The Changing Faces of Robin Hood, c. 1700 – c. 1900:

Rethinking Gentrification in the Post-Medieval Tradition

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I confirm that the work submitted is my own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

This thesis examines the changing representations of England's most famous outlaw, Robin Hood, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It makes an original contribution to knowledge by arguing that the concept of gentrification, first posited by Stephen Knight, is inappropriate for application to the majority of Robin Hood texts during the period. It suggests that Robin Hood scholars should be asking, in more historically contextualised terms, whether Robin Hood is 'polite' (in an eighteenth-century context), or whether he is 'respectable' (in a nineteenth-century context). These are terms which contemporary readers would have recognised and are more helpful, as will be shown, than the ahistorical term 'gentrified'. A further original contribution to knowledge is made by challenging Stephanie Barczewski's argument that Robin Hood during the nineteenth century was a working-class hero. As this thesis shows, the situation is more nuanced: the majority of writers during this period were actually drawn from the middle and upper classes, and they were writing primarily for members of their own classes. Thus, an attempt to view Robin Hood texts through a book history or bibliographical lens is also undertaken, as consideration is given to the affordability of works such as the political pamphlet, the multi-volume ballad anthology, and the three volume novel, and periodicals. The impacts that these factors have upon Robin Hood's gentrification and the audience of the works is then considered. A further original contribution to knowledge is made in the fact that this thesis examines sources that have been neglected by scholars: satirical works, criminal biographies, and penny dreadfuls.

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Introduction

1) Introductory Remarks

In a 1709 edition of *The Tatler*, Joseph Addison remarks that 'there are two kinds of immortality; that which the soul enjoys after this life, and the imaginary existence by which men live in their fame and reputation'.[1] It is the second type of immortality that Addison concerns himself with in his essay. He then recounts a dream in which he meets with a number of historical worthies whose deeds had resonated throughout the centuries and who had become, so to speak, immortal. The illustrious figures with whom he converses include ancient heroes such as Aeneas, Alexander the Great, and Julius Caesar. Later in his essay, Addison portrays these heroes as sitting around a table, and discussing who from British history should be included amongst their retinue. The ancient worthies could have chosen King Arthur, named the 'British Worthy' in John Dryden's opera, *King Arthur; or, the British Worthy* (1691). Perhaps King Alfred, the only English king ever to have been given the epithet 'the Great', could have been chosen.[2] Many illustrious figures from British history could have been selected to assume a place amongst these ancient warriors. However, the classical heroes discuss the matter further and conclude that, 'if they must have a British worthy, they would have Robin Hood'.[3] In the estimation of men such as Achilles and Caesar, it is only Robin Hood who is deserving of a place amongst them.

2) Methodology

Addison's statement is a fitting beginning for this thesis which explores changing representations of Robin Hood between c.1700 – c.1900. This thesis verifies a statement that Eric Hobsbawm makes in *Bandits* (1969): 'the sad truth is that the heroes of remote times survive because they are not *only* the heroes of the peasants'.[4] In the case of the later Robin Hood tradition, this statement deserves attention because Stephanie Barczewski in *Myth and National Identity in Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Legends*

1 Joseph Addison & Richard Steele, *The Tatler and The Guardian Complete in One Volume* (London: Jones, 1801), p. 178.
2 On representations of King Alfred in the 19th century see Joanne Parker, *England's Darling: The Victorian Cult of Alfred the Great* (Manchester University Press, 2009).
3 Addison & Steele, *The Tatler*, p. 181.
4 Eric Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, 2nd Edn (London: Pelican, 1972), p. 133.

of King Arthur and Robin Hood (2000) argues that, during the Victorian period, King Arthur was a symbol of national identity for the upper classes, and Robin Hood was a symbol of working-class identity.[5] Yet the research presented in this thesis depicts a more nuanced version of the development of the later Robin Hood tradition than Barczewski's rather binary statement would admit. Robin Hood, it will be shown, had many faces – some good, some bad – but he was used primarily by middle and upper class writers at various points between c.1700 and c.1900 to explore contemporary issues and concerns. Sometimes, as the case of criminal biography illustrates, he was appropriated as a moral example of the dangers of sin and vice, showing how indulging in immorality could lead to the gallows. At other points Robin was appropriated to radical ends, as in Joseph Ritson's *Robin Hood: A Collection of all the Ancient Poems, Songs, and Ballads* (1795). Sometimes he served as a symbol of national unity and class harmony, as he is in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819). As will become clear, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, rarely was Robin Hood actually appropriated both *by* a member of the working classes and solely *for* the entertainment of the working classes (at least as far as we can ascertain from the written record).

There are good grounds for assuming that Robin Hood was a historical figure. The Robin Hood with whom audiences are familiar today, however, is cultural phenomenon: he appeared in orally transmitted poems during the medieval period, in plays during the early modern era, and in novels in the nineteenth century. This thesis, therefore, analyses published texts between c.1700 and c.1900. These dates have been chosen because from c.1700, as we will see in the first chapter, the Robin Hood legend shifted from being primarily an oral tradition to a primarily textual one, although moves towards this shift in medium began during the seventeenth century. This study ends at the beginning of the twentieth century because from that point that the legend of Robin Hood became visual, and predominantly reimagined in film and television. In each chapter the audience and reception of the texts are addressed, and the sources are contextualised for, as we will see, they were often written in response to political events or contemporary concerns over certain issues. I am interested in why Robin Hood was portrayed in certain ways at particular times, and what these portrayals meant to contemporaries. This is why as wide a variety of texts as possible has been utilised: Robin Hood featured in a diverse range of literature, and the various representations that

[5] Stephanie Barczewski, *Myth and National Identity in Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Legends of King Arthur and Robin Hood* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), p. 246.

he receives signified different things to different authors and their audiences. Thus, this thesis is the result of taking a cultural historian's approach to the examination of Georgian and Victorian Robin Hood texts.

3) Contextual Literature and Argument

As the present study develops Hobsbawm's ideas, it is worth briefly discussing his work here. Hobsbawm's *Bandits* is essential reading for anybody studying outlaws of any type from any country. Hobsbawm posits the theory of social banditry, arguing that social bandits are outlaws whom the lord and the state regard as criminals, but who are revered by the people as freedom fighters.[6] Although some of Hobsbawm's arguments have since been questioned by historians such as Anton Blok,[7] it is from Hobsbawm's final chapter, 'The Bandit as Symbol', that one of the research questions for this thesis emerged, providing a springboard from which to counter Barczewski's over-generalised argument that Robin Hood was solely a hero of the working classes.

Taking the argument of a neo-Marxist social historian as a starting point for a work of cultural history inevitably requires some justification. As Josh Poklad notes, there has been a widespread rejection of Marxist perspectives as a category of historical analysis that occurred concomitantly with the 'cultural turn' in history.[8] Even in the history of crime, which for a time was dominated by the likes of E. P. Thompson, Peter Linebaugh and Douglas Hay, there is a sense that historical analyses have moved on from the era of neo-Marxist works such as *Albion's Fatal Tree* (1976) which was critiqued in an essay by J. H. Langbein in *Past and Present* in 1983.[9] Yet in regard to Robin Hood, the evidence as presented in this thesis confirms Hobsbawm's statement referred to above. Scholars may no longer agree with the political motivations behind the works of Thompson and Hobsbawm, but this does not mean that every conclusion of theirs is invalid, or that their ideas are no longer worthy of development. My motivations for researching Robin Hood derived from research undertaken for my Master's thesis into the literary representations of eighteenth-century highwaymen in

6 Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, p. 17.

7 See Anton Blok, 'The Peasant and the Brigand: Social Banditry Reconsidered', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 14: 4 (1972), 494-503.

8 Josh Poklad, 'Signs and Blunders: A Critique of the Current State of Victorian Consumption Studies', in *Imagining the Victorians*, ed. by Stephen Basdeo & Lauren Padgett, Leeds Working Papers in Victorian Studies, 15 (Leeds: LCVS, 2016), pp. 165-179 (p.168).

9 J. H. Langbein, 'Albion's Fatal Flaws', *Past and Present*, No. 98 (1983), 96-120.

the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[10] In that thesis, I argue that in their literary reincarnations, thieves such as Jack Sheppard (1702-1724) and Dick Turpin (1705-1739) are not the sole preserve of the working classes. In fact, they feature on the pages of respectable novelists such as William Harrison Ainsworth (1805-1882), and were consumed by predominantly middle-class audiences – the furore around the violence in Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard* (1839) notwithstanding.[11] The present study thus seeks to explore whether the same could be said of literary representations of Robin Hood during the same period.

Because of the wide-ranging and interdisciplinary character of this thesis, presenting a conventional literature review poses some problems. As will become clear when the succeeding chapters are read, most discussions of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature had to be grounded in two or more bodies of scholarship. My review of relevant literature is, therefore, incorporated into this chapter overview. However, as this thesis challenges not only Barczewski's argument relating to audience composition, but also Stephen Knight's idea of 'gentrification', it is necessary to review Knight's body of work separately.

Knight's three works, *Robin Hood: A Complete Study of the English Outlaw* (1994), *Robin Hood: A Mythic Biography* (2003), and *Reading Robin Hood* (2015), explore medieval and post-medieval Robin Hood texts. It is with these works that Robin Hood scholarship took a literary turn. One might naturally question why a new post-medieval history of Robin Hood needs to be written. This work is different to Knight's, however, because I incorporate into this discussion previously unexamined works such as eighteenth-century satires and penny dreadful stories from the 1870s and 1880s in *The Boys of England* and *Sons of Britannia*. Furthermore, while Knight has carried out extensive research into post-medieval Robin Hood texts, he is a literary critic, and perhaps there has been too 'literary' an emphasis in Robin Hood studies to date. Knight often undertakes detailed analysis of actual texts, but pays less attention to the wider contexts in which they were produced. This is why this thesis is also partially a bibliographical history because it considers the publishing and dissemination of texts such as *Ivanhoe* and Egan's *Robin Hood*.

[10] Stephen Basdeo, 'Dying Speeches, Daring Robbers, and Demon Barbers: The Forms and Functions of Nineteenth-Century Crime Literature, c.1800 – c.1868' (Unpublished MA Thesis, Leeds Metropolitan University, 2014).

[11] On the Newgate novel see Michael Hollingsworth, *The Newgate Novel 1830–1847: Bulwer, Ainsworth, Dickens and Thackeray* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1963).

It is this 'text and context' approach which facilitates my challenge to the idea of gentrification, which until now has been a central theme in the analysis of post-medieval Robin Hood texts. The gentrification of which Knight speaks is presented almost as a clear, linear progression:

> From the late sixteenth to the later eighteenth century, Robin Hood is often more or less gentrified; this *process* (suggested by some sixteenth-century historians) is mostly found in five-act drama, masque, and light opera, though a few ballads belong to this domain (emphasis added).[12]

Knight speaks of this process being extended well into the nineteenth century, and he applies the concept to the works of Ritson, and the penny bloods of Pierce Egan and J. H. Stocqueler.[13] Yet the legend was appropriated by various writers, and surely a legend such as the Robin Hood one, realised by many different writers in various periods, could never be confined to a single process. Thus Knight's concept of gentrification will come under scrutiny here: for many scholars a gentrified Robin Hood text is taken to be any text in which he is depicted as the Earl of Huntingdon. Discussions of gentrification, in fact, sometimes have a tendency to verge on the "Whiggish": Robin starts out in the early texts as a bold, often violent and murderous outlaw, before he is appropriated in the late sixteenth century by Anthony Munday as a moral and upright lord; these types of depictions continue through the nineteenth century, as Robin supposedly becomes the epitome of the English gentleman. But the depiction of Robin Hood as an Earl does not always mean, as will become especially clear in the case of criminal biography, that it is a conservative, 'safe', or non-violent version of the legend. Indeed, the meaning of gentrification when applied in scholarly works on Robin Hood is often left unclear. While Knight's works are meticulously researched, and of course have been invaluable secondary reading for this thesis, Knight dominates discussions of the later tradition to the extent that there are currently no *major* debates in the field when it comes to examinations of Robin Hood literature after c.1700. It is therefore the aim of this thesis to raise debate surrounding the key texts that make up the later tradition, and to argue that the concept of gentrification is not a helpful one to apply to virtually every eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Robin Hood text.

[12] Stephen Knight, *Robin Hood: A Complete Study of the English Outlaw* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1994), p. 8.

[13] Stephen Knight, *Robin Hood: A Mythic Biography* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 130.

As stated above, a legend could never be confined to a single process such as gentrification. Indeed, it should be noted that Knight's most recent work, *Reading Robin Hood*, argues that the Robin Hood tradition is 'rhizomatic': there is no one authoritative Robin Hood text, but many texts that are of equal importance. The legend set down roots in many places, and has been continually adapted and reformed.[14] Yet Knight does not discuss how this rhizomatic reading of the legend impacts upon his previous discussions of gentrification, and although the idea of gentrification is less prominent in *Reading Robin Hood*, although it is not abandoned as a concept entirely.

As the meaning of gentrification has never been properly defined in scholarly works thus far, the foregoing statements therefore require me to define what I mean when I speak of gentrification. As intimated above, existing scholarship appears to require that Robin be portrayed as an earl for him to be considered gentrified. According to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, one meaning of gentrification is: 'the process of making a person or activity more refined or polite'.[15] This is the definition that suits what the term is taken to mean in this thesis, although I would also add another moral dimension to this definition when applying it to Robin Hood, as when Munday supposedly gentrified Robin Hood in the sixteenth century, he was depicted as a noble outlaw. This is not just about rank, but is also about character. The key question here is whether scholars should use the term to apply to any Robin Hood text, particularly when the word was not coined until 1964.[16] This thesis argues that scholars should not utilise the concept, and that they should seek to apply historicist terms to the Robin Hood texts that they examine. For eighteenth-century sources, a better understanding of post-medieval Robin Hood texts might be gained by asking if Robin Hood is depicted as a 'polite' hero, while in a Victorian context surely 'respectable' might be better, for these were contemporary terms. Let us briefly examine the following cases: Pierce Egan's *Robin Hood* depicts Robin as a politically radical earl, he is a hero of the oppressed Anglo-Saxons who is unafraid to use often extreme violence to achieve his ends. In contrast, in Scott's *Ivanhoe*, Robin is not a lord but a yeoman freedom fighter, but he is respectable inasmuch as he never challenges the

[14] Stephen Knight, *Reading Robin Hood: Content, Form and Reception in the Outlaw Myth* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), p. 1.

[15] 'Gentrification' in *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) [Internet <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/gentrification> Accessed 22 May 2016].

[16] Ruth Glass, *London: Aspects of Change* (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1964)

establishment and works with Richard I to restore the true order. If contemporary reviews of Egan's novel are anything to go by, the yeoman Locksley in *Ivanhoe* is surely more respectable than the violent and radical Earl of Huntingdon who appears in Egan's novel. The two examples highlighted above, which shall be discussed in greater detail in this thesis, serve to highlight some of the problems with applying the vague and ahistorical concept of gentrification to certain Robin Hood texts.

As this thesis argues that scholars should seek to use terms that would have been understood by people who were reading Robin Hood literature during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it is necessary to briefly define what the terms 'polite' and 'respectable' meant in their historical contexts. For a definition of politeness, we might turn to Paul Langford, who has written extensively upon the subject.[17] In modern times, according to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, politeness merely signifies 'behaviour that is respectful and considerate of other people'.[18] As well as encompassing the meanings that people would associate with the term today, in the eighteenth century it had a wider, socially aspirational meaning: it was an art, a way of making one's self agreeable when in company with others. If one practised politeness through learning and self-improvement, and the cultivation of the 'polite arts', one became virtuous and earned the right to enter into polite society. Thus, polite society was inclusive, and admitted into its ranks men of lesser social status, enabling them to associate with members of the upper classes. Hence there was Mr. Spectator's coffeehouse club, which included aristocrats, gentry, merchants, and lawyers.[19] It is this inclusivity that sets it apart from seventeenth-century notions of civility, which were mainly connected with the aristocracy and the Royal Court.[20]

While politeness was a means by which those of middling status might emulate the social mores of the elite, by the nineteenth century a middle-class consciousness had emerged. The middle classes became the dominant economic, cultural, and political force in Britain during the nineteenth century.[21] Consequently, they began to differentiate themselves from the aristocracy and the gentry: they became, so they

[17] See Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

[18] 'Politeness', in *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) <www.oxforddictionaries.com> [Accessed 8 February 2017].

[19] Joseph Addison, *The Spectator*, 8 vols (Dublin: Wilson, 1778), 8: 13-18.

[20] Paul Langford, 'The Uses of Eighteenth-Century Politeness', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 12 (2002), 311-331.

[21] See Lawrence James, *The Middle Class: A History* (London: Abacus, 1998).

thought, more outwardly virtuous, decorous, and held themselves and others to higher standards of morality.[22] Other facets of respectability included, for men at least, being industrious and hard-working, while an aversion to violent entertainment was supposed to demarcate the respectable person as well. To be respectable meant that one had to practise sexual morality. To a certain extent, eighteenth-century polite society was accepting of certain types of vice. This is why certain characters such as the rake, Will Honeycomb, are also present in Mr. Spectator's coffeehouse club.[23] To be respectable, in contrast, meant that one had to be, outwardly at least, averse to all forms of sexual immorality. These ideas surrounding respectability correlate approximately to modern ideas of 'Victorian values'. It is considerations of politeness and respectability, terms that would have been recognisable to people in the Georgian and Victorian eras, which enable me to challenge the idea of gentrification.[24]

4) Rationale

This research was worth conducting because, in the words of Kevin J. Harty, 'Robin Hood Studies remains a fair field in need of folk'.[25] Robin Hood has always been well received by the public, but as Harty further argues, Robin Hood has until recently lacked 'the canonicity afforded to Arthur by Geoffrey, Malory, Tennyson or White'.[26] While there has been an academic journal devoted to the King Arthur legend, *Arthuriana*, in existence since 1979, it was only in 2017 that the idea of establishing a peer-reviewed journal devoted to Robin Hood Studies was first aired by Alexander Kaufman. Critical enquiry into the Robin Hood tradition, therefore, deserves to be expanded, especially when hitherto overlooked texts resurface that force us to look again at the greenwood legend. For example, the Forresters' manuscript, which is a seventeenth-century collection of twenty-one Robin Hood ballads, was discovered in 1993.[27] Julian Luxford from St. Andrews University uncovered a manuscript in 2009

22 On respectability see: Ben Wilson, *Decency & Disorder, 1789-1837* (London: Faber, 2007); F. M. L. Thompson, *Rise of Respectable Society: A Social History of Victorian Britain, 1830-1900* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

23 Addison & Steele, *The Spectator*, 1: 17.

24 See *Victorian Values: Proceedings of the British Academy*, ed. by T. C. Smout (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

25 Kevin J. Harty, 'Robin Hood in Greenwood Stood: Alterity and Context in the English Outlaw Tradition ed. by Stephen Knight (Review)', *Arthuriana*, 23: 1 (2013), p. 77.

26 Harty, 'Robin Hood in Greenwood Stood', p. 77.

27 *Robin Hood: The Forresters' Manuscript, British Library Additional MS71158*, ed. by Stephen Knight (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1998).

which said that Robin Hood and his men 'infested' England with 'continuous robberies'.[28] While research was being undertaken for this thesis, a ballad, previously unknown to scholars and entitled *Little John's Answer to Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster* (1727), came to light when I found it in the Special Collections Archive at the University of Leeds.

5) Chapter Overview

The first chapter of this thesis is entitled 'Reading Robin Hood: The Form and Function of *Robin Hood's Garland* in the Eighteenth Century'. Here I argue that the collection of Robin Hood ballads, often printed under the title of *Robin Hood's Garland,* were envisaged by their publishers as entertainment for a polite reading public. This line of argument owes much to Liz Oakley Brown's essay, 'Framing Robin Hood: Temporality and Textuality in Anthony Munday's Huntington Plays', which suggests that it is with Munday's two late sixteenth-century plays that the Robin Hood legend transitioned from being a predominantly oral tradition to a textual one.[29] Thus, although I do not discuss Munday's plays in detail, Oakley-Brown's theory informs my reading of eighteenth-century editions of *Robin Hood's Garland*.

Editions of *Robin Hood's Garland* during the eighteenth century have been discussed by scholars before, though this has always been with a view to examining their content, rather than what their publication history and format might say about their potential audience.[30] Victor Neuberg's *Popular Literature: A History and Guide* (1977) discusses the decline of the broadside ballad during the late seventeenth century and the rising popularity of the printed pamphlet.[31] While broadsides have a major role to play in the history of seventeenth-century Robin Hood ballads, apart from two satirical ballads printed in 1727, there were no new Robin Hood ballads printed as broadsides during the eighteenth century (some reprints, of course, continued to be published). Instead, new Robin Hood ballads during the eighteenth century, such as *Robin Hood and the Valiant Knight*, first appeared in garlands, rather than as standalone broadside

[28] Anon., 'Negative Attitude to Robin Hood', *BBC News*, 14 March 2009, online edn. http://news.bbc.co.uk [Accessed 24 May 2015].

[29] Liz Oakley-Brown, 'Framing Robin Hood: Temporality and Textuality in Anthony Munday's *Huntington* Plays', in *Robin Hood: Medieval and Post Medieval*, ed. by Helen Phillips (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005), pp. 113-128 (p. 125).

[30] Knight, *Reading Robin Hood*, pp. 83-102.

[31] Victor Neuberg, *Popular Literature: A History and Guide from the Beginning of Printing to the Year 1897* (London: Woburn Press, 1977), pp. 102-122.

sheets. Thus the rising popularity of printed collections of *Robin Hood's Garland* appears to be part of the decline of the broadside ballads of which Neuberg writes. Leslie Shepherd's wide-ranging *History of Street Literature* (1973) was essential reading for this project. Shepherd debunks many of the notions, still adhered to by some amateur folk song scholars, that the publication of ballads in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was simply a continuation of the oral traditions of the peasantry.[32] In the case of the later Robin Hood ballads which appeared on broadsides, there is no evidence to say that they are the lost record of a peasant song tradition. Broadsides were the songs of the people, but they were songs for *all* people: plebeian, middling, and upper-class. As well as participating in a discussion about their audience, this chapter further highlights the complications arising from the application of the concept of gentrification to texts such as the garlands. As they were anthologies of contemporary Robin Hood songs that were often prefaced with short biographical narratives, a variety of Robin Hoods appear in these publications. Some portrayals are positive, some are negative, and some are downright silly. Some songs portray Robin as the Earl of Huntingdon, others do not. Thus, the idea of gentrification would never fit comfortably upon these diverse and varied publications.

The eighteenth century was, of course, the golden age of English satire. Addison, Richard Steele (1672-1729), Alexander Pope (1688-1744), and Jonathan Swift (1667-1745) are the most famous English satirists of the era. But there was also a genre of satire that was not so 'Augustan': political broadside ballads. The second chapter, entitled '"Ironical Points of Low Wit": Robin Hood in Eighteenth-Century Satire' examines two political satires upon Robert Walpole, Britain's first Prime Minister (1676-1745): *Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster* (1727) and *Little John's Answer to Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster* (1727). The second ballad is the one that had been forgotten by scholars but which I recently found in the archives of Leeds University Library. *Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster* has previously been dismissed by scholars as unimportant,[33] but the fact that the ballad and the events that it

[32] Leslie Shepherd, *The History of Street Literature* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1973), p. 40.

[33] *Rymes of Robyn Hood: An Introduction to the English Outlaw*, ed. by R. B. Dobson & J. Taylor, 3rd Edn (Stroud: Sutton, 1979), pp. 191-192; it was as a result of reading R. B. Dobson and J. Taylor's work that these sources were identified. Dobson and Taylor's work is essentially a collection of primary sources from the entire Robin Hood tradition as well as commentaries upon them. While they are at their best when discussing the medieval Robin Hood texts, in their commentary upon the eighteenth-century political ballad *Robin Hood and*

relates were significant enough to have generated a sequel, *Little John's Answer*, renders these sources worthy of study. Not only does a discussion of these sources contribute to the originality of this thesis, but it also exemplifies the 'non-canonical' reading of Robin Hood that is aimed at in the present work.[34]

Furthermore, while the insights of Shepherd, and Neuberg were applicable to this chapter, Kathleen Wilson's work *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (1998) provided much needed contextual information, as she explores extra-parliamentary opposition to the Walpole regime in 'low' print culture. While anti-Walpole satires by Augustan writers have been discussed at length, it is the vitality of political prints and satires during the early eighteenth century, Wilson argues, that demonstrates the extent of popular involvement in the political discourse of the day.[35] Taking Wilson's argument further, I argue that the two political satires discussed in this chapter are part of this extra-parliamentary critique of the eighteenth-century establishment. Although Wilson goes into detail about perceptions of Walpole's premiership, and acknowledges that his regime was often called 'Robinocracy', this chapter shows exactly how Robin Hood's post-medieval literary history fits into the political culture of the day. Moreover, this chapter highlights the potential problems with applying the notion of gentrification to these works. Robin Hood is portrayed as a member of the upper classes within these texts. These ballads were printed for members of a metropolitan coffeehouse reading public. Yet the portrayal that Robin Hood receives in these works is predominantly negative. As many people at the time viewed Walpole, he is a self-serving, corrupt and embezzling Prime Minister. It makes no difference whether or not Robin Hood is a lord in these texts, for he is simply corrupt.

The chapter on political satires not only examines the content of the ballads, but also who read them and, very importantly, *where* they read them. In doing so I draw upon research by Jurgen Habermas in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (first translated into English in 1989). It was political satire and the emergence

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the Duke of Lancaster (1727), they list the number of places where this ballad can be found, either in its original form as a broadside or in later edited works. Among these sources was a scholarly collection of ballads edited by Milton B. Percival entitled *Political Ballads Illustrating the Administration of Sir Robert Walpole* (1916). It is from this footnote in Percival's work that I discovered the sequel, Little John's Answer, to which I referred above.

34 Dobson & Taylor, *Rymes of Robyn Hood*, p. 191.

35 Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 11-12.

of ‘moral weeklies’ which contributed, argues Habermas, to the development of the public sphere.[36] Brian Cowan in *The Social Life of Coffee* (2005) expands upon the work of Habermas, and discusses the social world of the coffeehouse, the venue in which political satires and moral weeklies such as Addison and Steele’s *Tatler* and *Spectator* were read and debated. Coffeehouses were the centre of news culture during the eighteenth century, forming, according to Cowan, a unique social space where men of all classes could gather and discuss the issues of the day.[37] Habermas’ and Cowan’s research upon political culture draws mainly upon satires and pamphlets written by men such as Addison and Steele, but this chapter thus adds to discussions of eighteenth-century coffeehouse culture by illustrating that it was not only Augustan satires that were being read in these venues, but also cheaper political pamphlets.

The third chapter, ‘“Of a Licentious, Wicked Inclination”: The Outlaw in Eighteenth-Century Criminal Biography’, was originally published in the peer-reviewed journal *Law, Crime, and History*.[38] The inspiration behind researching this chapter originally came from James C. Holt’s *Robin Hood* (1982). Prior to Knight’s literary focus, much of the research into the Robin Hood tradition was focused upon trying to identify a historical outlaw. It was Holt and Rodney Hilton who, in a series of articles in *Past and Present* during the 1950s and 1960s, ‘inaugurated the modern academic study of the medieval greenwood legend’.[39] Although his emphasis is upon identifying an historic outlaw, Holt’s enquiries always have an eye upon the development of the legend, as he says in his introduction:

> The legend endured through adaptation. In each generation it acquired new twists from shifts in audience composition, outlook and interests of the audience, or changes in the level of literacy. New characters were introduced to the plot. Fresh historical contexts were invented. Minor

[36] Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Trans. Thomas Burger & Frederick Lawrence (London: Polity, 1989), pp. 42-43.

[37] Brian Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee: The Emergence of the British Coffeehouse* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 243; Of course, as I intimated above, while it was assumed by eighteenth-century coffeehouse intellectuals that all men could gather and debate the news of the day, in reality it was very much restricted to the aristocracy and the middling sorts.

[38] Stephen Basdeo, ‘Robin Hood the Brute: Representations of the Outlaw in Eighteenth-Century Criminal Biography’, *Law, Crime and History*, 6: 2 (2016), 54-70.

[39] Dobson & J. Taylor, *Rymes of Robyn Hood*, p. xxiii.

> features of the older tales were expanded into major themes; important elements in the earlier tales were later jettisoned.[40]

It is Holt's last chapter, entitled 'The Later Tradition', which was particularly useful for this thesis. It is here that a fruitful line of enquiry developed as a result of reading Holt's passing comment upon Robin Hood's appearance in Alexander Smith's *History of the Lives and Robberies of the Most Notorious Highwaymen* (1714). After this, I found further entries on Robin Hood in Georgian criminal biographies.

It is argued in this chapter that Robin receives a negative depiction in these sources because authors such as Charles Johnson and Alexander Smith wished to convey to their predominantly middle-class readership the idea that crime was wrong, whilst simultaneously providing them with enjoyable entertainment. Often the morality behind their texts is only superficial, but these sources resist the trend towards any supposed gentrification by making Robin Hood a 'brute'. The category of brute which has been applied to representations of Robin Hood in this chapter comes from Lincoln B. Faller's typology of eighteenth-century thieves in *Turned to Account: The Forms and Functions of Criminal Biography in Late Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century England* (1987). From a close reading of over two thousand criminal biographies from the eighteenth century, Faller argues that representations of criminals fall into three categories: hero, brute, and buffoon.[41] Faller does not focus upon Robin Hood in his work. Instead he confines his analysis to eighteenth-century thieves. Thus, the present discussion adds to Faller's scholarship by considering portrayals of Robin Hood specifically in criminal biography.

Andrea McKenzie's work *Tyburn's Martyrs: Execution in England, 1675-1775* (2007) is a cultural history of execution in England during the period stated. Relying mainly upon printed sources, many of which make an appearance in this chapter, such as Smith's *Highwaymen*, she highlights the universality of original sin and its relation to crime in contemporary thought. Crime was viewed as a moral failing in the eighteenth century.[42] McKenzie does not examine eighteenth-century representations of medieval criminals, preferring instead to focus on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century

[40] James C. Holt, *Robin Hood* 2nd Edn (London: Thames & Hudson, 1989), p. 3.

[41] Lincoln B. Faller, *Turned to Account: The Forms and Functions of Criminal Biography in Late Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 127.

[42] Andrea McKenzie, *Tyburn's Martyrs: Execution in England, 1675-1775* (London: Hambledon, 2007), p. xvi.

highwaymen. My discussion of Robin Hood as a brutish sinner in criminal biography therefore adds to McKenzie's research by highlighting the ways in which the idea of crime as sin was so important to contemporaries that they were prepared to apply these ideas to stories of Robin Hood.

Hobsbawm makes another thought-provoking statement in *Bandits*, saying that, 'one might say that the intellectuals have ensured the survival of the bandits'.[43] As the fourth chapter entitled '"The Celebrated English Outlaw": The Antiquaries' Robin Hood' illustrates, it is intellectuals and scholars who have been highly influential in ensuring that old Robin Hood ballads have survived. Accordingly, this next chapter analyses the works of noted eighteenth-century antiquaries such as Thomas Percy (1729-1811) and Joseph Ritson (1752-1803). Percy's work, as Nick Groom argues in *The Making of Percy's Reliques* (1999), was a scholarly endeavour which contributed to the so-called 'ballad revival' of the mid-eighteenth century. Groom shows how the recovery of both medieval and early modern texts was reconfigured as a respectable antiquarian pursuit for middling and upper-class gentleman scholars, even if many of these ballads (which were being simultaneously printed in garlands as part of contemporary popular culture) had to be recast as 'ancient poems, songs, and ballads' for a polite audience.[44] In a similar manner, Monica Santini in *The Impetus of Amateur Scholarship: Discussing and Editing Medieval Romances in Late Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Britain* (2010) argues that it is under eighteenth-century antiquaries such as Ritson and Percy that the modern understanding of England's medieval past began to take shape.[45] Interestingly, neither Groom nor Santini speak of either Percy or Ritson's work as being gentrified in any way, although they do acknowledge that, on the whole, their works were published for a polite audience. This is the position that I take in this thesis: for example, contemporary reviews indicate that Percy's *Reliques* was indeed considered to be polite reading matter. But I further argue that such ballad collections cannot be called gentrified, as well as making the point that, even if we accept that the Percy and Ritson's products (i.e. as books sold to wealthy purchasers) are polite, the portrayals of Robin Hood within these products are often anything but.

[43] Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, p. 133.

[44] Nick Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), pp. 19-60.

[45] Monica Santini, *The Impetus of Amateur Scholarship: Discussing and Editing Medieval Romances in Late Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Britain* (New York: Peter Lang, 2010), p. 11.

The Robin Hood ballad included in Percy's work was *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*, in which Robin Hood's social status is not alluded to, while the outlaw is portrayed as violent and murderous. While Robin is an earl in Ritson's text, Ritson is hesitant to ascribe a noble birth to his revolutionary Robin Hood. He argues that it is only 'in the latter part of his life, at least […that] he appears to have had some pretension' to the Earldom of Huntingdon.[46] At a time of war with revolutionary France, furthermore, it is doubtful that Ritson's depiction of Robin Hood as a republican hero would have been received as polite.

Ritson's depiction of Robin Hood paved the way for depictions of the outlaw in the nineteenth-century novel. The function of the fifth chapter entitled '"King of outlaws, and Prince of good fellows": Robin Hood in the Nineteenth-Century Novel' is self-explanatory. Five Robin Hood novels are examined: the anonymously authored *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time* (1819); Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819); Thomas Love Peacock's *Maid Marian* (1822); Thomas Miller's *Royston Gower, or, The Days of King John* (1838); and G. P. R. James' *Forest Days* (1843). There is already a significant body of scholarship upon Scott's *Ivanhoe*: Jane Millgate's article 'Making it New: Scott, Constable, Ballantyne, and the Publication of *Ivanhoe*' was valuable reading for this project because she explains just how expensive the three volume novel (a format popularised by Scott) was during the period.[47] Andrew Lincoln's *Walter Scott and Modernity* (2007) explores the work of the celebrated author in depth, showing how Scott used and recreated the past as a means of discussing the problems that the nineteenth century faced. Lincoln states that 'Scott worked with a fully historicised understanding of the artist's role in contemporary society […] his fiction reflects upon the origins of modern society, origins seen as rooted in a process of division and repression'.[48] As we will see, it was Scott's desire to provide answers to the problems faced in nineteenth-century society that prompted him in part to appropriate Robin Hood and depict him as a yeoman who works alongside his upper-class counterparts to build a new united nation composed of Saxons and Normans. As with *Ivanhoe*, Stephen Knight has also covered Peacock's *Maid Marian* in his works, as has Rob Gossedge.

[46] *Robin Hood: A Collection of All the Ancient Poems, Songs, and Ballads,* ed. by Joseph Ritson, 2 vols (London: T. Egerton, 1795), 1: iv.

[47] Jane Millgate, 'Making it New: Scott, Constable, Ballantyne, and the Publication of Ivanhoe', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900,* 34: 4 (1994), 795-811.

[48] Andrew Lincoln, *Walter Scott and Modernity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), p. vii.

Peacock's main champion in the academic world, however, is Marilyn Butler in her monograph *Peacock Displayed: A Satirist in his Context* (1979). Despite his skill as a novelist and satirist, Butler does not deny that Peacock was – and continues to be – in many respects a writer whom the elites read.[49] This is an argument that I develop in this chapter concerning Peacock's *Maid Marian*: the novel was read by the elites, and it was elite characters that Peacock portrays. For example, through all of their adventures in the novel, Robin and Marian's outlaw escapades are essentially nothing more than an aristocratic game.

Clare A. Simmons' argument that by c.1830 medievalism became expensive and conservative is challenged in the sixth chapter.[50] Entitled '"Far above Jack Sheppard"? Robin Hood in Victorian Periodicals', this chapter analyses Robin Hood's depiction in Victorian penny bloods and penny dreadfuls. The serialised novels of Pierce Egan the Younger (1814-1880), for example, were hardly conservative but instead were politically radical, advocating political reform, and highly sympathetic towards the Chartist movement.[51] Although Egan's Robin Hood is an earl, the worldview that Robin exhibits in the novel is not that of an aristocrat, but of the labour aristocracy. Thus, in spite of his birth, in Egan's novel Robin Hood is not a gentrified outlaw.

The chapter also deals with a number of penny dreadfuls that were published in the latter half of the century. Robert Kirkpatrick has written extensively upon penny dreadfuls. His first book *From the Penny Dreadful to the Ha'Penny Dreadfuller: A History of the Boys' Periodical in Britain, 1762-1950* (2012) provides short accounts of the contents and publishing history of over 600 titles from the period, although he stops short of engaging in critical discussions of their reception and impact upon contemporary readers. The main area of disagreement that my thesis has with Kirkpatrick's work is that he rather uncritically assumes that every periodical published during his period was targeted towards working-class boys. As I will show in this

[49] Marilyn Butler, *Peacock Displayed: A Satirist in his Context* (London: Routledge, 1979), p. vii.

[50] Clare A. Simmons, *Popular Medievalism in Romantic-Era Britain* (New York: Palgrave, 2011), p. 196.

[51] Stephen Basdeo, 'Radical Medievalism: Pierce Egan the Younger's *Robin Hood, Wat Tyler*, and *Adam Bell*', in *Imagining the Victorians*, ed. by Stephen Basdeo & Lauren Padgett, Leeds Working Papers in Victorian Studies, 15 (Leeds: LCVS, 2016), pp. 49-64. This study builds upon research by Chris R. Vanden Bossche, Chris R. V. Bossche, *Reform Acts: Reform Acts: Chartism, Social Agency and the Victorian Novel, 1832-1867* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), pp. 37-49

chapter, two of the earliest Robin Hood penny serials were targeted towards adults, and their readership was socially diverse.

The seventh and final chapter entitled '"Deeds of Daring": The Public School Robin Hood of Late-Victorian Children's Books' explores the outlaw's appearance in that genre. The trend towards producing Robin Hood literature specifically for children began at the beginning of the Victorian period with the publication of Stephen Percy's *Robin Hood and his Merry Foresters* (1841), although Percy seems to have been eclipsed by Egan somewhat. Further children's books followed: John B. Marsh's *Life and Adventures of Robin Hood* (1865); Howard Pyle's *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood* (1883); Edward Gilliat's *Forest Outlaws, or St. Hugh and the King* (1887) and his second work *In Lincoln Green: A Story of Robin Hood* (1898); Henrietta E. Marshall's *Stories of Robin Hood Told to the Children* (c.1906) and her brief account of Robin in *Our Island Story* (1905); Escott Lynn's *When Lionheart was King* (1908); Henry Gilbert's *Robin Hood and the Men of the Greenwood* (1912); and Paul Creswick's *Robin Hood and his Adventures* (1917). This chapter shows how Robin Hood becomes reconfigured as a public school figure. He becomes a gentleman, loyal to the king, and a good sport who plays by the rules. While Barczewski argues that in late Victorian children's stories Robin becomes an anti-imperialist figure,[52] this thesis argues that, although Robin is rarely seen fighting abroad in these novels, his character is still imbued with an imperial ideology, namely the public school ethos.

John MacKenzie's *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960* (1984) contains two relevant essays entitled 'Imperialism and the School Textbook',[53] and 'Imperialism and Juvenile Literature'.[54] In these essays, and especially the latter, MacKenzie explores the ways in which the heroes of these late Victorian children's books:

> Prompted readers to identify with […] the ideology of the [imperial] present through the medium of historical romance. All celebrated self-reliance and individualism […] Morality came to have both a class and racial dimension, for integrity, courage, loyalty (all subsumed under the

[52] Barczewski, *Myth and National Identity*, p. 230.

[53] John MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1889-1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 173-198.

[54] MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, pp. 199-227.

> concept of 'character') were generally identified with a particular type of public school, middle-class, sporting, and of course Nordic ideal.[55]

It is one thing for writers to represent imperial ideology, but the question of whether or not children paid attention to it is altogether another matter. This is an issue which is explored at some length by Andrew Thompson in *The Empire Strikes Back? The Impact of Imperialism on Britain from the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (2005) which examines late Victorian juvenile literature. One of the questions that Thompson asks is:

> How far, then, did children's literature 'instil…an appreciation of the long years of progress that had turned Britain into the greatest imperial power' or 'nurture the qualities of courage, justice, and fair play that had made and would keep Britain great'?[56]

Thompson provides some balance to the claims of MacKenzie and other 'new imperial historians'[57] by arguing that, however much imperial ideology was foisted upon children through literature, the sense of pride in the empire that it instilled 'does not appear to have been very deep-rooted or well-informed'.[58] This is an important point that Thompson raises – and I discuss whether Robin Hood raised, if not pride in the empire, at least an acceptance of the public school ethos. Furthermore, while it might be assumed that these texts fit the gentrification thesis posited by Knight, it should be noted that the values of the public school ethos and muscular Christianity were not those of the aristocracy but of the upper middle classes. Although the latter class would see themselves as gentlemen, this status did not rest upon birth but rather upon character. Robin Hood is also portrayed as just as violent a character as he is in Victorian penny dreadfuls. While these works do not fit modern conceptions of gentrification, however, they were considered respectable by reviewers and moralists, being seen as an antidote to the penny dreadfuls discussed in the sixth chapter. Thus, a

55 MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, p. 207.

56 Andrew Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back? The Impact of Imperialism on Britain from the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (London: Longman, 2005), p. 205.

57 John MacKenzie's *Propaganda and Empire* (1984) initiated a whole series of debates between two groups of imperial historians: the 'old' imperial historians argued that the empire's influence upon domestic British society was minimal; the 'new' imperial historians argued that it was all pervasive. My own opinion is that Thompson's *The Empire Strikes Back* (2005) is the happy medium between the two positions: people would have thought of the empire on a daily basis, but at the same time, especially given the Mafeking celebrations in London during the Boer War, along with the singing of Music Hall songs such as *Another Little Patch of Red*, that people never thought of the Empire. For a critical response by an 'old' imperial historian to the claims of 'new' imperial historians see Bernard Porter's *The Absent-Minded Imperialists* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

58 Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back*, p. 122.

wide variety of sources is studied in this thesis: texts that have been previously examined by Robin Hood scholars are revisited, and new texts have been brought to light. The study begins in the next chapter which analyses published editions of *Robin Hood's Garland* from the early eighteenth century.

1) Reading Robin Hood: The Form and Function of *Robin Hood's Garland* in the Eighteenth Century

1) Introduction

This chapter argues that the printed collections of Robin Hood ballads, usually published under the name of *Robin Hood's Garland*, were targeted at a sophisticated reading public. They were not envisaged by their publishers as belonging to an oral tradition but were intended as reading material. This study is necessary because previous examinations of the garlands have always considered the content of the books, rather than viewing them as a product. This chapter, therefore, discusses their format, taking into account how the compilers arranged the material in them. The fact that the garlands were, as this chapter illustrates, clearly intended for a polite and predominantly middle-class audience might seem to support Stephen Knight's argument about gentrification. However, as the Robin Hood ballads in these collections portray him both positively and negatively, this chapter will consider whether the concept of gentrification can be applied to these publications. It will conclude that it cannot be applied to them, in spite of the fact that Robin Hood is named as the Earl of Huntingdon in almost all of the readers' prefaces.

