitz, who reprinted authorized continental editions of many English works, published "Chapters of Cranford" in his edition of *Household Words* at Leipzig in 1852 and 1853, but not the novel, *Cranford*, itself until the Leipzig edition of 1867, two years after the author's death. Mrs. Gaskell's two communications to Tauchnitz's London agents, Williams and Norgate, written on 12 and 25 February [1854] vividly suggest the frustrations of an author in Manchester trying to do business with publishers in London. She wrote formally:

Mrs Gaskell presents her compliments to Messrs Williams and Norgate, and having heard today from Baron Tauchnitz that he has not yet received the *volume* copy of *Cranford* which she desired Messrs Chapman and Hall to send through them to him some time ago, she would feel extremely obliged to Messrs Williams and Norgate if they would *at once* forward it to Leipzig in case it has already reached them. If the negligence should have been on the part of Messrs Chapman and Hall, Mrs Gaskell believes that it will be remedied in the course of tomorrow, as she has written to them to beg them in that case *immediately* to send a copy to Messrs Norgate & Williams's care for Baron Tauchnitz.

Mrs Gaskell would esteem it a favour if Messrs Williams and Norgate would let her know, when the book has fairly been sent off — 30.

The second communication shows that she had received no reply. In May 1853 Williams and Norgate published in *The Athenaeum*31 a notice of change of address "during Alterations and Enlargement of their old Premises". One should allow for the possibility that this upheaval was the reason why Baron Tauchnitz did not receive his copy soon after publication; this need not necessarily be seen as an example of negligence by Chapman and Hall.

In April 1855 when Mrs. Gaskell was staying with a friend, T.B. Price32, in Princes Terrace, Hyde Park, she wrote to her daughter

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30 Chapple and Pollard, 264.
31 *The Athenaeum*, 1335 (28 May 1853), 634.
32 Chapple and Pollard, 336.
Marianne giving details of her programme for the coming days: “Saturday I have to come to Piccadilly to see Mr Chapman by appointment about business”\textsuperscript{33}.

Internal evidence suggests that the date of appointment was Saturday 14 April 1855. On 17 April William Gaskell wrote from Manchester to Edward Chapman:

I have barely time today to send the receipt on the other side, (which I hope is in proper form)\textsuperscript{34}. The Cranford matter must stand over till I have had a little talk with Mrs. Gaskell. In extreme haste\textsuperscript{34}.

The receipt was for “the sum of Two Hundred and Fifty Pounds, in payment of the First Edition of a novel called “North and South””. On 25 April Mrs. Gaskell, at home again in Plymouth Grove, Manchester, herself wrote to Edward Chapman:

We have taken your proposals into consideration, (and pray don’t imagine that your kind promptitude in making them was lost upon me. I received the letter directed to Princes Terrace early on Saty morning, and I was very much obliged to you for the dispatch you had made.) Mr Gaskell consents to a trial of the cheap plan of publication of Cranford, & the other smaller tales/ for such a time\textbackslash or such a number/ as may be agreed upon; though with regard to Cranford it goes rather against the grain. What he wishes to know is what number you would propose to publish in the first instance?, and how soon you think the returns on that number are likely to be made? In order to save time, perhaps it might be as well if you were to send such form of agreement as may be requisite. I shall write by this post to Mr Dickens to ask for his formal consent for the republication of the H[household] W[ords] Tales.\textsuperscript{35}

A “cheap plan of publication” for Cranford, the “Railway Library suggestion”, had been proposed two years previously but John Forster had disregarded it. Now William Gaskell was persuaded to come to an agreement with Chapman and Hall for a cheap edition of Cranford, which was the bait, it seems, by which Chapman and Hall were lured into publishing the shorter tales. On 27 July 1855 Mrs. Gaskell wrote to an unknown correspondent:

Libbie Marsh is going to be published in a 2s. vol, which Chapman & Hall are making of my stories in Household Words, & other places. I

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 339.
\textsuperscript{34} Held in the Pierpont Morgan Library Gaskell Collection, MS. 124.
\textsuperscript{35} Chapple and Pollard, 340 (h).
drummed away at them to get this done, for so many friends asked me to have them collected.

There exist both an undated draft agreement and the formal agreement between William Gaskell and Chapman and Hall relating to the 1855 publication of Cranford and the selected tales. The draft agreement is on notepaper headed 193 Piccadilly and appears to be in the hand of Edward Chapman:

Memorandum of Agreement between the Rev'd Wm Gaskell and Messrs Chapman & Hall for the publication in a cheap form of “Cranford” — and a volume of selected Tales — both by Mrs. Gaskell

{Mr Gaskell} The Agreement to last for two years, after which time either party to be at liberty to dissolve it by giving three months notice

The A/cs to be made up at Midsummer and Xmas and the Royalty due to be paid within a reasonable time afterwards.

The draft does not answer Mr. Gaskell’s question about how many copies Chapman proposed to publish; it may be taken to imply that the returns would be made within two years. The lack of a signature or any covering material on the sheet suggests that it may have been accompanied by a letter answering Mr. Gaskell’s questions more precisely.

The formal agreement was dated 8 May 1855 and is in the hand of William Gaskell:

Memorandum of Agreement between the Rev'd William Gaskell and Messrs Chapman & Hall for the publication in a cheap form (at Two shillings) of “Cranford” and a volume of selected Tales both by Mrs. Gaskell.

Messrs Chapman & Hall to be at the entire cost of printing, binding and advertising the two books, and to pay to Mr. Gaskell a Royalty of Three pence on each copy sold —

36 Ibid., 365.
37 Held in the Pierpont Morgan Library Gaskell Collection, MS. 128.
This Agreement to be binding for two years from the date of publication, after which time either party to be at liberty to put an end to it by giving Three months notice —

The Accounts to be made up at Midsummer and Christmas, and the Royalty due to be paid by the end of February for the Christmas account and August for the Midsummer account —

The Volume of Tales to be published as soon after “Cranford” as possible — say four months from this date.

Chapman & Hall further undertake to print some of the “Tales”, such as “Libbie Marsh” &c, in a separate [sic] form and to give Mr. Gaskell one half of whatever profit may arise from this separate [sic] publication38.

Mr. Gaskell adopted the whole substance of the publisher’s draft, and strengthened the proposals by greater particularity, naming the sale price of the volumes and the dates by which the royalties were to be paid biannually to the author, and by adding two new clauses. The intention of the first of these was to guard against Chapman and Hall so delaying the volume of tales that Mrs. Gaskell’s chief purpose was thwarted. The second clause writes into the agreement another arrangement which she was anxious to achieve, and which she had discussed with Chapman, to make available “separate little penny or 2d pamphlets” of “moral & sensible” stories39. The third clause of the agreement which prescribed its duration was the occasion of serious dispute in later years.