2) Robin Hood Poems and Ballads before the Eighteenth Century.

Ballads are an inescapable part of the Robin Hood tradition, and must be discussed in any examination of the legend. The first recorded literary reference to Robin Hood texts appears in the B Text of William Langland's poem *The Vision of Piers the Plowman* (c. 1377). In the poem, the personification of the sin of Sloth, who assumes the identity of a lazy priest, says, 'I can noughte parfitly my Paternoster as the prest it syngeth / But I can rymes of Robyn Hood and Randolf Erle of Chestre'.[1] The earliest text known to researchers is *Robin Hood and the Monk* which dates in its present form from c. 1465.[2] Another named *Robin Hood and the Potter* survives in a manuscript

[1] William Langland, *Piers Plowman*, ed. by Elizabeth Robertson & Stephen H. A. Shepherd (New York: Norton, 2006), p. 82.

[2] Thomas H. Ohlgren, *Robin Hood: The Early Poems, 1465-1560: Texts, Contexts, and Ideology* (Cranbury, NJ: Rosemont, 2007), p. 40.

which can be dated to the late fifteenth century.[3] Finally, there is *A Gest of Robyn Hode* (referred to hereafter as the *Gest*). It is the longest, and perhaps the most famous, of all of the early Robin Hood ballads. The poem was probably composed during the fifteenth century although it was not printed until the early sixteenth century.[4] Early tales of Robin Hood circulated in oral tradition during the medieval period. As the reference to 'rymes of Robyn Hood' in *Piers the Plowman* suggests, stories of Robin Hood were in circulation as early as the 1370s. It was only later that the 'rymes' were written down or, in the case of the *Gest*, printed.

The Robin Hood tradition gradually became textual rather than oral. The watershed moment here is the appearance of Anthony Munday's two plays *The Downfall of Robert, Earle of Huntingdon*, and *The Death of Robert, Earle of Huntingdon* (written between 1597 and 1598, but published in 1601) which was the first time that stories of Robin Hood were set down in writing first before being disseminated orally.[5] It cannot be a coincidence that it is precisely during this period that we also begin to see prose accounts of the life of Robin Hood appearing, such as the Sloane manuscript life of Robin Hood which dates from the Elizabethan period.[6] Additionally, there was the seventeenth-century *The Noble Birth and Gallant Atchievements* [sic] *of that Remarkable Out-Law Robin Hood*, which is discussed in the third chapter of this thesis.

Before they were compiled into garlands, post-medieval Robin Hood ballads were printed as black letter broadsides. It is in the seventeenth century, when such broadsides were printed, that many of the now well-known tales of Robin Hood came into being. Such tales include the ballad of *Robin Hood and Allen-a-Dale*, *Robin Hood and the Tanner*, and *Robin Hood and Little John*. Typically, these ballads sold for a penny, and critics generally think that this means that they were targeted towards the

[3] Dobson & Taylor, *Rymes of Robyn Hood*, p. 123.

[4] James C. Holt, 'Robin Hood: The Origins of the Legend', in *Robin Hood: The Many Faces of that Celebrated English Outlaw*, ed. by Kevin Carpenter (Oldenburg: Bibliotteks- und Enformationssystem der Universität Oldenburg, 1995), pp. 27-34; James C. Holt in Robin Hood (1982) originally argued that the Gest dated from c.1400. He has subsequently revised this estimate, saying that c.1450 was a 'safer date' than c.1400. However, Ohlgren, *Robin Hood: The Early Poems*, p. 185 proposes a date towards the end of the Lancastrian period, c. 1483, although he offers no compelling evidence for this.

[5] Liz Oakley-Brown, 'Framing Robin Hood', p.125; Oakley-Brown also points to the presence of *texts* in Munday's plays, stating how 'the processes and politics of textual production and consumption are inscribed in Munday's plays'.

[6] Anon., 'Life of Robin Hood, MS. Sloan', in *Early English Prose Romances*, ed. by William Thoms, 3 vols (London: William Pickering, 1837), 2: 37-53.

poorer classes of society. But it has to be remembered that many of these broadsides survive only because they were collected by elite members of society. Samuel Pepys (1633-1703), for instance, bequeathed to posterity a large collection of broadsides, amongst which were included some Robin Hood ballads. The statesman Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford (1661-1724), was responsible for collecting what is now known as the Roxburghe Ballads collection. The fact that these two elite men bothered to collect Robin Hood ballads at all confirms Hobsbawm's assertion that 'the sad truth is that the heroes of remote times survive because they are not *only* the heroes of the peasants'.[7] Hobsbawm's assertion gives credence to Peter Burke's theories about the cross-class appeal of popular culture during the early modern period.[8] Indeed, one need look no further than Joseph Addison, who wrote with fondness of the ballad of *The Two Children in the Wood* in *The Spectator,* calling it 'one of the darling songs of the common people, [which] has been the delight of *most* Englishmen in some part of their age' (emphasis added).[9]

Other later ballads such as *Robin Hood and the Tanner*, *Robin Hood and the Jolly Pinder of Wakefield,* and *Robin Hood's Progress to Nottingham* are part of a textual tradition inasmuch as they were written down and published prior to their oral dissemination. But it was not merely on broadsides that these new ballads were printed. There was a thriving market for 'miscellanies' during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the latter part of his career, John Dryden (1631-1700) published several volumes of *Miscellany Poems*. These works were anthologies of various poetic works by himself and his contemporaries. After Dryden's death, the publishing of the miscellany poems continued, and still using Dryden's name on the title page, Jacob Tonson published *The Sixth Part of Miscellany Poems* (1727).[10] These poetic anthologies reflected works which were popular with contemporary readers, and the works of prominent eighteenth-century writers contained in them, such as Addison and

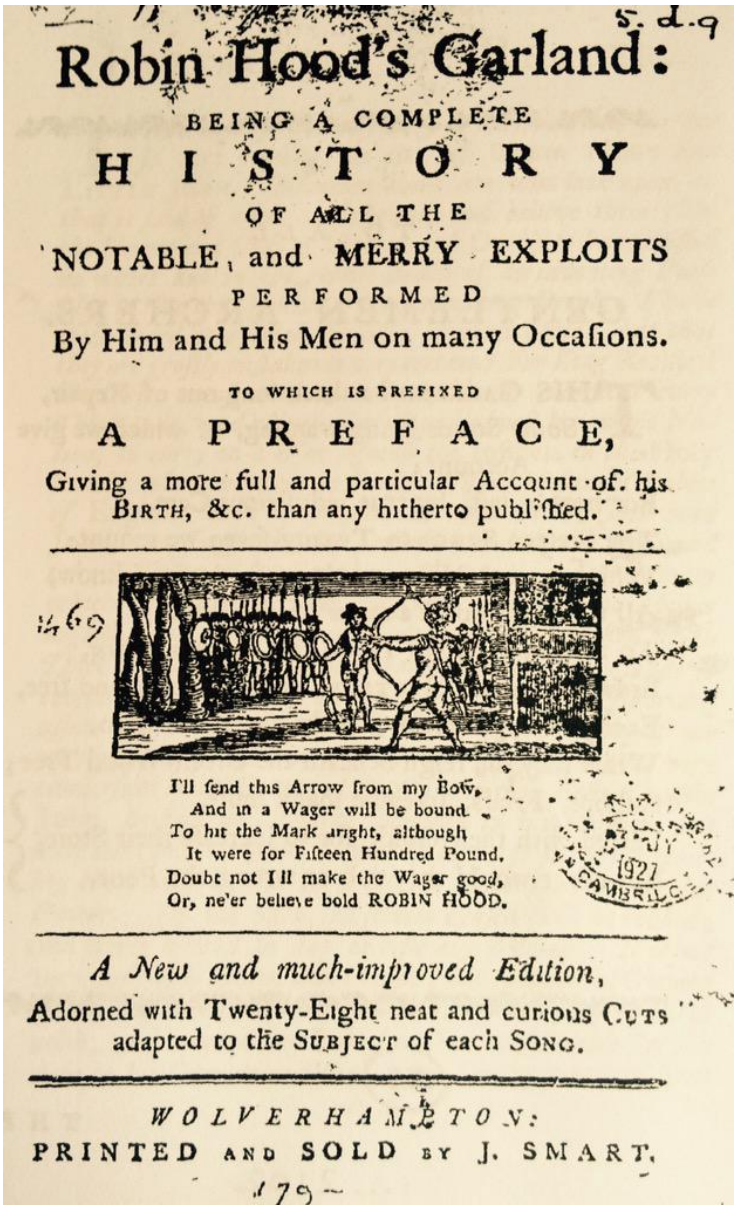
[7] Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, p. 131.

[8] Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, 3rd Edn (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

[9] Joseph Addison & Richard Steele, *The Spectator*, 8 vols (Dublin: W. Wilson, 1778), 2: 28.

[10] For a critical discussion of the Dryden *Miscellanies* see Stuart Gillespie & David Hopkins, 'Introduction: The Dryden-Tonson Miscellanies, 1684–1709', in *The Dryden-Tonson Miscellanies, 1684–1709*, ed. by Stuart Gillespie & David Hopkins, 6 vols (London: Routledge, 2008), 1: i-xvi; Adam Smyth, *"Profit and Delight": Printed Miscellanies in England, 1640–1682* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004); Barbara M. Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader: Cultural Mediation in Early Modern Literary Anthologies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

his fellow *Tatler* author Richard Steele. What is surprising about the *Sixth Part* is that it contains the text of a contemporary broadside ballad entitled *A Ballad of Bold Robin Hood, Shewing his Birth, Breeding, and Valour*.[11] Tonson was marketing this Robin Hood song, not as a traditional ballad, but as a piece of popular poetry, which was intended to be read rather than sung.



Robin Hood's Garland:

BEING A COMPLETE

HISTORY

OF ALL THE

NOTABLE, and MERRY EXPLOITS

PERFORMED

By Him and His Men on many Occasions.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A PREFACE,

Giving a more full and particular Account of his BIRTH, &c. than any hitherto publish'd.

I'll send this Arrow from my Bow,
And in a Wager will be bound
To hit the Mark aright, although
It were for Fifteen Hundred Pound.
Doubt not I'll make the Wager good,
Or, ne'er believe bold ROBIN HOOD.

A New and much-improved Edition,

Adorned with Twenty-Eight neat and curious CUTS adapted to the SUBJECT of each SONG.

WOLVERHAMPTON:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. SMART.

Figure 1: *Robin Hood's Garland* (c. 1790 edition): 'with twenty-eight neat and curious cuts adapted to the subject of each song'. (ECCO)

[11] *The Sixth Part of Miscellany Poems, Containing a Variety of New Translations of Ancient Poets: Together with Several Original Poems by the Most Eminent Hands. Publish'd by Mr. Dryden* (London: J. Tonson, 1727), pp. 276-282.

3) Robin Hood's Garland

It is, of course, with editions of *Robin Hood's Garland* that this chapter is concerned. Garlands were printed anthologies of popular songs and ballads. They were more substantial items than the humble chapbook, which typically numbered eight, sixteen, or twenty-four pages in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and usually cost around one pence or a half penny.[12] No edition of *Robin Hood's Garland*, in contrast, contains fewer than eighty pages. Although the prices of the earliest editions are not given, those from later in the century were significantly more expensive than chapbooks, with the 1770 edition of *Robin Hood's Garland*, for example, costing three pence.[13] A 1794 edition of *Robin Hood's Garland* was more expensive at four pence.[14] An even more expensive but undated eighteenth-century edition cost six pence.[15] These prices would have been quite expensive for those of the plebeian classes to afford.[16]

The appearance of the garlands would also have suited the polite tastes of eighteenth-century readers. They were not printed in the old Gothic style, as many previous broadside ballads had been; instead they were printed in Roman typeface. There are two reasons for this change in font: even in their own day, broadsides, set as they were in a heavy Gothic typeface, could be difficult to read.[17] Additionally, it may also be a symptom of the increasing vogue for all things neoclassical. Naturally such an argument remains speculative, but perhaps it is not altogether without merit. Black letter broadside ballads were unpolished and unrefined, and eighteenth-century publishers may well have thought that Robin Hood ballads needed, so to speak, a 'makeover' to suit a polite eighteenth-century readership.[18]

If readers were paying more for a product, then it stands to reason that they expected something of better quality than a regular broadside or chapbook. During the

12 Shepherd, *The History of Street Literature*, p. 28.

13 Anon., *Robin Hood's Garland* (Nottingham: Printed by S. Creswell in the New 'Change, 1770), p. 1.

14 Anon., *Robin Hood's Garland* (Nottingham: Printed and Sold by G. Burbage, 1794), p.1.

15 Shepherd, *The History of Street Literature*, p. 89.

16 In order to avoid repetition, please see the discussion of the affordability of broadsides in the second chapter.

17 Neuberg, *Popular Literature*, p. 77.

18 Stephen Schillinger, 'Begging at the Gate: Jack Straw and the Acting Out of Popular Rebellion', *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England*, 21 (2008), 87-127 (pp.92-93): As Schillinger argues, the process of printing in Roman typeface for more refined audiences began in the early seventeenth century, when publishers used this to attract a middle-class type of reader.

eighteenth century, the publishers of cheap printed works rarely made an effort to match the illustrations on their broadsides or chapbooks with the subject matter at hand. This practice continued until the 1820s when even James Catnach, a famous publisher of street literature, started out his business using worn typefaces and crude woodcuts, and often recycled them from one publication to another.[19] It was only in the early Victorian period that woodcuts in cheap publications became more detailed and elaborate, and began to be connected closely to the narratives they accompanied.[20] But the eighteenth-century versions of *Robin Hood's Garlands* are different in this respect. One of the first editions of *Robin Hood's Garland* from 1670 contains images of a man with a bow and arrow, along with several other characters who appear to match the figures from the ballads.[21] The fact that the illustrations in these publications were tailored to the subject matter became a selling point: the subtitle of a 1760 edition is typical of the many, advertising that it is 'adorn'd with twenty-seven neat and curious cuts, proper to the subject of each song' (Fig. 1).[22] Thus the substantial format of *Robin Hood's Garlands*, combined with their high cost, and the fact that the illustrations in them were possibly commissioned for this specific publication, suggests that they were targeted at an affluent and polite readership.

If we consider how the material is arranged within the garlands themselves, it becomes even clearer that these were products designed for an affluent literary marketplace. Seventeenth-century versions of *Robin Hood's Garland* contain no prefatory material, but this changed in the eighteenth century. The new innovation of the eighteenth-century editions is that almost all of them contain a preface to the reader, which takes the following form in most editions:

> *Courteous Reader,*
> It is to be observed, that various have been the reports of the birth and parentage of our famous out-law Robin Hood; yet, thro' industrious care and diligent search, we found him to be the undoubted son of noble

[19] V. A. C. Gatrell, *The Hanging Tree: Execution and the English People, 1775-1868* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 160.

[20] Rosalind Crone *Violent Victorians: Popular Entertainment in Nineteenth-Century London* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), p. 194.

[21] Anon., *Robin Hoods Garland; Containing his Merry Exploits, and the Several Fights which he, Little John, and Will Scarlet had, upon Several Occasions. Some of them Never before Printed. Entered According to Order* ([London]: Coles, Vere, Wright, 1670), p. i.

[22] Anon., *Robin Hood's Garland: Being a Complete history of all the notable and merry exploits perform'd by him and his men on divers occasions. To which is added, a preface, giving a more full and particular account of his birth, &c. than any hitherto published. Adorn'd with twenty-seven neat and curious cuts, proper to the subject of each song* (Northampton: Dicey, 1760), p. i.

> parentage; namely, the head ranger of the north of England: his mother was the daughter of the right honourable Earl of Warwick; his uncle squire Gamwell of Gamwell-Hall, as you shall find more at large in the following songs; some of which have been for many years omitted; but in this edition they have been carefully collected, and placed in their right order, for the satisfaction of all ingenious lovers of the bow, and lovers of the memory of Robin Hood.[23]

The address of readers as 'courteous' requires explanation. References to 'courteous readers' pervade eighteenth-century literature. In the conclusion of *A Tale of a Tub* (1704), to cite one example, Jonathan Swift declares that, 'I am wonderfully well-acquainted with the present relish of courteous readers'.[24] It might be assumed that the address of readers as courteous supports the idea of gentrification. After all, courtesy was a behaviour originally connected with early modern courtly life, whose tenets were published in numerous conduct books during the period.[25] But courtesy, by the eighteenth century, was subsumed into the social code of politeness, which was inclusive of people from both the upper and middling orders.[26]

Successive editions of *Robin Hood's Garland* continued this practice of addressing courteous readers, and sometimes inserted additional material. One edition from 1746 contains a lengthy prose account of Robin Hood's life which was plagiarised from a criminal biography entitled *The Whole Life and Merry Exploits of Bold Robin Hood* (1736), the text of which will be examined in the third chapter.[27] Later editions also contain addresses to the reader which are similar to the one cited above. The 1760 edition contains a preface to the reader,[28] as does the 1790 version.[29] One late

[23] Anon., *Robin Hood's Garland Being a Compleat history of all his Merry Exploits and Valiant Fights, which he, Little John, and Will Scarlet, fought on divers occasions. Licensed and entered according to order* (London: Onley, 1704), p. 3.

[24] Jonathan Swift, 'A Tale of a Tub', in *The Works of Jonathan Swift, D. D., Carefully Selected with a Biography of the Author*, ed. by D. Laing Purves (Edinburgh: Nimmo, 1902), pp. 41-98 (p.94).

[25] 'Courtesy book', in *The Cambridge Guide to Literature in English* ed. by Dominic Head (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 249.

[26] William Bowman Piper, *Common Courtesy in Eighteenth-century English Literature* (Newark, Del: University of Delaware Press, 1997), pp. 15-17.

[27] Anon., *Robin Hood's garland: being a compleat history of all the notable and merry exploits performed by him, and his men, on divers accounts and occasions. To which is added, The whole life of bold Robin Hood, Earl of Huntington* (London, [n. pub.], 1746).

[28] Anon., *Robin Hood's Garland* [1760], p. 1.

[29] Anon., *Robin Hood's garland: Being a Compleat history of all the notable and merry exploits perform'd by him and his men on divers occasions. To which is added, a preface, giving a more full and particular account of his birth, &c. than any hitherto published. A new and much-improved edition. Adorn'd with twenty-seven neat and curious cuts, proper to the subject of each song* (Wolverhampton: Smart, 1790), p. 1.

eighteenth-century version entitled *The Famous English Archer, or, Robert Earl of Huntingdon* (1796) declares in its preface that 'the *reader* is here presented with a new and greatly improved edition of the celebrated adventures and exploits of Robin Hood, the famous English Archer, of whose history a knowledge may be obtained from the following concise narrative' (emphasis added).[30] Similarly, *The English Archer; or Robert, Earl of Huntingdon* (1790) reproduces the address to the 'Courteous Reader' found in the 1704 edition.[31]

After the section containing the preface to the reader, most of the garlands arrange the songs in exactly the same order, following a broadly 'biographical' sequence. They begin with the ballad entitled *The Pedigree, Education, and Marriage of Robin Hood, and Clorinda*.[32] This is what might be termed an 'origin story'. It is the only biographical ballad to which the compilers of *Robin Hood's Garland* would have had access, given the fact that the *Gest* was virtually forgotten until it was reprinted in Ritson's 1795 anthology. The ballad describes, as its title suggests, the birth and parentage of Robin Hood, and ends with Robin meeting Little John when he goes to live at his uncle Gamwell's house. After this account of Robin's birth, the compiler(s) insert several of the episodic ballads (i.e. those which do not offer extended narratives of Robin Hood's life, but relate single events, such as meetings with strangers in the forests). Such ballads include *Robin Hood and the Jolly Pinder of Wakefield*.[33] Placed at the end of the various editions of *Robin Hood's Garland* is either one of the two ballads detailing Robin Hood's death such as *Robin Hood and the Valiant Knight*,[34] or *Robin Hood's Death and Burial*.[35]

30 Anon., *The Famous English Archer, or, Robert, Earl of Huntingdon, Commonly Called Robin Hood* (Monaghan: Printed by John Brown, 1796), p. 3.

31 Anon., *The English Archer; or Robert Earl of Huntingdon, Vulgarly Called Robin Hoo*d (Glasgow: George Caldwell, 1782), p. 3.

32 See the following editions as representative samples of the garlands' consistency in the formatting and arranging of the songs throughout the eighteenth century: Anon., *Robin Hood's Garland* [1704], pp. 5-8; Anon., *Robin Hood's garland: Being a Complete history of all the notable and merry exploits perform'd by him and his men on divers occasions. To which is added, a preface, giving a more full and particular account of his birth, &c. than any hitherto published. Adorn'd with twenty-seven neat and curious cuts, proper to the subject of each song* (London: C. Dicey, 1750), pp. 1-5; Anon., *Robin Hood's Garland* [1760], pp. 1-5; Anon., *The English Archer*, pp. 5-10.

33 Anon., *Robin Hood's Garland* [1704], pp. 12-15; Anon., *Robin Hood's Garland* [1750], pp. 8-9; Anon., *Robin Hood's Garland* [1760], pp. 12-14; Anon., *The English Archer*, pp. 12-14.

34 Anon., *Robin Hood's Garland* [1704], pp. 86-90; Anon., *Robin Hood's Garland* [1750], pp. 83-85; Anon. *Robin Hood's Garland* [1760], pp. 85; Anon., *The English Archer*, pp. 78-80.

35 Anon., *The English Archer*, pp. 81-83.

One particularly interesting version of *Robin Hood's Garland* appeared during the 1760s, and is worthy of further discussion here because it is the first time that lengthy prose narratives of Robin Hood's life provide links between the ballads. This book was *The Exploits of the Renowned Robin Hood* (1769), which begins with an introduction to the legend of Robin Hood:

> The accounts of this man's genealogy are exceedingly various; and the stories of his robberies, amongst the country people of England, seem as fictitious, as those concerning the thefts of Mercury, amongst the heathens of Greece and Italy […] There is sufficient tradition to induce us to think he really was a nobleman; particularly that contained in an old ballad, of which we shall give our readers a part, as containing a strong picture of the old English manners.[36]

Here again readers are addressed, and the publishers of the garland evidently think that the 'strong picture of the old English manners' is one of the attractions for polite readers. Published shortly after Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), this edition is evidently trying to draw upon the contemporary enthusiasm for native literary traditions.[37]

After the introduction detailing the birth of Robin Hood there is *The Pedigree, Education, and Marriage of Robin Hood, with Clorinda, the Queen of Titbury Feast*. Following this ballad, four pages of prose are provided linking it with the next ballad, *Renown'd Robin Hood*. The reader is told the story of how Robin inherits his uncle Gamwell's estate, and the good works which he performed for the poor upon his accession to the estate:

> Robin Hood, along with his uncle Gamwell's estate, inherited his spirit. As soon as the old gentleman died, he opened his house to all who were pleased to make use of it; relieved the poor, and did a thousand other meritorious actions, which gained him the good-will and esteem of all about him.[38]

After the biographical Robin Hood ballads, the 1769 edition of the garland places the episodic ballads. These ballads, likewise, are connected by lengthy prose narratives. Twelve pages of prose, for instance, connect *Renown'd Robin Hood* with the ballad of

[36] Anon., *The Exploits of the Renowned Robin Hood; The Terror of Forestallers and Engrossers, and the Protector of the Poor and Helpless: Interspersed with a Variety of Songs and Addorn'd with Several Curious Copper Plates* (London: Roberts, 1769), pp. 1-2.

[37] The search for native literary traditions as a counterbalance to classicism is discussed in further detail in chapter four.

[38] Anon., *The Exploits of the Renowned Robin Hood*, p. 7.

Robin Hood and the Tanner.[39] The material is arranged in this manner throughout, with further ballads connected by lengthy prose narratives. The garland ends its account of the life of Robin Hood with four pages of prose detailing the events of his death.[40]

Although we cannot say with certainty how the garlands were used by consumers after they were purchased, it is evident that publishers envisaged them as reading material, and certainly more up-market than the broadsides. At the end of the century, purchasers could buy a more substantial edition of Robin Hood's life. For example, there was *The History and Real Adventures of Robin Hood, and his Merry Companions: Written by Capt. C. Johnson. To which are added, some of the most favorite ballads from an old book, entitled Robin Hood's Garland* (1800).[41] The inclusion of Johnson's text, which is analysed in chapter three, is an attempt to historicise Robin Hood and give context to the ballads themselves, notwithstanding Johnson's highly suspect scholarship. The reader is told how Robin Hood was 'born in Henry II's time' and that he 'associated with a small band of robbers'.[42] With their readers' prefaces and the fact that some of them include lengthy biographies of Robin Hood, the garlands in general thus anticipate the publication of Ritson's text at the end of the century.

4) Reading *Robin Hood's Garland*?

Although the various garlands themselves suggest that they were published for readers and not sung, there is little reader testimony available from the eighteenth century to confirm this. But there is some: in Henry Brooke's picaresque novel *The Fool of Quality; or, The History of Henry, Earl of Moreland* (1765-70) one of the apprentices named Harry asks a fellow boy: 'did you ever *read* the History of Robin Hood, Jack? – I did, Sir' (emphasis added).[43] The author must either have been referring to a criminal biography or an edition of *Robin Hood's Garland*. More light is shed in Thomas

39 Anon., *The Exploits of the Renowned Robin Hood,* pp. 20-32.
40 Anon., *The Exploits of the Renowned Robin Hood,* pp. 86-90.
41 Anon., *The history and real adventures of Robin Hood, and his merry companions: Written by Capt. C. Johnson. To which are added, some of the most favorite ballads from an old book, entitled Robin Hood's garland* (London: Bosnor, 1800).
42 Charles Johnson, *The Lives and Actions of the Most Noted Highwaymen, Street Robbers, Pirates, &c. &c.* (London: Thomas Tegg, 1839), p. 70.
43 Henry Brooke, *The Fool of Quality; or, The History of Henry, Earl of Moreland,* 5 vols (Dublin: Printed for the Author by D. Chamberlain, 1770), 5: 273.

Holcroft's *Adventures of Hugh Trevor* (1794-97), in which he tells the reader why he became an author. He reveals that he read *Robin Hood's Garland* in his youth:

> I know not how it happened that I very early became in love with this divine art, but such was the fact. I could spell boldly at two years and a half old, and in less than six months more could read the collects, epistles, and gospels, without being stopped by one word in twenty. Soon afterward I attacked the Bible, and in a few months the tenth chapter of Nehemiah himself could not terrify me. My father bought me many tragical ditties; such as Chevy Chace, the Children in the Wood, Death and the Lady, and, which were infinitely the richest gems in my library, Robin Hood's Garland, and the History of Jack the Giant-killer.[44]

Further evidence exists from the early nineteenth century. An anonymous correspondent in *The Paisley Magazine* from 1823 declares how '[he] was deeply read in various poetical works of merit, such as […] "Robin Hood's Garland"'.[45] Augustin Thierry in *The History of the Conquest of England by the Normans* (1847) remarks that during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, 'several complete collections [of ballads] were made for the use of town *readers* with the pretty little title of *Robin Hood's Garland*' (emphasis added).[46] Similarly, in the preface to his Robin Hood novel *Royston Gower*, the nineteenth-century author Thomas Miller recalls reading *Robin Hood's Garland* in his youth.[47] The same author makes a further allusion to his youthful readings of *Robin Hood's Garland* in an article upon outlaws for *Cleave's Penny Gazette* in 1839.[48] Finally, as the nineteenth century was drawing to a close, the socialist William Morris, in an address to the reader in *A Dream of John Ball* (1888), makes reference to 'a stave of Robin Hood […] one of those ballads which in an incomplete and degraded form you *read* perhaps' (emphasis added), although Morris, admittedly, may have been referring to Percy, Ritson, or even the works of Francis James Child (1825-1896).[49]

In addition to the examples cited above, further evidence suggesting that editions of *Robin Hood's Garland* were designed purely as reading matter may be found in the fact that there are no melodies or tunes supplied. The absence of the tunes must

[44] Thomas Holcroft, *The Adventures of Hugh Trevor*, 6 vols (London: Printed for Shepperson & Reynnolds, 1794), 1: 13.

[45] Anon., 'Confessions over a Bottle', *The Paisley Magazine*, 1 March 1823, p. 109.

[46] Augustin Thierry, *The History of the Conquest of England by the Normans*, Trans. W. Hazlitt, 2 vols (London, 1847), 2: 228.

[47] Thomas Miller, *Royston Gower, or The Days of King John* (London: Nicholson, [n.d.]), p. 6.

[48] Thomas Miller, 'The Young Outlaw', *Cleave's Penny Gazette of Variety and Amusement*, 26 October 1839, p.2.

[49] William Morris, *A Dream of John Ball and A King's Lesson* (London: Kelmscott, 1892), pp. 14-15.

give pause for thought here. Undoubtedly some tunes may have been known by readers when they purchased the garlands. Some of the songs do carry subtitles such as 'to the tune of…' after which they insert the name of a well-known ballad immediately. In the 1790 edition of *The English Archer*, for example, the ballad of *Robin Hood and the Butcher* is subtitled as 'to the Tune of Robin Hood and the Beggar'.[50] The identification of tunes to some of the songs is vague, however: the ballad of *Robin Hood and the Stranger* in one garland is subtitled simply as 'to a new tune'.[51] This is not, however, uniformly to be the case with the garlands. Even so, the fact that a tune is specified on some ballads, as we shall see in the next chapter, does not automatically mean that these publications were not envisaged as reading material. In *The Exploits of the Renowned Robin Hood* no tunes are indicated at all, not even in the subtitles. Similarly, a version of *The History of the Life and Death of that Renowned Outlaw Robin Hood*, which is dated by archivists to c.1790, does not indicate any tunes.[52] Even when new Robin Hood ballads were written in poetic miscellanies, they did not include tunes, as is the case in *The American Mock Bird* (1760) which contains a short Robin Hood ballad titled simply as *A New Song*.[53] Admittedly, if some of the tunes were already known by readers despite the absence of melodies in the printed garlands, then it is impossible to imagine that readers did not at the very least sing or hum some of them as they were reading along. It may be better to ask, then, how the singing of Robin Hood ballads was perceived by people in the eighteenth century. Although references to singing Robin Hood are sparse, one source which does reference Robin Hood songs as being sung is a poem entitled *The Humours of May-Fair*. It depicts a ballad singer singing Robin Hood ballads, but there is a condescending attitude towards him:

> With hideous face and tuneless note,
> The ballad-singer strains his throat;
> Roars out the life of Betty Saunders,
> With Turpin Dick and Molly Flanders.
> Tells many woeful tragic stories,
> Recorded of our British worthies.
> Forgetting not Bold Robin Hood,

50 Anon., *The English Archer*, p. 13.
51 Anon., *The English Archer*, p. 38.
52 This appears to be a reprint of Martin Parker's ballad *A True Tale of Robin Hood* (1632). For a critical discussion of Parker's ballad see Dobson & Taylor, *Rymes of Robyn Hood*, pp. 187-90.
53 Anon., *The American Mock Bird* (New York: J. Rivington, 1760), p. 64.

> And hardy Scarlet of the Wood.[54]

Ballads themselves were often denigrated in the press, in spite of Addison's fondness for them. One correspondent in *The Grub-Street Journal* commented upon 'the scandalous practice of ballad-singing', saying that it was:

> The bane of all good manners and morals […] a continual nursery for idlers, whores, and pick-pockets; a school for scandal, smut, and debauchery; where our youth of either sex (of that lower class especially) receive the first taint, which by degrees so contaminates the mind, that, with every slight temptation they become abandoned, lewd, and strangers to all shame.[55]

The above remarks are echoed in *Bell's Classical Arrangement of Fugitive Poetry* (1789) which refers to 'beggarly, ballad-singing carrions'.[56] It is true that Addison had praised *Chevy Chase* and *The Two Children in the Woods* for their majestic simplicity, and ballads would form the basis of John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (1727), but in an urban context ballads were viewed as 'the cheap goods of destitute beggars'.[57] In a 1756 issue of *The Connoisseur*, George Colman, while praising the simplicity of ballads, remarked that while men such as Gay had refined the ballad, ultimately a reader should look to the polite poetry of Alexander Pope and others.[58] In contrast, *Robin Hood's Garland*, as we have seen, was published for relatively affluent reading audiences. They were not the vulgar doggerel of the streets but were repackaged and suitably refined for polite society.

5) The Gentrification Question

It has been established that the garlands were publications that were targeted towards an affluent readership. This does not mean, however, that these are gentrified pieces of literature. The garlands, while aimed at a polite audience, could never be classified as

[54] Anon., 'The Humours of May-Fair', *The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, 26: 181 (1760), pp. 264-65.

[55] Anon. *The Grub Street Journal*, 27 February 1735, cited in Paula McDowell, ''The Manufacture and Lingua-facture of Ballad-Making': Broadside Ballads in Long Eighteenth-Century Ballad Discourse', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 47: 2-3 (2006), 149-76 (p. 152).

[56] Anon., *Bell's Classical Arrangement of Fugitive Poetry*, 2 vols (London: J. Bell, 1789), 2: 73.

[57] Tim Fulford, 'Fallen Ladies and Cruel Mothers: Ballad Singers and Ballad Heroines in the Eighteenth Century', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 47: 2 (2006), 309-29 (p. 309).

[58] George Colman, *The Connoisseur*, 3rd Edn, 2 vols (Dublin: George Faulkner, 1756): 2: 143-48.

either gentrified or un-gentrified due to the fact that they contain both positive and negative representations of the hero, and some which are downright silly. The distinctive feature of many later ballads is the fact that they show Robin often to be a rather ineffective and even inept outlaw, for on a number of occasions in these ballads Robin meets his match.[59] They are tales of rustic buffoonery.[60] Very rarely do these later ballads make any allusion to Robin's social status.

Robin Hood and the Tanner is a typical tale of 'rustic buffoonery', and a discussion of this ballad is timely because in the latest attempt by researchers to make forays into the discussion of the later ballads, this particular song has been neglected.[61] Robin meets a tanner, Arthur-á-Bland, travelling through the forest, and bids him to stand. Arthur is shocked by Robin Hood's impertinence, for 'there was never a squire in Nottingham-shire / dare bid bold Arthur to stand.'[62] Arthur is rude to Robin:

> For thy sword & thy bow I care not a straw
> Nor all thy Arrows to boot
> If thou get a knock upon the bare scop
> Thou canst as well shite as shoot,
> Speak cleanly, good fellow, said jolly Robin,
> And give better terms to me.[63]

This passage with its profanity is quite rude, and it certainly is not gentrified according to the standard laid down in the introduction. It is unlikely even to have been thought of as polite, although politeness was accepting of a limited amount of crude humour.[64] Even so, perhaps it was viewed as one of those songs which ballad singers 'with hideous face and tuneless note' sang in the street, which was 'the bane of all good manners and morals'. Robin and the tanner proceed to fight with quarterstaffs, and Arthur soon gets the upper hand as 'from ev'ry hair of bold Robin's head, the blood came trickling down'.[65] At the end of the ballad Robin concedes that Arthur is the better fighter, and invites him to join his band, which he does, and the ballad concludes that

59 Dobson and Taylor, *Rymes of Robyn Hood*, p. 146.
60 Holt, *Robin Hood*, p. 4.
61 Discussions of *Robin Hood and the Tanner* do not appear in in Barrie Dobson and John Taylor's *Rymes of Robyn Hood*, nor in Stephen Knight and Thomas Ohlgren's *Robin Hood and Other Outlaw Tales*.
62 *The English Archer; or Robert Earl of Huntingdon, Vulgarly Called Robin Hood* (Glasgow: George Caldwell, 1782), p. 20.
63 *The English Archer*, p. 20.
64 See Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (London: Atlantic, 2007).
65 Anon., *The English Archer*, p. 22.

thenceforth people should sing 'of Robin Hood, Arthur and John.'[66] This is simply a tale of an uncouth tanner and Robin engaging in rustic buffoonery and it is doubtful whether readers in the eighteenth century would have viewed Robin as being what we would consider gentrified in this ballad.

Other ballads depict Robin as a heroic figure, such as *The Noble Fisherman; or, Robin Hood's Preferment*, in which, as with *Robin Hood and the Tanner*, no reference is made to Robin Hood's social origins. The ballad dates from the seventeenth century, with a broadside version having been entered in the Stationers' Register in 1631.[67] It is a strange story in which Robin Hood tires of his life in the greenwood and resolves to become a fisherman, because apparently fishermen seem richer than he is.[68] He travels to Scarborough, and once there, assumes the name of Simon-over-the-Lee, and takes up employment on a fishing boat.[69] When he is aboard ship one day, the company see a French pirate ship coming towards them, which sends the captain and the crew into panic.[70] But Robin Hood saves the day, as the ballad says:

> Symon he took his noble bow,
> An arrow that was both larg [sic] and long;
> The nearest way to the steersmans heart,
> The broad arrow it did gang.[71]

As a result of Robin's help against the French, the English ship gains twelve thousand pounds in prize money, one half of which Robin gives to his dame, and with the other half he says he intends to build an alms house.[72] In the context of the wars between England and France during the eighteenth century, many of which were fought at sea (it is in this period that Britannia began to 'rule the waves'), seeing an English hero in action against the French would likely have pleased readers. The lack of any identification of Robin Hood as an aristocrat, however, disqualifies this ballad from being considered as gentrified, as it certainly does not fulfil the requirement that Robin be of noble birth.

66 Anon., *The English Archer*, p. 23.
67 *Robin Hood and Other Outlaw Tales*, ed. by Stephen Knight & Thomas Ohlgren (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2000), p. 581.
68 Anon., 'Robin Hood's Fishing', in *Robin Hood and Other Outlaw Tales*, ed. by Stephen Knight & Thomas Ohlgren (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2000), pp. 581-591 (p. 589).
69 Anon., 'Robin Hood's Fishing', p. 589.
70 Anon., 'Robin Hood's Fishing', p. 586.
71 Anon., 'Robin Hood's Fishing', p. 587.
72 Anon., 'Robin Hood's Fishing', p.58.

There are, furthermore, some negative, or at the very least ambivalent portrayals of Robin Hood in some of the garlands. At the end of *Robin Hood and the Valiant Knight*, most of the garlands finish with the following epitaph that was supposedly found inscribed upon Robin Hood's grave:

> Robin, Earl of Huntingdon,
> Lies under this little stone,
> No archer was like him so good,
> His wildness named him Robin Hood,
> Full thirty years and something more,
> These northern parts he vexed sore,
> Such outlaws as he and his men,
> May England never know again.[73]

Despite his being the Earl of Huntingdon here, this is not a positive assessment of Robin's life and deeds: Robin 'vexed sore' the northern parts of the Kingdom, and the final line is a prayer on the part of the author that England would never again know 'such outlaws as he and his men'.

Even the last garland published shares the same characteristics as its predecessors. Appearing in 1855, *The Life and Exploits of Robin Hood* was a handsomely bound book with a frontispiece and engravings throughout.[74] Retailing at one shilling per copy, they were obviously intended for at least a lower middle-class readership.[75] It contained over 150 pages of a prose *Life and Exploits of Robin Hood*, along with almost every ballad that had been published. In this collection, the prose account takes precedence over the ballads. Robin is not an earl but a yeoman, which obviously takes account of earlier tales, such as the *Gest*, as well as Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819). However, despite his low birth, Robin is respectable in the Victorian sense of the word, being of good character:

> Whatever were the faults and vices of Robin Hood […] there were some bright and sterling qualities in his character; and, to judge him rightly, he must not be contemplated merely as the brave and generous captain of a band of robbers, but as an exiled patriot, avenging the wrongs of his countrymen, by inflicting vengeance upon their foreign oppressors.[76]

[73] Anon., *Robin Hood's Garland* [1794], p. 62.

[74] Anon., 'Milner & Sowerby's Standard Works', *The Bookseller*, 30 September 1867, p. 651.

[75] Anon., 'Milner & Sowerby's Standard Works', *The Bookseller*, 1 February 1870, p. 190.

[76] Anon., *The Life and Exploits of Robin Hood and Robin Hood's Garland* (Halifax: Milner & Sowerby, 1859), p. 169.

The reason for this patriotic assessment of Robin's character in the mid-nineteenth century is likely due to Walter Scott's portrayal of Robin of Locksley as an Anglo-Saxon freedom fighter in *Ivanhoe*. The yeoman of this preface is surely more respectable than the allegedly gentrified Robin Hood who appears in some garlands, or the rustic buffoon of the later ballads.

6) Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has argued that the various editions of *Robin Hood's Garland* that were printed throughout the eighteenth century were not envisaged by their publishers as belonging to an oral tradition, but were published, designed, and marketed primarily for a polite reading public. This is in contrast to arguments in prevailing studies of the later Robin Hood tradition, which deal with the content of the ballads without any consideration of the format in which they appeared. But it is clear the garlands were pointedly marketed to readers, as evinced by the inclusion in the 1704 edition, and subsequent editions of the garlands, of prefaces to the reader. We have seen how, contrary to the usual practice of chapbook production, where random illustrations were inserted for decoration, the woodcuts in the garland were tailored specifically to the subject matter, and this, combined with their cost, bespeaks a middle class and polite readership. What these findings further indicate is that Robin Hood scholars and folk song scholars should not view the garlands as static, and that they need to study change over time in the format that Robin Hood ballads assumed. This will allow us to better understand the types of people who were reading Robin Hood ballads in the early modern period.

This chapter has also demonstrated that the concept of gentrification can be problematic when applied to certain works of literature, in this case, the garlands. Simply because they are expensive texts does not mean that they are gentrified in the conventional sense of the word. Individual ballads in the garlands may have presented Robin as heroic, but there are many texts in which he is presented as something of a buffoon. In other ballads his portrayal is more morally ambiguous. The garlands do not present a homogenous view of Robin's character; such a variety of Robin Hoods appear in the garland collections that it is impossible to classify these works as gentrified.

2) ‘Ironical Points of Low Wit’: Satirical Appropriations of Robin Hood

A version of this chapter is published as:
‘A Critical Edition of *Little John’s Answer to Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster*’, *The Bulletin of the International Association for Robin Hood Studies*, 1 (2017), 15-31.

1) Introduction

Satire is one genre of literature which has not been examined in detail thus far by Robin Hood scholars. Robin Hood’s satirical appropriations, as this chapter illustrates, highlight the complexities of applying the idea of gentrification in a uniform way to post-medieval Robin Hood texts. In the examples of eighteenth-century satire that are discussed in this chapter, Robin Hood is appropriated to mock the government. This chapter will show how, in contrast to orally performed street ballads, these political satires were published for a politically informed and sophisticated reading audience. We will see that just because Robin is a statesman and a lord does not mean that he is gentrified as is commonly understood (we can assume that Robin Hood is a lord in these texts due to the fact that he stands in for Walpole, the Earl of Orford, and that the eighteenth-century political establishment was dominated by the aristocracy). This chapter also analyses nineteenth-century satirical portrayals of Robin Hood in *Punch*. As we will see, as far as the readership of these sources is concerned, they are not gentrified because they were published for a predominantly middle-class audience. Furthermore, although Robin is portrayed as being of noble birth, the moral ambiguity and unpopularity of the people that he represents exclude these texts from discussions of gentrification.

Politicians and statesmen have often been equated with criminals. Recognising that governments are essentially protection rackets, Saint Augustine of Hippo in *The City of God* (426 AD) once asked, ‘remove justice and what are states but gangs of

bandits on a large scale?'[1] Furthermore, politicians and statesmen have always been prime targets for satirists, and even today politicians are likened to historical criminals by writers wishing to criticise the government.[2] Recognising the importance of satire in eighteenth-century culture, Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke (1678-1751), remarked that 'when the people find themselves generally aggrieved, they are apt to manifest their resentment in satirical ballads, allegories, by-sayings, and ironical points of low wit'.[3] Two 'ironical points of low wit' are analysed in this chapter: *Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster* (1727), and *Little John's Answer to Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster* (1727). They are satires upon three prominent eighteenth-century political figures: the Prime Minister Robert Walpole (1676-1745), Nicholas Lechmere (1675-1727), and Lord Bolingbroke himself.

The first ballad has been known to scholars for a long time, though it has received very little critical attention. It was included in John Mathew Gutch's ballad anthology *A Lytell Geste of Robin Hode* (1847), in which Gutch concludes that 'it is not to be supposed that this ballad relates to any transactions in the life of our hero […] it is in all probability a satire upon some courtier, who had made application to the king for the rangership of one of his forests'.[4] Dobson and Taylor include only a brief discussion of it in *Rymes of Robyn Hood*.[5] They are particularly dismissive of eighteenth-century Robin Hood ballads, referring elsewhere to 'the imaginative poverty and stylistic debasement which overtook the legend of the greenwood during the course of the eighteenth century'.[6] The second ballad, *Little John's Answer to Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster* remained unremarked by critics prior to my discovery of it in the archives of the University of Leeds. In spite of Dobson and Taylor's remarks about the supposed stylistic poverty of eighteenth-century Robin Hood material, these ballads do deserve attention, not least because they are an indicator of how the legend was used and how it was interpreted in the eighteenth century. Likewise, Robin Hood's appearances in *Punch* deserve attention because thus far they have received no critical

1 Augustine, *The City of God*, Book 4 cited in B. D. Shaw, 'Bandits in the Roman Empire', *Past & Present*, No. 105 (1984), 3-52 (p. 3).

2 Terry Christian, 'David Cameron's "Reverse Robin Hood" stealing from the poor to give to the rich must stop', *The Mirror*, 17 October 2015 <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/david-camerons-reverse-robin-hood-6653069> [Accessed 14 February 2017].

3 Henry St. John, *The Craftsman* (1733), cited in Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, p. 27.

4 *A Lytell Geste of Robin* Hode, ed. by John Mathew Gutch, 2 vols (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longman, 1847), 2: 397.

5 Dobson & Taylor, *Rymes of Robyn Hood*, pp. 191-194.

6 Dobson & Taylor, *Rymes of Robyn Hood*, p. 183.

examination. This may be because most of the work carried out by Knight was published before the British Library's and other bodies' digitisation of Victorian periodicals. Thus, as well as illuminating the ways that Robin Hood was appropriated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, satire is useful to study because it facilitates the non-canonical reading of the legend that is aimed at in this thesis.

2) Criminals, Statesmen, and Satire during the Eighteenth Century

The eighteenth century was a period during which the lives of criminals were regularly adapted by satirists in the press and equated with political figures. A regular target for their attacks was Walpole, who is the minister satirised in the character of Peachum in *The Beggar's Opera* (1728).[7] Peachum is a thief taker and a receiver of stolen goods who equates himself with contemporary politicians by saying ''tis but fitting we should protect and encourage cheats, since we live by 'em'.[8] References to criminals whose names are derivatives of Robert abound in Gay's play, such as, 'Robin of Bagshot, alias […] Bob Booty'.[9] Walpole is colloquially named Robin in several contemporary satires such as *Robin's Reign, or Seven's the Main* (1731)[10] and *Robin and Will* (1733).[11] Furthermore, out of the alley-ways and courts of Grub Street numerous pamphlets poured forth attacking the 'Robinocracy'.[12] Nevertheless, despite the efforts of satirists to expose him as corrupt, Walpole held a firm grip on power during his tenure as Prime Minister, which lasted from 1721 to 1742. Some satires proved to be controversial: *Polly* (1729), the sequel to *The Beggar's Opera*, was banned by the Lord Chamberlain for being 'filled with slander and calumny against particular great persons'.[13] After the Licensing Act had expired in 1695, there were fifteen attempts by MPs in the early

7 Peachum – so called because every so often he has the thieves in his employ 'peached', just like the real-life Jonathan Wild (c.1682-1725) did.

8 John Gay, *The Beggar's Opera*, 3rd Edn (London: J. Watts, 1729), p. 1.

9 Gay, *The Beggar's Opera*, p. 3.

10 Anon. *Robins Reign or Seven's the Main* (London: Printed and Sold by the Booksellers of London and Westminster, 1731) London, British Museum BM Satires 1868.0808.3541.

11 Anon. *Robin and Will. Or, The Millers of Arlington. A New Ballad* (London: Printed for W. Webb, near the Royal-Exchange; and sold by the booksellers of London and Westminster, 1731) Oxford, Bodleian Library Broadside Ballads BOD4943; despite the 'Robin and Will', this ballads bears no relation whatsoever to the Robin Hood legend.

12 Paul Langford, *The Eighteenth Century: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 22.

13 Robert G. Dryden, 'John Gay's Polly: Unmasking Pirates and Fortune Hunters in the West Indies', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 34: 4 (2001), 539-37 (p. 539).

eighteenth century to limit what was said about politicians in the press.[14] Politicians themselves soon learned, however, that the press was a tool which they could co-opt to criticise their opponents. In 1722, for instance, Walpole himself bought out the Tory *London Journal*, and transformed it from an opposition paper into a government mouthpiece.[15]

3) The Ballads

Both *Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster* and *Little John's Answer* are anonymously-authored. This is not surprising, for in this period writers could find themselves in trouble with the authorities if they wrote satirical works. Daniel Defoe found out how risky it could be after he was pilloried for publishing a supposedly seditious work entitled *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* (1703).[16] Despite the relatively free nature of the press in this period, then, there were limits to the toleration of 'seditious libel', and Walpole's administration successfully prosecuted numerous cases of libel against publishers of papers such as *The Craftsman*.[17]

Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster is not a broadside but a six page pamphlet, whilst *Little John's Answer* is formatted like a newspaper. Their size is similar to a broadside, but both of these ballads were published for an audience of readers instead of singers. This is indicated by the fact that they both address their 'gentle readers'.[18] This is further suggested by their political content, which will be analysed below. As we will see, the ballads were intended to be read and debated within the coffeehouse public sphere which emerged during the early eighteenth century.[19] Due to the expansion of print culture, a development which was highlighted in the introduction, people gathered in public arenas such as coffeehouses to debate the news of the day.[20]

[14] Julian Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty? England, 1689-1727* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 182; the Licensing Act of 1643 required that all printed matter be censored prior to publication.

[15] Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty*, p. 181. *The London Journal* referred to above bears no relation to *The London Journal* referenced in chapter six, which was edited by Robin Hood novelist Pierce Egan the Younger.

[16] Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty*, p. 181.

[17] James V. H. Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 32.

[18] Anon., *Little John's Answer, to Robin-Hood and the Duke of Lancaster. A Ballad, To the Tune of The Abbot of Canterbury* (London: T. White, 1727), p. 3.

[19] Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, p. 44.

[20] Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee*, pp. 242-44.

Both texts are sequels to the Robin Hood legend. In both ballads, the year is 1202 and Robin Hood has received a royal pardon and has been accepted back into King John's favour, having become the king's 'keeper'. It is implied that he has become one of the most corrupt of the king's servants, and so the Duke of Lancaster travels to see the king and expose Robin Hood's corruption. When the duke meets the king, he pours forth a number of accusations against Robin:

> My good liege, quoth the duke, you are grossly abused,
> By knaves far and near, by your grace kindly used;
> There's your keeper so crafty, call'd bold Robin Hood,
> Keeps us all but himself, my good liege, in a wood.
>
> He riseth e'er daybreak, to kill your fat deer,
> And never calls me to partake of the cheer,
> For shoulders and umbles and other good fees,
> He says for your use, he locks up with his keys.[21]

There are also suggestions that Robin Hood surrounds himself at court with his allies, so as to entrench his power firmly, and is plotting to bring into the government a man, Harry Gambol, who is even more reprehensible than Robin:

> What is worse, he will make Harry Gambol a keeper;
> And the plot every day is laid deeper and deeper;
> Should he bring him once in, your court would grow thinner,
> For instead of a Saint, he would turn out a sinner.[22]

King John, however, is perfectly acquainted with the nature of Robin Hood's character, and the way that he manages state affairs:

> Quoth our liege, would you have Robin out – is that all?
> I wou'd have, quoth the duke, no *Robbing* at all;
> Why, man! Quoth the king, on my troth you'll bereave,
> All my court of its people, except 'tis my Sheriff.
>
> Besides, who'll succeed him? Because without doubt,
> You'd have someone put in sure, as well as put out.
> Then a smile so obliging the duke did display,
> And made a low beysance, as if who should say.[23]

King John dismisses the duke's concerns, admitting that retaining Robin Hood as his keeper is merely a matter of selecting the best out of a number of bad candidates for the position. The question is not whether or not Robin Hood is a corrupt minister of state,

[21] Anon., *Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster. A Ballad. To the Tune of the Abbot of Canterbury* (London: Roberts, 1727), p. 3.
[22] Anon., *Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster*, p. 3.
[23] Anon., *Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster*, p. 3.

but who would replace him and be less corrupt? In *Little John's Answer* the King's tone towards the Duke of Lancaster is not as humorous, and he actually sounds quite annoyed with him for bringing the matter of Robin's fraud and corruption to his attention:

> *Sir, would you succeed him? pray let us dispute,*
> Obedience and Silence, answer'd the Duke;
> The King turn'd about, and he smil'd for to hear,
> That the Duke would *partake* of *Robin's* Stolen Deer.
> *Derry, &c.*
>
> *I guess what your Grace, now, does mean, very plain,*
> *If* Robin's *a Thief, sir, You would be the same;*
> *I may as well have my Keeper, a* R------- *that I know,*
> *Sir, You have your Answer, and so you may go.*
> *Derry, &c*.[24]

King John can think of no one who might be a better candidate and, ultimately, neither can the Duke of Lancaster.

In both *Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster* and *Little John's Answer*, King John stands for King George I and Robin Hood is Walpole. One question which needs further discussion before proceeding is why the author chose Robin Hood to represent a corrupt eighteenth-century statesman. The similarities of both men's sobriquets have been alluded to above, but that can only go so far as an explanation. Given that there was already a market for Robin Hood ballads in eighteenth-century garlands, it is possible that the authors of these ballads were capitalising on the same market. The authors may also be appropriating the medieval period in order to critique the corruption endemic in the oligarchical politics of their own day. In Enlightenment historiography, Peter Raedt argues, the Middle Ages were often viewed as an unpleasant interlude between classical and modern times, whose rulers were viewed as nothing more than 'barbaric gang leaders'.[25] There are, however, certain caveats to Raedt's argument. In historiography the medieval period may have been denigrated, but as we have seen in the introduction, in eighteenth-century high art and culture the period certainly was not, even if much of this was simply medieval subjects and settings depicted with a neoclassical overlay. It might be speculated, then, that the authors chose Robin Hood to satirise the Prime Minister for the following reasons: Walpole and Robin shared the

[24] Anon., *Little John's Answer*, p. 4.

[25] Peter Raedt, 'Representations of the Middle Ages in Enlightenment Historiography', *The Medieval History Journal*, 5: 1 (2002), 1-20 (pp. 6-7, 19).

same nickname; there was already a market for Robin Hood ballads among literate and sophisticated readers; as we will see in chapter three, additionally, contemporary literary representations of Robin Hood were not unanimous in their presentation of him as a 'good' man (as in Smith's *Highwaymen*). These factors, therefore, allowed the authors of these ballads to freely use Robin Hood to represent a corrupt minister.

The Duke of Lancaster represents Nicholas Lechmere (1675-1727).[26] Lechmere was a Whig politician and a lawyer, who is described as having been 'stubborn, haughty, and opinionated […] and engaged in frequent clashes with Robert Walpole, the leader of the opposing Whig faction'.[27] Harry Gambol was a contemporary sobriquet for Bolingbroke. The narrative of the ballad refers to events which occurred between the King, Walpole, Lechmere, and Bolingbroke in 1727. Bolingbroke, a Tory, had been forced to flee from England to France in 1715: the Whigs had won the general election in the previous year, and upon taking office began to accuse many Tories of corruption and dismiss them from office, and one of their targets was Bolingbroke.[28] During his exile in France, Bolingbroke made the mistake of accepting an earldom from the Pretender, James Francis Edward Stuart (1688-1766), and agreed to serve as the exiled James' Secretary of State.[29] After the disastrous Jacobite Rising in 1715, James blamed Bolingbroke for its failure, and consequently Bolingbroke secretly made contact with the British Ambassador in Paris to betray the Jacobite cause in return for a royal pardon.[30] He was eventually allowed to return to England when he was pardoned on 25th May 1723, though he was still subject to some penalties, such as a prohibition from taking up his seat in the House of Lords, and Walpole treated him with suspicion.[31]

In April 1721, Walpole became First Lord of the Treasury (still the Prime Minister's official title), and it is from this time that he became the dominant force in British politics.[32] He firmly established his power in the Commons by making himself

[26] Dobson & Taylor, *Rymes of Robyn Hood*, p.192; Nicholas Lechmere was Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and, hence, 'the Duke of Lancaster' in the ballad.

[27] A. A. Hanham, 'Lechmere, Nicholas, Baron Lechmere (1675-1727)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn, May 2005 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16262> Accessed 4th April 2015].

[28] H. T. Dickinson, 'St John, Henry, styled first Viscount Bolingbroke (1678–1751)'. in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn, May 2005 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24496> [Accessed 8 April 2015].

[29] Dickson, o*p cit*.

[30] Dickson, o*p cit*..

[31] Dickson, o*p cit*..

[32] Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty*, p. 407.

indispensable to George I, keeping a close eye on all levels of government, frequently attending debates and critically judging the mood of the MPs so as to allow tactical changes on policy to be made when required.[33] He also extended his power by expanding his system of patronage, carefully presiding over government appointments in the hope of forming a cohort of dependable men in the Commons.[34] Despite the allegations of corruption levelled at him by his opponents, especially in regard to his handling of the economic crash known as the South Sea Bubble, he was a shrewd political operator. One early and admittedly very admiring biographer of Walpole stated that in 1727, the Prime Minister 'stood in the highest estimation of king and nation'.[35] Also in 1727, Bolingbroke decided to approach the King's mistress, the Duchess of Kendal (1667-1743), in order to secure the full restitution of his aristocratic rights and privileges. The Duchess was dismissed outright by the King, and it seemed that Bolingbroke would not achieve the restitution he desired. But an unlikely ally in this matter was Walpole, who said he would intercede on Bolingbroke's behalf, and arranged a meeting between Bolingbroke and the King:

> At a proper interval, Walpole besought the king to grant an audience to Bolingbroke; and urged the propriety, by observing, that if this request was rejected, much clamour would be raised against him for keeping the king to himself, and for permitting none to approach his person who might tell unwelcome truths.[36]

In other words, Walpole deemed it expedient to show that the Commons was not simply filled with his cronies. The King relented and Bolingbroke was granted an audience and admitted into the King's apartment at Walpole's behest. Meantime, Lechmere had learnt news of the intended meeting between Bolingbroke and the King, and strongly disapproved; he already disliked Walpole and, thinking that Walpole was arranging the meeting to invite Bolingbroke to actually serve in the government, took it upon himself to approach the King and 'expose' this apparent plot between Walpole and Bolingbroke. Lechmere travelled to see the king upon a flimsy pretence of asking him to sign some documents. Upon enquiring to see the King, he was told that he must wait, for the King was with Bolingbroke in his apartment, and Walpole was also waiting for an

33 Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty*, p. 409.
34 Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty*, p. 409.
35 William Coxe, *Memoirs of the Life and Administration of Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford*, 4 vols (London: Longman, 1816), 2: 250.
36 Coxe, *Memoirs*, 2: 252-53.

appointment with the King afterwards. Bolingbroke finished his interview at that exact moment and exited the King's apartment, and then the following scene occurred:

> Lechmere instantly rushed into the [King's] closet, and without making any apology, or entering upon his own business, burst out into the most violent invectives against Walpole, whom he reviled as not contented with doing mischief himself, but as having introduced one [Bolingbroke] who was, if possible worse than himself, to be his assistant.[37]

This accounts for the phrase in the ballad, 'what is worse, he will make Harry Gambol a keeper'.[38] But Lechmere completely misunderstood the situation, and the king decided to have a joke at Lechmere's expense: 'the king, delighted with this mistake, calmly asked him, if he would undertake the office of prime minister, Lechmere made no reply, but continued pouring forth his invectives, without having offered any of [his] papers to sign'.[39] Afterwards, upon seeing the king so amused, Walpole enquired as to the reason why, to which the king simply responded, 'Bagatelles! Bagatelles!'[40]

It could be argued that this encounter between George I, Walpole, Bolingbroke, and Lechmere is deserving of no greater place in history than a humorous footnote. The event never appears to have made it into a newspaper, and this ballad, it was assumed by Milton Percival in 1916, was probably written by one of Walpole's rival courtiers purely for its gossip value.[41] It is too reductive, however, to interpret the discussion of this ballad *solely* as yet another Walpole satire. There was, of course, a great multitude of political satires produced during Walpole's tenure as Prime Minister, so it is not amiss to discuss here why this, admittedly obscure, ballad deserves attention from eighteenth-century scholars. Whilst the elite literary opposition to Walpole's regime – from Swift, Pope, Gay, and Fielding – is a topic which has been discussed at length by scholars, Wilson notes that 'popular' participation in the political discourse of the day is a subject which has not yet been explored sufficiently.[42] And the 'popular' contributions to the political discourses of the day often took that form which Bolingbroke complained about in *The Craftsman*: satirical ballads, allegories, and by-sayings.[43] Thus

37 Coxe, *Memoirs*, 2: 252-53.
38 Anon., *Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster*, p. 2.
39 Coxe, *Memoirs*, 2: 254.
40 Coxe, *Memoirs*, 2: 254.
41 Milton O. Percival, *Political Ballads Illustrating the Administration of Sir Robert Walpole* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), p. xxxvi
42 Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, p. 5.
43 *The Craftsman*, cited in Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, p. 27.

this ballad is part of that extra-parliamentary contribution to eighteenth-century politics, satirising those at the heart of the political establishment.

It is only King John/George I who emerges with a relatively untarnished reputation in the ballad. Walpole/Robin is depicted as embezzling and corrupt, Lechmere/Lancaster is rather silly and impetuous, failing to ascertain the facts of a matter before acting. Bolingbroke/Gambol is no better, being a sinner who would 'serve [the king] ill'.[44] Whilst Walpole is certainly criticised in the ballad, it is insufficient to dismiss this satire *only* as a critique of Walpole, for the author appears to be commenting upon the corruption that is at the heart of the eighteenth-century political establishment. As we have seen, the author acknowledges that, were the King to replace Walpole, other ministers would be just as corrupt: this is made evident by King John's very resigned reply to the Duke of Lancaster that, were he to get rid of all corruption, 'you'll bereave, all my court of its people, except 'tis my Sheriff'.[45] This ballad, then, appears to be part of the 'widespread dissemination of an anti-corruption critique of authority that identified national, social, and moral ills with the distribution and exercise of political power.'[46] It was a critique which was driven by the press in the emergent public sphere identified by Habermas and Cowan, in which social spaces such as the coffeehouse, along with the publication of printed matter created a 'marketplace' where ideas could be discussed and debated outside of the confines of the royal court.[47] Given the fact that both ballads critique the Whigs and the Tories equally, they remind modern commentators that popular political participation in the eighteenth century cannot always be neatly divided along party lines.[48] These are critiques of the corruption endemic in, not only Walpole's regime, but the whole political establishment. This harks back to the earlier point raised about why the author chose the medieval period as a setting: the statesmen in the ballad, whichever party they are from, are really no better than corrupt medieval lords.

44 Anon., *Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster*, p. 5.
45 Anon., *Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster*, p. 5.
46 Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, p. 26.
47 Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, p.44. See also Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee*, p. 224.
48 Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, p. 14.

4) Nineteenth-Century Satire

I stated above that Robin Hood's appearances in eighteenth-century satire had not been subjected to in-depth critical analysis by scholars. The same is true of Robin Hood's representations in nineteenth-century satire. By the Victorian period, satire became less 'biting' in comparison to the often personal attacks levelled at Walpole by the likes of writers such as Alexander Pope and John Gay.[49] There is a very odd satirical work entitled *Archery and Archness* (1843), written by a writer who took the pseudonym Robin Hood, which lampoons prominent contemporary literary figures.[50] But the most famous vehicle for satire during the nineteenth century was the magazine *Punch*. Established by Henry Mayhew and Ebenezer Landells in 1841, it soon achieved a wide circulation, mainly amongst the middle and upper classes, and even Royalty were known to have read it.[51] Although it began as a 'bohemian' publication, over the course of the nineteenth century it gradually became humour fit for the Victorian drawing room. In the magazine, Robin Hood was appropriated on a few occasions for the same reasons that he was used in the two *Duke of Lancaster* ballads: to poke fun at statesmen and government policies as well as to air grievances.

The first instance of *Punch* appropriating Robin Hood came in 1863 with a small poem critiquing the actions of Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) during the American Civil War entitled *The Knaves in Lincoln Green*:

> When Federal Bulletins we read
> And Federal Greenbacks see,
> Why do we think of Robin Hood
> Under the green-wood tree?
>
> Is it that LINCOLN'S Cabinet
> Like him defy the law;
> Like him are clad in Lincoln-green,
> Like him the long-bow draw.
>
> Like him more loud their trumpet blow,
> Than heavier odds they face,
> Like him trust largely to their staffs,

[49] See Gatrell, *op cit.*

[50] Robin Hood [pseud.], *Archery and Archness* (London: Hurst, 1834); apart from the author's choice of pseudonym, this work bears no relation to the Robin Hood tradition. Instead, the author 'reviews' various contemporary poetical works, such as *The Task* by William Cowper, and he proceeds to tell readers how boring they are (pp. 4-17).

[51] Richard Altick, *Punch: The Lively Youth of a British Institution, 1841–1851* (Ohio State University Press, 1997), p. 17.

And live on spoils of CHASE.[52]

As in the two *Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster* ballads, we see Robin Hood/Abraham Lincoln acting like outlaws of old, imposing their will with the threat of violence at the point of a bow: the reference to Lincoln defying the law most likely alludes to the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act which was passed by the House of Representatives on 5 December 1862 and ratified by the Senate on 28 January 1863, a month before the poem was published. Moreover, the word CHASE evokes two things. It conjures images of the hunt and the deer that Robin and his men are often depicted as hunting for in the forest. It also refers to Salmon P. Chase (1808-1873), Lincoln's Secretary of the Treasury. The 'spoils' are references to the various taxes that Chase imposed to fund the Union war effort during the American Civil War and the Reconstruction.

Most of the issues that *Punch* uses Robin Hood to critique are what might be termed middle-class problems. One problem that, from the Victorian era to the present, the British public have always had issues with is the seemingly ever-increasing cost of rail travel. In the age of *laissez-faire* economics, the government was often hesitant to intervene in the affairs of rail companies. William E. Gladstone, who in 1844 was President of the Board of Trade, did make some attempt to regulate railway ticket prices.[53] But to the public it appeared as though prices kept increasing. In *The Railway Robin Hood and Little John* (1868), the outlaws, knowing that everybody now travels by train instead of through the forest, realise that they can acquire more money by becoming railway company bosses:

"Now, there thou sayest," quoth Robin Hood,
"Therein the truth dost speak;
And by my troth, they shall fare so
In fares that we wyll take." […]

And soe all that went by rail,
Whereon a holde they had,
The fares were raised by those two fellows:
Men swore it was too bad.[54]

[52] Anon., 'The Knaves in Lincoln-Green', *Punch*, 28 February 1863, p. 89.

[53] *An Act to Attach Certain Conditions to the Construction of Future Railways Authorized or to be Authorized by Any Act of the Present or Succeeding Sessions of Parliament; and for other Purposes in Relation to Railways* C. 85 7 & 8 Victoria (London: HMSO, 1844), pp. 465-476.

[54] Anon., 'The Railway Robin Hood and Little John', *Punch*, 26 September 1868, p. 129.

In the Victorian period, the working classes could even afford to travel by rail: a third class ticket cost one penny per mile as a result of Gladstone's Parliamentary Bill. There is therefore a definite class dimension to the complaint about rail fares in the *Punch* poem. The poem warns Robin Hood and Little John that, if the current rises kept up their momentum, the middle classes, who have always been willing to pay for either second or first class, will be forced to opt for cheaper fares:

> A bad shoote Robin shote, and John,
> With waste of might and mayne;
> Men first-class carriages gave up fast,
> And third to take were fayne.[55]

British politicians were not immune from the *Punch* Brotherhood's pens. In 1894 the Liberals were in power, and Sir William Vernon Harcourt introduced a new budget which proposed a very modest form of wealth redistribution to help the poorer classes of society, but a measure to which the conservative press objected.[56] Thus in the poem *Bold Robin Hood: A Fytte of Forest Finaunce*, Robin stands in for Harcourt who robs a merchant in Sherwood Forest:

> "There thou speketh soothe," the Merchaunte cried,
> "Thou scourge of Propertie!
> But the thing thou dubbest 'Graduation,'
> Is Highway robberie!"
>
> "Robberie?" quoth Bold Robin Hood,
> "Nay that's a slanderous statement.
> Redistribution it is not Theft –
> Nor Exemption, nor Abatement.
>
> "I robbe thee not, thou Mammonite!
> The aim of all my Labours
> Is – to ease thee of superfluous wealth
> For the goods of thy poorer neighbours!"[57]

The poem was accompanied with a full page illustration depicting 'Sir Robin Hood Harcourt (addressing "The Marchaunt")' saying '"Nay, Friend, 'Tis no robbery! I do but ease you of this to relieve your poorer brethren"' (Fig. 2).[58] The 'Graduation' to which the ballad refers was Harcourt's introduction of an estate tax, payable upon a person's death, of one per cent on properties worth £500, and eight per cent on properties worth

55 Anon., 'The Railway Robin Hood and Little John', p. 129.
56 Anon., 'Sir William Harcourt's Possible Budget', *The Spectator*, 24 March 1894, p. 7.
57 Anon., 'Bold Robin Hood: A Fytte of Forest Finaunce', *Punch*, 5 May 1894, p. 210.
58 Anon., 'Bold Robin Hood', *Punch*, 5 May 1894, p. 211.

£1 million.[59] The actual tax rates are immaterial here, except to point out that this was most definitely a tax which would have affected more affluent Victorians. Thus *Punch* magazine here is appropriating Robin Hood to express but also to ridicule middle- and upper-class concerns about taxation, and he is the symbol of a ‘robbing’ establishment.

Figure 2: 'Bold Robin Hood' *Punch*, 5 May 1894, p. 211

[59] Donald Read, *The Age of Urban Democracy, 1868-1914* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 295.

5) The Gentrification Question

As we have seen with the garlands, the fact that a certain Robin Hood publication is being marketed to and read by the elites, and is portrayed as a lord or statesman, does not necessarily imply that it is a gentrified text. Certainly the two Duke of Lancaster ballads were produced for a politically-informed audience of readers. But Robin himself does not receive a gentrified portrayal in any of the above sources. A robbing and allegedly corrupt Prime Minister, colloquially named Robin, was easily equated with the outlaw of medieval legend. One writer in 1737 drew an almost explicit comparison between Robin Hood and those in 'civil employments':

> Had [Robin Hood] turn'd his head to politics, had he been placed in the finances, or promoted to the station of Paymaster, Receiver General, Treasurer […] and robb'd the Exchequer, as Falstaff says, with unwash'd hands; had he plunder'd the publick, in a civil employment, till he had been almost the only rich man in the kingdom, we may conclude from many passages of history that there would have been no signs of him at this day.[60]

The only things which differentiate Robin from public servants are their methods of robbing people, but of course those who rob people through legal means seldom get caught. The references to various government positions such as paymaster, receiver general, and treasurer, are reminiscent of the words of Peachum, the thief taker, in *The Beggar's Opera*, who sings that, 'the statesman because he's so great, thinks his trade as honest as mine.'[61] It seems that in the eighteenth century being a statesman such as Walpole, or in this instance, Robin Hood, was equated with cunning and thievery.

Robin Hood's social status thus has no bearing upon his moral character in eighteenth-century satire, and this is also the case in the nineteenth century. Abraham Lincoln is certainly not of the gentry, for such distinctions of rank disappeared in America following independence. Even the pre-independence gentry in the thirteen colonies, while they were landowners, were not of the aristocracy.[62] In any case, Robin Hood's social status is not referenced in that short poem, and neither is it referenced in *The Railway Robin Hood and Little John*. In that poem, Robin and John are cast as

60 Anon., 'Bravery: The Characteristic of an Englishman', *The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle*, No. 8 (1738), p. 300.

61 Gay, *The Beggar's Opera*, p. 1.

62 Albert H. Tilson, Jr., 'Gentry in Colonial Virginia', in *Encyclopedia Virginia: A Publication of VHF: Virginia Foundation for the Humanities* ed. by Ann Henderson, Monica S. Rumsey & Emily J. Salmon (Charlottesville, VA: Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, 2012) <https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Gentry_in_Colonial_Virginia> [Accessed 27 July 2017].

bourgeois capitalists, rather than as members of the aristocracy. William Harcourt's family was, by its distant ancestry, of the landed gentry. However, he spent most of his life as a member of the professional classes, having been a journalist and then a lawyer. Thus, Robin Hood may be of elevated social status in nineteenth-century satire, and the publication that he appears in is one which is published for the middle classes, but he is not gentrified according to how the idea is commonly understood. Thus, satire is one area of literature which resists any type of supposed gentrification. Robin Hood may be a lord in these texts, and the Duke of Lancaster ballads themselves are certainly published for polite readers, but they are hardly worthy of being called gentrified, if it also means that Robin Hood is required to be of good character.

6) Conclusion

Satirical appropriations of Robin Hood have received little attention thus far from scholars, and this chapter has gone some way to remedying that situation. It is clear that Robin Hood was appropriated to critique the actions of statesmen throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Robin Hood is a statesman in the two ballads, and as Walpole was the Earl of Orford, it might be assumed that contemporaries assumed the Robin Hood of the two *Duke of Lancaster* ballads was also a lord. But Robin is not gentrified in these two texts, and neither is he in the various *Punch* satires. He is depicted in these satires variously as a corrupt statesman with no redeeming aspects in his character, a railway company boss who fleeces his customers, or as a statesman who taxes people too much. Interestingly, the eighteenth-century ballads appeared during a period when the most popular genre of literature – the criminal biography – was thoroughly revising Robin Hood's reputation, and these biographies will form the key sources of the next chapter.

3) 'Of a Licentious, Wicked Inclination': Representations of Robin Hood in Eighteenth-Century Criminal Biography

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'Robin Hood the Brute: Representations of the Outlaw in Eighteenth-Century Criminal Biography', *Law, Crime and History*, 6: 2 (2016), 54-70

1) Introduction

Whilst Stephen Knight's research on Robin Hood is extensive, one genre of literature that he has not as yet examined in detail is eighteenth-century criminal biography. As Robin Hood scholars have hitherto largely neglected this sphere, this discussion of Robin Hood's representations in the genre will draw upon scholarship on criminal biographies by Lincoln B. Faller, Hal Gladfelder, and Andrea McKenzie. Of particular relevance is here is Faller's argument that representations of thieves during the eighteenth century fall broadly into three categories: hero, brute, and buffoon.[1] As we will see, it is primarily, although not exclusively, as a brute that Robin Hood appears in criminal biography, presenting an obvious challenge to the idea of gentrification.

Although critics and the general public tend to view Robin as a legendary figure today, eighteenth-century authors treated him as a historical person, as real as Captain James Hind (1616-1652) or Jack Sheppard (1702-1724). Even at the end of the century, when Joseph Ritson published his biography in 1795, Robin Hood was viewed as a historical personality. This is not to say that criminal biographers never invented details, because they most certainly did, as we will see. And neither did criminal biographers strive to present scholarly accounts of the offenders about whom they were writing. But the idea that Robin was legendary or 'mythic' only emerged during the mid-Victorian era, when scholars such as Thomas Wright (1810-1877) came up with bizarre theories linking Robin Hood with Teutonic mythical figures such as Hudekin.[2]

1 Faller, *Turned to Account*, p. 127.
2 Knight, *Robin Hood: A Mythic Biography*, p. 146.

Robin Hood appears in several criminal biographies, most of which were authored anonymously or pseudonymously. The first of these appearances is in *The Noble Birth and Gallant Atchievements* [sic] *of that Remarkable Outlaw, Robin Hood* (1678). It is tempting to analyse *The Noble Birth* as part of the corpus of picaresque fiction. It contains some similarities to works such as *Vida de Guzman de Alfarache* (1599) and *The Swindler* (1626), both of which depict a socially marginal anti-hero surviving by his wits and eventually succeeding in life.[3] However, a requirement for a work of fiction to be deserving of the description of picaresque is that the protagonist is not a criminal, a definition that scholars have held since it was first outlined in F. W. Chandler's *The Literature of Roguery* (1907).[4] The next major work to feature Robin is the third volume of Alexander Smith's *A Complete History of the Lives and Robberies of the Most Notorious Highwaymen* (1719), in which he is listed as 'a highwayman and murderer'. Robin also appears in Charles Johnson's *Lives and Actions of the Most Noted Highwaymen* (1734), as well as two anonymously authored works, *The Whole Life and Merry Exploits of Bold Robin Hood, Earl of Huntingdon* (1737),[5] and *The Remarkable History of Robin Hood, and Little John* (1787). The genre did not simply disappear at the end of the eighteenth century, but persisted through to the twentieth. In addition to an examination of these hitherto unexamined eighteenth-century sources, therefore, this chapter will also investigate Robin Hood's appearances in Charles Macfarlane and Charles Whitehead's highwaymen histories, in addition to the stories of Robin Hood that appeared in 'true' crime periodicals such as *Lives of the Most Notorious Highwaymen, Footpads, and Murderers* (1836) and the early twentieth-century *Famous Crimes: Past and Present*.

This chapter will thus provide a commentary upon these neglected sources, showing how Robin Hood, with some exceptions, was de-historicised and depicted as

[3] F. W. Chandler, *The Literature of Roguery*, 2 vols (Boston: Burton Franklin, 1957) 1: 5; rogue and picaresque literature is described as 'the comic biography (or more often autobiography) of an anti-hero who makes his way in the world through the service of masters, satirizing their personal faults, as well as their trades and professions. It possesses, therefore, two poles of interest – one, the rogue and his tricks; the other, the manners he pillories. Since the rogue moves from master to master, he is often a traveller, yet that fact offers no excuse for confounding the picaresque novel with the novel of mere adventure'.

[4] John P. Kent & J. L. Gaunt, 'Picaresque Fiction: A Bibliographic Essay', *College Literature*, 6: 3 (1979), 245-270 (p. 246).

[5] In an email he sent me, Robin Hood scholar Thomas Hahn informed me that there is a copy of *The Whole Life* in the British Library with the handwritten date of 1712 on it. The edition this chapter uses, however, is the 1737 edition, which date is *printed* on the title page. Hahn is currently working on producing an edited collection of these early prose accounts.

one of the worst types of contemporary criminals. The reason for this is that, at a time of public anxiety over crime, people were less willing to believe in the myth of a good outlaw. These sources will also be used to show how nobility does not always equate to morality, for despite some of these texts presenting Robin Hood as a lord, as we will see, they cannot be considered gentrified accounts.

2) Crime and Criminal Biography in the Eighteenth Century

The criminal biographies of Robin Hood have hitherto been assumed by scholars to have been relatively minor texts within the overall tradition. Stephen Knight has little to say on the subject in *Reading Robin Hood*, commenting that 'several of the serial collections of criminal characters, including some versions of *The Newgate Calendar*, list [Robin Hood]'.[6] To begin with, then, it is best to explain why criminal biography emerged during the eighteenth century, and to demonstrate how significant the genre was, thereby justifying its inclusion here.

The eighteenth century was a time of great concern about what was perceived to be an ever-increasing crime wave. One commentator in the late seventeenth century exclaimed that 'even at noonday, and in the most open spaces in London, persons are stopped and robbed'.[7] *Newes from Newgate* similarly reported that 'notwithstanding the severity of our wholesome laws, and vigilancy of magistrates against robbers and highwaymen, 'tis too notorious that the roads are almost perpetually infested with them'.[8] *The Cheats of London Exposed* (c. 1750?), which is basically a rehash of John Awdley's *The Fraternity of Vagabonds* (1561), speaks of 'the many shocking crimes committed in and about London, as well as frauds and cheats daily practised, on the unwary tradesman, mechanic, and deluded countryman'.[9] The novelist, and magistrate of Westminster, Henry Fielding, adopts an alarmist tone in *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers* (1751):

6 Knight, *Reading Robin Hood*, p. 106; Robin Hood does not, as it happens, appear in any eighteenth-century edition of *The Newgate Calendar* which I have checked. The only edition of *The Newgate Calendar* that he appears in is the five volume edition published in 1927 by the Navarre Society, which is actually just an amalgamation of Johnson's and Smith's criminal compendia.

7 Faller, *Turned to Account*, p. x.

8 Anon. *Newes from Newgate*, cited in Hal Gladfelder, *Criminality and Narrative in Eighteenth-Century England: Beyond the Law* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), p. 47.

9 Anon. *The Cheats of London Exposed, or, The Frauds and Tricks of the Town* (London: Hogg [n.d.]), p. 3.

> I make no doubt, but that the streets of this town, and the roads leading to it, will shortly be impassable without the utmost hazard, nor are we threatened with seeing less dangerous gangs of rogues among us, than those which the Italians call the *banditti*.[10]

Whether the incidence of crime was as bad as its representation in contemporary print culture or not is debatable. Newspapers certainly exaggerated the situation when it came to reporting crimes against property. Previous research by scholars has shown how in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, property theft accounted for forty four per cent of newspaper reports, despite the fact that only seven per cent of crimes tried at the Old Bailey were property-related.[11] Yet contemporary court records reveal that there were indeed peaks in the level of indictments occurring in the 1690s, 1720s, 1740s, and 1770s, following the demobilisation of soldiers after various wars had come to an end.[12] Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker, however, highlight the fact the increasing number of indictments during the latter period was partially due to the fact that the Bow Street Runners were more intensive in their efforts in policing minor offences such as vagrancy, and indictments for theft in the 1770s rose only marginally.[13] Some overseas visitors to England thought that accounts of crime were exaggerated. The Frenchman Pierre Jean-Grosley, for instance, remarked that despite being constantly warned against criminals, he was never robbed once.[14] Thus, the actual incidence of crime was more of an 'irritant' to honest people rather than a menace.[15]

The moral panic over the perceived increase in crime left its mark upon criminal biographies, newspaper articles, books, pamphlets, and 'Last Dying Speeches'.[16] Four of the most famous criminal biographies from the period are Smith's *Highwaymen*, Johnson's *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious*

[10] Henry Fielding, *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers, &c.* (Dublin: G. Faulkner, 1751), p. 1.

[11] Robert Shoemaker, 'The Street Robber and the Gentleman Highwayman: Changing Representations and Perceptions of Robbery in London, 1690-1800', *Cultural and Social History*, 3: 4 (2006), 381-405 (p. 383).

[12] McKenzie, *Tyburn's Martyrs*, p. 105.

[13] Tim Hitchcock & Robert Shoemaker, *London Lives: Poverty, Crime, and the Making of a Modern City, 1690-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 270. The Bow Street Runners were the first semi-professional law enforcement agency established in London, and worked directly with Bow Street Magistrates office to catch offenders.

[14] Gregory J. Durston, *Whores and Highwaymen: Crime and Justice in the Eighteenth-Century Metropolis* (Hook: Waterside Press, 2012), p. 91.

[15] James A. Sharpe, *Crime in Early Modern England 1550-1750* (London and New York, 1984), pp. 119-120.

[16] Faller, *Turned to Account*, p. x.

Pyrates (1724),[17] Johnson's *Highwaymen*, and his last work entitled *Lives of the Most Remarkable Criminals* (1735). Pamphlets containing the lives of individual criminals were also published. It has been suggested by some critics that Defoe authored two standalone biographies of Jack Sheppard and one of the thief taker, Jonathan Wild.[18] Other standalone biographies existed such as the anonymous *A Complete History of James Maclaine, the Gentleman Highwayman* (c.1750). There were also serialised publications such as *The Ordinary of Newgate's Account*, which ran between 1676 and 1772, and *The Proceedings of the Old Bailey*, which ran between 1674 and 1913. In all, Faller points to the existence of over two thousand criminal biographies which were published during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[19] Yet to say that criminal narratives merely reflected the fear of crime is insufficient, for it was a two-way process. As the fear of crime increased, so did its expression in the proliferation of criminal biography; this in turn contributed to a moral climate of panic and danger, which then required the intervention of ever harsher laws to maintain civic order.[20]

It was people from the middle classes who formed the primary audience for criminal biographies.[21] There was certainly a ready market for these narratives: Kate Loveman notes that the number of males living in the capital who were unable to sign their names declined between 1670 and 1720 from 22% to 8%.[22] James V. H. Melton further highlights the fact that by 1750 over 60% of men were literate, along with 40% of females.[23] Indications of these works' audiences can be gained from their prefaces: the first volume of Smith's *Highwaymen* addresses 'honest gentlemen';[24] Johnson states that his *Remarkable Criminals* 'will not be without its uses amongst the middling sort of people'.[25] In short, criminal biographies were a predominantly middle-class

17 Charles Johnson, *A General and True History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates*, ed. by Arthur Heyward (London: Routledge, 1927).

18 P. N. Furbank & W. R. Owens, *Defoe De-Attributions: A Critique of J. R. Moore's Checklist* (London: Hambledon, 1994); these works were attributed to Defoe originally in J. R. Moore's checklist of works authored by Daniel Defoe, although this view has recently been challenged, but this view has recently been challenged by P. N. Furbank and W. R. Owens.

19 Faller, *Turned to Account*, p. x.

20 Gladfelder, *Criminality and Narrative*, p. 47.

21 McKenzie, *Tyburn's Martyrs*, p. 35.

22 Kate Loveman, 'A Life of Continu'd Variety: Crime, Readers, and the Structure of Defoe's *Moll Flanders*', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 26: 1 (2013), 1-32 (p. 9).

23 Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe*, p. 84.