On the author’s side no more obvious reason can be found for the air of haste with which these discussions and proposals were conducted than the urgency of her friends to see her tales republished, and her own desire to make moral tales available cheaply. The physical evidence in copies of the first edition of overhasty work suggests that Chapman and his printers and binders made the pace. On 19 May 1855, only eleven days after Mr. Gaskell signed the agreement, the cheap edition of Cranford, for which the text had been reset, was advertised in The Athenaeum: “In a few days will be published, IN THE SELECT LIBRARY OF FICTION, A CHEAP EDITION, price 2s. of CRANFORD”40. The Publishers’ Circular, which required a copy

38 Held in the Pierpont Morgan Library Gaskell Collection, MS. 129.
39 Chapple and Pollard, 365.
40 The Athenaeum, 1438 (19 May 1855), 572.
in hand of any volume desired to be included in its list of new works, listed the cheap edition of *Cranford* among works published from 14 to 31 May 1855.\(^{41}\)

Mr. Gaskell’s prudence in drawing up the contract for the cheap edition ensured that he (or the author) had the right to expect regular payment of royalties due. So far the income which Mrs. Gaskell had received from *Cranford* amounted to £176, plus whatever sums she was paid for the second edition and the American edition. These are not known. *Household Words* paid her a total of £76 for the eight “Cranford” papers. Wills calculated contributions by columns and quarter columns and paid as each paper was published. On his calculation of 137\(\frac{1}{2}\) columns her earnings worked out at a few pence over the *Household Words* standard rate of one guinea a two-column page. Mrs. Gaskell was fortunate because Wills tended towards cheeseparing. The amount of one hundred pounds which Chapman and Hall paid for the first edition may be compared with Chapman and Hall’s purchase of the copyright of *Mary Barton* for the same sum (the copyright of *Cranford* remained with Mrs. Gaskell) and with the five hundred pounds paid for the copyright of *Ruth* in January 1853.\(^{42}\)

Nine months after the cheap edition of *Cranford* was published Chapman and Hall made a payment to Mr. Gaskell. He dated the receipt at Manchester on 26 February 1856:

Received from Messrs. Chapman and Hall, for Royalty on 3,250 copies of “Cranford["]" and 2500 copies of “Lizzie Leigh and other Tales”, the sum of Seventy One Pounds, seventeen shillings and sixpence[.]

£71.17.6\(^{43}\)

The details of the receipt show that £40.12.6d. of this payment resulted from sales of the cheap edition of *Cranford*. It is not clear whether this was the first payment on this edition or whether there had been a payment in August 1855 for copies sold in the month between date of publication and midsummer.

In either case, the cheap edition sold fairly well. Kingsley’s *Westward Ho!*, which was first published by Macmillan in this

\(^{41}\) *The Publishers’ Circular*, xviii, 425 (1 June 1855), 203.

\(^{42}\) Chapple and Pollard, 967 (h).

\(^{43}\) Held in the Pierpont Morgan Library Gaskell Collection, MS. 127. Summarized by Chapple and Pollard, loc. cit.
year, in three volumes priced at a guinea and a half, sold 8000 copies in two years: a first edition of 1250 copies, second of 750, and a single volume cheap edition of 6000 copies. It is not comparable on points of size or price, but the more questionable figures in the comparison are the sales to which Chapman and Hall admitted.

Mrs. Gaskell was not pleased with her profits as her next letter of 27 August [1856] shows:

Please to remember that August is drawing very near to a close, and that you have confessed yourself 'very much ashamed of the small amount you had to hand over &c' the last time; so that this time I am hoping for some improvement in either you or the undiscerning public, which, if they won't buy, should be made to buy CRANFORD & LIZZIE LEIGH. Will you also kindly let me know what is due to me for any [increased] copies that may have been sold of the Moorland Cottage? It is nearly four years since I have heard anything of that unfortunate tale; & you know that after the sale of 2000 copies, (which had then been passed) I was to have half profits. Anxiously expecting your answer & 100£ note, & regretting the day I was ever deluded into a 'royalty' I remain dear Sir.

There is no record of any payment having been made in August 1856 or February 1857.

In March 1857 Smith, Elder (who had been Charlotte Brontë's publishers) advertised that they would shortly publish "Mrs. Gaskell's Memoirs of Currer Bell". This was the first work by Mrs. Gaskell to be published by Smith, Elder; and from this time she published no more with Chapman and Hall. George Smith of Smith, Elder must have sought the right to republish Mrs. Gaskell's fiction and on 26 November 1857 she wrote to him giving details, as far as she knew, of the state of Chapman and Hall's editions of Mary Barton, Ruth and North and South:

Now about my copyrights. I should be very glad to dispose of any, if I had them, in my power. But I am afraid I have not.[... ] As for Cranford, & Lizzie Leigh &c — he made a bargain with me before republishing them in his Railway Library. He was to have the sale of them for three years (expiring next May,) paying me a royalty of 3d on each copy sold. [...]  

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45 Chapple and Pollard, 406-7.
46 The Publishers' Circular, xx, 467 (2 March 1857), 123.
47 Chapple and Pollard, 484.
This letter, which appears to have been written without consulting any of the relevant agreements (it is likely that they were all in William Gaskell’s keeping), was the cause of a dispute which delayed the Smith, Elder edition of Cranford until 1864. When Mrs. Gaskell wrote “He was to have the sale of them for three years” she was presumably confusing in her memory the two elements of the third clause of the 1855 agreement: “This Agreement to be binding for two years from the date of publication, after which time either party to be at liberty to put an end to it by giving Three months notice —”. Since the cheap edition of Cranford was published in May 1855, William Gaskell was already in a position at the time of this letter to conclude the agreement with Chapman and Hall by exercising his right “to put an end to it”. George Smith, however, would presume from Mrs. Gaskell’s letter that Cranford could be made available to another publisher at the time she named in her letter, without the necessity of Mr. Gaskell’s terminating the agreement by giving three months’ notice to Chapman and Hall. A reasonable interpretation of the agreement would be that it continued to be binding for as long as notice to terminate was not given, and Chapman and Hall could rightly understand it so.

There are no further letters to show how these negotiations progressed until the year 1860. However, The English Catalogue of Books, 1835-63 prints this entry:

Gaskell (Mrs) Cranford, a Tale, post 8vo, 7s 6d Chapman & Hall, 1855; 12 mo. 2s C.H. Clarke 1858.48

Although an 1858 edition of Cranford has been included in standard bibliographies, no copy of Cranford bearing the date 1858 has been traced. It is probably a ghost. The entry may be a simple error in compilation irrelevant to the publication of Cranford itself, or one might postulate that C.H. Clarke, who were sufficiently interested in Mrs. Gaskell’s fiction to include Ruth and Mary Barton in The Parlour Library series when they were its publishers from 1860 to 1862, made a premature announcement during negotiations with Chapman and Hall for the stereotypes of Cranford, negotiations which later fell through. At this period large numbers of copyrights, stereotypes, sheets in quires, and bound volumes were offered for sale by auction or by private

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treaty. The stereo plates and copyrights of The Parlour Library itself were offered at auction in 1858 and bought in \(^{49}\). Sampson Low announced publication of Mrs. Gaskell's *Around [sic] the Sofa* prematurely in July 1858 and again on 31 December \(^{50}\). Mrs. Gaskell called him "a rascally publisher" who was trying to pass off the tales as new fiction \(^{51}\), but he was the only one of her publishers who registered her work with the Stationers' Company \(^{52}\). The impression is of a year of great instability in the publishing trade which caught up Mrs. Gaskell in its eddies and during which Chapman and Hall might well have quietly offered publication rights or sheets of *Cranford* to the trade. There is not yet, however, any definite link between circumstances such as these and the report of the 1858 *Cranford*.

A letter from Mrs. Gaskell to a correspondent, presumed to be Frederick Chapman, is one of the few remnants of the correspondence relating to the contentious transfer of the right of publishing *Cranford* from Chapman and Hall to Smith, Elder:

42 Plymouth Grove
Manchester —
Tuesday, August 21\(^{st}\) 1860.

Dear Sir,

As far as I understand your proposal, made on Messrs Smith's behalf, I shall be very glad to accede to it.

I understand from you that Messrs Smith wish to take off your hands the remainder of the 2\(^{nd}\) edition of *Cranford* & *Lizzie Leigh*, for which they would at once pay me £44, 13s. 9d for royalty.

They also wish me to promise them the right of reprinting fresh editions of these works, when the stock in hand, as named above, is disposed of: and for this right, when the editions were required, they would make me an offer for the (rig) power of republication.

*If I have rightly stated* these requests I give my consent to both. But I do not understand your last paragraph taken in connexion with the foregoing in which you say "we publish a very successful five shilling series, "the one that North & South is in, and we are of opinion that,

\(^{49}\) *The Publishers' Circular*, xxi. 501 (2 August 1858), 346.

\(^{50}\) Ibid., 500 (16 July 1858), 294; 511 (31 December 1858), 638.

\(^{51}\) Chapple and Pollard, 531.

\(^{52}\) *Index of Entries (Literary) in the Book of Registry of the Stationers' Company [ ... ] From 1 July 1842, to 9 October 1884*. At 9, 66.
"after a while Cranford & Lizzie Leigh would come in this series to advantage. We should like therefore (if you think well of this,) to have your consent; in this case the royalty would have to be increased in proportion from the 2' series to the 5' series."

I shall be glad to have this more fully explained.

I remain dear Sir,
Yours truly
E. C. Gaskell

Eight months later on 27 April [1861] a tart letter from Mrs. Gaskell to Frederick Chapman, enquiring how her account stood with Chapman and Hall, shows them still to be hanging fire and implies that she had offered them the opportunity to republish Cranford:

I should be very much obliged to you for a speedy answer to this letter; my last (from Winchester, at the end of February) has remained unanswered till now, although there were several questions in it to which I should have been glad to have received early replies. [...] I conclude from your silence that you no longer desire to republish 'Cranford', &c.—But will you be so kind as to give me an explicit answer?

Not having consulted their agreement she was unaware that Chapman and Hall still retained the right to publish Cranford in their cheap edition, and that until she (or, rather, her husband) gave notice to terminate the agreement, she was in a position of no strength at all. No wonder they did not hurry to reply.

Her ignorance persisted and a receipt was issued: "London, March 6th 1863. Received of Messrs. Smith Elder & Co the sum of Fifty pounds as payment in full for the entire copyright of "Cranford" written by me." She dated the receipt from Paris on 16 March 1863. It is clear from a subsequent letter that neither Mrs. Gaskell nor William Gaskell had on this date given three months' notice of termination of the agreement with Chapman and Hall and they were not therefore in a position to sell the exclusive copyright of Cranford to another publisher.

53 Quoted by permission of The Carl H. Pforzheimer Library; CHPL Misc. MS. 17.
54 Chapple and Pollard, 651-2.
By this time Dickens had brought *Household Words* to an end and now edited its successor, *All the Year Round*. In November 1863 a new paper, "The Cage at Cranford"\(^{56}\), was published in this weekly journal, and in January 1864 this postscript to *Cranford* was reprinted in America in *Littel's Living Age*\(^{57}\), with an acknowledgement to *All the Year Round*. "The Cage", which draws only upon the technical skills shown in *Cranford* without the strong sense of moral purpose, has never been much liked. One is tempted to speculate that it was written as a pawn in the publishing game.

A letter written late in 1863 to George Smith shows that Mrs. Gaskell had been turning to the legal members of her family for advice:

> I suppose it would not be possible for either you or me to ask for a sight of the letters in which Mr F. Chapman says 'the substance of the agreement is contained'? I did not write at once because I wanted to hear Harry Crompton's opinion, — he, being aware of all the previous transactions & letters. I send you his letter just received — (to be burnt when read —). I have not written to Mr F. Chapman I was in such a rage; — but do you think I had better, — asking to see letters &c. — or ask Charlie Crompton to go, on my part &c. — I cannot remember ever having said a word of the kind, — indeed I firmly believe I never heard of the 'three month's notice' in any way. But one may forget; and I shd be so sorry either to do anything dishonourable, or to injure you & get you into any turmoil. There are 'queer' \safe/ things about Mr F Chapman's behaviour about 'North & South', but that will keep\(^{58}\).

> It would have been more practical to spring-clean her husband's desk:

> I am so very sorry; but Mr Gaskell in cleaning out his desk, (full of letters & papers) has found this signed agreement, — so we have been wronging Mr Chapman after all! I am very sorry. What can I do? please let me pay for the horrid old stereotypes, or whatever they are. — I enclose your cheque for 50£ for you to take the money off for the stereotypes. I am trying to catch the morning post. *I will not write to Mr F Chapman till I hear from you*\(^{59}\).

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56 *All the Year Round*, x (28 November 1863), 332-6.
57 *Littel's Living Age*, 3rd ser., xxiv, 1022 (1 January 1864), 17-22.
58 Chapple and Pollard, 719.
59 Ibid., 721.
Two days later, on 10 December [1863], she wrote to George Smith again:

I have followed your advice to the letter; I have sent the (signed & dated) agreement to Mr Shaen, & copies of all the late correspondence since Nov' 6th] between Mr F.C. & me/ to Mr. Shaen; & begged him to call upon you; & given him directions to write to Mr F Chapman in my name &c, exactly as you bid me.\(^60\)

That Mrs. Gaskell consulted first the legal family of Crompton, which included her barrister son-in-law Charlie Crompton, and then William Shaen, her solicitor and financial adviser who had counselled her during the troubles following the publication of *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*, suggests that Frederick Chapman had threatened to sue. It is not clear why Frederick Chapman is said to have referred to letters in which “the substance of the agreement is contained” unless he had no access to any copy of the agreement itself, signed by William Gaskell and by Chapman and Hall, where the requirement of “Three months notice”, which seems to be at the centre of the dispute, is explicit.

Three further references to the Cranford row in Mrs. Gaskell’s letters to George Smith indicate that it dragged on into 1864. Her anxious postscript of 1 January: “Has Mr Frederick Chapman been really silenced, do you think? or has he only drawn back to make a fiercer spring?”\(^61\) — was justified by 3 May: “I must say how very sorry I am about this further trouble about Cranford”\(^62\).

On a “Thursday morning”, presumed to be in late May 1864, Mrs. Gaskell wrote to him again:

My dear Sir, [ ... ] Meta says you are so good “and thoughtful of my /your/ peace of mind about the affair with Mr. Fred. Chapman.” She does not go into details, but thank you very much. [ ... ]\(^63\)


\(^61\) Chapple and Pollard, 724.