24 Smith, *Highwaymen*, p. 3.

25 Charles Johnson, *Lives of the Most Remarkable Criminals Who Have Been Condemned and Executed for Murder, the Highway, Housebreaking, Street Robberies and Other Offences* ed. by Arthur Heyward (London: Routledge, 1927), p. i.

phenomenon.[26] And they were expensive: the third volume of Smith's *Highwaymen* cost half a crown; *Compleat Tryals* retailed at a price of ten shillings for the set. These publications were not cheap at a time when two shillings a day was the standard wage for a labourer.[27] Johnson's *Highwaymen*, furthermore, was published in folio format with full page engravings, which is suggestive of a polite readership.[28] The frontispiece to *The Newgate Calendar* (Fig. 3) is indicative of the type of polite audience that the publishers of that work expected. In the picture, an affluent lady sitting in a lavishly furnished house hands her son a copy of *The Newgate Calendar* while pointing to the gallows outside the window.

Figure 3: Frontispiece to *The Newgate Calendar* (1784)

26 Faller, *Turned to Account*, p. 206.
27 Faller, *Turned to Account*, p. 47.
28 Faller, *Turned to Account*, p. 47.

This is not to say that there were no cheaper alternatives. Many of the less expensive pamphlets published during the period told the lives of individual criminals. A price of sixpence is listed on the title page of *The Life and Genuine History of Richard Turpin* (1739).[29] The same price is also listed for *The Life, Actions, and Exploits of the Most Notorious and Famous Mary Field* (1748).[30] As we have seen, eighteenth-century editions of *Robin Hood's Garland* including material from Johnson's *Highwaymen* typically retailed at between four pence and sixpence, which was higher than the cost of an average chapbook, but certainly not as expensive as a large work such as Smith's. *The Life and Villainous Actions of that Notorious Offender, Jonathan Wild* (1725) would have set a purchaser back three pence.[31] At the lower end of the price range, 'Last Dying Speeches' broadsides were sold at public executions for one penny. The title page of Sir John Fielding's *True Examples of the Interposition of Providence, in the Discovery and Punishment of Murder* (c.1750?) lists a price of a halfpenny.[32] Thus there was a range of literature to suit a variety of incomes, but the works with which this chapter deals were clearly intended for an affluent readership.

3) <u>The Birth and Parentage of Robin Hood</u>

The structure of this discussion is divided into three sections, following the structure in which the life of Robin Hood is always presented to the readers of criminal biographies: birth and parentage, early life and descent into a life of crime, and death.[33] An account of the malefactor's parentage is always included in criminal biography. The reason for this, as Fielding muses in a revised edition of *Jonathan Wild* (1743), is so that 'the hero's ancestors [are] introduced as foils to himself'.[34] Thus, many offenders' parents are often 'honest and respectable', in order to highlight the dishonesty and lack of respectability in their children. Each criminal biography differs in its explanations of

29 Anon. *The Life and Genuine History of Richard Turpin* (London: J. Standen, 1739), p. i.

30 Anon., *The Life, Actions, and Exploits of the Most Notorious and Villainous Mary Field* (Dublin: Printed for the Author, 1748), p. i.

31 Anon., *The Life and Villainous Actions of that Notorious Offender, Jonathan Wild* (London: T. Catesby, 1725), p. i.

32 John Fielding, *True Examples of the Interposition of Providence, in the Discovery and Punishment of Murder* (London: J. Marshall, [n.d.]), p. i; the author is listed as Henry Fielding in most archival records, but the text itself refers to John Fielding as having authored it.

33 Andromeda L. Hartwick, 'Serial Selves: Identity, Genre, and Form in the Eighteenth Century' (PhD Thesis, University of Michigan, 2015), p. 67.

34 Henry Fielding, *The History of the Life of the Late Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great* (London: J. Bell, 1775), p. 4. This statement does not, however, appear in modern critical editions of the text.

Robin's birth and parentage. As the title suggests, *The Noble Birth* confers a peerage upon Robin.[35] Yet Smith is unconvinced with the story of Robin Hood's high-ranking descent:

> This bold robber, Robin Hood, was, some write, descended of the noble family of the earls of Huntingdon; but that is only fiction, for his birth was but very obscure, his pedigree *ab origine* being no higher than poor shepherds, who for some time lived in Nottinghamshire, in which county, at a little village adjacent to the Forest of Sherwood, he was born in the reign of King Henry the Second.[36]

In contrast to Smith, the 1737 biography, *The Whole Life and Merry Exploits of Bold Robin Hood* calls Robin 'our famous Earl of Huntingdon'.[37] Finally, towards the end of the century in *The Remarkable History of Robin Hood and Little John*, it is said that 'this renowned hero was the lawful son of a very illustrious man (no less than the head ranger of the north parts of England)'.[38]

Three of the accounts presented here have retained the so-called gentrified tradition of Robin Hood's birth, while Smith assigns him very lowly status. It can justly be said, however, that criminal biographers cared little for whether he was in actuality of noble birth or not, and although these accounts are presented as histories, they should be viewed as fictional narratives. That is to say that, these authors knew that Robin Hood was a real person, but that they did little research into the historical origins of the outlaw and were content to, as we will see, simply make things up. Many late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century narratives were branded as 'histories' or 'lives' such as *The Life and Strange Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719).[39] Perhaps the best gauge of Smith's commitment to historical veracity is the fact that he presents the reader with an account of the life of the entirely fictional

35 Anon., 'The Noble Birth and Gallant Atchievements of that Remarkable Out-Law, Robin Hood', in *Early English Prose Romances*, ed. by William Thoms, 3 Vols (London: William Pickering, 1828), 2: 1.

36 Alexander Smith, *A Complete History of the Lives and Robberies of Most Notorious Highwaymen, Footpads, Shoplifts, and Cheats, of Both Sexes. Wherein their Most Secret and Barbarous Murders, Unparalleled Robberies, Notorious Thefts, and Un-Heard of Cheats are Set in a True Light and Exposed to Public View for the Common Benefit of Mankind*, ed. by Arthur Heyward (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1933), p. 408.

37 Anon., *The Whole Life and Merry Exploits of Bold Robin Hood* (London: Printed for Henry Woodgate and Samuel Brooks, at the Golden Ball, in Paternoster Row, 1737), p. 1.

38 Anon., *The Remarkable History of Robin Hood and Little John; also of Henry Jenkins* (Knaresborough: Printed for Broadbells, 1787), p. 3.

39 Robert Mayer, *History and the Early English Novel: Matters of Fact from Bacon to Defoe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 4.

Shakespearean character, Sir John Falstaff.[40] This account of Falstaff is virtually plagiarised in Johnson's *Highwaymen*.[41] Thus, these criminal biographies were not scholarly histories despite their titles, and criminal biographers often cast aspersions upon the quality of each other's works. Shortly after Smith was writing, the biography of the brigand, Rob Roy, entitled *The Highland Rogue* (1723) criticised the earlier author, saying 'what an object of contempt and ridicule is Captain Alexander Smith […] his works are a confus'd lump of absurd lies, gross obscenity, awkward cant, and dull profaneness'.[42] Similarly, an early edition of Johnson's Highwaymen accuses most of Smith's accounts of being 'bare-fac'd inventions'.[43] Learned antiquaries in the latter half of the century also voiced concerns about the veracity of some of these accounts. When Joseph Ritson was writing in 1795, he offered the following assessment of Johnson's scholarship:

> Another piece of biography, from which not much will be expected, is "The lives and heroick atchievements of the renowned Robin Hood, and *James Hind*, two noted robbers and highwaymen, London, 1752" 8vo. This, however, is probably nothing more than an extract from Johnson's *Lives of the Highwaymen*, in which, as a specimen of the author's historical authenticity, we have the life and actions of that noted robber, Sir John Falstaff.[44]

The fact that Robin is Earl of Huntingdon in some accounts, and in others was born 'no higher than poor shepherds' was immaterial to the eighteenth-century criminal biographer. Johnson, in fact, is unconcerned with giving an authoritative account of Robin's birth:

> Such is the celebrity of this character […] that we will be excused from giving rather a lengthened account of him […] He was said by some to

[40] Smith, *Highwaymen*, pp. 5-13; although it has been theorised by some scholars that Shakespeare based his character of Falstaff upon the life of Sir John Fastolf (1380-1459), Smith's account is taken directly from Shakespeare. For more information see Stephen Cooper, *The Real Falstaff, Sir John Fastolf and the Hundred Years War* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2010).

[41] Johnson, *Highwaymen*, pp. 52-9.

[42] Anon., *The Highland Rogue: or, The Memorable Actions of the Celebrated Robert Mac-Gregor, commonly called Rob Roy* (London: Billingsley, 1723), p. vii.

[43] Charles Johnson, *A General and True History of the Lives and Actions of the Most Famous Highwaymen, Murderers, Street-Robbers* (Birmingham: Walker, 1742), p. 311.

[44] Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: xiv; I have attempted to locate the text to which Ritson refers but have been unable to thus far, though there is no reason to doubt Ritson's assertion that the account of Robin Hood is simply a reprint of Johnson's, for the latter's work was republished frequently throughout the century.

> have been the Earl of Huntingdon, and born in Henry II's time; and by others he is said to have been the child of two shepherds.[45]

Robin's social origins were of little significance to writers such as Smith and Johnson because criminality in the eighteenth century was not related to social class. The notion of a criminal underclass when Smith was writing was yet to fully emerge, being an invention of the nineteenth century.[46] When Smith was writing, everyone was viewed as capable of committing crime because all men were tainted from birth by sin.[47] Criminals could come from supposedly respectable backgrounds as well as from poorer backgrounds – they were only different from law abiding people in the degree to which they had allowed themselves to indulge in their sinful inclinations.[48] Crimes were sins, and as sinning was universal, criminals could not be defined as inherently different from honest people;[49] rather, crime was seen as an expression of moral weakness and corruption.[50] Thus, eighteenth-century criminology did not seek to explain crime in socio-economic terms. It was through seeing a criminal's conduct that a moral lesson could be learned. Gentle birth clearly is not important to these writers.

4) The Life of Robin Hood

All criminal biographies from *The Noble Birth* in the seventeenth century to *The Remarkable History* in the late eighteenth century tell a similar story regarding Robin's descent into outlawry. Smith says that Robin was 'bred up a butcher, but being of a very licentious, wicked inclination, he followed not his trade, but in the reign of King Henry the Second, [associated] himself with several robbers and outlaws, was chosen as their captain'.[51] Similarly, Johnson recounts that Robin 'trained to the occupation of a butcher, but his roving disposition was soon disgusted with that industrious employment'.[52] There is no precedent in the Robin Hood tradition which depicts Robin

45 Johnson, *Highwaymen*, p. 70.
46 Clive Emsley, *Crime and Society in England, 1750-1900* (London: Longman, 1987), p. 49.
47 Faller, *Turned to Account*, p. 54.
48 Faller, *Turned to Account*, p. 126.
49 Faller, *Turned to Account*, p. 6.
50 Ian Bell, *Literature and Crime in Augustan England* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1991), p. 42.
51 Smith, *Highwaymen*, p. 408.
52 Johnson, *Highwaymen*, p. 70.

as a butcher.[53] This is an eighteenth-century invention as there was thought to be a connection between the meat trade and highway robbery: Peter Linebaugh notes that a disproportionate number of those hanged at Tyburn for highway robbery were found to have been apprenticed to the butchers' trade.[54] James Hind, for instance, was apprenticed to a butcher,[55] and Dick Turpin also was a butcher.[56] Butchers were prominently integrated into the local community, and they would know when a potential target returned from market with money about his person.[57] From their experience in cattle driving they would have been familiar with the local terrain, and their dealings with fellow market traders, innkeepers, and victualing houses would have provided them with an outlet for the sale and disposal of their stolen goods.[58] Aside from these practical reasons, there was also thought to be a moral reason why butchers might become robbers. In *Remarkable Criminals*, Johnson argues that if a person chose to enter the butchers' trade then they likely had 'a bloody and barbarous disposition'.[59] This is fitting for the negative depiction that Robin receives in criminal biography. Thus the portrayal of Robin Hood as having been 'bred up a butcher' de-historicises him and places him in the same cultural and social milieu as contemporary highwaymen.

The notion that someone was 'born to be hanged', however, is at odds with the universality of original sin, and the theory that anyone might become a criminal. It is a paradox that the writers of criminal biography themselves could never explain. If sin was inherent in every man and woman, then the wonder, as Faller suggests, is not that crime was so prevalent but that it was not universal.[60] The subtle class consciousness that is apparent in some criminal narratives explains why Smith is keen to make Robin downwardly mobile. As we have seen, Johnson's *Remarkable Criminals* was aimed at 'the middling sort of people',[61] and Fielding's *Enquiry* manifests a condescending

53 Robin does temporarily assume the identity of a butcher in the late seventeenth-century broadside ballad *Robin Hood and the Butcher* (a variant of which also appears in the Percy Folio), but he is not born into or apprenticed to the trade in the narrative.

54 Linebaugh, *The London Hanged*, pp. 184-85.

55 Smith, *Highwaymen*, p. 136.

56 James Sharpe, *Dick Turpin: The Myth of the English Highwayman* (London: Profile Books, 2004), p. 109.

57 Linebaugh, *The London Hanged*, p. 210.

58 Linebaugh, *The London Hanged*, p. 210.

59 Johnson, *Remarkable Criminals*, p. 211.

60 Faller, *Turned to Account*, p. 54.

61 Johnson, *Remarkable Criminals*, p. i.

attitude towards 'the lower kind of people'.[62] There is therefore a distance between the theory of criminality in the eighteenth century and its representation in print.

Another aspect of these narratives which de-historicises Robin and makes him effectively an eighteenth-century criminal is the fact that 'he followed not his trade'.[63] The theme of young men casting aside a trade and turning to crime is a recurring one in criminal biography. For example, the highwayman Humphrey Angier was bound as an apprentice to a cooper 'but his behaviour […] was so bad that his master utterly despaired to do any good with him, and therefore was not sorry that he ran away from him'.[64] The theme is also echoed in Jack Sheppard's biography. When Sheppard meets the prostitute Edgeworth Bess they begin cohabiting, and it is from that point that 'Sheppard grows weary of the yoke of servitude'.[65] Idleness was sometimes perceived as the first stage on the road to Tyburn, and this view was illustrated by William Hogarth in *Industry and Idleness* (1747) which tells the story of two apprentices whose lives follow different paths: the industrious apprentice rises through the ranks to become a magistrate, and the idle apprentice is eventually hanged at Tyburn.[66]

However, idleness was not the only marker of potential criminality in these narratives of Robin's life. In the 1737 biography, Robin Hood's early life differs from Smith's portrayal. He is the Earl of Huntingdon, and from his youth manifests a love of good living, and it is stated that Robin became an outlaw because he squandered his inheritance and took to the road.[67] Criminal biography usually portrays offenders' criminal careers as something that had small beginnings, such as stealing farthings and marbles when they were young, eventually growing into 'great oaks of iniquity'.[68] These small crimes progressed further until the criminal could no longer help himself. Vice was an addiction which led to crime, as indicated in Johnson's account of the footpad, Robert Crouch, who 'addicted himself to gaming, drinking, and whoring, and all the other vices which are so natural to abandoned young fellows in low life'.[69] Similarly, Johnson describes the robber Arthur Chambers as having been 'from his very

62 Fielding, *An Enquiry*, p. 3.
63 Smith, *Highwaymen*, p. 408.
64 Johnson, *Remarkable Criminals*, p. 133.
65 Anon., 'The History of the Remarkable Life of John Sheppard', in *Defoe on Sheppard and Wild*, ed. by Richard Holmes (London: Harper, 2004), 1-44 (p. 6).
66 Sarah Jordan, 'From Grotesque Bodies to Useful Hands: Idleness, Industry, and the Laboring Class', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 25: 3 (2001), 62-79 (p. 73).
67 Anon., *The Whole Life and Merry Exploits of Bold Robin Hood*, p. 7.
68 McKenzie, *Tyburn's Martyrs*, p. 59.
69 Johnson, *Remarkable Criminals*, p. 439.

infancy […] addicted to pilfering'.[70] Robin Hood's downfall in Smith's *Highwaymen* begins with him turning away from his trade, whilst in the 1737 version it is evidently a love of good living, since he squanders his father's estate.

In all of these accounts Robin does, nevertheless, steal from the rich and give to the poor, and this must be accounted for with a brief discussion. Johnson records that 'his ingenuity […] suggested the expedient of robbing the rich to supply the wants of the poor'.[71] In the context of contemporary attitudes to highwaymen who did the same, however, the fact that Robin steals from the rich and gives to the poor in these narratives does not make him either justified or gentrified. There are several instances in Smith's work of other highwaymen, such as James Hind, stealing from the rich to give to the poor.[72] Claims by contemporary highwaymen that they stole from the rich and gave to the poor were often met with an indifferent response from public officials. For example, when the highwayman Paul Lewis offered this justification to the Ordinary of Newgate in 1763, the clergyman sarcastically replied that this was 'a common excuse for all thieves and robbers'.[73] Thus, the practice was not seen as a form of noble paternalism, but merely a standard excuse used by criminals to cover their supposed moral depravity.

The main feature of Robin Hood's personality which Smith and others want to emphasise is not that he stole from the rich and gave to the poor, but his criminality. Robin's 'wicked and licentious' inclinations are highlighted to provide moral instruction to readers, as Smith states in his preface that readers, through observing 'the dreadful aspects of vice they may be deterred from embracing her illusions'.[74] In his second volume, Smith reiterates his moral message, opining that 'nobody of common sense who sees how these miserable wretches have made themselves by their evil courses will be tempted to tread in the same steps, which lead directly to the gallows'.[75] The writers of eighteenth-century criminal narratives are not interested in viewing crime from a legal standpoint, or debating the innocence of an offender. Neither do they interest themselves with whether there were any external factors such as poverty or

70 Johnson, *Highwaymen*, p. 59.
71 Johnson, *Highwaymen*, p. 70.
72 Smith, *Highwaymen*, p. 137.
73 Stephen Roe, *The Ordinary of Newgate's* Account, cited in Shoemaker, 'The Street Robber and the Gentleman Highwayman', p. 389.
74 Smith, *Highwaymen*, p. 137.
75 Smith, *Highwaymen*, p. 211.

unemployment that might have driven an offender to crime. Instead, crime is viewed in works such as Smith's purely from a moral standpoint.[76]

Furthermore, Robin Hood, as modern audiences understand his legend, is always accompanied by his merry men. This is usually a positive portrayal of life in the greenwood, symbolising truth, loyalty, honour, and brotherhood. But in the eighteenth century, the most popular and heroic criminals were portrayed as acting alone.[77] Bands of outlaws were rarely seen as 'gallant'. On the contrary, the idea of organised bands of criminals caused popular alarm.[78] In Johnson's *Remarkable Criminals*, Robin and his men are compared to 'banditti'.[79] Ten years before Johnson was writing, the London mob was unanimous in its condemnation of the thief taker, Jonathan Wild, as he passed in the cart to Tyburn on the day of his execution, pelting him with rotten fruit and eggs, baying for his blood.[80] Wild was a receiver of stolen goods who ran a vast criminal network whilst functioning as London's chief law enforcer.[81] Admittedly, Wild is a special case, but as we have seen, there was concern about gangs of highwaymen during the century. Fielding in his *Enquiry* rails against '*gangs* of rogues […which the] Italians call the banditti' (emphasis added),[82] and he further muses upon 'the great difficulty of extirpating desperate gangs of robbers, when once collected into a body'.[83] The link between highwaymen and Italian banditti was not a favourable one: some robbers in eighteenth-century England, such as Jack Sheppard, did indeed enjoy celebrity status among the populace during the eighteenth century, but this was not a universal feeling towards robbers as a whole. Highwaymen were popular figures at the gallows when they were about to die, but as Anton Blok says of the banditti, '[they] very often terrorised those from whose ranks they had managed to rise'.[84] The case of Edward Burnworth, Thomas Berry, Emanuel Dickenson, William Marjoram, and John Higgs recorded in Johnson's *Remarkable Criminals* is a case in point: the account reveals that

76 Gladfelder, *Criminality and Narrative*, p. 37.
77 Faller, *Turned to Account*, p. 180.
78 Faller, *Turned to Account*, p. 179.
79 Johnson, *Remarkable Criminals*, pp. 306-07.
80 *Conmen and Cutpurses: Scenes from the Hogarthian Underworld*, ed. by Lucy Moore (London: Penguin, 2001), p. 260.
81 Heather Shore, *London's Criminal Underworlds, c.1720-c.1930: A Social and Cultural History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2015), pp. 25-28.
82 Fielding, *An Enquiry*, p. 2.
83 Fielding, *An Enquiry*, p. 2.
84 Anton Blok, *Honour and Violence* (London: Polity, 2000), p. 16.

this gang of thieves would indeed rob people of any class and were men to be feared.[85] The fact that Robin Hood in eighteenth-century criminal biography is portrayed as the leader of a band of ruffians further reinforces his 'brute' status.

Furthermore, Robin is never depicted as a mounted robber. By default this would have made him in contemporary readers' minds a mere footpad, at least by the standards of eighteenth-century highwaymen. Legendary and heroic highwaymen are always mounted robbers, capable of outstanding feats of horsemanship.[86] An indicator of this is the alleged ride to York from London in one day which was attributed first to the highwayman, William Nevison, in Defoe's *A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1727), before finally resting upon Turpin in William Harrison Ainsworth's novel *Rookwood* (1834).[87] In contrast, the footpad was represented as a meaner, baser type of creature. Footpads were distinguished from highwaymen, not just by the fact that the latter robbed on horseback, but because footpads were perceived to be more violent and from lower social origins than highwaymen.[88] It was a dichotomy that by the mid-eighteenth century had become widely accepted in the popular press, although in reality the distinction between a 'heroic' mounted robber and a common and cruel footpad was often blurred.[89]

To conclude this section on Robin Hood's life, and to illustrate further just how negative a portrayal Robin receives in eighteenth-century criminal biography, it is useful to examine how Smith portrays his encounter with King Richard I. In *A Gest of Robyn Hode* the king meets Robin in the forest and the latter enters his service. This reconciliation with the king is a theme that is replayed with variations in Scott's *Ivanhoe*, and in modern portrayals of the legend. The story is different, however, in criminal biography: Robin simply robs the King. Smith records the following account of the meeting between the King and Robin Hood: 'the King, seeing it was in vain to resist Robin Hood's power, he [sic] gave him a purse in which was about 100 pieces of gold; but swore when he was got out of his clutches that he would certainly hang him whenever he was taken'.[90] 'Heroic' seventeenth- and eighteenth-century highwaymen are often depicted as ardent Royalists. Hind is heroic in Smith's work and his crowning

85 Johnson, *Remarkable Criminals*, pp. 306-24.
86 Patrick Parrinder, 'Highway Robbery and Property Circulation in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 13: 4 (2001), 509-528 (p. 513).
87 Sharpe, *Dick Turpin*, p. 74.
88 Shoemaker, 'The Street Robber and the Gentleman Highwayman', p. 386.
89 Shoemaker, 'The Street Robber and the Gentleman Highwayman', p. 388.
90 Smith, *Highwaymen*, p. 12.

achievement is that he once robbed 'that infamous usurper Oliver Cromwell'.[91] The seventeenth-century highwayman, Whitney, justified his offences by claiming allegiance to the Jacobite cause.[92] Yet Robin Hood, as he is represented in criminal biography, cannot claim any political justification for his actions, and he is loyal to no King, nor does the representation of his death serve to redeem him either.

5) The Death of Robin Hood

The traditional story of Robin Hood's death is derived from the *Gest* and another early modern ballad entitled *The Death of Robin Hood*. According to this story, his death is caused by the treachery of the Prioress of Kirklees, Robin's cousin, who conspires with her lover, Sir Roger of Doncaster, to kill him by letting him bleed to death. While Robin is dying, Little John asks him if he might burn Kirklees Priory to the ground in retaliation for the nun's treachery – a request which Robin refuses.[93]

There are several differences between the ballad account of Robin's death and those which appear in criminal biographies. In *The Noble Birth*, Robin does not meet his fate at the hands of the Prioress, but actually grows rich and leads a good life after his pardon from the King: 'Robin Hood dismissed all his idle companions, and betaking himself to a civil course of life, he did keep a gallant house, and had all over the country, the love of the rich, and the prayers of the poor'.[94] This is a typical picaresque ending, with the protagonist, having suffered a series of adverse circumstances, and having lived a life that, if not fully criminal, skirts the bounds of legality, finally attaining wealth and status.[95] However, Smith fully revises the account of the outlaw's last moments:

> Robin Hood had continued in his licentious course of life for 20 years, when being very sick, and then struck with some remorse of conscience, he privately withdrew himself to a monastery in Yorkshire, where being

91 Smith, *Highwaymen*, p. 138.

92 Shoemaker, 'The Street Robber and the Gentleman Highwayman,' p. 389.

93 Anon., 'The Death of Robin Hood', in *Robin Hood and Other Outlaw Tales*, ed. by Stephen Knight & Thomas Ohlgren (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2000), pp. 592-98.

94 Anon. 'The Noble Birth', p. 35.

95 See *Lazarillo de Tormes and The Swindler: Two Spanish Picaresque Novels*, Trans. Michael Alpert (London: Penguin, 2003), pp. 1-60; for example, Lazaro in Lazarillo de Tormes, for instance, has to con his blind keeper out of money and food, and goes from master to master until he grows rich and marries someone, leaving aside his former life.

> let blood by a nun, he bled to death, aged 43 years, and was buried in Kinslay.[96]

The nun in Smith's account receives no censure for killing Robin Hood by allowing him to bleed to death when he had sought medical treatment: his death in a monastery of all places is likened almost to divine punishment for the 'licentious course of life' he has led. The same story is followed in Johnson's account, although it is a monk who bleeds him.[97] It is a similar story in the 1737 version of Robin's life, although it is again a monk who bleeds him in this text:

> Robin Hood continued in his licentious course of life above twenty years, when falling sick, he was then struck with some remorse of conscience for all his former misdeeds and unlawful practices, upon which he privately withdrew himself to a Monastery in Yorkshire, where being let blood by a monk, he bled to death, aged 43 years, and was buried in Kinslay.[98]

In the 1787 version the story is different again:

> Being worn out with the many desperate battles he engaged himself in, he retired to his cousin's who then resided at Kirkley-Hall in the County of York, and upon desiring her to let him blood, she did it so effectually that *she meant him never to do any more harm*, for, after opening a vein, she locked him in a room, where he bled to death; but, just before his departing, he sounded his bugle horn, when Little John, who heard the summons, directly **[**went**]** to his lord and master, who begged with his last breath that Kirkley Hall and the nunnery adjoining it, might be burned to the ground as revenge for his death – which request we are informed was complied with (emphasis added).[99]

The reason that criminal biographers have revised accounts of Robin's death is because he is not simply a highwayman but guilty of 'several most notorious robberies and murders'.[100] Robin would eventually be brought to account for his crimes because during this period people believed that God himself directly intervened in the detection and punishment of murder as this crime was perceived as 'a direct attack on God'.[101] This was a belief that stretched as far back as the sixteenth century, as the author of *The Theatre of God's Judgement* (originally published in 1597 but reprinted throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) intimated: 'the justice of God riseth up, and with his own arme he discovereth and punisheth the murderer; yea, rather than [the murderer]

96 Smith, *Highwaymen*, p.412.
97 Johnson, *Highwayman*, p.80.
98 Anon. *The Whole Life and Merry Exploits of Bold Robin Hood*, p.58.
99 Anon. *The Remarkable History of Robin Hood and Little John*, p. 16.
100 Smith, *Highwaymen*, p. 410.
101 Faller, *Turned to Account*, p. 73.

shall go unpunished, senceless [sic] creatures and his own heart and tongue rise to give sentence against him'.[102] The murderer's own heart could rise against him – in the case of Robin Hood, only after over twenty years of murderous depredations is he struck with 'remorse of conscience for his misspent life and unlawful practices'.[103] Upon retiring to a monastery, God exacts his just revenge and Robin is punished. This narrative trope used by other eighteenth-century crime writers. For instance, in Defoe's *Roxana* (1724), the eponymous murderess fears the devastating effects of her own internalised guilt rather than any possible investigation by the authorities.[104] In Fielding's *Jonathan Wild*, when Wild asks one of his men to commit murder, the man refuses because he is fearful that 'murder […] was a sin of the most heinous nature, and so immediately prosecuted by God's judgement that it never passed undiscovered or unpunished'.[105] Henry Fielding's brother, John, who assumed the magistracy of Westminster after the death of his brother, similarly wrote about how divine providence would always lead to a sure conviction.[106]

6) Nineteenth-Century Criminal Biography

Another factor to consider, and one which further illustrates the popularity and importance of criminal biography, is the fact that a market for similar works continued into the nineteenth century. Two compendia of criminals' lives featured Robin Hood in this period, both of which followed the model laid down by Smith and Johnson: Charles Macfarlane's *The Lives and Exploits of the Banditti and Robbers of all Nations* (1833), and Charles Whitehead's *Lives and Exploits of English Highwaymen, Pirates, and Robbers* (1834). A discussion of these sources is necessary for two reasons: they have not been previously studied by Robin Hood scholars, and they further highlight the problems arising from the application of the ahistorical concept of gentrification to criminal biography. Thus, it is necessary to briefly discuss why the market for tales of crime in the eighteenth-century style lingered on until the early nineteenth century.

102 Thomas Beard & Thomas Taylor, *The Theatre of God's Judgements* (London: Printed by S. I. & M. H. and are to be sold by Richard Whitaker at the Signe of the Kings Armes in St. Pauls Churchyard, 1648), p. 214.

103 Johnson, *Highwaymen*, p. 80.

104 Ian Bell, 'Eighteenth-Century Crime Writing', in *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction*, ed. by Martin Priestman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 7-18 (p. 9).

105 Henry Fielding, 'The Life of Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great', in *Miscellanies by Henry Fielding*, ed. by Hugh Amory, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 3: 99.

106 Fielding, *Some Examples of Divine Providence*, p. 3.

Highway robbery was still a real, though diminishing danger for travellers during the early nineteenth century.[107] The last highway robbery took place in 1831.[108] The reasons for the decline of highway robbery have been a matter of debate: urbanisation around the environs of London, which eroded the haunts of highwaymen in times past, has been offered as one explanation; other scholars point to the extension of the turnpike system and the use of traceable banknotes.[109] The truth of the matter is probably a mixture of both reasons, but the decline of highway robbery meant that by the 1820s and 1830s highwaymen were less feared and were becoming objects of nostalgia.[110]

Politicians in the nineteenth century also turned their attention to the matter of crime, which was as much of a problem as it had been a century before: in 1805 only seventy males and twenty-seven females out of every one hundred thousand had been committed to trial for indictable offences. By 1840 these figures had been multiplied by seven times.[111] The apparent increase in the crime rate was in all likelihood due to improved record keeping and more reportage of crime in the press, but to politicians and the public it was increasingly clear that something should be done to ameliorate the situation. Hence a professionalised police force was established with the passage of the Metropolitan Police Act in 1829. This Act replaced the old system of thief takers, constables, and watchmen, and Bow Street Runners. The governments of the day passed further reforms: the 'bloody code' began to be dismantled in 1823 in response to the campaigns against it by Samuel Romilly (1757-1818).[112] Prison reform was also enacted by successive governments, and by 1823 gaols were funded by both the government and rate-payers, where previously private entrepreneurs had run them. By 1835 the government had commissioned regular prison inspections, and the first

[107] Gilliann Spraggs, *Outlaws and Highwaymen: The Cult of the Robber in England from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century* (London: Pimlico, 2001), p. 234.

[108] Shoemaker, 'The Street Robber and the Gentleman Highwayman', p. 405.

[109] Spraggs, *Outlaws and Highwaymen*, p. 234.

[110] Spraggs, *Outlaws and Highwaymen*, p. 234.

[111] V. A. C. Gatrell, 'The Decline of Theft and Violence in Victorian and Edwardian England', in *Crime and the Law: The Social History of Crime in Western Europe since 1500*, ed. by V. A. C. Gatrell, Bruce Lenman & Geoffrey Parker (London: Europa, 1980), pp. 238-270 (p. 240).

[112] James Gregory & John Stevenson, *The Routledge Companion to Britain in the Eighteenth Century, 1688-1820* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 194-95; The Bloody Code is an early nineteenth-century term to describe the eighteenth-century penal code, in which two hundred offences gradually became capital felonies. The relaxation of the bloody code can be traced to several Acts of Parliament passed between 1808 and 1829.

juvenile detention centre was opened in the Isle of Wight in 1838. Thus there was a national debate about crime, punishment and reform to the legal and penal system.[113]

Concomitant with the national debate over the state of the criminal justice system was the enduring popularity of crime literature. For example, broadsides detailing the 'Last Dying Speeches' of criminals were still being sold as they had been in the eighteenth century for a penny in tandem at public executions outside the Debtors' Door of Newgate Gaol.[114] Dr. William Dodd's autobiographical narrative poem *Thoughts in Prison* (1777) went through several editions in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[115] *The Newgate Calendar*, originally published in 1774, was reprinted and edited by Andrew Knapp and William Baldwin in five volumes between 1824 and 1826. Camden Pelham published *The Chronicles of Crime, or, The New Newgate Calendar* (1840). Pierce Egan, whose son will be encountered in a succeeding chapter, authored two criminal biographies: *The Life & Adventures of Samuel Denmore Hayward, the Modern Macheath* (1822) and *Pierce Egan's Account of of the trial of John Thurtell and Joseph Hunt* (1822). Johnson's *Highwaymen* was reprinted and re-edited with new material dozens of times during the early nineteenth century either in whole or in part.[116] These works were popular because they drew upon eighteenth-century styles of reporting and were written 'in the good old-fashioned way the public relished'. This was in contrast to the more restrained reporting of crime to be found in newspapers.[117] There was also the phenomenon of the Newgate novel, a genre of literature which flourished during the 1830s, beginning with the publication of Edward Bulwer Lytton's *Paul Clifford* (1830) and *Eugene Aram* (1832), and carried on by

[113] For the sake of brevity, many details here have had to be omitted. For a more comprehensive survey of the national debate regarding the criminal justice system see Randall McGowen, 'The Well-Ordered Prison, 1780-1865', in *The Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society*, ed. by N. Morris & D. J. Rothman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 71-99.

[114] See Vic Gatrell, *The Hanging Tree: Execution and the English People, 1770-1868* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

[115] The first edition of *Thoughts in Prison* was printed in 1777, with further editions following in 1781, 1796, 1801, 1808, 1809, 1815, and 1818.

[116] Complete editions of Johnson's *Highwaymen* printed during the early nineteenth century appeared in 1813, 1814, 1825, 1839; Editions of his *History of the Pirates* appeared in 1837, which was often merged with his *History of the Highwaymen*, as appeared in 1813. Extracts of Johnson's works were often published such as *Lives of the Most Remarkable Female Robbers* (1801) and *The History and Real Adventures of Robin Hood and his Merry Companions, written by Capt. Charles Johnson* (1801).

[117] Phillipe Chassaigne, 'Popular Representations of Crime: the Crime Broadside – a Subculture of Violence in Victorian Britain', *Crime, Histoire & Sociétés/Crime, History & Societies*, 3: 2 (1999), 23-55 (p. 28).

Ainsworth's *Rookwood* (1834) and *Jack Sheppard* (1839), the latter featuring the eponymous eighteenth-century boy thief. The emergence of these novels, argues Spraggs, was a direct consequence of the growing nostalgia for the mounted robber.[118] Finally, although this will be considered in further detail in the next chapter, there was also the rise of the penny blood and penny dreadful genres. G. W. M. Reynolds' *The Mysteries of London* (1844-45), which is a tale of vice and crime in both high and low life, was the biggest-selling novel of the Victorian era.[119] MacFarlane's and Whitehead's works were also popular throughout the century and went through several editions, with versions appearing in 1836, 1837, 1840, 1854, and 1867.

Macfarlane (1799-1856) was a historian and travel writer which perhaps explains why he chose to focus upon the banditti and robbers of *all* nations in his criminal biographies.[120] Macfarlane's work is very cavalier in respect to the facts of Robin Hood's life, although the historian in Macfarlane meant that he had to pay at least some lip service to preceding scholarship upon Robin's life and deeds, in particular the work undertaken in 1795 by Ritson. For his introduction to the life, therefore, he practically plagiarises Ritson:

> Robin Hood was born at Locksley, in the county of Nottingham, a place no longer in existence, in the year 1160, and in the reign of King Henry II. He is commonly reputed to have been Earl of Huntingdon, a title to which, it is said, he had no small pretension.[121]

In the style of Smith and Johnson, Macfarlane tells us that although Robin was 'born of honest parents',

> He appears to have been in his youth of an extravagant and lawless disposition, and, having dissipated his inheritance, insomuch that it had become forfeited, and being in the predicament of outlawry for debt, he was fain to seek asylum in the woods.[122]

Robin is similarly denied a reprieve by the king in Macfarlane's work, and their meeting and the meeting of the outlaw and the monarch is set in terms similar to Johnson's account: 'perceiving from the superiority of numbers that it was in vain to resist, the

[118] Spraggs, *Outlaws and Highwaymen*, pp. 234-39.

[119] K. T. Hoppen, *The Mid-Victorian Generation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 388.

[120] Rosemary Mitchell, 'MacFarlane, Charles (1799-1858)', *in The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn, May 2005 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <www.odnb.com/view/article/17491> [Accessed 13 May 2015].

[121] Charles MacFarlane, *The Lives and Exploits of the Banditti and Robbers of all Nations*, 2 vols (London: R. W. Pomeroy, 1836), 2: 74.

[122] MacFarlane, *The Lives and Exploits of the Banditti and Robbers of all Nations*, 2: 75.

King presented [Robin Hood] with a purse, which from its weight Robin deemed sufficient to supply his present necessities'.[123] MacFarlane's final conclusions concerning Robin's whole career are that he engaged in a series of 'predatory exertions of power'.[124] In all of these exertions Robin,

> Attacked the goods of the wealthy only – he never killed any person, unless he was resisted or attacked – he would never permit a woman to be abused or in any way maltreated, and that he never plundered the poor, but bestowed upon them the wealth he wrested from the abbots.[125]

As we have seen above with regard to eighteenth-century criminal biography, the fact that Robin gives to the poor in Macfarlane's work does not make him particularly worthy of admiration. Macfarlane says of all banditti that 'they give to the poor, indeed, but it is as spies and instruments of their own crimes, or at least in order to induce the poor to remain passive while they carry on their work of depredation against the rich'.[126] There are, therefore, no noble sentiments behind outlaws' seemingly philanthropic gestures.

Whitehead's *Lives and Exploits of English Highwaymen* is described by one contemporary reviewer as being 'chiefly remarkable for the obvious zest with which [he] details the atrocities of the persons who stood to him for heroes'.[127] Evidently in 1834, which is the year that Ainsworth's *Rookwood* was published, Whitehead tried to capitalise upon the popularity of the Newgate novel. Not only did he author the *Highwaymen* but also *The Autobiography of Jack Ketch* (1834).[128] Whitehead was a novelist, and did not pretend to write a history book, unlike MacFarlane, and this is evident by Whitehead's inclusion in his compendium of the life of Colonel Jack, which amused his late nineteenth-century biographer.[129] He begins negatively by informing his readers that Robin Hood's profession, 'in this country at least, is now happily extinct'.[130] In his youth Robin is described as being 'of an extravagant and lawless

123 MacFarlane, *The Lives and Exploits of the Banditti and Robbers of all Nations*, 2: 80.
124 MacFarlane, *The Lives and Exploits of the Banditti and Robbers of all Nations*, 2: 75.
125 MacFarlane, *The Lives and Exploits of the Banditti and Robbers of all Nations*, 2: 75
126 MacFarlane, *The Lives and Exploits of the Banditti and Robbers of all Nations*, 1: 6.
127 Anon., 'Charles Whitehead', *Temple Bar: with which is Incorporated Bentley's Miscellany*, September (1889), 99-110 (p. 100)
128 Jack Ketch was the generic name given to London hangmen.
129 Anon., 'Charles Whitehead', p. 101; Colonel Jack is the invention of Daniel Defoe, who created the character in his eponymous novel.
130 Charles Whitehead, *The Lives and Exploits of English Highwaymen, Pirates, and Robbers; Drawn from the Most Authentic Sources, by Capt. Charles Johnson, with Additions by Charles Whitehead, Esq.* (London: Printed for the Booksellers, 1883), p.1.

disposition'.[131] Yet the ambivalence manifested towards Robin is complicated by the fact that he goes on to give an abridged version of Thomas Love Peacock's *Maid Marian* (1822), in which Robin and Marian reign as king and queen of the forest.[132] Sexual propriety is also observed in Sherwood:

> "I am thy bride, Robin: but though we be wedded, we will not bed; the laws of chastity enjoined in Sherwood, neither you nor I will infringe […] Neither shall you name me as heretofore, Matilda Fitzwater, nor fair Maud, nor aught else but Maid Marian; for Maid I will be, albeit a bride, while thou art an outlaw.[133]

Marian is chaste, and is withholding sex until he is ready to re-join respectable society. This arrangement would doubtless have met with approval from Whitehead's middle-class readers.

7) The Gentrification Question

Smith and Johnson's works which depict Robin as 'no higher than poor shepherds' clearly do not show a gentrified outlaw, for he is not a lord and is primarily a 'brute'. The criminal biographies which depict Robin as a lord, however, perhaps more than any other source studied in this thesis, reflect the fact that aristocratic parentage does not equate to morality or respectability. It has to be remembered that the eighteenth century was a period in which the middle classes were becoming richer and more influential, and gradually differentiating themselves from the nobility. The 'middle state' of society was, according to Defoe in *Robinson Crusoe*,

> The best state of the world, the most suited to human happiness, not exposed to the miseries and hardships, the labour and sufferings, of the mechanic part of mankind, and not embarrassed with the pride, luxury, ambition, and envy of the upper part of mankind.[134]

In Samuel Richardson's *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* (1740), the character that is most virtuous is the eponymous servant girl whose aristocratic Master, Mr. B., attempts to seduce and rape her (until he is so impressed with her virtue that he decides to take her as a wife). Lovelace in Richardson's *Clarissa* (1748) is 'the unrepentant doyen of a

131 Whitehead, *The Lives and Exploits of English Highwaymen*, p.2.
132 Whitehead, *The Lives and Exploits of English Highwaymen*, p.10
133 Whitehead, *The Lives and Exploits of English Highwaymen*, p. 10.
134 Daniel Defoe, 'Robinson Crusoe', in *The Works of Daniel Defoe. Carefully Selected from the Most Authentic Sources. With Chalmers Life of the Author*, ed. by John S. Keltie (Edinburgh: Nimmo, 1869), pp. 31-208 (p. 35).

regressive and discredited aristocracy keen to challenge the rising bourgeoisie'.[135] These examples from contemporary literature illustrate that during the eighteenth century the aristocracy were often viewed as profligate and immoral, just as Robin is the aristocrat who squanders his inheritance, as he does in the 1737 biography.