\(^62\) Ibid., 732.

\(^63\) Held in the National Library of Scotland, Acc.6713, Box 2 4. Quoted in full by Chapple, op. cit., 185-6. (Meta was the author’s second daughter, Margaret Emily.)
The tone of Mrs. Gaskell's letter, in which she speaks openly and in detail about the fiction she is writing at the time, indicates the friendship, trust and co-operation which characterized her relationship with her latest publisher.

Smith, Elder must have reached a compromise with Chapman and Hall. On 1 November 1864 they were able to announce that an illustrated Cranford would be published during the month\(^{64}\), and on 26 November they advertised in *The Athenaeum*:

**THE FOLLOWING ARE NOW READY. With Four Illustrations, crown 8vo. 3s.6d. CRANFORD. By Mrs. Gaskell.**

*Lizzie Leigh and Other Tales*, *Cousin Phillis*, and *The Grey Woman* were “shortly to be published” at the same price\(^{65}\).

Meanwhile Chapman and Hall continued to extract what profit they could out of *Cranford* and the shorter tales as a memorandum by George Smith shows:

This cheque for £28.17.0 paid to Mrs Gaskell's Solicitors by Messrs Chapman & Hall on copies of *Cranford* & *Lizzie Leigh* published by them under an old agreement (which they alleged remained in force) after we had purchased the copyrights. It should be credited to each Book in equal proportions. GS Jany 3/65\(^{66}\).

The offer from Smith, Elder relayed to Mrs. Gaskell by Frederick Chapman on 21 August 1860 did not propose purchase of copyright by Smith, Elder, only “the right of reprinting fresh editions” and “an offer for the power of republication”. The copyright would, on those terms, remain with Mrs. Gaskell.

Assuming that the offer of £44.13.9 was calculated on the basis of a 3d. royalty, 3575 copies (or equivalent sheets) of *Cranford* and *Lizzie Leigh* remained. The cheque for £28.17.0 paid to Mrs. Gaskell’s solicitors in January 1865 would represent 3d. royalties on 2308 copies, said to have been sold by Chapman and Hall between December 1863 and January 1865. If it is assumed from George Smith’s note that exactly 1154 copies of each volume were sold, that brings the totals, for which Chapman and Hall are known to have paid royalties to the author, to 4408 copies of *Cranford* and 3654 copies of *Lizzie Leigh*. It is improbable that over the two-year period, 1863-65, exactly the same numbers of

\(^{64}\) *The Publishers’ Circular*, xxvii. 651 (1 November 1864), 611.

\(^{65}\) *The Athenaeum*, 1935 (26 November 1864), 695.

\(^{66}\) Chapple and Pollard, 719, n. 1 (h).
each volume were sold. George Smith’s wording, “should be credited to each book in equal proportions”, sounds more like an estimate for convenience of accounting than arithmetical accuracy. The proportion of copies of Cranford to copies of Lizzie Leigh sold in the period to February 1856 was approximately 13:10. If one assumes that these were the total sales since the date of publication of the cheap edition of each volume, and takes account of Cranford being on sale for three and a half months longer (Lizzie Leigh was listed among new works published from 30 August to 14 September 1855, just sneaking inside Mr. Gaskell’s deadline)\(^6\), then applying only the same proportionate allocation to the payment of £28.17.0 gives (in round figures) presumed sales for 1863-65 of Cranford, 1300, and of Lizzie Leigh, 1000. The estimated sales of the cheap edition might then be Cranford, 4550 and Lizzie Leigh, 3500. But if the figure of 3575 copies remaining in 1860 is accepted, 1267 copies have not been brought to account. Splitting these in the same proportion of 13:10 gives estimated print runs of 6565 (say 7000) for Cranford and 5050 (say 5000) for Lizzie Leigh. In rounding upwards and downwards thus, one is accepting Chapman’s judgment of the likely market, a judgment, incidentally, with which publishers in the nineteenth century such as Unwin and Blackwood would have concurred: “Booksellers are not of this opinion as to collections of short stories taking”\(^6\)\(^8\).

Whether all these copies were sold and whether Mrs. Gaskell received full payment for those that were sold remain in doubt. We know that, in addition to £176 from Household Words and from the first edition, she received royalties of £100.14.6 from the cheap editions of both Cranford and Lizzie Leigh. Probably she should have been paid about £150 for the cheap edition of both volumes. She also received 600 francs for the French edition. Smith, Elder intended to pay her £50 for the copyright of Cranford, but she returned this cheque to pay for “the horrid old stereotypes” and we do not know what remainder, if any, she was paid. There are no receipts telling of any other payments by Smith, Elder for Cranford.

\(^6\) The Publishers’ Circular 1855, xviii. 432 (15 September 1855), 355, 358.  
\(^6\) Annotated letter held in the National Library of Scotland, MS.4586, Fo.122.
By the end of 1863 Chapman and Hall knew that Smith, Elder intended to publish a Cranford, and they could have guessed that it would be an illustrated edition, like the Sylvia's Lovers which Smith, Elder had brought out in 1863. There is reason to think that Chapman tried to keep open the market for his cheap edition by devising an illustrated binding for the remaining sheets of Cranford.

The printer and engraver Edmund Evans (1826-1905), who commanded the largest business in engraved and printed illustrations and covers for the mid-Victorian railway novel, wrote in his memoirs:

These 'Yellow backs' as they were called — though I did an immense number of covers for W.H. Smith & Co., Chapman, Hall & Co., also for Messrs Smith, Elder & Co., with the imprint on a grey paper, enamelled, which suited the colours black, red, blue, or green very well, and did not look so common as the yellow enamelled — these Yellow backs were very popular, for Railway reading books particularly. I have known publishers order an illustrated cover for a remnant they had in stock, and not only sell off that remnant, but a reprint would be demanded.

A copy of Cranford, which, although undated, has for a time been catalogued as an 1855 copy, may show that it was in this manner that Frederick Chapman met the coming challenge of an illustrated Cranford, when he still had stocks on hand of the 1855 sheets. It appears to be printed from the 1855 stereotypes.

The undated copy — unlike the 1855 edition which does not anywhere bear Mrs. Gaskell's name and is ascribed only to the author of Mary Barton, etc. — has Mrs. Gaskell's name on the front cover (which is illustrated) and on the spine. On the back cover is an advertisement for four titles in "Chapman & Hall's Five Shilling Editions of Popular Authors". These include two novels by Scrutator (pseudonym of K. Horlock): The Master of the Hounds, first published by Hurst and Blackett in three volumes in 1859 [1858], subsequently by Chapman and Hall in 1863 at 5s., and in 1865 at 2s.; and The Country Gentleman, first published by Hurst and Blackett in three volumes in 1862, subsequently by

70 Manchester Central Libraries, Language and Literature Library, 823.894 Q3 155. Listed incorrectly in J.A. Green, A bibliographical guide to the Gaskell collection in the Moss Side Library (Manchester, 1911), 45: "Lond.: Smith & Co. n.d."
Chapman and Hall in 1863 at 5s., and in 1865 at 2s.; an unattributed novel, *The House of Elmore: a Family History*, first published by Hurst and Blackett in three volumes in 1855, subsequently by Chapman and Hall in 1863 at 5s., and in 1865 at 2s.; and — at the head of the advertisement — *Charlie Thornhill; or, The Dunce of the Family* puffed in a long quotation taken from the review of the first edition in *The Times* of 3 October 1863. The novel is by Charles Clarke and *The English Catalogue of Books, 1863-71* records three editions by Chapman and Hall: three volumes at 31s.6d. and new editions at 5s. and 2s., all catalogued together as “1863-65”. The quotations in support of the other three titles advertised on the back cover of this copy of *Cranford* are likewise extracted from reviews of first editions and are of earlier date than October 1863. The date of *The Times*’s review of *Charlie Thornhill* offers a terminus a quo for this *Cranford*. One should allow between one and three months for the first edition of *Charlie Thornhill* to sell off before it was re-issued in the Select Library of Fiction, but the advertisement on the back cover of *Cranford* may have preceded the single volume issue. The terminus ad quem is less certainly indicated. *The English Catalogue of Books, 1863-71* lists 8o editions of all three novels advertised with *Charlie Thornhill* at 5s. in 1863, followed by 12o editions at 2s. in 1865. The payment by Chapman to Smith on 3 January 1865 may have been a winding-up of the *Cranford* affair. One may postulate that during 1864 Chapman and Hall were issuing sheets printed from the 1855 stereotypes between illustrated covers at 5s. Although the undated *Cranford* itself is not marked with its sale-price, the illustrated cover makes it clear that it was of the Select Library of Fiction 5s. series, and this presumably was the form of publication which Chapman had intended by his proposal of 21 August 1860 to Mrs. Gaskell. There is no sign of this issue in Chapman and Hall advertisements, nor in the various lists of new books in the periodicals for 1863-4.

It was Edmund Evans’s firm which engraved and printed the illustrated covers for the undated *Cranford*. The cloth is such as

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71 Catalogue of the British Library; and *English Catalogue of Books*.

72 *The Times* (3 October 1863), 11c.

73 I am grateful to the librarian, who informs me that the collection of Edmund Evans’s proofs of illustrated bindings in the John Johnson Collection, Bodleian Library, consists chiefly of work from his later period, and does not include the *Cranford* binding.
he describes, grey printed in colours of black, blue and red, and enamelled. Whether Cranford was one of those novels for which "a reprint [was] demanded" must be conjectural. The difference between the papers of the 1855 copy and the undated copy in Manchester Central Library74 might serve an argument that some if not all of the sheets used for the undated illustrated issue were newly printed, not remnants of the 1855 sheets. The paper of n.d. MP is thicker and remains in white and strong condition compared with the paper of 1855 MP which is now discoloured to fawn and brittle at the edges. Better paper and an illustrated binding would be the distinctive specifications of a dearer "edition". The stereotypes of the 1855 Cranford, however, were bought by Smith, Elder in December 1863. Or did Chapman retain a set for his own use? Perhaps the transaction never took place, and Mrs. Gaskell kept her £5075.

There are two locations only for copies of the 1855 Cranford, the British Library76 and Manchester Central Library. A comparison of these two copies reveals some differences. The bindings cannot be compared because the 1855 L copy has been bound up at a later date with two other 1855 novels. It would be superfluous to attempt to enumerate in these volumes of Mrs. Gaskell's the detailed typographic variation which has already been demonstrated to be typical of the period and should be expected in a cheap edition77; but some minor typographic variants, which are insubstantial with regard to transmission of the text, are of interest in the novel's publishing history when set beside n.d. MP. A summary based on ocular examination only will indicate the confused connections between these two copies and n.d. MP copy.

CRANFORD. | BY THE AUTHOR OF | "MARY BARTON," "RUTH," "NORTH AND SOUTH," &c. | CHEAP EDITION. | LONDON: | CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY. | MDCCCLV.

74 Hereinafter referred to as 1855 MP and n.d. MP.
75 Over 30 later "editions" of Cranford have been scanned without these stereotypes turning up.
76 Hereinafter referred to as 1855 L.
77 W.J. Barnes, A Bibliography of Elizabeth Barrett Browning (Austin, University of Texas, 1967).
Foolscap 8°: A⁴ B-S⁸ T⁴ U² [S² signed (-A₁, A₂, T₂, U₂)]. 146 leaves, pp. [2] i-v vi 1 2-281 282-284 [= viii, 284]. Leaf-size 17.4 × 11.2cm. [measured fold to fore-edge as worn]; no marks; smooth, discoloured to fawn. Contents: i-2 blank, i bastard-title CRANFORD. [body height 2.5mm.], ii blank, iii title, iv blank, v Contents, vi Contents continued, 1 2-281 text, 282 colophon: C. WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND, 283-284 blank. Notes: p. vi (contents) prints "PEACE TO CRANFORD", p. 268 (chapter heading) and all rectos pp. 269-281 (running title) print "PEACE TO CRANFORD." with double apostrophes; p. 199, line 21, word missing: "servant [of] Mrs."; p. 280, line 3, character omitted and word contracted: "seing". From p. 2 to p. 257 standard page comprises 29 lines of text, thereafter decreasing irregularly, fewest lines being 24.

Width of line is constant at 7.7cm.


As 1855 MP, but bound up with two other volumes, and showing the following typographical variants:
Copyright receipt date: 1 June 1855.

As 1855 MP, but in illustrated binding to be described, and with the following typographical variants:
p. i bastard-title: CRANFORD, body height 3.5mm. p. iii title follows order of novels in 1855 L; omits "MDCCCLV."
p. v contents prints "CHAPTER VII. | VISITING [ ... ] 102"
p. vi, p. 268, rectos pp. 269-281 all as 1855 L
p. 145 signature L not signed, but two specks of ink in its position suggest damage to stereotype rather than omission from newly set type. Scanning by eye shows obvious damage, not evident in 1855 MP, to the following characters: at p. v to numerals 1 and 17; at p. 17 to numerals 17; at page 18 to numerals 18; at p. 32 to numeral 3; and to other page numerals; at p. 45 to sig E; at p. 152 severe damage at left of first 10 lines of text; at p. 159 to third letter of first line and second letter of second line; at p. 216 page numerals 216 appear larger. Imposition of p. 24 and p. 25 (conjugates) places p. 25 higher by more than half body size. Width of text-line constant at 7.5cm.

78 Printing on back cover is indistinct and in some places elucidated by reference to catalogues.
Leaf-size: 17.1 × 10.5 cm.; no marks; rough, white and thicker than 1855 MP.

Binding: 4 sewing holes; all signatures sewn; U2 torn off except for fragment 0.3 cm. wide along fold. Spine lined with printed paper.

Boards (detached) measure 17.7 × 10.7 cm.; lined with plain white pastedowns. Enamelled grey cloth cover with black lettering on spine, front and back, except for main title CRANFORD (transcribed in bold below) on front cover which is sans serif with blue face and black shadow. Illustration in red, blue, red + blue, all with black outlining.