Interestingly, Robin is never portrayed as a member of the middle classes, the classes that formed the primary audience for criminal biographies. He is either a dispossessed aristocratic outlaw or a low-born criminal. Indeed, according to contemporary authors, there was often little difference between the aristocracy and the criminals of low life. Indeed, sometimes criminals were shown to have better morals than the aristocracy, as we saw in the previous chapter. Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*, for instance, sees one of the highwaymen asking the following question: 'Why are the laws levell'd at us?'[136] Other highwaymen reply, expounding upon the honour and virtues of thieves, and one of them concludes with the statement: 'show me a gang of courtiers who can say as much'.[137] This is not to say that the 'low born' were highly regarded by writers either: Fielding's *Enquiry* holds a great deal of disdain for the lower orders because they tend to emulate the example of their aristocratic superiors. The end result is that vice, 'reaches the very dregs of the people, who aspiring still to a degree beyond that which belongs to them […] they disdain the wages to which their industry would intitle [sic] them'.[138] Aristocrats and criminals have the same fatal flaw – idleness.

While Smith, Johnson and the rest are evidently very keen on depicting Robin in as harsh a light as possible, there are some subtle hints of admiration for the outlaws in these texts as well. In addition to giving Robin an aristocratic heritage, his adventures in *The Noble Birth* are described in one place as being 'merry pranks'.[139] Smith describes Little John, Will Scarlet, and Much as 'chief men of courage and bravery'.[140] In Johnson's account of Robin's meeting with Lord Longchamp, the reader is told that he possesses 'a great share of personal courage'.[141] These contradictions in the text highlight the often shifting and ambiguous attitudes of the public towards criminals in the eighteenth century. Despite these seemingly redeeming features of bravery and

135 Erin Mackie, *Rakes, Highwaymen, and Pirates: The Making of the Modern Gentleman in Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), p. 61.
136 Gay, *The Beggar's Opera*, p. 19.
137 Gay, *The Beggar's Opera*, p. 20.
138 Fielding, *An Enquiry*, p. 3.
139 Anon. 'The Noble Birth', p. 1.
140 Smith, *Highwaymen*, p. 409.
141 Johnson, *Highwaymen*, p. 78.

courage, however, Robin is still a brute (regardless of his noble birth). It was the exception rather than the rule for a criminal to be admired by the public during the eighteenth century, and it is only with Ainsworth's *Rookwood* (1834) that the figure of the highwayman becomes truly romanticised. They may have been popular figures of entertainment at the gallows, and through 'dying game' attracted popular applause, but the gallows neutralised any threat they posed because they were about to die.[142] The limited forms of admiration extended to Robin in criminal biography should not lead one into thinking that these texts are in any way gentrified as it is currently understood.

As with their eighteenth-century predecessors, Macfarlane's and Whitehead's *Highwaymen* books were thoroughly middle-class affairs, and each author's work consisted of two lavishly-embellished volumes which sold for twenty-one shillings.[143] In addition, these books were viewed by some press commentators as respectable reading matter. *The Court Magazine and Belle Assemblée* remarked that 'the first thing that strikes us in taking up these volumes is the beauty of their embellishments, which are numerous as well as beautiful'.[144] The same magazine goes on to thoroughly recommend MacFarlane's work to their readers, 'who would enjoy a winter evening's amusement […] seated by their own peaceful hearth'.[145] As for being gentrified, Macfarlane says that 'he is commonly reputed to have been Earl of Huntingdon, a title to which, it is said, he had no small pretension'.[146] This is hardly definitive, being more of an acknowledgment that Robin *might* have been noble. And Robin Hood, while he is a subject of respectable reading matter, here, but as we have seen, the representation of his morality within the text is ambiguous.

Yet, overall, the reader was supposed to disapprove of all of the robbers detailed in Whitehead's work. It was argued above how eighteenth-century criminal biographies were moralist texts which negotiated and expressed contemporary issues regarding criminality and sin. The ostensible function of criminal biography during the nineteenth

142 To 'die game' meant that a highwayman should show bravery at the scaffold, and court the adoration of the crowd; Dick Turpin, instead of waiting for the ladder to be removed from under his feet, jumped off the ladder instead, thereby giving a good show.

143 See advertisements in the following newspapers: Anon., 'Advertisements and Notices' *The Morning Post*, 5 January 1833, p. 1; Anon., 'Advertisements and Notices', *The Morning Post*, 15 November 1833, p. 1.

144 Anon., 'The Literature of the Month', *The Court Magazine and Belle Assemblée*, December 1832, 309-313 (p.309).

145 Anon., 'The Literature of the Month', p. 313.

146 Charles MacFarlane, *The Lives and Exploits of the Banditti and Robbers of all Nations*, 2 vols (London: R. W. Pomeroy, 1836), 2: 74.

century is the same, even if the text's didacticism is only superficial. Whitehead's purpose in authoring *The Lives and Exploits of English Highwaymen* was nominally to set a moral example: the lives of the robbers that he presents in his text 'have been met with the universal execration and abhorrence of mankind, and now only serve to point a moral'.[147] Macfarlane also implies that his text should be viewed didactically, and warns his readers that they 'will not find my robbers such romantic, generous characters, as those that occasionally figure in the fields of fiction'.[148] MacFarlane overplays this point a little, and says that tales of outlaws and robbers are so harmful to society that, 'were I a despot as potent as a Chinese Emperor, I would decree a destruction of all the ballads relating to brigandism, and would punish every teller of a story, or a tradition on that subject'.[149] These high principles, however, did not stop MacFarlane producing two lengthy volumes on the subject of robbers and outlaws. For, in addition to their didacticism, another function of both works is to provide sensational and violent entertainment. This is the scene, for example, related of a fight between Robin's man and some of the Sheriff's soldiers:

> The staff of Michael did good service on the pates of many of the Sheriff's force; several flat noses, dislocated shoulders, and peeled sconces, bore testimony to its hardness and the vigour with which it was handled. After a short fight, the Nottingham men clapped spurs to their horses, and such of them as were lucky to escape the sword of Robin, the cudgel of Midge the Miller, the arrows of Maud, and Michael's oaken toy, galloped off toward Nottingham.[150]

While there were indeed some favourable reviews of these works, as alluded to above, for the most part reviewers saw straight through Macfarlane's and Whitehead's attempts to moralise. Reading tales of crime could, according to the reviewers, induce people to follow a life of crime, using Robin Hood as an example:

> Such works as the present are capable of extensive mischief, inasmuch as contrary to the Editor's description who says, that he paints vice in its ugliness, it assumes in these very volumes a character of romantic interest, which is highly conducive to its corrupting powers. Who, for instance, in reading the account of the popularity and kind-heartedness, the jolly life, and undisturbed career of Robin Hood, would not covet the life of an outlaw?[151]

147 Whitehead, *The Lives and Exploits of English Highwaymen*, p. 1.
148 MacFarlane, *The Lives and Exploits of the Banditti and Robbers of all Nations*, 1: 3.
149 MacFarlane, *The Lives and Exploits of the Banditti and Robbers of all Nations*, p. 16.
150 MacFarlane, *The Lives and Exploits of the Banditti and Robbers of all Nations*, p. 7.
151 Anon., 'Notices', *The Monthly Review*, February 1834, 278-79 (p. 279).

Such a disapproving attitude from the *The Athenaeum* is unsurprising – it is the same magazine that would denounce Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard* a few years later as 'a bad book, and what is worse, one of a class of bad books, got up for a bad people […] a history of vulgar and disgusting atrocities'.[152] Equally critical of Macfarlane was *The Literary Gazette*:

> The success of Macfarlane's *Lives of the Banditti* seems to have induced this second publication of the same genus, some objections to which seem to have been foreseen by the preface. The author quotes the well-known lines,
> *"Vice is a monster of such hideous mien,*
> *As, to be hated, needs but to be seen"*
> And proceeds to argue that the exposures in these pages cannot endanger the most fragile morals, or relax the most elastic principles […] the point, we think, is extremely doubtful. The history of seventy or eighty scoundrels, who have disgraced humanity, and been hanged, can hardly inculcate any sound morality.[153]

The reviewer in *The Literary Gazette* goes on to say that upon opening Whitehead's work, 'we recoil with disgust, or start with horror, at the first aspect of loathsome guilt'.[154] The 'first loathsome aspect of guilt' in both works is Robin Hood, for his story is placed at the beginning of each book. The problem for these reviewers probably is the fact that, in both MacFarlane's and Whitehead's works most of the highwaymen and *banditti* are neither wholly good nor wholly evil. Middle-class commentators in the press often objected to figures that were of an ambiguous morality, preferring the security of a moral universe in which the good and the bad were readily identifiable.[155] Through his appearance in both works, Robin Hood is being drawn into contemporary discussions of morality and respectability, for though there are aspects of respectability in his character in each book, he is also undeniably a man of questionable morality. Despite being a lord in these texts, he can hardly be called gentrified. Even if the individual accounts of Robin are relatively positive, as in Whitehead's text, the outlaw's inclusion alongside the history of disreputable thieves (however much the authors

152 Sidney Owenson, 'Review', *The Athenaeum*, 26 October 1839, 803-805 (p. 805).
153 Anon., 'Lives and Exploits of English Highwaymen, Pirates, Robbers, &c. By C. Whitehead (Review)', *The Literary Gazette*, 4 January 1834, 818-819 (p. 819).
154 Anon., 'Lives and Exploits of English Highwaymen, Pirates, Robbers, &c. By C. Whitehead (Review)', p. 819.
155 Lyn Pykett, 'The Newgate Novel and Sensation Fiction', in *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction*, ed. by Martin Priestman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 19-40 (p. 30).

attempt to convince readers otherwise) renders Robin disreputable and unrespectable by association, much less gentrified.

In *The Examiner,* a reformist journal, a review of Whitehead's work is used simply as a springboard to criticise the contemporary political establishment:

> If the plan of this collection were extended so as to comprehend those who have pillaged on the largest scale, and fattened on the spoil of a nation, what noble histories it would contain!
> *'Tis wonder we ha'n't better company,*
> *Upon Tyburn tree.*
> Even from the present Pension List many curious memoirs might be gleaned, showing the arts and devices by which the public has been notably fleeced […] Certainly, on reading the Lives in these volumes, and comparing the deeds with the affairs on a larger scale which we are in the habit of contemplating, we see the great inferiority of the [highwayman's] handicraft. How the Parliamentary Jobber, fairly drawn, would throw these clumsy knaves and their petty exploits into the shade![156]

The review then goes on to state that robbery and plunder have not always been a plebeian business: feudal chiefs had, according to the reviewer, been the biggest robbers in English history.[157] For an article which purports to be a review of Whitehead's work, there is little discussion of his actual text. The whole article draws Whitehead's highwaymen volumes into the contemporary discourse of 'Old Corruption': it is Parliament and the aristocracy who are the real villains in society, and the crimes of highwaymen such as Robin Hood are nothing compared to those of the robber barons of yesteryear. Robin and his fellow banditti are still bad men in Whitehead and Macfarlane's works, but not as loathsome as statesmen.

As it has become increasingly clear throughout this chapter, Robin Hood's post-medieval literary afterlife is at many times inseparable from mainstream crime literature. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century criminal biographies place Robin in the company of the most notorious thieves, reprobates, and murderers throughout history. These biographies had an undoubted influence upon the development of the mainstream Robin Hood tradition. As we shall see in the next chapter, Joseph Ritson viewed his own Robin Hood text as a means of improving upon the suspect scholarship of Smith and Johnson. Scott was an enthusiastic collector of eighteenth-century criminal biographies, and we have seen how the same tensions which heroize yet condemn

156 Anon., 'The Lives and Exploits of English Highwaymen (Review)', *The Examiner* 29 December 1833, 818-819 (p. 818).
157 Anon., 'The Lives and Exploits of English Highwaymen (Review)', p. 818.

Robin in criminal biographies are continued to some extent in *Ivanhoe*, but of this we will learn more in the fifth chapter. MacFarlane and Whitehead still place Robin alongside the most notorious rogues of all nations in their respective works.

Just two years after Whitehead was writing there appeared a new periodical from the publishers Edward Lloyd, William Strange, and George Purkess entitled *The History and Lives of the Most Notorious Highwaymen, Footpads, and Murderers* which ran for two years and was, in the words of Rosalind Crone, 'a cheap imitation of Captain Alexander Smith's infamous work'.[158] The opening passage is a mixture of Smith and Johnson's introductions to their biographies of Robin Hood:

> The accounts of this man's genealogy are exceeding various, and the stories of him as fictitious among the country people, as the theft of Mercury among the heathens […] In the first, he is said to be the Earl of Huntingdon […] But in the second, he is said to derive his family, *ab origine*, from no higher than shepherds.[159]

The opening passage is evidently a mixture of Smith and Johnson's introductions to their biographies of Robin Hood. Ultimately the periodical decides that Robin Hood was of noble birth. Their reasoning for this is that there is evidence that he had an education and therefore he must have been a lord. Yet while Robin is praised for his beneficence towards the poor, he is simultaneously castigated for having been 'of a licentious and wicked inclination'.[160] He lost his inheritance due to 'generous and polite living'.[161] By this means then Robin is a typical nineteenth-century aristocratic scoundrel who squanders his inheritance. Moreover as in Smith's account, when Robin meets with the King he simply robs him.[162]

Robin Hood's connection to the wider genre of crime literature persisted until around the turn of the twentieth century, when the cheap magazine by Harold Furniss entitled *Famous Crimes: Past and Present* ran a story on Robin Hood.[163] Furniss prefaces the account by saying that, while it is a strange that his periodical such as his should focus upon a medieval subject, he wishes to give an account 'of all the great

158 Crone, *Violent Victorians*, p. 173.

159 Anon., 'The Life and Surprising Adventures of Robin Hood', *The History and Lives of the Most Notorious Highwaymen, Footpads, Murderers, Brigands, Pickpockets, Thieves, Banditti, and Robbers of Every Description*, 10 September 1836, p. 154.

160 Anon., 'The Life and Surprising Adventures of Robin Hood', p. 154.

161 Anon., 'The Life and Surprising Adventures of Robin Hood', p. 154.

162 Anon., 'The Life and Surprising Adventures of Robin Hood', pp. 156-57.

163 Robin Odell, *Ripperology: A Study of the World's First Serial Killer and a Literary Phenomenon* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2006), p. 28: apparently this magazine appeared in 1903, but none of the issues are dated.

rascals who flourished in those good old days […and] none was more famous than Robin Hood'.[164] As a whole the account is relatively friendly in its depiction of Robin. But there are a few important caveats to this: he is, of course, described as a rascal, but Furniss points out that, were Robin alive today, '[he] would have been speedily hunted down by the prosaic constable from Scotland Yard, and incontinently hanged in the backyard of the nearest gaol'.[165] Surely the yeoman Robin of Locksley, 'the Prince of good fellows', is more respectable than the Robin Hood who appears in *The History and Lives of the Most Notorious Highwaymen, Footpads and Murderers*, or the man who would be speedily hunted down by a detective? Yet what we have in these two accounts are supposedly gentrified tales of Robin's birth.

8) Conclusion

This chapter has shown that Robin Hood's appearance in this *mainstream* literary genre is deserving of attention. These books were not for 'the lower orders' but were expensive, middle-class works. Of course, in Smith and Johnson's works he is not a hero, possessing at most one or two admirable qualities such as bravery and courage. As a succeeding chapter on Victorian penny dreadfuls shall do, the commentary provided in this chapter upon these sources has highlighted the pitfalls in applying the ahistorical concept of gentrification to certain sources based solely upon Robin Hood's depiction as a nobleman. Robin may indeed be a lord in many of these texts, but he is not particularly moral and is primarily a brute. Smith and Johnson's works, as we will see in the next chapter, influenced portrayals of Robin Hood in the works of Robert Southey, Joseph Ritson, and Walter Scott. In turn, Ritson and Scott's works would shape portrayals of Robin Hood in nineteenth-century criminal biography.

Although criminal biography was largely superseded by the rise of the novel in the mid-to-late eighteenth century, there was still a market for compendia of short biographies of famous criminals which lasted into the nineteenth century. In spite of the fact that material is plagiarised directly from the works of Ritson and Peacock, in nineteenth-century criminal biography there is still ambivalence towards Robin Hood: he is not romanticised and he is not gentrified. And it has to be wondered what people thought at his inclusion alongside some of the more depraved highwaymen of British

[164] Anon., 'The Story of Robin Hood and his Merry Men', *Famous Crimes: Past and Present*, 10: 119 [n.d.], p. 26.
[165] Anon., 'The Story of Robin Hood and his Merry Men', p. 26.

history, such as that of the robber and cannibal Sawney Beane, whose lair was filled with 'legs, arms, thighs, hands, and feet of men, women, and children […] suspended in rows like dried beef, some limbs and other members were soaked in pickle'.[166] To reviewers, Macfarlane's and Whitehead's works were simply nothing more than 'the history of seventy or eighty scoundrels, who have disgraced humanity'.[167] As far as his social status is concerned, Robin Hood may well have been gentrified, but that does not necessarily mean that he was respectable or well-regarded by readers, especially when he is represented simply as the first in a long line of murderous outlaws.

166 Whitehead, *The Lives and Exploits of English Highwaymen*, p. 25.
167 Anon. 'Lives and Exploits of English Highwaymen (Review)', p. 818.

4) 'That Celebrated English Outlaw': The Antiquaries' Robin Hood

1) Introduction

Although criminal biographies were marketed as history books, there were not scholarly works. Serious historical research into the Robin Hood legend began during the mid-eighteenth century, with the works of Thomas Percy (1729-1811) and Joseph Ritson (1752-1803). Firstly, it is necessary to revisit the following statement by Eric Hobsbawm: 'the sad truth is that the heroes of remote times survive because they are not *only* the heroes of the peasants'.[1] Nowhere is Robin Hood's elite status in this period more apparent than in the works of eighteenth-century antiquaries, which were important in developing the modern idea of Robin Hood that would be adapted by nineteenth-century authors. Indeed, that these men researched Robin Hood at this point confirms Hobsbawm's other statements that, 'one might say that the intellectuals have ensured the survival of the bandits'.[2] As this chapter shows, in spite of these intellectuals' works being marketed to members of the middle and upper classes, they are not gentrified. We may ask whether these works are polite instead of gentrified, as the former was a contemporary term that would have been understood by readers. Even then, Robin Hood, although he may be a subject of polite reading, is not necessarily polite himself.

2) Book Production in the Eighteenth Century

We must first consider whether, as Barczewski states, Robin Hood in this period was a symbol of working-class identity. Surely, if he was, then the major literary works which feature him would have been affordable to them. Yet an analysis of these works' bibliographical history tells a different story. Although certain aspects of the history of eighteenth-century publishing were briefly examined in the chapter upon criminal biography, it is worth revisiting here in further detail because it emphasises the fact that

1 Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, p. 131.
2 Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, p. 133.

books were, to borrow a phrase from Faller, a definite middle class phenomenon.[3] The production and purchase of books was a very different process in the eighteenth century compared to today. Books were printed and sold to the purchaser unbound, simply as a block of text. Sometimes the publishers sold the work in cheap card or paper boards. The block of text would then be taken to a bindery to be bound according to the purchaser's specification, usually to match his private library. This is why many books during the eighteenth century contain detailed 'Directions to the Binder'.[4] The idea of mass-market uniform book bindings is a modern one, and in effect every book surviving from the eighteenth century is a uniquely handcrafted object, and two editions of the same text are rarely the same in outward appearance.[5]

These books were also costly, with Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765) retailing at ten shillings and sixpence.[6] Thomas Evans' *Old Ballads, Historical and Narrative* (1777) sold for eight shillings.[7] Joseph Ritson's *Robin Hood: A Collection of all the Ancient Poems, Songs, and Ballads* (1795) was a two volume set and cost twelve shillings when it was first published.[8] There were regional variations in wages during the late eighteenth century: a northern labourer might expect to earn around six shillings and nine pence per week, while the average wage for a labourer based in London was around seven shillings and sixpence.[9] Still, it is very unlikely that a working-class labourer from either region would have spent their money on buying Ritson's text, as it would have consumed almost two weeks wages. As material objects, then, the works of these antiquaries were definitely aimed at an affluent readership.

3) The Reinvention of Robin Hood as an Historical Curiosity

The appearance of Percy's ballad anthology was hardly innovative when it was first published in 1765. Collections of ballads had existed since the seventeenth century. These, however, were part of a current popular culture which all classes of society

3 Faller, *Turned to Account*, p. 206.

4 Instructions to the binder are found, for example, in *The Britannic Magazine for the Year 1793; or, Entertaining Repository of Heroic Adventures* 1 (London: Printed for the Author and Sold by Champante and Whitrow, 1793), p. iv.

5 David Pearson, *Books as History* (London: British Library Publishing Division, 2012), p. 23.

6 Anon., 'Books Published in February', *Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, February 1765, p. 111.

7 Anon., 'This Day is Published', *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, 5 February 1777, p. 1.

8 Anon., 'This Day is Published', *The Morning Chronicle*, 14 December 1795, p. 2.

9 N. J. Smith, *Poverty in England 1601-1936* (London: David and Charles, 1972), p. 22.

enjoyed.[10] The work of Percy, however, was different to previous ballad collections because, as a result of his scholarship, the ballads he presented became historical curiosities.[11] Percy's and Evans' collections appeared at an interesting point in the eighteenth century, during which English intellectuals were gradually becoming aware of their own national identity. The revival of Shakespeare on the stage by David Garrick in the late eighteenth century, for instance, was an attempt to establish the theatre as a respectable environment, and also to foster a sense of patriotism among the public for works written by historic English writers.[12] Both the *Reliques* and the *Old Ballads* strive, as Evans says in his preface, to display 'the character of the nation […] in striking colours'.[13] There were also hints of British nationalism in Leonard MacNally's play *Robin Hood, or Sherwood Forest* (1784).[14] What Percy and Evans were doing was, in keeping with Benedict Anderson's ideas of an imagined national community, constructing a national English past composed of the deeds of kings and knights, as well as outlaws.[15]

Whilst neoclassicism defined much art, architecture, and literature in the eighteenth century, there was also an underlying interest in the medieval period throughout the eighteenth century among people from all levels of society, especially from the mid-eighteenth century onwards.[16] As was noted in the introduction, Henry Purcell composed the music to John Dryden's play, *King Arthur, or the British Worthy*, which was performed at the Queen's Theatre in London in 1691.[17] Dryden also 'translated' some of Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* in 1700, with the original Middle English verse refined into heroic couplets. Another medievalist opera was written by Georg Frederich Handel in 1711, entitled *Rinaldo*, and set during the

10 See Peter Burke, *op cit.*

11 Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques*, p. 25.

12 John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), pp. 330-31.

13 Nick Groom, 'The Purest English: Ballads and the English Literary Dialect', *The Eighteenth Century*, 47: 2/3 (2006), 179-202 (p. 181).

14 Leonard MacNally, *Robin Hood, or, Sherwood Forest* (London: J. Almon, 1787), p. 74; Robin Hood exclaims, 'Strains of Liberty we'll sing, to our country, Queen and King!'

15 Groom, 'The Purest English', p. 181.

16 See Chris Brooks, *The Gothic Revival* (London: Phaidon, 1999).

17 For more information on John Dryden's *King Arthur* see the following: William R. Hill, 'The Sources For Dryden's *King Arthur*', *Bach*, 12: 1 (1981), 23-29; Robert Shay, 'Dryden and Purcell's King Arthur: Legend and Politics on the Restoration Stage', in *King Arthur in Music*, ed. by Richard W. Barber (Cambridge: Brewer, 2002), pp. 9-23.

time of the First Crusade.[18] In 1731 Henry Fielding's play *The Tragedy of Tragedies, or the Life and Death of Tom Thumb the Great* premiered in the Theatre Royal in the Haymarket, and was set in the time of King Arthur.[19] Thomas Arne's opera *Alfred* was performed at Cliveden in Buckinghamshire for the commemoration of the accession of George I in 1740. Arne's opera is most famous, of course, for its finale entitled *Rule Britannia.* Admittedly, the various operas cited here were essentially medieval tales of heroism with a baroque or neoclassical overlay. Percy's and Evans' work, however, does appear to be distinct because they reconstructed the distant sound of 'olde, merrie England' by using archaic spellings such as the 'ee' in their works to exhibit 'the remote rumble of national history'.[20]

Percy famously rescued a number of manuscripts from a fire, among them the ballad of *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*.[21] Whilst there are some works in Percy's ballad anthology which, like *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*, carry marks of antiquity, many of the ballads therein had, in fact, still been in circulation in chapbooks and broadsides when he published his work.[22] The elites, which by Percy's time were beginning to comprise the middle classes, gentry, and the aristocracy, had the money to pay for the expensive books which were being published by such antiquaries, but at the same time, the content of those books had to be distinct from the material available from broadside vendors, which were fast becoming thought of as 'vulgar'. Thus, Percy's work reconfigured the street ballad as the relics of an ancient English past: such ballads and poems were now 'reliques'. One of the ways in which he did this was by excluding the musical settings of most of the ballads printed in his collection, thereby ensuring that they were 'no longer merely ephemeral rustic ditties […but instead] historical artefacts'.[23] They were rendered fit for 'the polished age' of the eighteenth century.[24]

[18] On Handel's *Rinaldo* see the following: Curtis Price, 'English Traditions in Handel's Rinaldo', in *Handel: Tercentenary Collection* ed. by Stanley Sadie & Anthony Hicks (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1987), pp. 120-137.

[19] See notes and introduction to the play in the following work: *Tom Thumb: And The Tragedy of Tragedies*, ed. by L. J. Morrissey (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1970).

[20] Groom, 'The Purest English', p. 198.

[21] Knight, *Robin Hood: A Complete Study of the English Outlaw*, p. 46.

[22] Groom, 'The Purest English', p. 180.

[23] Groom, 'The Purest English', pp. 183-84.

[24] Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, ed. by Edward Walford (London: Frederick Warne, 1885), p. 11.

It was for polite readers that Evans published *Old Ballads*. In a stratagem similar to Percy's, Evans framed his collection of ballads as the relics of an ancient English past:

> Many of the ancient ballads have been transmitted to the present times; and in them the character of the nation displays itself in striking colours. The boastful history of her victories, the prowess of her favourite kings and captains, the wonderful adventures of the legendary saint and knight-errant, are the topics of rough rhyme and unadorned narration.[25]

Part of the appeal thus appears to be the supposed primitivism and historical authenticity of stories from England's medieval past. Polite and refined readers could congratulate themselves that they were more civilised than their medieval forebears, but they could also be proud of them as well. Until Stephen Knight's work, Evans has been largely overlooked in the study of the development of the Robin Hood legend, but he included twenty-eight Robin Hood ballads in his collection, and most of these were of sixteenth-, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century origin.[26] Aside from the *Garlands*, Evans' collection was one of the most comprehensive collections of Robin Hood ballads to appear up to this time.[27]

4) Radical Robin Hood

If Percy and Evans had depoliticised Robin Hood, it was Joseph Ritson (1752-1803) who re-politicised him and appropriated him to radical ends. Ritson was a conveyancer, self-taught scholar and antiquary, born in Stockton-on-Tees, and although he was successful in business, it is his antiquarian works for which he is chiefly remembered.[28] He was also highly critical of Percy, and indeed, many antiquaries before him, for taking it upon themselves to edit and refine the ancient ballads in their collections.[29] Ritson published *Robin Hood: A Collection of All the Ancient Poems, Songs, and Ballads, Now Extant, Relative to that Celebrated English Outlaw* in 1795, although his letters show that he was working on Robin Hood at least two years prior to its

[25] Thomas Evans, *Old Ballads, Historical and Narrative, with Some of Modern Date, Now First Collected and Reprinted from Rare Copies with Notes*, 4 vols (London: Printed for Thomas Evans in The Strand, 1810), 1: i.

[26] Knight, *Robin Hood: A Mythic Biography*, p. 95.

[27] Knight, *Robin Hood: A Mythic Biography*, p. 95.

[28] Stephanie L. Barczewski, 'Ritson, Joseph (1752–1803)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn, 2004 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2368> [Accessed 25/06/2015].

[29] Barczewski, 'Ritson, Joseph (1752–1803)'.

publication.[30] His anthology of ballads was more comprehensive than Evans' and, as well as including many of the same ballads featured in the collections of Percy and Evans, Ritson also included five of the earliest sources: *A Gest of Robyn Hode*, *Robin Hood and the Potter*, *Robin Hood and the Beggar*, *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*, and *A True Tale of Robin Hood*. As well as printing these early sources, Ritson scoured archives around the country and found virtually every scrap of information relating to his hero, constructing out of these materials his 'Life of Robin Hood'.

Ritson's biography of Robin Hood is essentially an up-market criminal biography. It is approximately the same length as the accounts given by Alexander Smith and Charles Johnson, and Ritson was well-acquainted with Robin's 'former biographers' in the genre of criminal biography. As we saw in chapter three, when Ritson gives an account of existing biographies, his footnotes reveal the fact that his own publication is an attempt to improve upon what he saw as sub-standard scholarship in previous biographies by Charles Johnson.[31] Furthermore, Ritson's account reads as though it were a criminal biography: an account of Robin's birth is given, and the reader is told that he became an outlaw as a result of having a wild and profligate youth:

> In his youth, he is reported to have been of a wild and extravagant disposition; insomuch that, his inheritance being consumed or forfeited by his excesses, and his person outlawed for debt, either from necessity or choice, he sought an asylum in the woods and forests.[32]

The above passage is similar in its sentiments to Johnson's: he not only argued that Robin Hood was 'of a roving disposition', but also, in other accounts such as that of Jack Shrimpton, noted that the miscreant was of an 'unsettled and extravagant disposition'.[33] Finally Ritson gives an account of Robin's death. Like Macheath in *The Beggar's Opera*, it is through the treachery of a woman that Robin meets his end.[34] Following his death, the reader is then given a brief retrospective account of Robin's moral character:

> He was active, brave, prudent, patient, possessed of uncommon bodyly strength, and considerable skill; just, generous, benevolent, faithful, and

30 Joseph Ritson, 'Letter CXIV: To Mr. Laing', in *The Letters of Joseph Ritson, Esq.*, ed. by Nicholas Harris, 2 vols (London: William Pickering, 1833), 2: 21.
31 Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: xiv.
32 Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: xiv.
33 Johnson, *Highwaymen*, p. 70, p. 423.
34 Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: xi.

> beloved or revered by his followers for his excellent and amiable qualities […] the most humane and the Prince of all Robbers.[35]

Thus the formula of eighteenth-century crime writing was a perfect fit for Ritson's account of Robin Hood.[36]

While Charles Johnson and Alexander Smith appropriated Robin Hood to make a moral point, however, and to warn readers against the consequences of following a life of sin and vice, Ritson had a political point to make instead. Ritson was a radical who detested the monarchy and the aristocracy, and so he fashions Robin Hood into a kind of medieval Thomas Paine.[37] After having journeyed to Paris in 1791, Ritson became an enthusiastic admirer of the French Revolution, which was still in full swing when he published *Robin Hood* in 1795.[38] Shortly after his visit to France, in his letters he began to address all of his like-minded associates as 'Citizen'. Ritson was not the first to anachronistically superimpose late eighteenth-century revolutionary ideals on to medieval rebels, of course, for the young Robert Southey, in his enthusiasm for the

35 Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: xii.

36 Bodleian MS. Eng. Misc. e. 21 43v-43r; interestingly, even in Southey's unpublished novel, *Harold* (1791) we can subtly see the legacy of criminal biography. At the very beginning of the novel, Robin Hood's way of life is described as 'barbarous' by Harold's brother, Tancred.[36] There is also a comical scene in which Robin Hood, the merry men, and King Richard, having waylaid the Bishop of Hereford, make the latter officiate at a mock trial in which the outlaws poke fun at the Bishop and all of the times that they have ever got the better of him: '"I confess for my part," said Little John, "having once met with the right reverend father, before whom we now stand, and feloniously, traitorously, and with evil intent having despoiled him of all the wealth he had with him and likewise afterwards tying him on a horse the wrong way, for which crimes most reverend prelate I humbly beg absolution" […] "And I for my [part]," said Robin Hood, "I confess that once in the winter season when the road was very wet, having laid a rope under the water near a slight pond which the right reverend father, before whom we now stand, was obliged to pass through, [I] feloniously, traitorously and with evil intent, [some text appears to be missing here] by which wicked manoeuvre the holy man was thrown into the water. Not contented with this I likewise was wicked, cruel, and barbarous enough to despoil him of all his money and his horse'. The language of this mock trial mirrors the solemnised speech used in 'Last Dying Speeches' and *The Newgate Calendar* (another point of comparison between Southey's unpublished novel and *Ivanhoe* is the fact that some curious Anglo-Saxon sounding names appear which are similar to those found in Scott's novel, such as an Athelwold and a woman named Ulfrida). Thus, the legacy of criminal biography upon Southey, Ritson, and as we see in chapter five, Walter Scott, further justifies the discussion of those sources in the third chapter.

37 An influential figure in the American Revolution and French Revoluton, authoring *Common Sense* (1776) and *The Rights of Man* (1791).

38 Ritson, 'Letter XCVI: To Mr. Walker', 1: 202: 'I admire the French more than ever. They deserved to be free and they really are so. You have read their new constitution: can anything be more admirable? We, who pretend to be free, you know, have no constitution at all'.

French Revolution, had also made Wat Tyler a man who fought for the 'rights' of the 'sovereign people'.[39]

Robin is not so much an outlaw in Ritson's text as a freedom fighter, who 'set Kings, judges, and magistrates at defiance'.[40] Unlike the criminals of popular biography, Robin is a rebel who has a clear social mission:

> That our hero and his companions, while they lived in the woods, had recourse to robbery for their better support, is neither to be concealed nor denied […] but it is to be remembered […] that, in these exertions of power, he took away the goods of rich men only; never killing any person, unless he was attacked or resisted; that he would not suffer a woman to be maltreated; nor ever took anything from the poor, but charitably fed them with the wealth he drew from the abbots.[41]

But it is a very bourgeois radical ideology which Ritson bestows upon Robin Hood in his text as he places much emphasis upon the idea of 'independence':

> In these forests, and with this company, he for many years reigned like an independent sovereign; at perpetual war, indeed, with the King of England, and all his subjects, with an exception, however, of the poor and needy, and such as were "desolate and oppressed," or stood in need of his protection.[42]

Other instances of independence follow for, according to Ritson, Robin Hood was:

> A man who, in a barbarous age and under a complicated tyranny, displayed a spirit of freedom and *independence*, which has endeared him to the common people, whose cause he maintained, (for all opposition to tyranny is the cause of the people,) and, in spite of the malicious endeavours of pitiful monks, by whom history was consecrated to the crimes and follies of sainted idiots and titled ruffians, to suppress all record of his patriotic exertions and patriotic acts, will render his name immortal (emphasis added).[43]

In the late eighteenth century, to be independent was to be the epitome of manliness. The term signified financial self-reliance combined with civic virtue and a love of political liberty.[44] Furthermore, this idea of independence had always carried with it a healthy disrespect for the establishment, and at its more extreme was certainly inclined to Republicanism.[45] To have the means to be independent obviously precluded a great

39 Robert Southey, *Wat Tyler, A Dramatic Poem* (London: T. Sherwin, 1817), p. 10.
40 Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: xi-xii.
41 Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: ix.
42 Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: v.
43 Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: xi-xii.
44 Matthew McCormack, *The Independent Man: Citizenship and Gender Politics in Georgian England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp. 1-15.
45 McCormack, *The Independent Man*, p. 63.

majority of the plebeian classes, although members of the labour aristocracy and artisan classes could be classed as independent. Robin Hood in Ritson's text is certainly a man who manifests a love of political liberty with public spirit.

Anticipating the fact that some of his readers might disapprove of his radical interpretation of Robin Hood, Ritson portrays the Norman rulers as tyrants.[46] To those who might question Robin's methods in establishing an 'independent sovereignty' in opposition to the King, Ritson simply replies 'what better title King Richard could pretend to the territory and people of England, than Robin Hood had to the dominion of Barnsdale and Sherwood, is a question humbly submitted to the consideration of the political philosopher'.[47] While subtly imbuing Robin with revolutionary ideals, Ritson also had to make Robin appealing to his readers, who would have been affluent. This is why one of the main problems in twelfth-century England (and of course eighteenth-century England) in Ritson's text appears to be that of 'Old Corruption'. The term was used by both the middle and working classes to describe a political system that facilitated institutionalised corruption in government, exacerbated by the fact that prior to 1832 the middle classes, by and large, did not have the vote.[48] In his letters Ritson expresses how disgusted he is with the eighteenth-century political system when he comments upon the General Election in 1790, saying that he can witness nothing but 'bribery [and] perjury'.[49] Thus, the establishment in the twelfth century is depicted as an idle elite who exist on the backs of the industrious classes, and Ritson equates the Norman regime with the political elite of his own time:

> Our hero, indeed, seems to have held bishops, abbots, priests, and monks, in a word, all the clergy, regular or secular, in decided aversion […] and, in this part of his conduct, perhaps, the pride, avarice, uncharitableness, and hypocrisy of these clerical drones, or pious locusts, (too many of whom are still permitted to pray upon the labour of the industrious, and are supported, in pampered luxury, at the expence [sic] of those whom their useless and pernicious craft tends to remain in superstitious ignorance and irrational servility,) will afford him ample justification.[50]

46 Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: vi.
47 Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: x.
48 See Philip Harling, *The Waning of Old Corruption: The Politics of Economical Reform in Britain, 1779-1846* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); William D. Rubinstein, 'The End of "Old Corruption" in Britain, 1780-1860', *Past & Present*, No. 101 (1983), 55-86.
49 Ritson, 'Letter LXXXII: To Mr. Walker', 1: 169.
50 Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: x.

'Clerical drones and pious locusts' is not simply a manifestation of traditional English Protestant anti-Catholicism, but an indictment of all clergymen of whatever hue, for Ritson was an atheist.[51] His anti-religious sentiments would have been relatively uncontroversial, but Ritson had to be somewhat circumspect in conveying his revolutionary beliefs to the reading public. Indeed, he believed that he was being watched by the authorities, and some of his like-minded acquaintances had found themselves in Newgate on charges of sedition.[52] But a reader did not need to be a radical to agree with a critique of Old Corruption as Whig/Liberal critics used this term against their political enemies as well. Adapting the discourse of Old Corruption was one method by which, as we shall see, later radical writers appropriated Robin Hood to appeal to a wide audience.

5) The Gentrification Question

Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* is not a gentrified work, at least not according to the definition given in the introduction. Percy held that the idea that Robin was a nobleman was fictitious. It was merely a result of the fact that 'the common people, who, not content to celebrate [Robin Hood's] memory by innumerable songs and stories, have erected him to the dignity of an earl'.[53] The Robin Hood that readers are presented with in Percy's text was the violent yeoman of *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne* who brutally kills Guy. Yet Percy's publication as a whole was deemed to be reading fit for a polite and refined age: *The Monthly Review* commented that the work 'lays a just claim to the attention of every lover of polite literature'.[54] Thus Percy's *Reliques*, as with other sources discussed so far, and those which will feature in forthcoming chapters, highlight the problems with applying an ahistorical term to primary sources. Robin Hood is not gentrified in Percy's text, but he is packaged into a figure who is acceptable for eighteenth-century polite society. In a similar manner, Evans' ballad anthology would likely have been considered polite reading. But his collection of Robin Hood ballads can hardly be called gentrified for the same reasons that the garlands did not present a gentrified Robin Hood. There are several types of

[51] *The Letters of Joseph Ritson, Esq.*, ed. by Nicholas Harris, 2 vols (London: William Pickering, 1833), 1: lxxx

[52] Ritson, 'Letter CVI: To Mr. Wadeson', 2: 7.

[53] Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, p. 64.

[54] Anon., 'Reliques of Ancient English Poetry', *The Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal*, April 1765, p. 242.

Robin Hood that appeared in Evans' work: some depictions of him are heroic, as in *Robin Hood Rescuing the Widow's Three Sons from the Sheriff*,[55] while some ballads present Robin more ambiguously as *Robin Hood and the Valiant Knight* does.[56] In addition, many of the ballads such as *Robin Hood and the Tanner* present the outlaw as little more than a buffoon in their Robin-Hood-meets-his-match scenarios.[57]

As Ritson's work was the most influential scholarly work upon Robin Hood to appear during the eighteenth century, his purported gentrification of Robin Hood deserves an in-depth discussion. Knight argues that Ritson gentrifies Robin Hood, saying that his biography 'combines the gentrified tradition with more recent flourishes: Robin was born Earl of Huntingdon at Locksley in 1160, so encapsulating the gentrified tradition from Major to Munday, and following the "Sloane Life" closely'.[58] Yet this statement by Knight does not adequately account for the nuance that Ritson allows concerning the conflicting evidence that there was surrounding Robin Hood's lineage. Ritson does indeed retain Anthony Munday's idea that Robin Hood was an earl, but in his text it is clear that he is hesitant to ascribe an aristocratic birth to him. Ritson writes that Robin Hood 'is frequently stiled [sic], and commonly reputed to have been Earl of Huntingdon; *a title to which, in the latter part of his life, at least, he actually appears to have had some pretension*' (emphasis added).[59] Clearly Ritson, the skilled scholar that he is, is aware that the earlier texts depict Robin as a yeoman. In his footnotes Ritson elaborates further upon the matter of Robin's noble birth and acknowledges that there are debates on the issue.[60] The 'latter part of his life' statement in all probability stems from Ritson's familiarity with the *Gest*, at the end of which Robin joins the king's household.[61] Thus, Ritson is saying that Robin Hood *might* have become a nobleman, but in the main body of his text he is not depicted as one.

Ritson does believe that Robin possessed 'nobility', and as a possible answer to Percy he cites Munday's second play where, after Robin has been dispossessed, he desires not to be known by any titles but as 'Robin Hood, plain Robin Hoode, / That honest yeoman stout and good'.[62] Thus, there is a democratic reason why Robin is

55 Evans, *Old Ballads, Historical and Narrative*, 2: 235-239.
56 Evans, *Old Ballads, Historical and Narrative*, 2: 258-261.
57 Evans, *OId Ballads, Historical and Narrative*, 2: 113-18.
58 Knight, *Robin Hood: A Mythic Biography*, p. 97.
59 Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: iv.
60 Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: xxii & lxvi.
61 Ritson, Robin Hood, 1: 71-80.
62 Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: lxiv.

simultaneously an earl and a yeoman. During the eighteenth century, being a lord did not bar a person from being a leading figure in a popular revolt. In Ritson's lifetime, Lord George Gordon had stoked the Gordon Riots in 1780 in London. As we have seen, Ritson was enamoured with the French Revolution. In writing *Robin Hood*, he may have had in mind either General Lafayette (1757-1854), who contributed to the writing of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, or perhaps Louis Phillippe (1747-1793), a member of the French Royal family who lent his support to revolutionaries and even changed his name to Citoyen Égalité.

While readers may have agreed with Ritson's critiques of 'Old Corruption', in the context of a war against republican France, it is doubtful that readers who recognised the republican sentiments behind his work thought that Robin Hood was in any way gentrified, as is commonly understood by scholars. This was a time when English Jacobin clubs were being suppressed. Even some groups who campaigned for modest parliamentary reforms found their activities proscribed: for example, between 1792 and 1794 over thirty radicals found themselves in gaol charged with sedition. The most notorious cases were those of Thomas Hardy (1752-1832), John Horne Tooke (1736-1812), and John Thelwall (1764-1834). All of these men were members of various reform societies such as the London Corresponding Society, whose demands for reform were quite modest: universal male suffrage and annual parliamentary elections (both demands would be incorporated into the Chartist People's Charter during the Victorian era).[63] Yet with the outbreak of war between Britain and Revolutionary France in 1792, the British government became increasingly paranoid concerning anything that had the slightest hint of radicalism.[64] And as we have seen, some of Ritson's associates found themselves in Newgate on charges of treason. It was also a time of patriotic fervour, which may be one reason why Ritson was keen to cast Robin's activities as 'patriotic exertions'.[65] However, in spite of Ritson's appropriation of patriotism, contemporary reviewers did not think of Ritson's portrayal of Robin Hood as patriotic. For example, a reviewer in *The Critical Review* commented that, '[Robin Hood's] character is here estimated too highly. He certainly possessed a spirit of

[63] See *The London Corresponding Society 1792-99*, ed. by Michael T. Davis (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2002).

[64] See Carl B. Cone, *English Jacobins: Reformers in Late Eighteenth-Century England* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 2010).

[65] For a discussion of Patriotism in the eighteenth century see Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992).

freedom and independence; but, however we may be inclined to excuse the manner in which that spirit was displayed, it was not without a smile that we saw it denominated patriotism.'[66]

Further complicating the supposed gentrification of Ritson's text is the fact that, as with the garlands discussed in the first chapter, and as with Evans' *Old Ballads, Historical and Narrative*, a variety of Robin Hoods appear in the text. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the differing representations of Robin Hood in the ballads again for the argument has been made both earlier in this chapter and in the analysis of *Robin Hood's Garland* in chapter one.

Another aspect of Ritson's text which deserves examination is the images which John Bewick produced for *Robin Hood*, especially given the fact that in some advertisements Bewick's images seem to have been one of the main selling points of the book. This is indicated in an advertisement in *The Morning Chronicle*:

> This day is published, price 12s […] elegantly printed on fine paper with vignettes, by the Bewicks, *Robin Hood: A Collection of All the Ancient Poems, Songs, and Ballads, Now Extant, Relative to that Celebrated English Outlaw, to which are prefixed historical anecdotes of his life*.[67]

John worked alongside his famous brother Thomas producing woodcuts for a variety of publications including books, newspapers, periodicals, and even trade cards.[68] The brothers produced mainly rural scenes, and it might be supposed that these rustic images gentrified Ritson's portrayal of Robin Hood.[69] However, it is clear that even Bewick's images represented every different type of Robin Hood who appeared in Ritson's ballad anthology.

[66] Anon., 'Robin Hood: A Collection of All the Ancient Poems, Songs, and Ballads, Now Extant, Relative to that Celebrated English Outlaw; to which are Prefixed Historical Anecdotes of his Life. 2 vols 8vo. 12s. Boards', *The Critical Review or Annals of Literature*, No.23 (1798), p. 229.

[67] Anon., 'This day is published', *The Morning Chronicle* 14 December 1795, p. 2.

[68] Scholarship upon the lives and works of the Bewick firm includes: Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination*, pp. 399-424; Jenny Uglow, *Nature's Engraver: A Life of Thomas Bewick* (London: Faber, 2006); Diana Donald, *The Art of Thomas Bewick* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013); Nigel Tattersfield, *Thomas Bewick: Graphic Worlds* (London: British Museum Press, 2014). Much of this scholarship focuses upon the work of Thomas Bewick, but there is a short biography of John Bewick: Iain Bain, 'Bewick, John (bap. 1760, d. 1795)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn, 2005 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com> [Accessed 11 Aug 2016].

[69] Stephen Basdeo, 'Robin Hood: Illustrating an Outlaw', British Association for Romantic Studies Conference, Cardiff University, 2015.

Figure 4: John Bewick's Frontispiece to *A Gest of Robyn Hode* (1795)

Figure 5: John Bewick's Frontispiece to *A True Tale of Robin Hood* (1795)

Bewick's images for *Robin Hood* are anachronistic, making Robin and his men appear more like eighteenth-century country gentlemen than medieval outlaws. This is unsurprising, for when it came to representing the medieval period, contemporary writers and artists did not aim for historical authenticity but sought to present a neoclassical or a Shakespearean view of history which would provide direct continuity with their own day.[70] The illustration which accompanies *A Gest of Robyn Hode* (Fig. 4) depicts both Robin and his outlaws and attests to the above statement. The clothing that each man is wearing certainly looks more Georgian and classically pastoral than medieval; Robin is wearing a hat with a large feather attached to it. This is repeated throughout Bewick's images, as evident in his illustration to *A True Tale of Robin Hood*

[70] Mitchell, *op cit*. See also Roy Strong, *And When Did You Last See Your Father?* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978).

(Fig. 5). This look appears to have been a trend for depictions of Robin Hood, for he is depicted in a similar manner in William Blake's 1783 print *Robin Hood and Clorinda* (Fig. 6) or John Raphael Smith's 1787 illustration of Mr. Bowden as Robin Hood in Leonard MacNally's play *Robin Hood, or Sherwood Forest* (Fig. 7). In Bewick's accompaniment to *A Gest of Robyn Hode*, Robin and Little John are sitting peacefully under a tree while a deer can be seen in the background. This image might be termed the 'pastoral Robin Hood', depicting an idealised vision of life in England, a time before the onset of industrialisation in Britain and enclosures of the common land, something which Thomas Bewick critiqued in another illustration entitled *The Beggar and his Dog at the Rich Man's Gate* (1804).[71] Echoing the above, Katey Castellano comments that the majority of images produced by the Bewick firm are 'snapshots of human life lived collectively in idealised harmony, [and] they also reflect an overt dependence on a common good figured as customary rights, which assert the right to gather water or game from common sources'.[72] While Ritson was making a political point in his *Life of Robin Hood*, Bewick is similarly presenting an idealised vision of the past in which men could enjoy their natural rights. His images are a curious combination of eighteenth-century rural life with elements of medievalism. They depict the medieval world of the outlaws as a utopia of free and equal men. While they are not overtly political, there is a subtle subversive use of Robin Hood in Bewick's images, although it is different to the republican appropriation of Robin Hood in Ritson's text. The point here is that, when all aspects of Ritson's text are included, that is the biography, the poems, and the images, there are tensions between all three, and none can be classed as gentrified.

[71] Katey Castellano, *The Ecology of British Romantic Conservatism, 1790-1837* (London: Palgrave, 2013), p. 81.
[72] Castellano, *The Ecology of British Romantic Conservatism*, p. 78.

Figure 6: William Blake, *Robin Hood and Clorinda* (London: T. Macklin, 1783) British Museum 19370410.15

Figure 7: John Raphael Smith, *Mr. Bowden in the Character of Robin Hood* (London, 1787) British Museum 19021011.4943.

6) Conclusion

Ritson's work was reprinted fifteen times throughout the nineteenth century.[73] Ritson also influenced other antiquaries to produce further Robin Hood ballad anthologies. The

73 Dobson and Taylor, *Rymes of Robyn Hood*, p. 54.

next major collection of Robin Hood ballads was published by John Mathew Gutch under the title *A Lytell Geste of Robin Hode* (1847). Gutch's publication followed a similar formula to Ritson's. It was published in two volumes, containing a 'Life of Robin Hood', an abridged version of Ritson's 'Life of Robin Hood', in addition to Ritson's ballad collection and other later ballads such as *Robin Whood and King Richard* which were not included in Ritson's work.[74] Gutch's aim in his anthology is 'to controvert the noble lineage which Mr. Ritson in his modern and more elaborate Life has ascribed to him'.[75] Evidently, the idea that Robin Hood was of noble birth was unconvincing to Gutch. This was disingenuous of Gutch to portray Ritson as believing that Robin Hood was of aristocratic birth, however, for as we have seen, Ritson did not fully accept it himself. There were similarities between the work of Ritson and Gutch. Each of the ballads included in Gutch's collection were accompanied by frontispieces and end-pieces, drawn by F. W. Fairholt, and they were of a similar character to those which Bewick created for Ritson's anthology. Gutch's book is a work of what he hopes will be considered serious scholarship, originally intended only for a middle-class, academic audience.[76] This is in contrast to Ritson, whose work was, despite its cost, 'popular' in conception. By the time that Gutch was working on Robin Hood material in 1847 the audience for these antiquarian anthologies had become primarily wealthy book-collecting enthusiasts,[77] the type of people who would have attended auctions such as the 'Bibliomania' auction held by Mr. Evans in Pall Mall in 1825, where a folio of Munday's *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon* from 1601 sold for the considerable price of 28 guineas.[78] The end result of Gutch's work, however, was little more than an expanded reproduction of Ritson's work, which was ultimately less commercially successful.[79]

This chapter has shown that texts such as Percy's *Reliques*, Evans' *Old Ballads*, and Ritson's *Robin Hood* defy any attempt at neat categorisation. Ritson hesitantly gives Robin lordly status, and although he does want to believe that Robin was of noble birth, his scholarly integrity compels him to acknowledge the fact that there are debates

74 The 'Whood' is not a typographical error but its actual title.
75 Gutch, *A Lytell Geste of Robin* Hode, 1: i.
76 Gregory, *Victorian Songhunters*, p. 142.
77 Barczewski, *Myth and National Identity*, p. 88.
78 Anon., 'Bibliomania', *The Observer*, 7 February 1825, p. 2.
79 E. Baigent, 'Gutch, John Mathew (1776–1861)' in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn., 2005 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11780> [Accessed 22/01/2015].

and contradictions around the issue. In short, Robin may be a subject of polite reading in these texts, but his portrayal, as in Percy's edited version of *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*, is not polite. In any case, Robin Hood's social status is not mentioned in either Percy's or Evans's works. While Robin is tentatively depicted as a lord in Ritson's text, it is doubtful that contemporaries thought of the revolutionary Robin Hood as gentrified. This is why scholars should ask whether Robin is polite or not, as it is a more appropriate historicist standard by which to measure Robin's representations. The main eighteenth-century text is, of course, by Ritson, whose work provided the inspiration for three major nineteenth-century novels: Scott's *Ivanhoe*, Peacock's *Maid Marian*, and Pierce Egan's *Robin Hood and Little John*. Yet as the next chapter will show, we must likewise pause before we consider applying the term gentrified to these texts either.

5) 'King of the Outlaws and Prince of Good Fellows': Nineteenth-Century Robin Hood Novels

1) Introduction

The early nineteenth century saw a proliferation of Robin Hood literature. John Keats and John Hamilton Reynolds authored two Robin Hood poems in 1818.[1] Reprints of Ritson's *Robin Hood* appeared in 1820 and 1823, and Robin also received his 'big break' in the nineteenth-century novel. Robin Hood scholars regard *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time* (1819) as the first Robin Hood novel. Contrary to prevailing scholarly opinion, however, the first Robin Hood novel written, although not published, did not appear in 1819 but during the late eighteenth century with Robert Southey's *Harold, or, the Castle of Morford* (1791).[2] The story has all the hallmarks of Southey's early radical political sentiments: Robin is presented as a tough yeoman who fights for political reform. Despite having been known to Robert Southey scholars for a long while, *Harold* is not referenced in any Robin Hood scholarship.[3]

Southey's novel was not read by the wider public so this chapter will focus upon the five novels that were actually printed: the afore-mentioned *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time*; Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819); Thomas Love Peacock's *Maid Marian* (1822); Thomas Miller's *Royston Gower; or, The Days of King John* (1838); and G. P. R. James' *Forest Days* (1843). This chapter problematizes Barczewski's assertion that Robin Hood during the nineteenth century was solely a hero to the working class, as books in this period were expensive, and largely affordable only to the elites and middle classes. Furthermore, despite Robin Hood being a subject of entertainment for the wealthier classes of society, and the fact that he is in two of these novels depicted as a

[1] Knight, *Robin Hood: A Mythic Biography*, pp. 100-105; nothing new can be added to a discussion of the textual content of Keats' and Reynolds' poems which has not already been discussed excellently by Stephen Knight. Furthermore, this thesis is a discussion of Robin Hood in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century popular culture and I do not discuss it here for the following reasons: Keats' poem was originally published in his collection entitled *Lamia, Isabella, and the Eve of St. Agnes* (1820); contemporary reviews that I have seen do not mention the Robin Hood poem, and the poem's influence on subsequent portrayals.

[2] Bodleian MS. Eng. Misc. e. 114.

[3] Jean Raimond, 'Southey's Early Writings and the Revolution', *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 19 (1989), 181-196.

lord, the idea of gentrification is once again an unsuitable concept to apply to the majority of these works.

2) Book Production in the Early Nineteenth Century

The main vehicle for the dissemination of the Robin Hood story in the nineteenth century was through the novel, and therefore a discussion of the middle-class character of the novel is necessary. The history of the rise of the novel is intertwined with the rise of the middle classes during the later eighteenth century.[4] Novels in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century were being read primarily by the middle classes. And novels usually depict members of the middle classes attempting to acquire status, wealth, or power through self-improvement rather than by inheritance.[5] The middle-class nature of the novel is also indicated by consideration of the affordability of books during this period. The production of books was costly, which, in turn, meant that prices for them were high.[6] In 1818, one publisher told a Select Committee of the House of Commons that 'books are a luxury, and the purchase of them has been confined to fewer people […] those who would be disposed to purchase books, have not the means of so doing, and are obliged to be frugal'.[7] The high cost of books was due to the fact that they were still being printed and sold as they had been in the eighteenth century. As we have seen, in the previous century books were usually printed and sold unbound, and the purchaser was then required to take the work to a bindery to have it bound according to their own specification.[8] The two-volume *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time* cost twelve shillings upon its first publication.[9] Three-volume works generally cost around fifteen or eighteen shillings.[10] Most of Scott's works, however, were more expensive: *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805) cost twenty-five shillings, and Scott's first novel *Waverley*

4 See Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding* (London: Pimlico, 2006).

5 John Richetti, 'Introduction', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth-Century Novel*, ed. by John Richetti (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 1-8 (p. 7).

6 Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900*, 2nd Edn (London: Phoenix Books, 1963), p. 260.

7 *Report from the Select Committee on the Copyright Acts* (1818) cited in Altick, *The English Common Reader*, p. 260.

8 This practice still persisted with some books as late as 1845. For example, the fourth edition of Henry Downes Miles' *Dick Turpin the Highwayman* (1839) contains instructions to the binders 'for placing the engravings'.

9 Anon., 'Books Published this Day', *The Morning Chronicle*, 12 August 1819, p. 1.

10 Altick, *The English Common Reader*, p. 263.

retailed at twenty-one shillings.[11] *Ivanhoe* was even more expensive: it was sold unbound in three octavo volumes and priced at thirty-one shillings.[12] The cost of binding the three volumes would have raised the price significantly and probably resulted in a total cost of thirty-seven shillings.[13] Miller's *Royston Gower* was also published in three volumes and sold for one pound eleven shillings and sixpence.[14] James' *Forest Days* retailed at thirty-one shillings and sixpence.[15] Thus none of these novels could be considered cheap.

The expense of books meant that, as one review of *Forest Days* stated, 'there are very few who purchase novels when they are first published'.[16] Those with lower incomes, however, may have been able to read a copy of *Ivanhoe*, *Maid Marian*, or *Royston Gower* from one of the many circulating libraries and subscription libraries throughout the country. Moreover, Peacock's novels were not as expensive as Scott's. His first novel *Headlong Hall* (1816) was priced at six shillings unbound and seven shillings bound.[17] This was also the case with *Maid Marian*, a one-volume novella which similarly cost seven shillings.[18] Keats' *Lamia, Isabella, and the Eve of St. Agnes* (1820) which contained his Robin Hood poem was similarly priced at seven shillings and sixpence.[19] It might be supposed that a volume such as *Maid Marian* may seem to have been within the reach of a less affluent reading public, but even its relatively low cost would not have made it so. Skilled tradesmen and artisans could command anything from fifteen shillings to twenty-five shillings per week, whilst bricklayers and labourers could obtain somewhere in the region of ten shillings to twelve shillings per week.[20] This may seem like a reasonable wage, but it is important to remember patterns of employment and the relation of wages to the cost of living: much work was seasonal,

[11] Altick, *The English Common Reader*, p. 263.
[12] Millgate, 'Making it New: Scott, Constable, Ballantyne, and the Publication of *Ivanhoe*', p.808.
[13] William St. Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 194.
[14] Anon., *The Publishers' Circular, Volume 1* (London, [n.p.], 1837), p. 22.
[15] Anon., 'New Publications', *The Gentleman's Magazine*, March (1843), p. 296.
[16] Anon., 'The Works of G. P. R. James', *The Mirror Monthly Magazine*, November 1847, p. 323.
[17] St. Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, p. 194.
[18] St. Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, p. 629.
[19] Anon., 'Art. IV. Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and other Poems', *The Eclectic Review*, September 1820, p. 158.
[20] Edward P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, 4th Edn (Pelican Books, 1972), pp. 342-43.

and while wages did rise in the first half of the nineteenth century, there was still the problem of chronic underemployment amongst many sectors of the working classes.[21]

For further evidence that a relatively inexpensive novel such as *Maid Marian* (when compared with the cost of *Ivanhoe* at least) was not being read by the working classes, we can consider what exactly the poor were reading during the early nineteenth century. The period witnessed a thriving trade in chapbooks. The main centres of chapbook production in Britain were Glasgow and Edinburgh, Newcastle, Penrith, and London.[22] Robin Hood appears to have been a staple product of itinerant chapmen's wares, along with other medieval tales such as *Guy of Warwick* and *The Wise Men of Gotham*.[23] Many of these chapbooks were being published and sold at the same time as *Maid Marian*. Other chapbook titles include *The Famous Exploits of Robin Hood, Little John, and his Merry Men All* (published between 1813 and 1838), as well as the *Little Folks'* edition of *The History of Bold Robin Hood* (c.1840). Some of the Robin Hood chapbooks that I have encountered, surprisingly, appear to have been more expensive than the average chapbook price which was usually a penny.[24] One version of Robin Hood's life printed in 1822 was sold with coloured plates for one shilling.[25] The chapbook version of *Ivanhoe* entitled *Ivanhoe, or, The Knight Templar* (c.1819) lists a price of sixpence on its title page.[26] If these chapbook versions of Robin Hood's life are viewed in tandem with continuing sales of Robin Hood broadside ballads in the nineteenth century, it becomes evident that the poor were not getting their stories of Robin Hood from novels, but from the street literature which flourished in the early part of the century.[27]

21 Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, p. 275.

22 Chris Wright, 'Forgotten Broadsides and the Song Tradition of the Scots Travellers', in *Street Ballads in Nineteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and North America: The Interface between Print and Oral Traditions*, ed. by David Atkinson & Steve Roud (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 77-104 (p. 77).

23 Shepherd, *The History of Street Literature*, p. 90.

24 Shepherd, *The History of Street Literature*, p. 90.

25 Anon., *Robin Hood: Being a Complete History of all the Notable and Merry Exploits Performed by Him and His Men on Many Occasions* (London: William Darton, 1822), p. i.

26 Anon., *Ivanhoe, or, The Knight Templar* (London: J. Bailey [n.d.]), p. 1.

27 These are a selction of some surviving nineteenth-century Robin Hood broadside ballads: *The Bold Pedlar and Robin Hood* (London: J. Catnach, c.1813-c.1838) Bodleian Library Broadside Ballads Bod1022; *Robin Hood and the Fifteen Foresters* (London: J. Pitts, 1811) Bodleian Library Broadside Ballads Bod18605; *Bold Robin Hood and Allen-a-Dale* (London: J. Catnach, c.1819-c.1844) Bodleian Library Broadside Ballads Bod13020; *Bold Robin Hood* (London: J. Catnach, c.1813-c.1838) Bodleian Library Broadside Ballads Bod13254.

3) Legacies of Antiquarian Interest in Robin Hood

Thus, it is clear that novels in the early nineteenth century were published predominantly for the entertainment of the elites. We must now turn to the texts themselves and see the type of audiences that the respective novelists imagined would be reading their works. To do this, it is useful to look at the framing narratives of *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time* and *Ivanhoe*. In each of the novels' prefaces, they draw upon the popular antiquarianism of the late eighteenth century, which, as we have seen, was a predominantly bourgeois phenomenon.

The plot of *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time* is unremarkable, and has been discussed by Stephen Knight at length.[28] It is a gothic romance and tells the story of Robin losing his inheritance to his malevolent step-brother, Will Scarlet, and becoming an outlaw. Oddly, Robin Hood is friends with the Sheriff of Nottingham in this novel, who seeks to protect Robin Hood from the machinations of his step-brother's henchmen. Where this thesis will add to existing examinations of this novel is by dwelling on its framing narrative because it provides a representation of the respectable classes of people who the novel is aimed at, all of whom have a deep interest in old ballads. The narrative begins in the year 1819 when a young Scottish lawyer visits England to spend some time with his former tutor from Oxford. The lawyer is a cultured and learned man, familiar with the Graveyard Poets and the works of Joseph Addison.[29] A dinner party is held one evening and many similar, bourgeois figures are present. Those present at the dinner party enter into a discussion of the benefits of reading fiction, and in particular historical fiction.[30] One of the guests then proceeds to a discussion of old ballads, and one gentleman argues that,

> "The popular songs of a country have always a strong and important effect on its people, and to take care that these songs should be of a proper tendency, has justly been thought an object worthy to engage even the attention of a statesman."[31]

The conversation then turns to Robin Hood, and one of the guests reveals that there is an old woman in the village named Goody who is descended from the Welsh Bards and

[28] Knight, *Robin Hood: A Mythic Biography*, pp. 116-18; Knight, *Robin Hood: A Complete Study of the English Outlaw*, p. 178; Knight, *Reading Robin Hood*, pp. 146-51.

[29] Anon., *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time*, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1819), 1: 4.

[30] Anon., *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time*, 1: 61-73.

[31] Anon., *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time*, 1: 69-70.

English minstrels.[32] She is able to recite ancient tales passed down to her through several generations. Knight argues that Goody may have been based upon Anna Gordon Brown of Falkland (1747-1810).[33] She was a lady who learned ballads in her childhood from her nursemaid which were subsequently written down and published by antiquaries such as Walter Scott in his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802) and Robert Jamieson in *Popular Ballads and Songs, from Tradition, Manuscripts, and Scarce Editions* (1806).[34] Among her ballad repertoire were two ballads entitled *The Birth of Robin Hood* and *The Wedding of Robin Hood and Little John*, both of which were unknown to Ritson, but were included in Gutch's later anthology (although modern Robin Hood scholars are now hesitant to include Mrs. Brown's ballads in the Robin Hood canon).[35]

The next evening all of the guests assemble in the old woman's cottage to hear a tale of Robin Hood.[36] The guests clearly are well-to-do people. There is obviously the young Scottish lawyer, and his tutor. There are several 'young ladies of the neighbourhood',[37] along with Mr. and Mrs. Plowshare. The Plowshares are affluent farmers who are rich enough to send their daughters away to a finishing school where they receive an education and have their manners refined.[38] Thus the framing narrative, combined with the fact that it was an expensive two volume novel, indicates that in both its format and content, *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time* was a work for the type of people who are represented in the lengthy introductory chapter: respectable, middle-class people, or those who aspire to be so.

Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time did not achieve a wide circulation. Scott's *Ivanhoe* had a far greater and more sustained influence upon subsequent interpretations of the Robin Hood legend. Scott was born in Edinburgh in 1771, and at

32 Anon., *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time*, 1: 13.

33 Knight, *Reading Robin Hood*, p. 147.

34 See *The Ballad Repertoire of Anna Gordon, Mrs Brown of Falkland*, ed. by Sigrid Riewerts (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2011).

35 Dobson & Taylor, *Rymes of Robyn Hood*, pp. 195-97; Dobson and Taylor say that 'Mrs. Brown's ballad owes nothing but Robin Hood's name to the native English cycle of stories: the early stanzas of the poem with their familiar tale of illicit love and secret birth depend heavily on other Scottish ballads, and especially on *Willie O Douglas Dale* […] It remains suspicious that for the missing story of [Robin Hood's] birth we have to wait until the recitation of a remarkable Scottish woman delivered five years after the first (1795) of Ritson's comprehensive collection of the Robin Hood ballads'.

36 Anon., *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time*, 1: 79-81.

37 Anon., *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time*, 1: 27-28.

38 Anon., *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time*, 1: 37-38.

the age of fourteen he was indentured by his father to a solicitor, but throughout his life maintained a deep interest in antiquarian studies. In his youth he avidly read Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765) and was also a collector of chapbooks and broadsides.[39] Although modern critics think of Scott as a novelist and poet, he was also an historian with a detailed knowledge of a wide range of primary sources, and his novels exhibit a remarkable degree of historical knowledge.[40] Scott assumes the identity of an antiquary in the framing narrative of *Ivanhoe* and throughout the novel he references many fictionalised primary sources in his footnotes.[41] This feigned scholarly apparatus which draws upon late eighteenth-century popular antiquarianism gives the novel an air of historical authenticity.[42]

The preface is a letter from the fictional Sir Laurence Templeton to the Reverend Doctor Dryasdust. Templeton declares that he thinks it strange that 'no attempt has been made to excite an interest for the traditions of Old England, similar to that which has been obtained on behalf of those of our poorer and less celebrated neighbour'.[43] Thus, English patriots currently have no sense of shared history around which they can rally, and Templeton singles out Robin Hood as being a figure that could arouse patriotic sentiments in the reading public of all classes, saying that his name 'if duly conjured with, should raise a spirit as soon as that of Rob Roy'.[44] He explains that this is partially due to the fact that there is a language barrier between readers in the present and the writers of the medieval period. What is needed is an author who can animate the past for modern readers, and make it come alive for them. This is because 'he who first opens Chaucer, or any other ancient poet, is so much struck with the obsolete spelling, multiplied consonants, and antiquated appearance of

39 Numerous biographies of Scott and his works are available: Andrew Lincoln, *Walter Scott and Modernity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007); Jane Millgate, *Walter Scott: The Making of the Novelist* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1987); John Sutherland, *Life of Walter Scott: A Critical Biography* (John Wiley & Sons, 1997); D. W. Jefferson, *Walter Scott: An Introductory Essay* (Edinburgh: Dunedin Academic Press, 2002); Angus & Jenni Calder, *Literature in Perspective: Scott* (London: Camelot Press, 1969).

40 Alice Chandler, 'Sir Walter Scott and the Medieval Revival', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 19: 4 (1965) 315-32 (p. 315).

41 Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe: A Romance* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1871), p. 227: Statements such as, for instance, 'we need add nothing more to vindicate the probability of the scenes which we have detailed, and are about to detail, upon the apocryphal authority of the Wardour MS'.

42 See Jerome Mitchell, *Scott, Chaucer, and Medieval Romance: A Study in Sir Walter Scott's Indebtedness to the Literature of the Middle Ages* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1987).

43 Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 12.

44 Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 12.

the language, that he is apt to lay down the work in despair'.[45] Dryasdust would be content to allow the romances of ancient times to stay pure and undefiled from the influence of modern English, or have the past appear to be dry as dust. This is where the author of modern romance should intervene, for their 'language must not be obsolete and unintelligible'.[46] Furthermore, 'the subject assumed should be, as it were, translated into the manners, as well as the language, of the age we live in'.[47] Templeton reveals that he composed his novel from various sources such as the Auchinleck MS.,[48] and the entirely fictional **Wardour Manuscript** (the title of which Scott had printed in Gothic typeface in order to give a further touch of historical authenticity to the appearance of his novel).[49] By inventing medieval sources, and framing his story as the translation of a 'lost' manuscript, Scott is playing upon the middle and upper classes' interest in popular antiquarianism which emerged in the late eighteenth century. Thus, to adapt Hobsbawm's statement, one might say that middle-class intellectuals-turned-novelists have ensured the survival of the Robin Hood legend in the nineteenth century.

4) The Yeoman Robin Hood: The Novels of Scott, Miller, and James

Although books were expensive, and in spite of the fact that it was, for the most part, middle-class authors writing Robin Hood novels in this period for a presumed middle-class readership, we do not witness a gentrified outlaw in the majority of the Robin Hood books written at this point. In keeping with earlier Robin Hood texts such as the *Gest*, in the works of Scott, Miller, and James, Robin is a yeoman. But in spite of enjoying modest social status in these works, Robin is still a respectable gentleman: he behaves in a chivalrous and civilised manner.

Throughout *Ivanhoe*, Robin Hood is called Robin of Locksley. He only appears in ten out of the forty-four chapters in the novel, although he is the novel's most dynamic character, in contrast to the title character, Ivanhoe.[50] It seems odd that Scott would have rejected the idea that Robin Hood was a lord, given Scott's alleged Tory

45 Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 16.
46 Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 18.
47 Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 15.
48 National Library of Scotland Adv. MS. 19.2.1.
49 Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 19.
50 Ivanhoe takes part in the jousting tournament at the beginning, and rescues Rebecca from being burned at the stake at the end, but he spends the majority of the novel incapacitated after fighting in the tournament. In many of Scott's novel the central hero is relatively inactive. See Alexander Welsh, *The Hero of the Waverley Novels* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963).

politics (in reality, he was a progressive conservative). The reason that Scott demotes Locksley to the status of a yeoman is because he wished to represent the nineteenth-century labouring poor, or at the very least the rural labour aristocracy through Locksley and his band of disinherited outlaws.[51] The theme of social and political unity is important in *Ivanhoe*. As Scott suggests in his dedicatory epistle, his purpose in writing the novel was to create for English readers a sense of a shared history around which all members of society could rally.[52] England in particular faced a series of crises in the aftermath of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815). After the end of the wars, prices and wages fell in all sectors, and the numbers of demobilised soldiers returning home exacerbated the problem of unemployment.[53] There was also a strong clamour for political reform coming from the disenfranchised middle and working classes while Scott was writing. Riots attended many of the mass public meetings such as those that occurred at Spa Fields, London, in 1816, when people gathered to hear the radical orator Henry Hunt speak upon the subject of parliamentary reform. Matters came to a head in 1819 when between sixty and eighty thousand people gathered in St. Peter's Fields, Manchester, in support of the movement for parliamentary reform.[54] The local militia charged at the protesters, killing fifteen people and injuring approximately five hundred, an event which horrified Scott.[55] His novel, therefore, looks back to the medieval period, and what Scott understood as its feudal ordering of society, to find the model of an ordered and harmonious social structure which people in the nineteenth century could emulate.[56] Nostalgia for the feudal system was seen by Scott as a means

51 Simon J. White, '*Ivanhoe,* Robin Hood, and the Pentridge Rising', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 31: 3 (2009), 209-24 (p. 210).

52 Paul J. de Gategno, *Ivanhoe: A Reader's Companion* (New York: Twayne, 1994), p. 9.

53 Boyd Hilton, *A Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 251.

54 For a discussion of popular protest and government responses to it during the early nineteenth century see the following works: John Stevenson, *Popular Disturbances in England, 1700-1832*, 3rd Edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014); Edward Royle, *Revolutionary Britannia: Reflections on the Threat of Revolution in Britain, 1789-1848* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000); D. G. Wright, *Popular Radicalism: The Working-Class Experience, 1780-1880*, 5th Edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013).

55 White, '*Ivanhoe*, Robin Hood, and the Pentridge Rising', p. 212.

56 Chris Wickham, 'Le forme del feudalesimo', *Settimane di Studio* 47, (2000), 15-46; Medieval scholars nowadays tend to avoid using the word 'feudalism' in view of the fact that it has been applied without consistency in various contexts. Sometimes it is taken to apply to medieval economic and social structures from the sixth century onwards in which include an elite who were rewarded with land instead of money, a dependant peasantry, low tax rates, and an emphasis on loyalty, as defined by Marc Bloch. For Marxist historians it is a system of exchange where surplus production is taken from peasant families by means of coercion. There

of tackling the problems posed by social and political division and upheaval in the early years of the nineteenth century. In Scott's vision, the serf should be willing to die for his master, and the master willing to die for the man he considers his sovereign.[57] This vision of a stable national society is inclusive, and in the novel each man, of whatever social status he may be, has his own part to play. Through Robin Hood, Scott intends to show that from the very beginning of national history even commoners could have an influence for good, thus contributing to the unity of the nation.[58] It is Locksley who proves to be most useful to Richard I in re-establishing his authority.

Whilst Ritson tried to cast Robin as a radical and subversive figure in his ballad anthology, Scott links him to a conservative agenda. He is now a man who is loyal, although not uncritically, to the King. Robin is rendered respectable by virtue of the fact that Scott never depicts him committing any criminal act, and his outlaw status is downplayed. The real outlaws are the Norman barons and Prince John. Locksley is rarely called an outlaw in the text. Instead he is called 'a stout well-set yeoman, arrayed in Lincoln green',[59] or 'yeoman',[60] 'Locksley the yeoman',[61] or 'captain'.[62] This is significant because it gives the impression that Locksley's men are organised like an army regiment, rather than simply an irregular group of outlaws with no discipline and order. Scott may not have wanted readers to be reminded of the Luddites, the mob-like machine-breaking movement which began in Nottingham. There are only two scenes in which Locksley is addressed as an outlaw. The first is when he is negotiating a ransom for the Jewess Rebecca.[63] Even in this scene, however, he is not robbing anybody. This may explain why Scott chose to call his character Robin of Locksley. Throughout the novel, the reader is never told that this Robin of Locksley is the same outlaw as Robin Hood. Readers may very well have suspected it, but it is not confirmed until the end of

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is also the legal definition of 'feudalism' which denotes the granting of land by a lord to a vassal in exchange for services. Wickham's article is published only in Italian and is unavailable online, but his work has been summarised in English in Charles West's short article 'The Forms of Feudalism' on Sheffield's University's website <http://turbulentpriests.group.shef.ac.uk/the-forms-of-feudalism> [Accessed 09/12/2015].

57 Chandler, 'Sir Walter Scott and the Medieval Revival', p. 324.

58 William E. Simeone, 'The Robin Hood of *Ivanhoe*', *The Journal of American Folklore*, 74: 293 (1961), 230-234 (p. 231).

59 Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p.84.

60 Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 89, p. 110, p. 144, p. 145, p. 148, p. 194.

61 Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 193.

62 Scott, *Ivanhoe*, pp. 125-126.

63 Scott, *Ivanhoe*, pp. 338-339.

the novel, when, in the second instance that Locksley is called an outlaw, Richard and Locksley reveal their true identities to each other:

> "Call me no longer Locksley, my Liege, but know me under the name, which, I fear, fame hath blown too widely not to have reached even your royal ears – I am Robin Hood of Sherwood Forest."
> "King of Outlaws, and Prince of good fellows!" said the King, "who hath not heard a name that has been borne as far as Palestine? But be assured, brave Outlaw, that no deed done in our absence, and in the turbulent times to which it hath given rise, shall be remembered to thy disadvantage."[64]

Richard nullifies Locksley's entire criminal career by pardoning any misdeeds he has committed whilst Richard was fighting the Crusades. By this means Scott neutralises any subversive, anti-authoritarian tendencies which people may be inclined to read into the character of Robin of Locksley.

While Locksley is undoubtedly heroic in *Ivanhoe*, complications arise when Scott's subtle criticisms of the outlaws' conduct are taken into account. Scott is hesitant to heroize Locksley too much, and while Robin is necessary to Richard in re-establishing the political and social order, he is neither perfect nor saintly. When Wamba is alone with Richard I, Wamba reveals that he holds a more nuanced assessment of the outlaws' characters. He says that 'those honest fellows balance a good deed with one not quite so laudable'.[65] Richard asks Wamba to elaborate upon what he has said:

> The merry men of the forest set off the building of a cottage with the burning of a castle – the thatching of a choir against the robbing of a church – the setting free a poor prisoner against the murder of a proud sheriff; or, to come nearer to our point, the deliverance of a Saxon Franklin against the burning alive of a Norman baron. Gentle thieves they are, in short, and courteous robbers; but it is ever [sic] the luckiest to meet with them when they are at their worst.[66]

This is an ambiguous critique by Wamba: although sheriffs are generally viewed as bad in the Robin Hood tradition, and although Wamba is not a Norman enthusiast, murdering them is not to be praised either. This passage is probably inserted because Scott, in all of his novels, strove to give balanced portrayals of the characters in them.[67]

64 Scott, *Ivanhoe*, pp. 419-20.
65 Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 414.
66 Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 414.
67 Angus Calder & Jenni Calder, *Literature in Perspective: Scott* (London: Evans Brothers, 1969), p. 77.

Scott is partially continuing the conventions of eighteenth-century criminal biography, allowing Locksley to be portrayed as a hero, yet simultaneously critiquing his actions.[68] It is known that Scott owned and read Charles Johnson's *Highwaymen* and several other eighteenth-century criminal biographies, and these undoubtedly contributed to his nuanced assessment of the outlaws' morality in his tale. He allowed criminal biography to inform some of his other stories: it is definitely known that *The Pirate* (1822) was based upon his reading of the life of Capt. John Gow in Johnson's *Pyrates*.[69] *The Abbotsford Library Catalogue* (1837) lists another criminal biography in Scott's collection entitled *The Highland Rogue* (1723), which, of course, inspired *Rob Roy* (1818).[70]

However, not every reader was impressed with Scott's balanced portrayal of Locksley. A reviewer in *The Monthly Review* said that the Robin Hood of *Ivanhoe* comes across as nothing more than one of 'the lower orders' who has taken to the road

[68] Welsh, *The Hero of the Waverley*, p. 56: the influences of the picaresque novel, the forerunner of criminal biography, are present in both *Waverley* and *Rob Roy*. See also Patrick Parrinder, *Nation and Novel: The English Novel from Its Origins to the Present Day* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 156: Parrinder also notes how Scott drew upon eighteenth-century portrayals of highwaymen in another scene in *Ivanhoe* when the Templars disguise themselves as robbers and kidnap Cedric's party in the forest.

[69] Walter Scott, *The Pirate*, ed. by Mark Weinstein & Alison Lumsden (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2001), p. 490n; in Scott's last written work *Reliquiae Trotcosienses or, The Gabions of the Late Jonathan Oldbuck Esq. of Monkbarns* (1832), which is a guide to Abbotsford and its collections, Scott picks out Charles Johnson's *The History of the Most Noted Highwaymen* (1734) as being of especial interest, and indeed it seems he was familiar with several of the anonymous criminal biographies from the early eighteenth century such *as The History and Lives of the Most Notorious Pirates and their Crews* which is probably just a reprint of Johnson's *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates* (1724).

[70] Anon., *Catalogue of the Library at Abbotsford* (London: T. Constable, 1838), p. 91. Scott's copy of *The Highland Rogue* is now on display at the Abbotsford Museum Visitor Centre. In The Abbotsford Library book catalogue, there are several other criminal biographies listed in Scott's collection: Alexander Smith's *History of the Highwaymen* (p. 448); Johnson's *History of the Highwaymen* (p. 131); John Reynolds' *Triumph of God's Revenge Against Murder* (p. 154); *Tryal of Philip Stansfield for the Murder of his Father* (p. 13); *Tryals of Ireland, Pickering and Grove* (p. 30); *Innocency and Truth Vindicated* (p. 58); *Last Speeches of Mr. John Kid and Mr. John King* (p. 65); *Trial of Margaret Tindall* (p. 129); *True Relation of the Murder Committed by David Wallis* (p. 133); *Trial and Execution of Mary McKinnon* (p. 135); *Last Speech, Confession, and Dying Words of Nichol Muschat* (p. 145); *Trials of Skelton, Sutherland, M'Donald* (p. 152); *Trial of Duncan Terrig and Alexander Bane MacDonald* (p. 278); *Trial of R. Thornhill* (p. 293); *Trial of William Burke* (p. 295); *Trial of Mungo Campbell* (p. 297); *History of the Mysterious Murder of Maria Marten* (p. 340); *Trial of Henderson for Murder* (p. 343); *History of the Polstead Murder* (p. 340); *Trial of Capt. Donnelan* (p. 296); *Trials for Murder* (p. 152); *Trial of Holloway and Haggerty* (p. 297); *Trial of Mary McKinson* (p. 135); *Murder Will Out* (p. 421).

because he ‘disdained the regular pursuits of industry’.[71] This assessment of Scott’s portrayal is similar to the description of Robin in Charles Johnson’s account, where Robin was ‘trained to the occupation of a butcher, but his roving disposition was soon disgusted with that industrious employment’.[72] Similarly, in 1820 Henry Crabb Robinson wrote that Scott ‘has failed, however, in rendering Robin Hood acceptable – the delightful hero of the old popular ballad is degraded in the modern romance into a sturdy vagrant’.[73]

Nevertheless, Scott’s portrayal of Robin Hood was highly influential upon Thomas Miller and his novel, *Royston Gower*. Miller was born in 1807 in Gainsborough, Lincolnshire. His father died when he was three years old after having participated in the Burdett Riots in 1810, leaving Miller and his mother in poverty.[74] In spite of his impoverished childhood, Miller’s mother ensured that he received an education. From an early age Miller loved to read, eventually becoming both a poet and a novelist who sought to emulate Scott, whom he describes as ‘the immortal author of *Waverley*’.[75] As in Scott’s novel, Robin Hood is not the main protagonist of Miller’s story, but is an outlaw who comes to the aid of the oppressed who suffer under ‘the tyranny of the Norman Forest laws’.[76] *Royston Gower* is indeed a worthy successor to *Ivanhoe* as the novel is meticulously researched. Miller tells the reader in his preface that the novel was the result of having ‘spent some time in that national, and truly beneficial institution, the British Museum [where he] perused several scarce and ancient works that gave him a great insight into the manners and customs of the period about which he has written’.[77]

Although Miller adapts Scott’s trope of the enmity between the Anglo-Saxons and the Normans, he is much closer in his political sentiments to Ritson, portraying Robin as ‘this early Reformer’.[78] Indeed, Miller’s representation of Robin Hood might

71 Anon., *The Monthly Review*, Jan 1820, 71-89 (p. 82)
72 Johnson, *Highwaymen*, p. 70.
73 Henry Crabb Robinson, ’Diary Entry by Henry Crabb Robinson, 21 Jan. 1820’, in *Henry Crabb Robinson on Books and their Writers*, ed. by E. J. Morley, 3 vols (London: Dent, 1938), 1: 238.
74 Anon., ‘Thomas Miller’, *The Labour League Examiner*, 7 November 1877, p. 3.
75 Miller, *Royston Gower*, p. 7.
76 Miller, *Royston Gower*, p. 5.
77 Miller, *Royston Gower*, p. 5.
78 Miller, *Royston Gower*, p. 7.

justifiably be called ‘The Chartist Robin Hood’.[79] Although Robin is not gentrified, that is to say he is not a lord in the novel, he is still a gentle man. He and his men are described as ‘gallant’, and they are ever ready to come to the aid of those who are oppressed by the Norman tyrants.[80] Another yeoman Robin Hood appears in G. P. R. James’ *Forest Days*. There is little evidence to suggest that the novel was ever intended as a political and social commentary such as *Ivanhoe* or *Maid Marian*. Its impact appears to have been so minimal that only a brief mention of it will suffice. The novel rehearses the familiar code of conduct for the outlaws: ‘the peasant, the honest Franklin, the village curate, the young, and women of all degree’ are permitted to pass through the forest unmolested.[81] Although he is not an aristocrat in the novel, he is described in noble terms as ‘the Lord of Sherwood’.[82] James made one innovation, however: the novel is not set during the 1190s but during Simon De Montfort’s uprising between 1264 and 1267, the same setting used by George Emmett for his penny dreadful *Robin Hood and the Archers of Merrie Sherwood* (1869). Robin is not the principal protagonist but one of many characters involved in the rebellion, with Robin on the side of De Montfort.[83] The Victorians held a glowing opinion of De Montfort as the man

[79] Stephen Basdeo, ‘The Chartist Robin Hood: Thomas Miller’s Royston Gower; or, The Days of King John (1838)’, Reworking Walter Scott Conference, University of Dundee, 31 March - 2 April 2017; this is the argument I recently made in a conference paper. For example, from the preface it is clear that Miller intended to adapt Chartist discourse and superimpose it on to his twelfth-century tale. Firstly, one of the men with whom Robin becomes associated, a Saxon named Hereward, is a man who seeks the establishment of ‘a charter’. Obviously allusions are made to Magna Carta, but perhaps Miller’s choice of spelling is noteworthy here: whenever the Victorians wrote about Magna Carta, they usually spelled it as ‘Magna Charta’. Miller’s ‘Charta’, however, is a ‘charter’. It is a Charter, furthermore, which enjoys the support of all the Saxons and is presented in good faith to King John and the Barons, but is rejected immediately by them. Such scenes are reminiscent of the dismissal of the first Chartist petition by the government in the nineteenth century. Miller’s setting is also significant. Had he truly wished to emulate Scott’s medieval tale, he could have chosen for his novel the days of King Richard. Instead Miller opted for the days of King John. Setting the outlaw in this timeframe does not require Miller’s Robin Hood to side with an oppressive Norman establishment, as Locksley does in *Ivanhoe* by supporting King Richard. Another scene in the novel where Chartism can be seen to have a subtle influence is the time that a small scale Peasants’ Revolt occurs because the people ‘value their freedoms and liberties’, two words which were ever present Chartist texts.