Spine: SELECT LIBRARY | CRANFORD [rule] MRS GASKELL [three different formalized floral emblems in red arranged below vertically. Lower 2 cm. of cloth is decayed].

Front: SELECT LIBRARY. | BY THE AUTHOR OF MARY BARTON, RUTH, &c. | CRANFORD BY MRS GASKELL [[Illustration] | LONDON: CHAPMAN & HALL, 193, PICCADILLY. First and last lines of titling are printed within inner and outer rules of grey rectangle, 6 mm. at widest, which surrounds remainder of titling and illustration below. In foreground four ladies in caps around card-table with sleeping lady in chair back right by fireplace. Four or five ornaments on overmantle or reflected in mirror over. Chair at centre front with railed back. Chair and carpet mainly mid-blue, ladies and walls in red, all with black outlining.

In comparing these three copies one notes that the order in which other novels by the author are listed on the title page of 1855 MP copy is that which is observed in the advertisement of the edition and adheres to the chronology of their publication. The order of the title pages of 1855 L and n.d. MP copies results in a better lay-out by avoiding division of the title, *North and South.* In the 1853 editions, of course, *North and South* did not figure on the list. This seems like a printer's decision rather than a publisher's, and might possibly make 1855 MP the earlier title-page, assuming that a compositor setting from printed copy would be more likely to improve the lay-out than otherwise. In the preliminaries, n.d. MP copy also follows 1855 L copy on p.vi in printing PEACE TO CRANFORD without double apostrophes. The undated copy varies from both 1855 copies not only in omitting the date, but also in printing incorrectly on p. 102 instead of 104. With the variant size of type used for the half-title these distinctions all need a more substantial explanation than damage or alteration to stereotype plates.

The missing signature L (p.145) and the very imperfect impression of p.152 in n.d. MP copy occur within the same unit, assuming that eight stereotyped pages were permanently attached to one riser for presswork and, perhaps, during storage. On the other hand, the differing alignment of pp.24 and 25 is most likely to result from reimposition of separate stereotype pages on the riser, in preparation for presswork, at a separate time. Ocular scanning of these pages in 1855 MP copy and n.d. MP copy raises no evidence of type having been reset and the explanation must lie within the handling of the stereotypes. The page numerals 216, which appear in n.d. MP copy to be taken from a different fount, may be accounted for by Hansard's criticism: “Now, as in the process of moulding and casting, contraction must take place in every stage; the natural consequence will be, that the type so inserted will have a larger face than the type of the plate”\(^{80}\). A battered double apostrophe and letter, “T, four lines below

\(^{79}\) Facsimile not entirely reliable on punctuation owing to severe wear on printing.

the numerals 216 lend support to an explanation of damaged numerals having had to be replaced by inserted type.

There has been no attempt to proof-read and correct what was imperfect in the 1855 issue. The variant chapter title and running title, PEACE TO CRANFORD, which involves three signatures, STU, can hardly have been caused by re-setting of whole pages of type. Page 280 (T8b) continues to read “seing” in all three copies, and the occasional unpleasing, uneven spacing of the text on these pages is identical in 1855 MP copy and n.d. MP copy. One possible explanation of the variant double apostrophe is alteration of the stereotypes by taking out the double apostrophes within STU to accord with a pile of signature A, for which type had been set afresh, already printed for a later run of the 1855 issue. Alternatively, some of the double apostrophes within signatures STU may have been so badly battered that all were taken out from the stereotypes, and type for p.vi set in agreement. This would be consistent with the practice of printing the preliminaries last, although in this case, where the text of the novel was not reset, it should not have been expected to be necessary. The publisher’s decision to bulk out this rather slim volume was allowed to stand throughout, even though paper could have been saved by resetting the later signatures with corrections and with more lines to the page. Other seeming typographic variants in signatures B-U may all be accounted for by damage to stereotypes. On the evidence of only one copy of n.d. MP it would be bold to claim that the slight decrease in type area of each page impression was the result of further contraction in a full set of secondary stereotypes cast for this issue, but the possibility exists.

Returning to the preliminaries, the incorrect numeral 102 on p.vi of n.d. MP copy suggests that stereotypes of these pages were never made. A publisher may expect preliminaries to change and may anticipate the need to remove date of first publication. Although fewer characters have to be set, the cost of manufacture and the cost of metal tied up in a stereotype of, say, a half-title is much the same as for a whole page of text. If the preliminaries were printed from type in forms for a hypothetical further print-run of the 1855 Cheap Edition, the variant double apostrophe on p.v could have been readily omitted to accord with altered stereotypes for the chapter title and running titles in signatures STU. One of the recommendations in favour of stereotypes was the advantage for the publisher of not tying up funds in large
quantities of quires in an initial long print-run, and the printing of the 1855 issue may have extended over a considerable time.

The appearance of n.d. MP copy is superficially of a better quality book than 1855 MP — to which the ghost of Chapman cries "Of course, three shillings better!" — an appearance achieved by a sharper impression on better paper in spite of the consistently more battered and imperfect characters which close scrutiny reveals. The condition is consistent with well-worn stereotypes or with secondary stereotypes. The printing history of these three copies is far from being satisfactorily reconstructed, and the typographical variants would suggest only an ill-defined impression in three states. But the bindings of 1855 MP copy and n.d. MP copy, together with the contemporary witness of the correspondence, discontinuous though it is, identify two issues, the first dated 1855 occurring in two variant states, with a second separate issue tentatively dated 1864.

It remains a fascinating puzzle whether Mrs. Gaskell knew of this separate issue of Cranford. After the affair was taken off her shoulders by her lawyers they may not have worried her with details, but George Smith seems to have written to her quite openly about the publishers' disagreement. The composition and publication of Cranford gave Mrs. Gaskell mingled pleasure and pain and but little profit. For the author they ended with her death in November 1865; for the publisher and reader the pleasure and profit continued through the following century which saw the publication of some seventy editions of Cranford.

APPENDIX I

A CENSUS OF CRANFORD HOLDINGS WITH DESCRIPTIONS

An attempt to unearth a copy of the reputed 1858 Cranford led to correspondence in 1971 with some 200 libraries in the English-speaking world, followed in 1974-5 by a limited personal search. Twenty-nine (16) copies of the first London edition were

81 Chance discovery of an 1855 Tauchnitz North and South on open shelves in a public library in a small English town convinced me that rare volumes are to be found in little libraries as well as great.
82 Bracketed numerals signify copies examined.
located, four (3) of the "second edition", two (2) of the 1855 cheap edition, five (4) of the 1864 illustrated edition, and 19 (10) of the 1853 New York edition. Reports on holdings included an undated Chapman and Hall edition catalogued as 1855 (discussed above), and an undated New York edition catalogued as 1853 (not examined) which has been excluded from further reference. There were no reports of any other English language edition during Mrs. Gaskell's lifetime, nor earlier than the 1867 Tauchnitz edition. The three losses reported read like a representative sample of hazards: the 1853 London edition in Liverpool City Libraries was "destroyed by enemy action"; "an 1853 edition" (place of publication not specified) was withdrawn before 1932 from the stock of Seattle Public Library; and the whereabouts of his copy of the second edition was no longer known at the time of the enquiry to the late Sir Geoffrey Keynes.

The tallies invited comparison with Dr. Gordon Ray's "inquiry [ ... ] into resources for the study of nineteenth century English fiction" reported in 1964. He placed Cranford at the bottom of his list of 20 popular first editions by major authors with only 15 copies (including two rebound) held in the 29 collections included in his survey. Precise comparison between the number of copies of the first edition of Cranford recorded by the present inquiry (29, of which at least seven are rebound) with the tally recorded by Dr. Ray is not possible because he did not specify which collections held which novels and because, moreover, he discreetly concealed figures which would identify the holdings of the four private collections among the 29 surveyed. At the time of his inquiry 14 of the institutions named on his list of 25 held 15 copies of the first edition (including at least two rebound) whereas the other 11 institutions were not known to hold a first edition ten years later. Dr. Ray's concluding word to librarians, "It is later than you think!" is underlined.

84 There is a slight discrepancy between figures quoted ibid. p.14 and p.23.
85 This search by correspondence presumably coincided with the preparation of the relevant volume of The National Union Catalog: Pre-1956 Imprints (London & Chicago, 1972). I am very grateful to librarians, to those who took the trouble to reply in the negative as well as to those who replied in detail, and those who later permitted me to examine rare books. Some discrepancies in the reporting suggest that a negative report may not always be reliable.
The chief purpose of my inquiry was to solve a problem in the publishing history of *Cranford*; no textual problem was foreseen, nor encountered. In examining copies of the first edition a picture was built up of a product of printing which, although textually accurate, was marred by many technical imperfections. Only once was it possible to compare two copies side by side, and on another occasion it was possible to put side by side a copy of the first edition and two copies of the "second edition". Both acts of comparison by eye failed to reveal any significant discrepancy in the impressions, although notes on the copies sighted separately over several months suggested otherwise. Checking the position of ascender/descender relationships and of the spacing provides no evidence that the text was reset. Checking broken and displaced letters indicates that first and second "editions" were printed from standing type with the exception of signature A. Particularly obvious type-batter to between 17 and 26 characters in 11 signatures was compared on a scale of five (the more dots the worse the batter, reversing the system now familiar in the consumer movement). Granted the hazards of memory and subjectivity, the notes show irregular dilapidation, although the type-impressions of the copies known to be early (for example, that inscribed to her husband by the author was dated 18 June 1853) duly appeared crisper and more free of blemish. Some correction may have been carried out before the "second edition", assuming that it was printed second, because the disturbed signatures recorded below do not occur in the copies examined. In all the copies of the first edition examined except one (OX/U-1) there is noticeable set-off in varying degree. In two copies where it is slight it becomes imperceptible after p. 232, except for set-off from p. 324 on to the back fly-leaf. In a third copy set-off becomes imperceptible after p. 223. Savage explains the cause: "when a book is pressed, or bound, before the ink is sufficiently dry: the Book-binder's hammer is a severe test; and where a book is required to be bound as soon as printed, the best plan, perhaps, is to have it cold pressed ...]."

This strengthens the evidence of letters and documents that Chapman hustled his editions on to the market as fast as possible after agreement with the author was reached.

The mystery of the 1858 Cranford must be filed under "pending" for lack of a body, but the inquiries uncovered unsuspected trove, the undated cheap edition bound by Evans. In the hope that comparison may yet discover hidden treasure, I here append descriptions of the other recorded editions of Cranford during the author's lifetime:

Cranford. 1853, first edition.

Foolscap 8°: A² B-X⁸ Y² [S2 signed (-A1, A2, Y2)] 164 leaves, pp. i-iii iv, I 2-324 [=iv, 324]. Signatures an average of 1 cm. in from right-hand margin below text with letter and numeral aligned horizontally. Leaf-size most commonly 17.0 × 10.5 cm.; no marks, wove, smooth, white (now discoloured). Contents: i title, ii [rule 26mm.] | REPUBLISHED FROM "HOUSEHOLD WORDS." | [rule 26mm.] iii-iv contents, I 2-324 text. Imprint at foot of p.324: LONDON: | BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS. Headlines: recto [chapter title in caps.]; verso CRANFORD. Pages numbered at outer edge of headlines. Edition binding: 5 sewing holes. Top-edge uncut, fore-edge and bottom trimmed. Boards 17.6 × 10.7 cm. Cloth is closest to Tanselle's 106 ae diagonal wave 87 or Sadleir xiii ripple-grain 88; British Colour Council cedar green B.C.C. 80 89; blocked in blind on front and back with rectangular border of double rules [2 mm. wide] and centred floral ornament [90 × 62 mm.]. Spine blocked in blind at head and foot with repeating formal floral band [7 mm.]; blocked in gilt CRANFORD | [rule 10 mm.] | BY THE | AUTHOR OF | MARY BARTON | [pendent floral ornament 30 mm.]. Yellow endpapers. Binder's label inside back cover: BOUND BY BONE & SON, 76, FLEET STREET, LONDON.

Publication day: 18 June 1853; 1500 copies printed to be sold at 7s.6d. Advertisements in The Athenaeum, 1338 (18 June 1853),

ELIZABETH GASKELL'S CRANFORD

748; The Literary Gazette, and Journal of the Belles Lettres, Science, and Art, 1900 (18 June 1853), 586.
Receipt dated 18 June 1853 by W. Gaskell for £100 for 1500 copies (Pierpont Morgan Library).
Notes: Condition of type may be monitored by observation of p. 315, line 19, "this" of which "s" is slightly high but of a good and clear impression in copy inscribed on 18 June 1853 by author and in OX/U-1 copy, but displaced upwards and/or sideways in varying degree in other copies. Signatures I² K² R² found with raised numerals in CLU copy; D² I² K² R² raised in IEN copy. Leaf-size in copy in original binding recorded as small as 16.6 × 10.3cm. Boards found at 17.8 × 10.9cm. Set-off between opposed pages is typical, but not found in OX/U-1 copy.
Locations:
Great Britain: ED/N-1* LO/N-1*† LO/S-7 LO/U-1 LVU† MA/P-1* OX/U-1* United States of America: CLU* CSmH*† CTY* ICN*† ICU* IEN* InU* INU IU MH* NcD† NjP* NN* NN* NNU* OU PBL ViU Private collections: (1) the late Sir Geoffrey Keynes, (now in CA/U-1); (2) John Geoffrey Sharps, Esq., Sarda Lapis, 25 Cornelian Drive, Scarborough, North Yorkshire.
Note: Although NUC lists FMU, a second edition not a first was reported to this inquiry.
There are printed descriptions of the following copies: LO/U-1 Sotheby and Co., Catalogue: The Final Portion of the Library of the late Clement K. Shorter, Esq., 17 March 1937, item 731.
CtY R.F. Metzdorf (comp), The Tinker Library (New Haven: Yale University Library, 1959), item 1056.

Sigla: * signifies copy examined; † signifies copy known to be rebound (list may not be complete).
Notes on dating of other copies:
LO N-1 accession date is "22 Ju 53".
NNU copy inscribed on front fly-leaf "[?Neilson. July 1853".