[80] Miller, *Royston Gower*, pp. 263, 319.

[81] G. P. R. James, *Forest Days: A Romance of Old Times* (London: Simms & McIntyre, 1852), p. 48.

[82] James, *Forest Days*, p. 79.

[83] James, *Forest Days*, p. 71.

who set in motion the construction of parliamentary democracy in Britain.[84] Thus, although Robin is on the side of somebody who was essentially a revolutionary, as in *Ivanhoe* he is not a subversive figure. He is instead a respectable yeoman and patriot.

5) An Aristocratic Robin Hood: *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time* (1819) and *Maid Marian* (1822)

While the novels discussed thus far portray Robin Hood as a yeoman, he does appear as an aristocrat in two novels during this period, as he does in the anonymously authored *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time* (1819). There is little to add here in terms of plot analysis that would significantly contribute to the body of academic knowledge. Besides, its influence upon the legend was non-existent, as it did not inform any succeeding portrayals of Robin Hood.[85] Another aristocratic Robin Hood appears in Peacock's *Maid Marian*, which was well-received when it was first published, and which has remained popular with critics. Peacock, who was born in 1785 in Weymouth, was a self-educated scholar, and maintained friendships with other influential Romantic poets and novelists such as Percy B. Shelley.[86] The medieval world of *Maid Marian* is different to the world conjured up by Scott. It is barely historicist: the novel is actually a satirical romance which is critical of conservatives in post war Europe who sought to re-impose a feudal social structure onto post-revolutionary states.[87]

The novel opens with the wedding of Robin of Huntingdon and Marian. During the wedding, Prince John's soldiers march in and accuse Robin of treason.[88] Robin flees into the forest with Little John and other loyal servants and lives the life of an outlaw.[89] In the novel, Peacock interweaves stories from seventeenth-century ballads such as

[84] See the following works: Daniel Waley, 'Simon De Montfort and the Historians', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 140 (2002), 65-70; Adrian Jobson, *The First English Revolution: Simon de Montfort, Henry III and the Barons' War* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012).

[85] For detailed discussions of *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time* (1819) see the following: Knight, *Reading Robin Hood*, pp. 143-186; Knight, *Robin Hood: A Mythic Biography*, pp. 116-118; Knight, *Robin Hood: A Complete Study of the English Outlaw*, pp. 171-192.

[86] Nicholas A. Joukovsky, 'Peacock, Thomas Love (1785–1866)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn., 2005 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21681> [Accessed 25 Oct 2015].

[87] Marilyn Butler, 'The Good Old Times: *Maid Marian*', in *Robin Hood: Anthology of Scholarship and Criticism* ed. by Stephen Knight (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1999), pp. 141-54 (p. 141).

[88] Thomas Love Peacock, *Maid Marian and Crochet Castle*, ed. by George Saintsbury (London: MacMillan, 1895), p. 4.

[89] Knight, *Reading Robin Hood*, p. 154; Stephen Knight even comments upon the novel's supposed 'brilliance and influence'.

Robin Hood and the Bishop of Hereford and *Robin Hood and Allen-a-Dale* into a larger narrative involving the personal rivalries between Robin and Prince John. There are also the usual skirmishes between Robin's band and the forces of the Sheriff of Nottingham and Prince John. Then, at the end, King Richard returns and pardons Robin and Marian.

Where the novel is original is in its foregrounding of Maid Marian (known as Matilda before she joins Robin in the forest). Marian is absent in early texts such as *A Gest of Robyn Hode* and her appearance in the legend came via the sixteenth-century May Day games.[90] From there she made her way into Munday's two plays and also Martin Parker's *True Tale of Robin Hood* (1631). In Peacock's novel, Marian is a strong female character who subverts gender norms. It is mentioned several times that she is fond of hunting.[91] She is ready to participate in hand-to-hand combat to protect her home against the Sheriff's men when they attempt to apprehend her as Robin Hood's accomplice.[92] She is strong-willed and defies the wishes of her father on a number of occasions, especially in regards to going out of the castle and into the woods on her own.[93] Thus, Marian is a foil to the gothic heroine, who gets imprisoned in castles and can only escape with the help of a male protagonist. Peacock's independent Marian has no need of a man to rescue her. She is a woman who becomes bored in the domestic sphere, exclaiming at one point in the novel that 'thick walls, dreary galleries, and tapestried chambers, were indifferent to me while I could leave them at pleasure, but have ever been hateful to me since they held me by force'.[94] While it is not feminist in a modern sense, Peacock's work is deeply pervaded by a proto-feminist consciousness.[95] In fact, it has been suggested by some Peacock scholars that Marian was based upon Peacock's friend, the novelist Mary Shelley (1797-1851).[96]

Robin's merry men live according to chivalric principles, displaying 'Legitimacy, equity, hospitality, chivalry, chastity, and courtesy' in everything that they do.[97] The outlaws are commanded that 'all usurers, monks, courtiers, and other drones of the great hive of society, who shall be found laden with any portion of the honey whereof they have wrongfully despoiled the industrious bee, shall be rightly despoiled

90 Barczewski, *Myth and National Identity*, p. 190.
91 Peacock, *Maid Marian*, p. 20.
92 Peacock, *Maid Marian*, p. 53.
93 Peacock, *Maid Marian*, p. 28.
94 Peacock, *Maid Marian*, p. 84.
95 Barczewski, *Myth and National Identity*, p. 192.
96 Knight, *Reading Robin Hood*, p. 127.
97 Peacock, *Maid Marian*, p. 88.

thereof in turn; and all bishops and abbots shall be bound and beaten, especially the abbot of Doncaster; as shall also all sheriffs, especially the sheriff of Nottingham'.[98] Just as a true social bandit does, Robin steals from the rich and gives to the poor, or, as it is stated in Peacock's terms, engages in 'raising genial dews from the bags of the rich and idle, and returning them in fertilising showers upon the poor and industrious'.[99]

Rob Gossedge argues that Maid Marian is representative of the alliance between the working and middle classes against nineteenth-century forest laws.[100] Yet as with so many texts in which Robin and Marian are portrayed as lord and lady, the reader is never allowed to forget that these two are merely playing at being outlaws.[101] As we have seen, Marian expresses boredom in the domestic sphere, and longs to be liberated from it. When she joins Robin Hood and commences living in the forest with him, however, all that she is doing is swapping one aristocratic world for another. Tuck, Little John, and Will Scarlet, for instance, are all described as 'peers of the forest'.[102] For readers who were dissatisfied with the current social and economic order in Britain during the early nineteenth century, of course, the forest could have represented an alternative to the contemporary establishment. But unlike the commoner hero of *Ivanhoe*, the main characters in Peacock's novel were taken from readers' worlds of tapestried chambers and galleries, and 'green tea and muffins at noon'.[103] It is Robert, the Earl of Huntingdon, with whom affluent readers could better identify, rather than Robin the yeoman from *Ivanhoe* or *Royston Gower*.

As far as reprints and second editions go, Peacock's little work did not fare as well as *Ivanhoe*. It went quickly out of print and was only revived by the publisher Richard Bentley in the mid-1830s.[104] Peacock's novel was, however, adapted for the stage, and there was an opera written by James Robinson Planché entitled *Maid Marian; or, The Huntress of Arlingford* (1822) which played at the Theatre Royal in

98 Peacock, *Maid Marian*, p. 89.
99 Peacock, *Maid Marian*, p. 126.
100 Rob Gossedge, 'Thomas Love Peacock, Robin Hood, and the Enclosure of Windsor Castle', in *Robin Hood in Greenwood Stood: Alterity and Context in the English Outlaw Tradition*, ed. by Stephen Knight (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), pp. 135-164.
101 This is the point made by Liz Oakley-Brown in regards to Anthony Munday's two plays *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, and *The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*. See Oakley-Brown, 'Framing Robin Hood,' p. 115.
102 Peacock, *Maid Marian*, p. 82.
103 Peacock, *Maid Marian*, p. 5.
104 St. Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, p. 361.

Covent Garden. This adaptation of Peacock's story is a work that lives in the shadow of *Ivanhoe*. The prefatory note on the libretto states that:

> The opera of "Maid Marian" is founded principally upon the incidents, poetry, and dialogue, of a very beautiful little novel, so named, by the author of "Headlong Hall," and other talented productions, but the Adapter has availed himself likewise of some undramatized situations from the Romance of "Ivanhoe," and of such information as he could glean from the various legends and ballads, collected by Ritson.[105]

The insertion of scenes from *Ivanhoe* probably served to inject some action and excitement into what otherwise might have been a dull play. As in the novel, life in Sherwood sounds very genteel: Robin is the Earl of Huntingdon, and Friar Tuck, Little John, and Will Scarlet are described as 'peers of the forest'.[106]

6) The Gentrification Question

The Robin Hood of *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time* and Peacock's *Maid Marian* complicates the argument of this thesis, inasmuch as they appear to be gentrified in the conventional sense: Robin Hood is both a lord and an upright, moral character. In the former, Robin Hood never commits a single criminal act, and, surprisingly for an outlaw, he declares that the word robber has become 'hateful to his thoughts'.[107] The novel also closes with an imperative to all readers to which is highly supportive of the status quo: 'Fear God – Honour the King – Relieve the Poor – Forbear to Envy the Rich; and do as you would be done by towards all mankind!'[108] In *Maid Marian*, Robin Hood is the outlawed earl, steals from the rich and gives to the poor, and is loyal to King Richard. Peacock does not graphically describe any of the violence which one expects might form part of the daily life of an outlaw. In fact, he makes a clear attempt to sanitise the violence of earlier Robin Hood stories in one of his footnotes:

> 'These byshoppes and these archbyshoppes / Ye shall them bete and bynde.' Says Robin Hood in an old ballad [the *Gest*]. Perhaps, however, this is to be taken not in a literal sense but in a figurative sense, from the binding and beating of wheat: for as all rich men were Robin's harvest, the bishops and archbishops must have been the finest and fattest ears among them, from which Robin merely proposes to thresh the grain

105 J. R. Planché, *Maid Marian; or, the Huntress of Arlingford. A Legendary Opera in Three Acts. First Performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, on Tuesday, December 3rd, 1822* (London: John Lowndes, 1822), p. iii.

106 Planché, *Maid Marian*, p. iii, p. 41, p. 39.

107 Anon. *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time*, 2: 103-104.

108 Anon. *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time*, 2: .221.

> when he directs them to be bound and beaten: and as Pharaoh's fat kine were typical of fat ears of wheat, so may fat ears of wheat, *mutatis mutandis*, be typical of fat kine.[109]

Unsurprisingly, Peacock's 'figurative' interpretation of the violence in the medieval Robin Hood texts never gained currency in either nineteenth- or twentieth-century academic scholarship or popular representations.

It would, however, be inappropriate to classify either *Robin Hood* or *Maid Marian* as a gentrified text. If we take the basic idea of gentrification, to be 'of the gentry' or a 'gentle man', the idea fits neither text because the meaning of what constituted a gentleman changed during the period discussed in this thesis. In the seventeenth century, to be a gentleman was to be a member of the upper classes. But by the eighteenth century, Henry Fielding in *Joseph Andrews* shows how the commoner Joseph can be a gentleman by virtue of his polite conduct.[110] Joseph's conduct is more 'gentle' than the gentry and members of the aristocracy who appear in his novel. The destabilisation of class boundaries and the appropriation of the term 'gentleman' continued into the nineteenth century. Alexis de Tocqueville, for instance, made the following observation in the 1850s:

> If we follow the mutation of time and place of the English word 'gentleman' […] we find its connotation being steadily widened in England as the classes draw nearer to each other and intermingle. In each successive century we find it being applied to men a little lower in the social scale.[111]

Indeed, people in the nineteenth century were hesitant to define the term 'gentleman', preferring to leave it open and vague, because it was both a moral and social category.[112] This is why a scholarly category of analysis based predominantly upon social status is inappropriate.

Furthermore, although Robin is not a lord in some nineteenth-century novels he still is a morally upright man, a respectable 'gentle man'. A better question to ask, then, is whether Robin Hood is respectable in these novels, given that this was a term that

[109] Peacock, *Maid Marian*, p. 89n.

[110] Treadwell Ruml, 'Joseph Andrews as Exemplary Gentleman', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, 22: 1 (1993), 195-207.

[111] Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, (London: Harper & Brothers, 1955), pp. 82-83.

[112] Hugh Osborne, 'Hooked on Classics: Discourses of Allusion in the Mid-Victorian Novel', in *Translation and Nation: Towards a Cultural Politics of Englishness*, ed. by Roger Ellis & Liz Oakley-Brown (Clevedon: Multilingula Matters, 2001), pp. 120-66 (p. 145).

was understood by contemporaries. The middle-class idea of respectability emerged in the early nineteenth century and represented a reaction against the manners of the preceding century when 'bawdiness, low-level violence, and drunkenness were tolerated and often celebrated' and where vice could be accepted as long as one acted with civility and politeness.[113]

Robin in James' *Forest Days* certainly disapproves of lewdness. For example, after a night of feasting and merriment in the forest, Little John stands up and promises to give to the outlaws present a rendition of a popular ballad. Before he does, Robin tells him that there must be 'no ribaldry'.[114] A reviewer of James' work even commented that 'there is no word or expression to offend the most modest reader; and the purpose is ever good, to uphold virtue and expose vice'.[115] The same reviewer further down in the article states that 'parents have no fear in placing [*Forest Days*] in the hands of their children; for, however [James] may gild life with romance, we never rise from our pages with a feeling that our respect for virtue has been tampered with, or our disgust of vice abated'.[116]

The Robin Hood of *Ivanhoe* is respectable enough, in spite of Wamba's ambivalent attitude towards him and his outlaws. He is after all a patriotic English hero, the 'King of the Outlaws and the Prince of Good Fellows'. Yet Scott, Miller, and James' Robin Hood characters would normally be excluded from discussion of gentrification solely on account of the fact that they are not presented as being of noble birth. Conversely, the depiction of a thief as being of noble birth does not mean that he or she is necessarily a respectable character. As we have seen, Robin is depicted as the Earl of Huntingdon in some criminal biographies, but he is not more gentrified in character than he is in James' *Forest Days* in which, although he is not a nobleman, he is still an upright man.

7) Conclusion

The tales of Robin Hood that survive from the nineteenth century do so because Robin was not solely the hero of the working classes but of the higher classes as well. Early nineteenth-century Robin Hood novels built upon the scholarly interest in the outlaw

113 Ben Wilson, *Decency & Disorder, 1789-1837* (London: Faber, 2007), p. 413.
114 James, *Forest Days*, p. 89.
115 Anon., 'The Works of G. P. R. James', p. 324.
116 Anon., 'The Works of G. P. R. James', p. 324.

which emerged in the late eighteenth century. Yet although the novel was targeted towards members of the bourgeoisie and the upper classes, the portrayal of him as a lord is by no means the default representation of him during this period. Out of the five Robin Hood novels that appeared between 1819 and 1843, only two of them presented Robin as the Earl of Huntingdon: *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time* and *Maid Marian*. The other three, *Ivanhoe*, *Royston Gower*, and *Forest Days* depict Robin Hood as a yeoman, a term by which he was described in medieval texts.

Unlike previous prose accounts of Robin Hood in criminal biography, which were intended as moralist texts, none of these novels served a single function. Scott's *Ivanhoe* was written in order to provide a shared sense of history to the English nation at a time when it was politically and socially divided. Peacock's *Maid Marian* was a satire upon continental conservatism. Miller's *Royston Gower* attempted to make support for Chartism synonymous with patriotism for middle-class readers. The content of the anonymous *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time* and James' *Forest Days* suggests that neither author wished to make larger political points but simply wished to entertain.

Ultimately, these novels also highlight the issues involved with applying the concept of gentrification to any of these sources. Studying them requires scholars to define what they mean when they use gentrification as an analytical reference. As previous texts studied in this thesis indicate, Robin being of noble birth does not necessarily mean that he is a man of high moral principles. Yet Robin can be of humbler origins, as he is in *Forest Days*, and still be respectable. That of course is a word that would have been understood by all of these writers, and is perhaps more fitting to apply to these Robin Hood texts because it does not require Robin to be a nobleman, but simply to be a good man.

6) 'Far Above Jack Sheppard'?
Robin Hood in Victorian Periodicals

1) Introduction

The novels discussed in the previous chapter were all published in the expensive three volume format. This chapter also discusses representations of Robin Hood in nineteenth-century novels, although we will now move towards an examination of novels that were at the cheaper end of Victorian fiction.

Thus far in Robin Hood studies, it is only the following serialised novels that have received significant critical attention: Pierce Egan the Younger's *Robin Hood and Little John, or, The Merry Men of Sherwood Forest* (1838-40); Joaquim Stocqueler's *Maid Marian, The Forest Queen* (1849); the anonymously authored *Little John and Will Scarlet* (1865); and George Emmett's *Robin Hood and the Archers of Merrie Sherwood* (1869). Whilst this chapter will undertake an analysis of the above texts, it will also address previously unexamined texts such as Will Williams' *Bold Robin Hood and His Merry, Merry Men*, serialised in *Our Young Folks' Weekly Budget of Tales* in 1873, and the anonymously authored *Young Lord of Huntingdon*, serialised in *Young Britannia* in 1885.[1] This chapter also considers four Robin Hood stories that appeared in *The Boys of England* between 1883 and 1887: *The Prince of Archers, The Wedding of Allen-a-Dale, Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne,* and *Robin Hood and the Widow's Three Sons*.

The majority of works mentioned above fall into the penny blood or penny dreadful category. Penny bloods were serialised works of fiction primarily aimed at adults, of which Egan's *Robin Hood* and Stocqueler's *Maid Marian* are examples. 'Penny dreadful' is a term which emerged around 1870. They were targeted towards children, although there are exceptions to this generalisation. Examples of penny dreadfuls include Emmett's *Robin Hood,* as well as the Robin Hood stories that appeared in magazines such as *The Boys of England,* alongside the other tales of thieves and robbers which flourished after c.1870 such as *Black Bess, or, Knight of the Road* (c. 1868) and *The Wild Boys of London* (c.1866).

[1] During my research, another unexamined serial came to my attention entitled *Bold Robin Hood* which appeared in *Boys and Girls* in 1887. This, however, is nothing more than a virtual plagiarism of Emmett's tale and thus is not discussed in depth.

Through an analysis of the above works it will be shown how, although Robin is a lord in the majority of these stories, the ahistorical term 'gentrified' is inappropriate to describe them. In a discussion which follows on from the previous chapter, it will be argued that Robin Hood scholars would be better advised to write about these texts in historicist terms, asking whether they are 'respectable' or not. Although every text discussed here depicts Robin Hood as the Earl of Huntingdon, they are not gentrified. There is a significant amount of violence in all of these serialised tales, and in reviews these stories were often condemned in the moral panic over violent literature which began with Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard*. These concerns increased over the course of the nineteenth century as moralists in the press expressed anxiety about the effects of 'pernicious reading' upon the minds of impressionable youths in the later part of the century.[2] Indeed, through a comparison with Ainsworth's novel, we will also see that noble birth and respectability are not mutually exclusive. The shadow of the eighteenth-century thief Jack Sheppard would thus have an effect upon how Robin was presented in the cheap literature of the nineteenth century. Finally, this chapter challenges Clare A. Simmons' argument that after c.1830 Victorian medievalism became conservative and expensive.[3] In the principal works discussed here there was sex, violence, and radical politics, all for the price of one penny.

2) Periodical Publication during the Victorian Era

There were a significant number of more sophisticated periodicals in circulation during the Victorian era – more sophisticated compared to the penny blood at least. Richard Cosgrove has highlighted the importance of legal journals to Victorian literary culture,[4] and M. Jeanne Peterson has discussed how medical periodicals became the preferred form for the dissemination of new advancements.[5] Such academic periodicals were likely to be expensive and probably had little appeal beyond members of their respective professional audiences. Of a more general nature were literary periodicals such as *All the Year Round*, *Household Words*, and *Cornhill Magazine*, all of which retailed at nine pence per issue. *Punch* was less expensive, selling for sixpence.

[2] John Springhall, 'Pernicious Reading? The Penny Dreadful as Scapegoat for Late Victorian Juvenile Crime', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 27: 4 (1994), 326-49.

[3] Simmons, *Popular Medievalism in Romantic-Era Britain*, p. 193, p. 196

[4] Richard Cosgrove, 'Law', in *Victorian Periodicals and Victorian Society*, ed. by J. Don Vann & Rosemary T. VanArsdel (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1994), pp. 11-21.

[5] M. Jeanne Peterson, 'Medicine', in *Victorian Periodicals and Victorian Society*, ed. by J. Don Vann & Rosemary T. VanArsdel (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1994), pp. 22-44.

Between the academic periodicals and the family literary titles were semi-scholarly and literary periodicals such as *The Quarterly Review* and *The Edinburgh Review*.[6] The numbers of each of these magazines were then usually bound together at six-monthly intervals and sold in volumes.

A similar magazine to *All the Year Round*, but retailing at a significantly lower price, were periodicals such as *The Penny Magazine* which ran a number of articles dedicated to Robin Hood. There was also the radical *Reynolds's Miscellany*, and the anti-establishment *London Journal*, edited by Pierce Egan the younger between 1860 and his death in 1880. Other publications included *The People's Periodical and Family Library* in which *A String of Pearls*, the original story of the now famous 'Demon Barber' Sweeney Todd, first appeared.[7] There were also standalone penny bloods, such as Egan's and Stocqueler's texts, and Reynolds' *Mysteries*. Reynolds also plagiarised contemporary popular works, as he did in *Pickwick Abroad, or, The Tour in France* (1837-38),[8] serialised shortly before Gilbert Beckett's *Oliver Twiss* (1839).[9]

In a thesis which argues that Robin Hood was appropriated by the middle and upper classes and represents their outlook, the inclusion of penny novels needs to be justified. Too often popular historians assume that it was *solely* the working classes who read penny bloods and dreadfuls, and they often fail to distinguish between two genres. Judith Flanders, for example, refers to 'working-class penny bloods' in *The Invention of Murder* (2011).[10] Another generalisation often made is that these penny bloods and penny dreadfuls were read primarily by children. Even J. C. Holt said that Egan's *Robin Hood* was 'the first [Robin Hood] story written deliberately for children'.[11]

These points need to be addressed. The one penny price tag of penny bloods and penny dreadfuls would have *probably* made them affordable to working class readers. In *The Mysteries of London*, however, Reynolds shows how, even though a working-

6 See Joanne Shattock, *Politics and Reviewers: the Edinburgh and the Quarterly in the early Victorian Age* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1989).

7 For a discussion of the publishing history of the original Sweeney Todd story *A String of Pearls* see the introductory chapters in *Sweeney Todd : The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, ed. by Robert Mack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

8 G. W. M. Reynolds, *Pickwick Abroad; or, The Tour in France* (London: Willoughby [n.d.]); for a critical discussion of this work see Elizabeth Jay, *British Writers and Paris: 1830-1875* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 261-63.

9 Poz [pseud.] *Oliver Twiss, the Workhouse Boy* (London: James Pattie [n.d.]); the 'Twiss' is not a typographical error but the actual title.

10 Judith Flanders, *The Invention of Murder: How the Victorians Revelled in Death and Detection and Created Modern Crime* (London: Harper, 2011), p. 115.

11 Holt, *Robin Hood*, p. 183.

class person might earn what appears to be a good sum of eight shillings per week, it was soon swallowed up by rent, food, and clothing. He further highlights the fact that much of this work was often casual, involving long hours, which, when finally calculated, amounted to approximately one farthing per hour.[12] This is not to say that the affordability of reading material necessarily dictates or entirely restricts access to them. Henry Mayhew in *London Labour and the London Poor* (1851) records that, 'it was not uncommon for two poor families to club for 1*d.* to purchase an execution broadsheet'.[13] Mayhew further records that poorer readers often read broadsheets aloud to friends and acquaintances who could not afford them.[14] In light of this, Victorian scholars should reconsider just how working-class readers gained access to such publications. Moreover, from a purely practical view, it should be noted that middle- and upper-class readers had pennies in much greater abundance than their working-class counterparts. Furthermore, as pointed out in the previous chapter, three volume novels were expensive during the nineteenth century, sometimes too expensive for affluent readers who resorted to borrowing books from subscription libraries. For this reason Barbara Gribling, speaking of Egan's *The Black Prince* (c.1850), points out that novels such as this 'capitalized on a growing trend for affordable fiction among the *middle classes*' (emphasis added).[15] Furthermore, the form in which penny bloods survive is often in their expensively bound library editions. The first and second series of *The Mysteries of London* was published in two volumes, while the third and fourth series authored by Thomas Miller and Edward L. Blanchard respectively were similarly reissued in bound volumes. After their initial serialised print runs, Egan's *Robin Hood*, Stocqueler's *Maid Marian*, the anonymous *Little John and Will Scarlet*, and George Emmett's *Robin Hood* were similarly reissued in large volumes. Clearly there was a market among wealthier purchasers for handsomely bound editions of these cheaper novels.

It was not solely children who read penny bloods and penny dreadfuls either, for they often contained adult themes. Reynolds' *Mysteries* was highly political – a

12 G. W. M. Reynolds, *The Mysteries of London*, ed. by Trefor Thomas (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), pp. 79-80.

13 Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor* ed. by Robert Douglas-Fairhurst (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 93.

14 Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor*, p. 93.

15 Barbara Gribling, *Negotiating the Late Medieval Past: The Image of Edward the Black Prince in Georgian and Victorian England* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2017) [FORTHCOMING]. Barbara Gribling was kind enough to allow me to see proofs of her work.

damning indictment of vice in high and low life, it exhibited anti-aristocratic and republican sentiments, along with a healthy dose of violence. Egan's novel, as we shall see, was also highly political, arguing against 'Old Corruption' and for universal male suffrage. Even during the late Victorian period, when the term 'penny dreadful' entered into common parlance and authors were consciously targeting children, it should not be assumed that only children read them. The authors of these works, for example, certainly anticipated both an adult and juvenile readership. In *Little John and Will Scarlet*, it is anticipated that 'man or boy' would read the story.[16] Similarly, when the penny dreadful version of *The New Newgate Calendar* published an article entitled 'Christmas in Newgate' it addressed adults.[17] Although this thesis disagrees with Stephen Knight on several key points regarding the interpretation of Robin Hood penny serials, he does offer a convincing assessment of Egan's readership. They should be viewed, he says, as forms of 'mass-market' entertainment which people from various socio-economic backgrounds enjoyed.[18] In this way, penny dreadfuls were much like graphic novels today, read by both children and adults.

3) Radical Robin Hood

Stephen Knight argues that, the violence in the narrative notwithstanding, Pierce Egan's *Robin Hood and Little John* is a conservative and 'gentrified' portrayal of the Robin Hood story.[19] Similarly, Paul Buhle argues that Egan's *Robin Hood* displayed 'no political leaning by the author towards either radicalism of conservatism'.[20] These are views which have recently been challenged by Chris R. Vanden Bossche, who argues that these novels should be viewed as radical texts.[21] Furthermore, the radical sentiments expressed in *Little John and Will Scarlet* shall be examined here, as the novel has thus far received very little critical attention.

16 Anon., *Little John and Will Scarlet* (London: H. Vickers [n.d.]), p. 24.

17 Anon., 'Christmas in Newgate', *The New Newgate Calendar*, 2 January 1864, p. 162; the article in question opems with the following statement: 'Christmas in Newgate! – and why not? You are free from its sombre, grimy walls […] while you revel in good cheer, make your friends welcome, romp with your children, or stir your glowing fire, do so in a spirit of thankfulness'

18 Knight, *Robin Hood: A Mythic Biography*, p. 186.

19 Knight, *Robin Hood: A Mythic Biography*, p. 128.

20 Paul Buhle, *Robin Hood: People's Outlaw and Forest Hero* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2011), p. 64.

21 Chris R. Vanden Bossche, *Reform Acts: Chartism, Social Agency, and the Victorian Novel, 1832-1867* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014). See also Basdeo, 'Radical Medievalism', pp. 48-64.

It is first necessary, however, to consider briefly what radicalism meant during the nineteenth century, which will then allow the radical ideals expressed in the novels to be examined in context. Recent scholarship dealing with nineteenth-century radicalism has highlighted how diverse it was: scholars write of 'Manchester Radicalism', 'moral radicalism', 'entrepreneurial radicalism', 'free trade radicalism', and 'independent radicalism'.[22] It is the last type of radicalism which most accurately defines the sentiments expressed by Egan and the author of *Little John and Will Scarlet*. Independent radicals, perhaps unsurprisingly, did not hold to a uniform ideology, but they did express a desire for a fundamental change in the constitution of British society, arguing that the root of all of Britain's social problems was political.[23] The ills of society could, according to many independent radicals, therefore be traced to the operations of a corrupt state and selfish elite who legislated for policies which worked in their favour to the detriment of the people.[24] This is not to say that it was only independent radicals who focused on social problems and criticised political corruption. Many Chartist writers did the same, and the term 'independent radicalism' is applied to *Robin Hood* and *Little John and Will Scarlet* because they did not come out in support of any particular radical or reform movement. It was not enough, of course, for independent radical authors simply to complain about the conditions of the present, for they also had to present an appealing vision of a better society to their readers.[25] This is exactly what Egan and the author of *Little John and Will Scarlet* do, and both works were intended to have relevance to the nineteenth century. It was recognised by a reviewer in *MacMillan's Magazine* that Egan's historical romances 'deal more directly with present times'.[26] Similarly, *Little John and Will Scarlet* makes a direct comparison between the Norman nobility and the nineteenth-century aristocracy. When the novel speaks of the oppression faced by the good Anglo-Saxons, for instance, it says that 'under these circumstances the people of England suffered deeply for the present, and had yet more dreadful cause for fear for the future. They always in the end bore the burden, and have from time immemorial to the present day.'[27]

[22] Michael J. Turner, *Independent Radicalism in Early Victorian Britain* (Westport, CT: Praegar, 2004), p. 2.
[23] Turner, *Independent Radicalism*, p. 4.
[24] Turner, *Independent Radicalism*, p. 4.
[25] Turner, *Independent Radicalism*, p. 4.
[26] Anon., 'Penny Novels', *MacMillan's Magazine*, June 1866, pp. 96-105 (p. 104).
[27] Anon., *Little John and Will Scarlet*, p. 183.

Egan and the author of *Little John and Will Scarlet* were not the only radical nineteenth-century authors to have racialised their contempt of the aristocracy. John Wade in *The Extraordinary Black Book* (1820), for example, refers to the nineteenth-century aristocracy as 'our *Norman* lawgivers' (emphasis added).[28] In an article for *Reynolds' Newspaper* published in 1869, an anonymous author (perhaps G. W. M. Reynolds himself) writes that the British people are 'even now bondsmen to native tyrants'.[29] The same author goes on to focus upon the rebels of history and attempts to claim all types of robbers, rebels, and highwaymen as radical leaders, arguing that:

> Servile historians have depicted as robbers, rascals, and freebooters men who were in reality doing their utmost to save themselves and posterity from being plundered by the ancestors of those coroneted robbers who now hold possession of a large portion of English soil.[30]

Foremost among these rebels and robbers, according to Reynolds, is Robin Hood who was a symbol of the 'struggle […] that endured for centuries between the people and the nobility'.[31] Another unnamed writer for an 1884 edition of *Reynolds Newspaper,* in a passage reminiscent of Thomas Paine, similarly refers to the 'Norman freebooters [who rule] the mass of people'.[32]

According to radicals, from the Painites in the eighteenth century, to the Chartists during the nineteenth century, the cause of political, social, and economic oppression in Britain was the political monopoly of the propertied elite.[33] And it is this political monopoly of the property-owning Norman elite that is critiqued in *Robin Hood* and *Little John and Will Scarlet*. For example, Egan complains that the Normans contrive 'to deprive the Saxons of every little thing which might make them self-sufficient and happy in their own land […having] robbed [the] Saxons of their inheritance'.[34] In *Little John and Will Scarlet,* 'every device of cruelty and wickedness was carried out [by the Normans] to intimidate other people from rebellion and

[28] John Wade, *The Extraordinary Black Book* (London: Effingham Wilson, 1831), p. 209.
[29] G. W. M. Reynolds, 'The Robbery of the Land by the Aristocracy', *Reynolds Newspaper,* 10 June 1869, p. 5.
[30] Reynolds, 'The Robbery of the Land by the Aristocracy', p. 5.
[31] Reynolds, 'The Robbery of the Land by the Aristocracy', p. 5.
[32] Anon. *Reynolds Newspaper* 3 February 1884 cited in Anthony Taylor, '"Some Little or Contemptible War Upon Her Hands": *Reynolds Newspaper* and Empire', in *G.W.M. Reynolds: Nineteenth-century Fiction, Politics, and the Press* Eds. Anne Humpherys & Louis James (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 99-122 (p.105).
[33] Margot C. Finn, *After Chartism: Class and Nation in English Radical Politics 1848-1874* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 5.
[34] Pierce Egan, *Robin Hood and Little John, or, The Merry Men of Sherwood Forest* (London: W. S. Johnson [n. d.])), pp. 142, 143.

resistance'.[35] The two novels are vague on the precise nature of this political oppression that people during the twelfth century allegedly faced, but both novels place the blame firmly upon the aristocracy, and the language of class is clearly apparent in Egan's novel. He writes that there are 'two classes' under whom the poor suffer: the landowning Norman class and the Church.[36] These classes make laws to suit their own interests at the expense of the good Saxons.[37] The novel begins with a craftily-worded criticism of the nobility which simultaneously critiques that class in its twelfth- and nineteenth-century contexts, saying that 'the aristocracy was uniformly composed of marauders, tyrants, and sycophants – the usual characteristics of aristocrats – whose occupation was pillage, murder, and the ravishment of maidens'.[38] The nobility are further denounced as being nothing but 'legalised banditti'.[39] In the same novel the Catholic Church fares no better, for 'the greatest enemies of human progress, of the happiness of the people, are the priests, who, under the pretence of watching after their interests, rob and plunder them'.[40]

Egan and the author of *Little John and Will Scarlet* do not simply complain about the conditions of the present, however, for they give their readers a vision of a better society in which problems can be solved via a democratic process. In both texts, the outlaws' society is one in which the Anglo-Saxons elect their leaders. Robin's election speech in Egan's novel is depicted almost as a nineteenth-century hustings:

> Friends and brother Saxons – This is a proud and joyous moment for me, that you should so unanimously and cheerfully, at the instigation of Little John, elect me as the head of your community; warmly and earnestly I thank you for it […] All I have to speak upon the fact of my being your leader, is of the duties which will be imposed on me by my post, and of the constant endeavours I will make to perform them to your satisfaction.[41]

In *Little John and Will Scarlet*, the reader is told how Robin was 'elected King of the Outlaws'.[42] In fact, the novel hints at a republican solution to the problems facing Victorian Britain: the writer suggests that 'once when Oliver Cromwell released [the

35 Anon., *Little John and Will Scarlet*, p. 162.
36 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 191.
37 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 212.
38 Anon., *Little John and Will Scarlet*, p. 3.
39 Anon., *Little John and Will Scarlet*, p. 182.
40 Anon., *Little John and Will Scarlet*, p. 183.
41 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 146.
42 Anon., *Little John and Will Scarlet*, pp. 46-47.

people] from despotism, they had an opportunity, but they threw it away'.[43] Egan does not suggest a republican solution to the political oppression of the people in *Robin Hood*, although he does suggest this possibility at the end of *Wat Tyler*, in which, towards the close of the novel, he muses upon what might have happened had Tyler succeeded:

> They might have tumbled the monarchy into dust, and from the grossest state of slavery and despotism, have sprung into an enlightened and popular form of government, which, if virtuously conducted, is as rightful and trustful in its relations as it is just in its principles.[44]

It may seem of minor importance, but Egan never describes Robin and Marian as 'King and Queen' of the forest, as authors both before and after him have done.

It is pertinent to note that both texts appeared during a time of public debate about the extension of the vote to working-class men. Egan's *Robin Hood*, which began its serialisation in 1838, coincided with the emergence of Chartism. One of the principal aims of the Chartist movement was universal male suffrage. Men who were elected to the Chartist National Convention in 1839 used the term 'MC' after their names to designate themselves, in imitation of MPs, as 'Members of the Convention'.[45] Thus the Chartists undoubtedly saw themselves as a genuinely democratic alternative to the government of the day.[46] As stated above, Egan never gave overt support to Chartism in *Robin Hood*, but an alternative to twelfth-century Norman society is presented in both novels. The fact that the outlaws' society in *Robin Hood* and *Little John and Will Scarlet* is democratic makes it an example of good government. Aside from electing their leaders, all men and women in the forest are equal. In Egan's novel, when Robin's wife Matilda goes to live with the outlaws in the forest, she asks people to call her Marian so that, although she is an aristocrat, people will not think of her as being superior (or inferior) to the other forest dwellers.[47]

Similarly, *Little John and Will Scarlet*, appearing in 1865, coincided with another public debate about the extension of the vote to working-class men. It was under Disraeli that the vote was finally given to some working-class men in 1867, but movements toward the passage of the Reform Act were taken as early as 1865 while

43 Anon., *Little John and Will Scarlet*, p. 183.
44 Pierce Egan, *Wat Tyler, or the Rebellion of 1381* (London: G. Pierce, 1847), p. 868.
45 Sean Lang, *Parliamentary Reform, 1785–1928* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 49.
46 John Charlton, *The Chartists: The First National Workers' Movement* (London: Pluto Press, 1997), p. 19.
47 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 101.

Little John and Will Scarlet was being serialised.[48] In the novel, as a result of the foresters being able to vote for their leaders, greenwood society becomes harmonious. It is a society in which food is plentiful, in contrast to the plight of the dearth experienced by 'the modern peasantry'.[49] Clearly the answer to society's problems, according to Egan and the author of *Little John and Will Scarlet*, is to bring about a democratic society.

One objection to the radical reading of these texts might be that in both of them the outlaw is portrayed as the Earl of Huntingdon. As we have seen, in the earliest Robin Hood texts, Robin is not depicted as a nobleman but as a yeoman, and the idea that Robin was a nobleman emerged during the sixteenth century. Egan deals with the issue of Robin's noble birth rather effectively: once Robin learns of his birth-right, although he does attempt to reclaim it through legal means, corrupt landowners prevent him from regaining his inheritance.[50] Towards the end of the novel he is restored to his estate by King Richard, but corrupt officials in the Church prevent him from taking ownership of the estates:

> "Possession is nine-tenths of the law," says the adage, and the crafty Abbot of Romsey tried hard to make it ten; he did not attempt open opposition to the will of Richard, but he craved time to enable him to retire to his other estates; and during that time he employed every means to gain the Chancellor to his side, by making presents of great value, and offering assistance in any way should it be required; and by these means the decree of Richard was evaded.[51]

This is 'Old Corruption' in action: it is the propertied classes scheming to deprive a man of his lawful inheritance. It also means that Robin Hood, being deprived of land and inheritance, never becomes a member of those classes.

In addition, Egan's Robin Hood never lives among the upper classes: instead 'he had mixed with no society above the class in which Gilbert Hood [his adoptive yeoman

48 For a discussion of the post-1832 Reform Acts passed in Britain, see the following works: Robert Saunders, *Democracy and the Vote in British politics, 1848-1867: The Making of the Second Reform Act* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011);Robert Saunders, 'Lord John Russell and parliamentary reform, 1848-67', *English Historical Review*, No. 120 (2005), pp. 1289-1315; Robert Saunders, 'The politics of reform and the making of the Second Reform Act, 1848-1867', *Historical Journal*, No. 50 (2007), pp. 571-91; *idem* 'Chartism from above: British elites and the interpretation of Chartism', *Historical Research*, No.81 (2008), pp. 463-84.

49 Anon., *Little John and Will Scarlet*, p. 211.

50 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 98.

51 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 298.

father] was placed'.[52] The casting of Robin as an earl stems from the fact that Egan wished to pay at least some lip service to the preceding Robin Hood tradition. In his preface, for instance, he references Ritson's *Robin Hood* (although Ritson, himself a radical, saw no problem with a lord standing up for the people),[53] and throughout his novel numerous footnotes indicate which Robin Hood ballads different parts of his novel are based upon.[54] Egan finds ways to negate what to him seems to have been the rather inconvenient 'truth' in the Robin Hood tradition that Robin was an aristocrat. After all, for many scholars and readers, Robin's rank as Earl of Huntingdon had effectively become a 'fact' as a result of Ritson's scholarship. However, the numerous comparisons made between the twelfth century and the nineteenth century in *Little John and Will Scarlet*, which justified resistance to the state, and promoted a democratic republican alternative, certainly suggest that that novel should be read as a radical text, in which Robin Hood's aristocratic origins are largely irrelevant.

The irrelevance of Robin Hood's noble birth is equally apparent in other penny dreadfuls later in the century. On two occasions in Will Williams' *Bold Robin Hood* (1874), Robin makes clear that he does not wish to be identified as a Lord.[55] Oddly, there are other parts of Williams' tale in which Robin is also described as a yeoman.[56] Emmett's novel also describes Robin as both a noble and commoner without any explanation.[57] There is unlikely to be any deep explanation for these contradictions in these individual stories' descriptions of Robin's social status. In light of the fact that penny serial authors often ran with a subplot over numerous weeks and then sometimes dropped them without any explanation, it is more likely that through writing them in instalments, Emmett and Williams simply forgot that they had made Robin a lord.[58] But if Robin in these novels does not self-identify as a lord, then the gentrification thesis is clearly problematized.