**Cranford, 1853, second edition.**


Description otherwise as for first edition. Set-off has not occurred.
Publication date: advertisement in The Athenaeum, 1347 (20 August 1853), 995: "Just published, small 8vo. cloth, 7s.6d."

Locations:
Great Britain: LO/N-1*† OEL* OX U-1*†
United States of America: FMU.

**Cranford, 1864, illustrated edition.**


[The right of Translation is reserved.]
Crown 8°: 1, 1a-7, 7a 8 8a² [§1-2 signed (+1₁; -1₁, 1₂); §1a₁ - 8a₁ signed] 122 leaves, pp. 1-5 6-243 244. Leaf-size 18.8 × 12.7cm.; wove, no marks; smooth, white.

Plates: (1) ""She looked up to remonstrate." p.228." gummed to verso of front fly-leaf. Separated by tissue from (2) illustrated title page: CRANFORD BY MRS. GASKELL. SMITH ELDER & C. 65 CORNHILL. 1864 in "rustic" lettering superimposed on view of somnolent village street resembling Knutsford; gummed to printed title-page [1₁]. (3) ""Matty — Miss Matilda Miss Jenkyns!"" p. 48." gummed to p.49. (4) ""Please, ma'am, he's only Jem Hearn,"" p.203" gummed to p.202. Wood engravings measuring 13.8 × 8.8cm. drawn by George du Maurier, engraved by Charles Swain; versos blank. Paper: no marks, smooth, cream.

Contents: 1 title, 2 blank, 3 contents, 4 blank, 5 6-243 text, 244 colophon: LONDON: PRINTED BY SMITH, ELDER AND CO., 15½ OLD BAILEY, E.C.

Edition binding: 5 sewing holes. Top edge trimmed, fore-edge and bottom edge uncut. Boards 19.8 × 12.7cm. Cloth resembling (but
not the same as) Sadleir's xviii fine-dotted diaper, and Tanselle's
120 criss-cross; British Colour Council Cardinal B.C.C. 186;
blocked in blind on front and back covers with rectangular border
of multiple rules, fleur-de-lis at corners, and publisher's imprint
and device centred. Spine blocked in gilt with formalized scroll
and leaf emblems at head, foot and centre and lettered: CRANFORD | BY | M° GASKELL | Illustrated | Edition | SMITH
ELDER & Co. Cream end-papers.
Publication date: advertisement in The Athenaeum, 1935 (26
November 1864), 695: "[...] now ready [... ] 3s.6d."
Notes: In ED/N-1 copy there is no full point following the last
word of the title page: reserved].
Locations:
Great Britain: CA/U-1 + ED/N-1* LO/N-1* OX/U-1*
United States of America: NNU*
Notes on dated copies:
LO/N-1 Copyright receipt date: 12 January 1865.

CRANFORD. | BY THE AUTHOR OF | "MARY BARTON,"
"RUTH," &c. | NEW YORK: | HARPER & BROTHERS,
PUBLISHERS, | 329 & 331 PEARL STREET, | FRANKLIN
SQUARE. | 1853.
Foolscap 8°: A8 B-X8 [§1 signed (-A1; A5 signed A2)] 168 leaves,
pp.1-5 6-329 330-336 (331-336 paginated as 1 2-6). Leaf-size most
commonly 17.0 × 10.5cm.; no marks, smooth, white. Contents: i
title, ii blank, iii-iv contents, 5 6-329 text, 330 blank, 1 2-6
Harper's advertisement: CHOICE BOOKS FOR YOUNG
PEOPLE.
Binding: two blank leaves before A1 and two following X8; four
sewing holes. Top, fore-edge and bottom edge trimmed. Boards
measure within the ranges 17.3 - 18.5 × 10.6 - 12cm. Cloth occurs
as dark brown, patterned Gaskell 103(b)91 ribbed-morocco grain;
as dark brown with characteristics from Tanselle 104 ripple and
116 weave; as dark red patterned Gaskell 103(b); as burgundy
patterned between Tanselle 102bd moiré fine rib and 104 ripple; as
brilliant blue patterned Gaskell 103(b). Front and back covers
blocked in blind with elaborately ornamented border on rec-
tangular base 11 × 8.5cm. Spine stamped in gilt: [fleuron]

CRANFORD. | BY | THE AUTHOR OF | 'Ruth,' | 'Moorland Cottage,' | 'Mary Barton,' | &c. &c. | [three different fleurons] | Harpers. End-papers occur variously in yellow, creamy yellow, and acid yellow.
Notes: NNU copy contains two of S gathering.

Publication date: listed among works published during July 1853, at 60 c. in Norton's Literary Gazette, III (15 August 1853), 134.
Locations:
Great Britain: OX U-I*
North America: CaKQ+ CLU* CiY* IU MB MBAI* MH* MiU MWA NcU NjP (x3)* MN+* NNU* PPCCH PPL
Private collection: John G. Sharps.
Note: Inclusion of MB and MWA relies on evidence of NUC, which lists MiU twice; the copy listed at IaU is undated.

APPENDIX II

TEXT OF AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER RELATING TO CRANFORD

[1853] May 3. Part of autograph letter from E.C. Gaskell to John Forster [held in The Huntington Library]:

Plymouth Grove.
May 3.

My dear Mr. Forster,

I was going to write to you today. I should have written sooner, but for a reason, which I will tell you bye and bye. First however I want to thank you for your story. What relation was Mrs. Dawson Dawes [?] to Mrs. Fitzherbert, — or any? Mr. Gaskell has seized upon your letter, and locked it up, and considers it his property, — and the story too, — am I not generous to give it up, and allow him the use of it? I did not know what 'Friends in Need' was, at first; you know the HW people always make titles for me. Oh dear! I suppose I must come to the fact about publishing
Cranford. About that unlucky letter I wrote to Mr. Chapman, & part of which he repeated to you so falsely, — Well! when I received your first letter, I wrote to him very indignantly, not to say angrily; I don't remember the exact words, but I know it was something to the effect that I would have nothing more to do with him, and of course no communication whatever has passed between us since. Now I would rather go on with him, for many reasons; but there is the one great reason of his falsehood in this instance; and also that after what I said it is very "awkward" to be the first to make advances. For this reason I did not write at once, as I should have done, to thank you for your advice and offers of help. I seldom see the Household Words, and I do not now remember if I have written six or seven Cranford papers, — (they have one, the final number, still unprinted) and I do not know how large a vol it would make, nor in the very least do I know how much would be a fair price for it. All that I must leave to you, tried friend as you are. And whatever you think right I will do, — only for the reason named above I would rather any one else had it than Mr. Chapman. You never say what you thought of the Railway Library suggestion? Mr. Gaskell is so excessively against any change of any kind that I have not liked to reply to a kind of message I had through Miss Brontë; and that reminds me of her warm message back to you. I gave yours to her, — and she said 'Tell Mr. Forster he is not so easily forgotten, as he seems to imagine, — I thank him for his remembrances & send him mine'. She staid with us a week; from Thursday to Thursday. She did not care for Manchester sights, which was a great relief; I like her more & [continued Chapple and Pollard, 230.]