52 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 8.
53 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. viii.
54 Egan, *Robin Hood*, pp. 38, 39, 47, 98, 190.
55 Will Williams, 'Bold Robin Hood and his Merry, Merry Men', *Our Young Folks Weekly Budget of Tales, News, Sketches, Fun, Puzzles, Riddles &c.*, 24 January 1874, p. 60.
56 Anon. 'Bold Robin Hood and his Merry, Merry Men', *Our Young Folks Weekly Budget of Tales, News, Sketches, Fun, Puzzles, Riddles &c.*, 13 December 1873, p. 633.
57 George Emmett, *Robin Hood and the Archers of Merrie Sherwood* (London: Hogarth House [n. d.]), pp. 2-3.
58 Anon. *The New Newgate Calendar*, 24 October 1863, p.16; amusingly, as in the case here, some penny dreadful issues even end mid-sentence.

Being of noble birth, of course, does not automatically imbue a criminal with a particularly outstanding moral character. We saw this in the case of criminal biographies. Ainsworth's Jack Sheppard in his eponymous novel is portrayed as being of noble birth, but no scholar would ever apply the idea of gentrification to Ainsworth's story, much less 'respectable'.[59] There is also the key issue that, in penny dreadfuls and in Victorian literature more generally, being an aristocrat usually equates to being a completely immoral person. For example, there is Lady Cecilia in Reynolds' *Mysteries of London*, who seduces and corrupts the good vicar Reginald Tracey. Reynolds' follow-up, *The Mysteries of the Court of London* (1848-1856), is essentially a chronicle of vice and depravity among the aristocracy. Lord Steyne in *Vanity Fair* (1848) befriends Becky Sharp for one reason only: to have extramarital sex with her. While there are some respectable noblemen in Thackeray's novel, such as Sir Pitt Crawley, it is clear that being of noble birth does not always equal respectability.

It might further be argued that Robin is gentrified in Egan's novel, as well as in *Little John and Will Scarlet*, because he is a patriotic Englishman, thus a brief discussion of this point is necessary. Ideals of patriotism, duty, and heroism admittedly were central to nineteenth-century historical fiction, scholarship, and biographical writing. Robert Southey's *Life of Nelson* (1813), for example, placed great emphasis upon a man's duty to the nation, recounting Nelson's signal, 'England expects that every man should do his duty'.[60] Robin Hood as he appears in *Robin Hood and Little John* and *Little John and Will Scarlet* is certainly a patriotic figure, but his patriotism is connected to the country and to the people that constitute the nation, rather than the English state or the Crown. This is what Hobsbawm calls 'the revolutionary democratic point of view' in nationalism, in which the sovereign people constitute the nation.[61] He desires to ameliorate the nation's problems because they suffer under 'kingly and priestly misrule [through] intimidation and bluster'.[62] In Egan's text, Robin's sole focus is the improvement of the lot of the peasants. For example, even after being pardoned he remains an outlaw until his dying day, having all his life 'endeavoured to lift the

[59] William Harrison Ainsworth, *Jack Sheppard: A Romance*, 3 vols (London: Bentley, 1839), 3: 176-189; it is revealed that Sheppard's mother is the heiress to the Trenchard estates, which accounts for Jonathan Wild's continued harassment of the Sheppard family.

[60] Robert Southey, *Life of Nelson* (London: George Bell, 1888), p. 365.

[61] Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since* 1780, 2nd Edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 22.

[62] Anon., *Little John and Will Scarlet*, p. 162.

wretched serfs out of the galling clutches of dire oppression'.[63] Egan places great emphasis upon the political rights and sovereignty of the people, not only in *Robin Hood* but in all of his early novels such as *Quintin Matsys* (1838) and *Wat Tyler* (1841). Despite the noble birth accorded to Robin by Egan, which as we have seen is relatively meaningless in the novel anyway, Robin is *of* the people and *for* the people. Thus *Robin Hood and Little John* and *Little John and Will Scarlet* can justifiably be called the successors to Ritson's radical interpretations of the Robin Hood legend. There was a more conservative approach to ideas of duty and patriotism that was adopted by later authors such as Emmet; this issue is discussed in the next chapter which examines late-Victorian Robin Hood children's books for they provide a precursor to the imperial attitudes found in them.

4) Gender and Domesticity in Robin Hood Serials

Victorian ideas of respectability were defined not only by class but also by gender. It might be argued that the representations of masculinity and femininity in these novels imply that these are gentrified texts. Stephen Knight, after all, argues that Egan's *Robin Hood*, for example, portrays the outlaw as a typical Victorian gentleman, '[domesticating] the outlaw myth [… and] in touch with the new ideas of gentrification'.[64] Middle-class ideas of domesticity certainly do feature in Egan's novel, as well as other Robin Hood penny serials. But the ideas of Victorian manliness which appear in Egan's novel, as well as in some of the other penny serials, are not necessarily or exclusively those of either the gentry or the middle classes, although the outlaws still come across as respectable. It would be more accurate to say that Robin Hood in Egan's novel displays the required characteristics of respectable working-class masculinity. He makes it clear that, although not educated as an aristocrat, in his youth Robin is mature and self-reliant:

> He was so much in advance of his age in thoughts, perceptions, and feelings, that he acted and felt as one ten years his superior; one important reason for this had been the system of education Gilbert Hood [Robin's father] had employed in bringing him up. By education, we mean not book learning, but action; he had, from a child, been taught to

63 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 279.
64 Knight, *Robin Hood: A Mythic Biography*, p. 130.

> think and act for himself, and this self-reliance shone out in all his words and deeds.[65]

While middle-class ideas of respectable masculinity similarly placed great emphasis upon being independent and self-reliant, this was also a facet of working-class manliness. John Tosh states that 'the idea that a working man's property lay in his skill, acquired by apprenticeship or training under his father's eye, carried a comparable load of moral worth'.[66] This makes Robin one of the respectable working classes, a man who adheres to the adage 'heaven helps those who help themselves' quoted in the beginning of Samuel Smiles' *Self Help* (1859).[67] But as well as being independent, for a working-class man to be 'manly' in the Victorian period also required them to be brave and strong, and to adhere to the principles of chivalry.[68]

There are further instances in which Egan's Robin Hood displays the characteristics of model working-class masculinity. As we have seen, although he is by birth an aristocrat, Robin is brought up to a life of labour under the guidance of his adoptive yeoman father, which is a marker of his labouring man's manliness.[69] Furthermore, he does not flinch from using force while protecting himself and his men. He shoots Caspar Steinkopf through the eye with one of his arrows when he lays hands on a girl called Maude,[70] an event which is accompanied with a suitably gruesome illustration (Fig. 8).[71] There is also one episode in which Robin Hood and his men chase over two hundred Norman knights out of the forest.[72] The outlaws are successful in battle because they have not allowed themselves to become decadent and effeminate. Will Scarlet's father, for instance, allows Will to go into the woods at a young age as 'he did not wish that his boys should be in any degree effeminate'.[73] Effeminacy was not strictly equated at this stage with homosexuality. Rather, it was seen as the result of

65 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 167.

66 John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Harlow: Pearson, 2005), p. 17.

67 Samuel Smiles, *Self-Help; with Illustrations of Character, Conduct, and Perseverance* (London: John Murray, 1871), p. 1. See also Robin Gilmour, *The Idea of the Gentleman in the Victorian Novel* (London: George Allan & Unwin, 1981), pp. 99-103.

68 Chris Loutitt, 'Working-Class Masculinity and the Victorian Novel', in *The Victorian Novel and Masculinity*, ed. by Philip Mallet (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2015), 31-50 (p. 32).

69 Tim Barringer, *Men At Work: Art and Labour in Victorian Britain* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 15; Barringer refers to 'the persistence of the identification of masculinity with labour'.

70 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 70.

71 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 65.

72 Egan, *Robin Hood*, pp. 136-145.

73 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 39.

a man allowing himself to become weak, soft, and delicate, delighting in luxurious food and fine clothing.[74] Egan's praise for, and idealisation of, working-class masculinity is likely to be something that he inherited from his father, Pierce Egan the Elder. His father loved plebeian culture, and authored several works such as *Life in London* (1823), which is essentially an autobiographical work recounting the adventures of two bourgeois Londoners anxious to see some of the 'real life' of the capital. Additionally, Egan the Elder wrote the five-volume *Boxiana* (1818-1829), a chronicle of British boxing, a sport whose participants were often drawn from the working classes. The traits of masculinity which Robin Hood manifests in his character are not those connected with the gentry or aristocracy, but of the working classes.

Furthermore, another aspect of Robin Hood's masculinity which admits him into the ranks of the respectable working classes is his adherence to chivalric ideals:

> Robin Hood loved the fair sex generally, from an innate predisposition towards them, and for the sake of the fair being whom he had wedded, he had inculcated this feeling amongst his followers, so that a female might at any time have passed alone and safely through any part of the forest peopled by his men.[75]

While chivalry was definitely a characteristic of Victorian middle-class masculinity,[76] it was something that was encouraged, too, in working class men, and Smiles in *Self Help* writes of 'the aristocracy of character' that all men can be admitted into if they should follow the principles of chivalry.[77] Marian extols Robin Hood's chivalrous virtues, describing him as 'one whose every act to me was noble, who has never infringed upon the power he knew himself to possess over me; who even sacrificed his own chance of happiness with me, rather than give me the shadow of a cause for regret'.[78] Obviously there is some resonance here with the older code of conduct that Robin imposes upon his followers in the *Gest*: to harm no women but only churchmen and the sheriff. In the

[74] For discussions of Victorian ideas of effeminacy, see the following works: Susan C. Shapiro, 'Yon Plumed Dandebrat': Male 'Effeminacy' in English Satire and Criticism', *The Review of English Studies*, 39: 155 (1988), 400-12 (p. 400); James Eli Adams, *Dandies and Desert Saints: Styles of Victorian Masculinity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

[75] Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 190.

[76] Gilmour, *The Idea of the Gentleman in the Victorian Novel*, p. 88. For a further discussion of chivalry and manliness see Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981).

[77] Raffaella Antinucci, '"A Hero in Transition": the Victorian Gentleman as a Revisited Paradigm of Masculinity', in *Figures in the Carpet: Studi di Letteratura e Cultura Vittoriana*, ed. by Giulia Pissarello (Pascara: Edizione Tracce, 2012), pp. 75-89 (pp. 79-80).

[78] Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 152.

nineteenth century, however, the representation of these neo-chivalric values became a marker of respectability and masculinity, to be aspired to by both the working and middle classes. These qualities are gentrified only inasmuch as it indicated that, to be a gentleman, one had to be chivalrous, but they do not require that Robin Hood be a lord.

Figure 8: Robin Shoots Caspar Steinkopft through the Eye from Pierce Egan the Younger's *Robin Hood and Little John* (London, 1840).

Life in Sherwood follows all the rules of Victorian domesticity and propriety. The author of *Little John and Will Scarlet* ensures that Robin and Marian cannot be accused of sexual misconduct. When Marian visits the forest, for example, she finds part of it set apart for ladies – 'a true ladies' bower'.[79] Prior to their marriage, Marian refuses to stay overnight in the forest because 'it would be unmaidenly'.[80] It is Marian who has to propose the idea of not staying overnight in Robin's abode, of course, for women were supposed to be the guardians of family morality, according to Victorian moralists. The idea was articulated by Edward John Tilt in *Elements of Health and Principles of Female Hygiene* (1853), in which he says that 'in civilised nations matrons give the tone to society; for the rules of morality are placed under their safeguard'.[81] Furthermore, the author of *Little John and Will Scarlet* makes it quite clear what the

79 Anon., *Little John and Will Scarlet*, p. 33.
80 Anon., *Little John and Will Scarlet*, p. 67.
81 Edward John Tilt, *Elements of Health and Principles of Female Hygiene* (Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blackiston, 1853), p. 268.

proper role for women is in British society when giving an account of a Saxon village fair:

> The girls began to strip […] when we say began to strip, we speak advisedly, though we are alluding to Saxon maidens, and not savages […] It must steadily be borne in mind that these were strictly virtuous girls – in time to be faithful wives and mothers.[82]

To refer again to Tilt, marriage in the Victorian era was viewed as 'the most important act in a woman's life'.[83] In Will Williams' *Bold Robin Hood*, for example, the outlaws' living arrangements are entirely in keeping with the ideals of Victorian domesticity. When women join the outlaws in the forest, for example, houses are constructed.[84] (Williams does not explain how the outlaws manage to evade detection in the forest after building conspicuous constructions). Similar domestic sentiments are expressed in W. C. H. W.'s poem *Robin Hood and his Merry Men* which appeared in *Bentley's Miscellany* in 1846, in which it is said that Marian keeps the outlaws' home 'well-swept'.[85]

Issues of gender and domesticity are really brought to the fore, however, in Stocqueler's *Maid Marian*. By the time that Stocqueler was writing, the middle-class ideology of domesticity was at its height. In the first half of the novel, Stocqueler foregrounds the character of Marian, as might be expected from the title. Robin is away on Crusade in the Holy Land with King Richard and Marian has been left in charge of the outlaws. Marian proves she is a brave and active leader for the outlaws, managing the 'home' of Sherwood while the master of the house is away. The reader first encounters Marian alone in the forest, attired in a male forester's outfit.[86] In a similar manner to Peacock's earlier portrayal of Marian, in Stocqueler's novel she is skilled in the use of the bow and arrow.[87] Additionally, Marian enthusiastically participates in hunting with her fellow outlaws,[88] and at one point she even wrestles with a wild boar.[89] These vigorous activities do not make her unfeminine, however, and Stocqueler says

82 Anon., *Little John and Will Scarlet*, p. 173.
83 Tilt, *Elements of Health and Principles of Female Hygiene*, p. 268
84 Will Williams, 'Bold Robin Hood and his Merry, Merry Men', *Our Young Folks Weekly Budget of Tales, News, Sketches, Fun, Puzzles, and* Riddles, 14 February 1874, p. 108.
85 W. C. H. W. 'Robin Hood and his Merry Men', *Bentley's Miscellany*, July 1846, p. 296.
86 J. H. Stocqueler, *Maid Marian, the Forest Queen, being a companion to "Robin Hood"* (London: G. Pierce [n. d.]), p. 2.
87 Stocqueler, *Maid Marian*, pp. 40, 139.
88 Stocqueler, *Maid Marian*, p. 53.
89 Stocqueler, *Maid Marian*, p. 40.

that she was blessed with both 'gentleness and firmness, feminine grace and masculine intrepidity'.[90]

It is because of her feminine qualities that Stocqueler says all women should strive to be as active, brave, and independent as Maid Marian was.[91] However, it is difficult to ascertain to which class of Victorian women Stocqueler is aiming his remarks. It was difficult for women of any class in Victorian Britain to be fully independent of their fathers or husbands. It may be that in Marian's vigorous defence of the poor in his novel, Stocqueler is urging nineteenth-century women readers to pursue roles in various philanthropic organisations, as many middle-class Victorian women did.[92] Pursuing such interests allowed those women to have a degree of independence away from the home and participate in public life. It is this type of independence-up-to-a-point that is manifested in Stocqueler's novel. Indeed, it might have proved to be a sound example of a Victorian proto-feminist novel, were it not for developments that occur in its second half. When Robin returns home, Marian's independence ceases and she becomes a typical 'Victorian' lady: weak and impressionable, she almost kills all of the outlaws after she is tricked by a witch who lives in the forest into administering an elixir to them.[93] In fact, the witch, Minnie, is an example of how female independence can apparently go too far. The witch has poisoned all of her previous husbands, and now lives alone. Poisoning in the nineteenth century was assumed to be a crime which women were more likely to commit than men, even if actual statistics prove this myth to be mistaken.[94] Nevertheless, women who poisoned men were seen as perversions of ideal femininity,[95] and with Stocqueler's serial appearing in 1849, the poisoning panic

90 Stocqueler, *Maid Marian*, p. 26.

91 Stocqueler, *Maid Marian*, p. 205.

92 See the following works on Victorian women and their roles in public life: Hilary Fraser, Judith Johnston, Stephanie Green, *Gender and the Victorian Periodical* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 149; Simon Morgan, *A Victorian Woman's Place: Public Culture in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Tauris, 2007); For an edited collection of primary sources see *Women in Public, 1850-1900: Documents of the Victorian Women's Movement*, ed. by Patricia Hollis (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014).

93 Stocqueler, *Maid Marian*, p. 132.

94 See Katherine Watson, *Poisoned Lives: English Poisoners and their Victims* (London: Hambledon, 2004).

95 Radojka Startup, 'Damaging Females: Representations of women as victims and perpetrators of crime in the mid nineteenth century' (Unpublished PhD thesis, UCL, 2000), p. 10.

of 1847-52 undoubtedly contributed to his condemnation of the witch/poisoner in his novel.[96] And Minnie is proud of her independence, declaring at one point that:

> I am monarch in my own right – free, independent, absolute! – free to go where I will and when I will – unburthened by domestics and guards – mistress of the birds of the air and the beasts and reptiles which crawl at my feet – the arbiter of life and death.[97]

From a modern perspective, it is difficult not to be drawn to Minnie because she is one of the more interesting characters out of a cast of rather wooden outlaws and knights. Her poisonous machinations know no social rank: as she exclaims, 'peer or peasant, baron or boor, they have all had a taste of Minnie's craft'.[98] The diverse social status of her victims thus transforms Minnie's poisonings into a threat to the social order, a symbol of class as well as gender anarchy. Once the outlaws realise that Minnie has attempted to use Marian's good and trusting nature to kill the outlaws (Minnie never explains why she attempted to kill the outlaws, she simply hates men in general), they decide to put her to death. Minnie, however, is independent until the end of her life. In a scene that is reminiscent of Ulrica's death in *Ivanhoe*, the male outlaws are denied the opportunity to punish her because she accidentally self-immolates:

> The whole party [of outlaws] entered the wood, but they had not advanced many paces before they heard the piercing screams, and saw bright flames issuing from the locality of [Minne's] hut. "We are anticipated," cried Will, "She is her own destroyer!" And it was even as he supposed. The fire which she had been employing to fulfil some mystic or superstitious object connected with the retracing of Hagar, had caught the dry leaves and fragile beams of her hateful abode. She rose in alarm when the sense of danger overtook her, but the smoke, in which she had been for some time enveloped, had now done its work. She reeled to and fro in her efforts to reach the door […] Before she could recover from her stupor the entire hut was wrapt in a sheet of flame, and had caught the ragged habiliments of the poor wretch.[99]

Through this, Stocqueler allows the outlaws to avoid the opprobrium of executing a woman, whilst Minnie retains her independence, although at the cost of her life. Marian in Stocqueler's novel is an example of good femininity: she is independent, but only to a point – she still requires Robin's leadership in most matters. And this confirms Robin Hood's strong masculine identity; a working-class man who 'keeps' his wife at home.

[96] For a discussion of the poisoning panic see Ian Burney, *Poison, Detection and the Victorian Imagination* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).
[97] Stocqueler, *Maid Marian*, p. 109.
[98] Stocqueler, *Maid Marian*, p. 92.
[99] Stocqueler, *Maid Marian*, p. 131.

Minnie, on the other hand is a product of what happens when women supposedly are allowed too much freedom.

5) The Gentrification Question

The radical political sentiments in Egan's *Robin Hood* and *Little John and Will Scarlet*, and their implications upon the gentrification question, have been discussed above. In every one of the novels discussed Robin is portrayed as the Earl of Huntingdon, but this does not mean that the novels are conservative, gentrified, or even respectable. Middle-class masculinity is not the only model influencing portrayals of Robin Hood in penny bloods and dreadfuls, and the violence in them challenges the hegemony of mid-Victorian civility and respectability.

The point briefly raised earlier regarding the violence in each of these texts deserves fuller comment. The statement by Kevin Carpenter about Egan's *Robin Hood* accurately sums up its content: 'terrific battles, terrible injuries, violent deaths, attempted rapes, amorous encounters, nocturnal abductions'.[100] Robin may be noble and chivalrous towards the poor, but he possesses a cruel streak. For example, he burns a man's face with a torch in one scene,[101] and attention has already been drawn to the moment at which he shoots the Norman Caspar Steinkopf through the eye (Fig. 8).[102] Friar Tuck beats a man badly, 'laying open his face as if it had been gashed with a knife'.[103] There is a vividly described scene in which Allen-a-Dale cuts off a Norman's limb.[104] Marian suffers two attempted rapes, after the second of which Robin hangs the Norman would-be perpetrator's dead body upon a tree as a warning to all who might attempt something similar.[105] Carpenter's statement could be extended to every other Robin Hood penny serial. For instance, in Stocqueler's *Maid Marian* the death of the villain Hugo Malair is described in the following terms:

> The words are scarcely spoken when a third terrific cut cleaves his morion in twain, and simultaneously a thrust at his side reaches his

100 Kevin Carpenter, 'Robin Hood in Boy's Weeklies to 1914', in *Popular Children's Literature in Britain*, ed. by Julia Briggs, Dennis Butts & Matthew Orville Grenby (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 47-68 (p. 51).
101 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 37.
102 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 70.
103 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p.1 10.
104 Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 94.
105 Egan, *Robin Hood*, pp. 37, 155.

> heart's core. Gash follows gash, and blow heaped upon blow. Drenched with blood, the stalwart soldier falls to the earth'.[106]

As a whole, the stories are very violent. For example, the Normans brutally kill the Jewish money-lender Reuben, a scene which is described in similarly horrifying terms:

> In a second the Jew was drawn up several feet, and hung dangling in the air with his head downward. The next instant the swords were out, and the flesh of the miserable miser was pierced in a dozen places […] Shrieks and convulsive sobs mingled with his broken words. The blood rushed to his head – he was choking – suffocating.[107]

From a distance Robin sees this happening and puts Reuben out of his misery by sending an arrow into his head, which has resonances of the finale of James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826). But Stocqueler also provides the reader with a vivid description of the aftermath of this torture. The body is left hanging upside down by the Normans and:

> The many hours during which the head had swung in an unnatural position had caused the eyelids to protrude and the forehead to swell enormously. Blood had trickled from the mouth, and mingling with the hairs of the long beard, had connected it with the lower part of the face by a cement of clotted gore.[108]

The Normans are even so brutal as to torture and kill a harmless dog by cutting off its paw.[109] In *Little John and Will Scarlet* both male and female outlaws, as well as Robin, commit violent acts.[110]

Figure 9: 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne', *Boys of England*, 4 March 1887, p. 92.

106 Stocqueler, *Maid Marian*, p. 67.
107 Stocqueler, *Maid Marian*, p. 103.
108 Stocqueler, *Maid Marian*, p. 106.
109 Stocqueler, *Maid Marian*, p. 114.
110 Anon., *Little John and Will Scarlet*, pp. 11 & 163.

"CUT HIM DOWN," CRIED ONE OF THE KNIGHTS, "CUT HIM DOWN."

Figure 10: 'The Young Lord of Huntingdon', *Young Britannia*, 2: 32 (1885), p. 90.

Further violent scenes occur in *The Prince of Archers* in which Robin shoots a Norman soldier through the eye, described in the following terms: 'the missile flew true to its mark, its steel point entering the man's eye, pierced his brain, and he fell headlong to the ground'.[111] The tale of *Robin Hood and the Widow's Three Sons* in *The Boys of England* sees Robin and his men rescuing the three men from the gallows, after which they hang the Sheriff instead. But the tale makes a departure from the ballad and Robin and his men surround the gallows and leave the Sheriff hanging for one hour so as to prevent any family members from ensuring that he has a quick death by pulling his body down, an act which could be interpreted as unnecessarily cruel.[112] In the one-off tale *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne* published in *The Boys of England*, the reader is

111 Anon., 'The Prince of Archers, or, The Boyhood Days of Robin Hood', *Boys of England: A Journal of Sport, Travel, Fun and Instruction for the Youths of All Nations***,** 23 March 1883, p. 57.

112 Anon., 'Robin Hood and the Widow's Sons', *Boys of England: A Journal of Sport, Travel, Fun and Instruction for the Youths of All Nations*, 17 June 1887, p. 332.

told how 'with a great back stroke he sent Guy's head rolling on the floor […] He then put on the horse skin himself, and sticking Guy's head on the end of his bow, gashed it with his knife until the features were unrecognisable'.[113] The moment that the illustrator chose to depict is the point at which Guy's head is sent rolling on the floor, no doubt to the delight of titillated young boys (Fig. 9). Similarly, illustrations in *The Young Lord of Huntingdon* focused on some of the most violent scenes in the novel, such as the moment that Friar Tuck holding a Norman soldier down on the floor (Fig. 10) or the moment that Friar Tuck stabs a Norman soldier in the throat (Fig. 11).

Egan does at least include a short digression to justify the presence of violence in his novel:

> Perhaps it is here necessary that the reader should understand, that, at the period of which we write […] bloodshed [was] a matter of small account, and its frequency contributed still more to lessen the abhorrence which might be supposed to be created by its presence […] The great barbarism of the time counselled this reasoning; and this will account for Robin's readiness – though yet a boy – to use his weapon to slay a foe.[114]

This statement is probably for the benefit of reviewers and moralists rather than readers, and clearly Egan rejects Thomas Love Peacock's figurative interpretation of violence in the Robin Hood tradition which we encountered previously. Sex and violence sold well. These violent scenes fed the Victorians' love for violent entertainment, which accounts for the fact that the best-selling novel of the Victorian era was not a work by Dickens, Thackeray, Hardy, or Trollope, but Reynolds' *Mysteries of London*.[115] Rosalind Crone argues that penny bloods provided readers with an opportunity to indulge in violent entertainment.[116] John Carter Wood explains that during the first half of the nineteenth century, there was a shift from the enjoyment of actual violent entertainment, such as cock fighting, to the enjoyment of the representation of violence in print. Wood states that although violence 'had been a widely accepted part of social relations, community self-policing and recreational life in the eighteenth century, [it] gained a new cultural prominence as a '"social problem"'.[117] This is why penny bloods and penny dreadfuls became a form of entertainment through which contemporaries could vent their longing

[113] Anon., 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne', *Boys of England: A Journal of Sport, Travel, Fun and Instruction for the Youths of All Nations*, 4 March 1887, p. 92.
[114] Egan, *Robin Hood*, p. 87.
[115] Crone, *Violent Victorians*, p. 168.
[116] Crone, *Violent Victorians*, p. 168.
[117] John Carter Wood, 'A Useful Savagery: The Invention of Violence in Nineteenth-Century England', *Journal of Victorian Culture* 9: 1 (2004), pp. 22-42 (p.23).

for increasingly outlawed violent entertainments: enjoying the representation of actual violence meant that they would risk arrest. Yet Crone's specific association of the genre specifically with the working classes must be challenged, for as we have seen, a cursory glance at the publishing history of Egan's, Stocqueler's and Emmett's works offered above, reveals that there was also a market for this type of entertainment among more affluent readers.

THE FRIAR, RECEIVING THE BATTLE AXE ON HIS BUCKLER, RAN HIS SWORD THROUGH HIS OPPONENT'S NECK.

Figure 11: Anon. 'The Young Lord of Huntingdon', *Young Britannia* 2: 34 (1885), p.121.

Thus, context and reception should feature prominently in Robin Hood scholars' discussions of gentrification, even though they hitherto have not. Robin Hood penny blood authors and Egan in particular, were often criticised in the press for having portrayed Robin as a thief who was only marginally better than Jack Sheppard and other London low-life characters. *The Westminster Review*, in an article entitled 'Modern Perversions', characterised Egan's work thus: '"Robin Hood and Little John" by Pierce Egan the Younger! Truly this is too bad'.[118] The reviewer goes on to state that England's national hero has become nothing more than 'a thorough-bred cockney of the year of grace 1839 […] in the region of undying glory occupied by Tom and Jerry, Black Sall, and Dusty Bob'.[119] The 'thorough-bred cockney' is an allusion to Ainsworth's Jack Sheppard, while Tom and Jerry, Black Sall, and Dusty Bob are all

[118] Anon., 'Modern Perversions', *The Westminster Review Vol. XXXIII* (London: Henry Hooper, 1840), p. 425.
[119] Anon., 'Modern Perversions', p. 425.

references to Egan the Elder's *Life in London*. The same reviewer, however, gives grudging compliment to Egan for at least making Robin Hood 'far above Jack Sheppard'.[120] Thus Robin is still a criminal, but he is not the worst of the worst. This equation of Robin Hood to other metropolitan thieves continued to be made throughout the century. In 1855, *The Times* made a direct connection between Robin Hood and later notorious thieves such as Sheppard:

> Talk of Robin Hood and Little John in Sherwood Forest, of Rob Roy in the Highlands, and their dingy imitators in this metropolis described by Dickens and Ainsworth, we believe there to be a perpetual succession of the class. Perhaps the same man passes from one form into another – developing, according to changes in society, from a forester to a mountaineer, thence to a highwayman, thence to an instructor of pickpockets and receiver of their work in St. Giles.[121]

Thus, we can see that Robin Hood may or may not be of elevated social status in many of the novels discussed in this chapter, but contemporary reviewers are not reading him as respectable, much less gentrified. Similar sentiments to those expressed in *The Times* appeared in a lengthy article written by Charles Mackay for *Bentley's Miscellany* in which Robin is merely one of a number of notorious thieves, along with others such as Du Vall, Turpin, and Cartouche, whose stories mainly appeal to the 'striplings of dissolute habits […] who will one day become [their] imitators'.[122] Quite why *Bentley's Miscellany* felt justified in taking the moral high ground here is unclear. After all, it was in that periodical that *Jack Sheppard* was first serialised. It was a narrative which, as we have seen, supposedly induced Courvoisier to murder his master Lord William Russell, and which was denounced as 'a history of vulgar and disgusting atrocities'.[123]

Thus, although penny blood and penny dreadful authors strove to present Robin as a respectable man who observed all the rules of sexual propriety in regard to his living arrangements, these works and others like them received much criticism in the press. One reviewer in *The Times*, commenting upon the novels of both Reynolds and Egan, remarked that 'Lust was the Alpha and Murder the Omega' of their novels,[124] though Egan was quick in seizing 'the opportunity of flatly and emphatically

120 Anon., 'Modern Perversions', p. 425.
121 Anon., *The Times*, 22 June 1855, p. 6
122 Charles MacKay, 'On the Popular Admiration for Great Thieves', *Bentley's Miscellany*, July 1841, 406-411 (p. 411).
123 Sidney Owenson, *The Athenaeum*, 26 October 1839, 406-405 (p. 405).
124 Anon., 'Great Expectations', *The Times*, 17 October 1861, p. 6

contradicting this mendacious slander' in a response to the editor.[125] Contemporaries were worried about the effects of 'pernicious reading' upon the minds of impressionable youths, and penny bloods and dreadfuls were usually condemned by reviewers, many times without having actually being read, as being full of sex and violence.[126] (Of course, sometimes the reviewers were correct in their critiques, particularly in regard to the inclusion of violence). By the late nineteenth century, penny dreadfuls began to be blamed by the police and the press for inducing young boys to commit crime. The most common offence connected to the reading of penny dreadful literature was burglary and theft, which is perhaps unsurprising as so many stories focused upon highwaymen and robbers. Twelve year-old Arthur Thomas in 1883 was charged with stealing a horse and wagon. At his trial it was said that 'the prisoner had lately been reading some "penny dreadfuls" with the view of following in the footsteps of Dick Turpin, or some other "hero", and riding to York or elsewhere'.[127] The magazine *The Boys of England*, which it will be recalled published four of the Robin Hood stories examined in this chapter, appeared in the trial of eighteen year-old Richard Robson in 1874. He was charged with stealing cash from his employer and when police arrested him it was noted that in his possession 'was a number of a publication called *The Boys of England*'.[128] Two years later *The Boys of England* was metaphorically in the dock again during the trial of John Ascot, who had been charged with embezzling funds from his employer. The arresting officer mentioned that 'in the prisoner's room he had found a quantity of cheap literature, such as *The Boys of England, Jack Sheppard* and other works of this kind'.[129]

Penny dreadfuls were also held responsible for crimes of a more heinous nature. In 1872, thirteen year-old Samuel Hoy was charged with the attempted murder of his stepmother. His father attributed his actions to having read *The Boys of England*.[130] Additionally, in Otley, Yorkshire, in May 1893, Fred Cook was indicted for the murder of his two year old brother, having struck him on the head with a meat chopper. During

125 Pierce Egan, 'To the Editor of The Times', *The Times*, 23 October 1861, p. 4.

126 Springhall, 'Pernicious Reading? The Penny Dreadful as Scapegoat for Late Victorian Juvenile Crime', p. 346.

127 Anon., *The Times* 22 September 1883, cited in Robert Kirkpatrick, *Children's Books History Society, Occasional Paper XI: Wild Boys in the Dock - Victorian Juvenile Literature and Juvenile Crime* (London: Children's Books History Society, 2013), p. 7.

128 Anon., *The Times* 20 January 1874, cited in Kirkpatrick, *Wild Boys in the Dock - Victorian Juvenile Literature and Juvenile Crime*, p. 10.

129 Anon., *Edinburgh Evening News* 6 July 1876, cited in Kirkpatrick, *Wild Boys in the Dock - Victorian Juvenile Literature and Juvenile Crime*, p. 10.

130 'Trial of Samuel Hoy, 16 December 1872' (t18721216-69) in *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* <www.oldbaileyonline.org> [Accessed 19 September 2016].

his trial it was mentioned that 'the prisoner has been largely addicted to the reading of sensational literature of the "penny dreadful" order, which was likely to have a very prejudicial effect on a morbid temperament such as his seems to have been'.[131] Whether entertainment can drive people to commit criminal acts is a debate that which continues to the present day.[132] One has to wonder, furthermore, just how much juvenile offenders played up to the idea that pernicious reading caused them to commit crime in the hope of leniency. As Heather Shore's research in *Artful Dodgers* has shown, boys and their parents usually volunteered this information to the judge.[133] Instances such as these are therefore perhaps more an example of the accused and their families 'playing the system' and tugging at the heart strings of Victorian bleeding heart liberals who wanted to 'save the children'. Robin Hood was a regular feature of penny bloods and penny dreadfuls, and when it comes to the thinking about how contemporaries viewed the genre as a whole, these periodicals do not even warrant the term 'respectable', much less gentrified.

There were, of course, more benign representations of Robin Hood in Victorian periodicals. Louey Jackson's short story in *Belgravia Magazine* depicts Robin Hood as a young boy of sixteen years old living in a rural idyll who falls in love with a lady.[134] John Keats' nostalgic poem *Robin Hood: To a Friend* was reprinted in *Beeton's Boy's Own Magazine*.[135] William Jones published two original Robin Hood poems in 1866 and 1870. The first poem for *MacMillan's Magazine* entitled *Robin Hood and the Potter*, draws upon early ballad material and presents Robin as a rustic fellow who spends his time playfully picking fights with people he meets:

> Now the moral is this: - 'tis a hit or a miss
> With those that are frequently boasting;
> It may last for time, but no reason or rhyme
> Will protect them some day from a roasting!
> So, archers beware, when you shoot foul or fair,
> Your arrows are not misdirected,
> Or, as surely as Fate, you will find out too late,

131 Anon. *Hull Daily Mail,*, 12 May 1883, cited in Kirkpatrick, *Wild Boys in the Dock - Victorian Juvenile Literature and Juvenile Crime*, p.16.

132 *The Sun*, 26 November 1993, p. 1; In living memory there was the 1990s crusade against 'Video Nasties' in the wake of a particularly brutal child killing, with *The Sun* carrying a very dramatic headline urging readers to 'Burn Your Video Nasties'.

133 Heather Shore, *Artful Dodgers: Youth and Crime in Early 19th-Century London* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999), p. 128.

134 Louey Jackson, 'Robin Hood', *Belgravia Magazine*, July 1893, 311-320.

135 John Keats, 'Robin Hood', *Beeton's Boys' Own Magazine*, No. 4 [n.d.], 477.

A lesson you never expected![136]

Jones' second poem *A Lytell Geste of Robin Hood* is merely an adaptation of the ballad of *Robin Hood and Allen-a-Dale*.[137] In Keats' and Jones' poems, however, it is unknown whether Robin is a lord or not, thus the title 'gentrified' is equally inapplicable to them too.

6) Conclusion

This chapter has shown why the concept of gentrification is inappropriate to apply to the majority of Robin Hood stories and poems in nineteenth-century periodicals. They were read by a wide range of readers from a variety of social classes, although they were seen at the time as publications that were read primarily by the working classes. Robin is represented as a lord in almost all of the serialised novels. Yet this is rarely an important aspect of Robin's character, and he rarely lives among the upper classes. The forest society of Sherwood which Robin and the outlaws build is in most cases a refuge for members of the working classes to flee from persecution by the upper classes. In some cases, the texts have an egalitarian and/or republican agenda behind them, and they look forward to a future society in which there is no distinction of rank. After c. 1830, then, Victorian medievalism did not immediately become conservative and expensive as Clare A. Simmons suggests, for there were certainly radical and inexpensive medievalist texts being published beyond the 1830s,[138] as the case studies in this chapter have shown. There were further radical medievalist texts written later in the century by authors such as William Morris whose *A Dream of John Ball* (1886) finds the beginning of English socialism in the events of 1381. Morris and E. Belfort Bax, furthermore, find proto-socialism in the actions of Robin and his men in *Socialism from the Root Up* (1886).[139] Thus, scholars should perhaps talk in term of Victorian medievalisms, instead of a homogenous medievalism.

It would be difficult to describe relatively inexpensive penny bloods with such radical agendas as gentrified. Robin Hood is certainly portrayed as a respectable figure in these narratives: he is an upright and chivalrous man. These values were not the

136 William Jones, 'Robin Hood and the Potter', *MacMillan's Magazine*, May 1866, p. 74.
137 William Jones, 'A "Lytell Geste" of Robin Hood', *The New Monthly Magazine*, April 1870, 432-433.
138 Simmons, *Popular Medievalism in Romantic-Era Britain*, pp. 193-96.
139 William Morris & E. Belfort Bax, 'Socialism from the Root Up', *Commonweal*, 22 May 1886, p. 61.

preserve of the gentry in the Victorian period, however, but of the middle classes and the respectable working classes. Despite the endorsement of contemporary gender ideals, another factor which further complicates the respectability of these texts is the violence contained in them. Arrows pierce through brains, Norman soldiers are maimed, heads literally roll, and on several occasions in a few of the novels, some of the women suffer attempted rapes at the hands of evil soldiers. All of these scenes are vividly described and sometimes illustrated graphically. These violent texts were part of a trend in the rise in popularity of violent literary entertainment during the Victorian era. Clearly, reviewers certainly did not think of these novels as either gentrified or respectable, and they were blamed by the authorities and the press for the rise in crime, especially during the latter part of the century.

While penny bloods from between c. 1840 until c. 1860 appealed mainly to adults, after the latter date the bloods' successors, penny dreadfuls, were marketed primarily towards children. Penny dreadfuls were not the only form of children's literature available in the nineteenth century, however, for there was also a flourishing market in children's books. It is these which are the subject of the next chapter.

7) 'Deeds of Daring': The Public School Robin Hood of Late-Victorian Children's Books

1) Introduction

On 15 November 1859 the 1st Nottinghamshire (Robin Hood) Rifles Volunteer Corps was established. A poem in the style of the seventeenth-century ballad was published in *The Nottinghamshire Guardian* to commemorate the founding of the corps:

> Bold Robin Hood ranged the forest all round,
> The forest all round ranged he;
> Now Robin and men are under the ground,
> And Robin's successors are we […]
>
> Now Robin Hood Rifles, not Robin's bow-men,
> Protect the weak and the fair;
> Robin Hood bullets will "settle the hash"
> Of foes who dare to come here.[1]

The poem ends by stating how the corps will 'sing God bless the Queen'.[2] By the 1850s, Robin Hood is clearly being appropriated here to serve the military interests of the nation, and later in the period he became, in the words of J. Walker McSpadden and Charles Wilson, 'a national hero'.[3] From mid-century, as this chapter will show, Robin Hood was appropriated in children's literature to serve Victorian military and imperial ideology. He is represented as a man whose conduct is in line with the ideals of the public school ethos – an ethos which stressed the values of muscular Christianity, athleticism, sportsmanship and fair play, chivalry, and duty to the nation.[4]

The following works, then, are discussed in this chapter: Stephen Percy's *Tales of Robin Hood* (1840); John B. Marsh's *Life and Adventures of Robin Hood* (1865);

[1] Anon. 'Ballad for the Robin Hood Rifles by One of Themselves', *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 27 October 1859, p. 7.
[2] Anon., 'Ballad for the Robin Hood Rifles by One of Themselves', p. 7
[3] J. Walker McSpadden *Robin Hood and his Merry Outlaws* (London: Associated Newspapers, Ltd. [n.d.]), p. 3.
[4] J. A. Mangan, 'Noble Specimens of Manhood: Schoolboy Literature and the Creation of a Colonial Chivalric Code', in *Imperialism and Juvenile* Literature, ed. by Jeffrey Richards (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), pp. 172-94.

Howard Pyle's *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood* (1883);[5] Edward Gilliat's *Forest Outlaws, or St. Hugh and the King* (1887) and his second work *In Lincoln Green: A Story of Robin Hood* (1898); J. Walker McSpadden's *Robin Hood and his Merry Outlaws* (1898); Henrietta E. Marshall's *Stories of Robin Hood Told to the Children* (c.1906); Escott Lynn's *When Lionheart was King* (1908); Henry Gilbert's *Robin Hood and the Men of the Greenwood* (1912); and Paul Creswick's *Robin Hood and his Adventures* (1917). These works will be discussed thematically in terms of the particular values they projected, because they are so generic that to read one is practically to have read them all.

That Robin Hood in this period was appropriated to serve the military and imperial needs of the British Empire contradicts Stephanie Barczewski's argument that during the late-nineteenth century, Robin Hood was an anti-imperialist figure. Barczewski suggests that 'the authors who treated the legend of Robin Hood […] instead of promoting imperialism, they more often attacked it by emphasising its high cost in terms of the attention paid to more pressing domestic problems'.[6] That is a rather broad statement to make, especially in view of the fact that in some novels Richard I's foreign adventures are praised. Marshall speaks very approvingly of Richard I's crusading activities, saying 'it would be a terrible sin to allow wicked heathen to live in the Holy Land'.[7] Re-interpreting Scott's message that Richard I should pay attention to affairs at home instead of gallivanting abroad, in *The Story of Ivanhoe for Children*, Ivanhoe's crusading adventures are the medieval equivalent of nineteenth-century imperial exploits, as the author says that Ivanhoe 'in a modern novel, […] would perhaps have gone to the gold mines of Australia, or sought his fortunes in America or South Africa'.[8] Towards the close of Lynn's *When Lionheart was King*, Robin prophesies that 'the day is not far distant when Englishman and Norman shall live side

[5] See the following: Christopher F. Armstrong, 'The Lessons of Sports: Class Socialization in British and American Boarding Schools', *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 1: 4 (1984), 314-331; Steven B. Levine, 'The Rise of American Boarding Schools and the Development of a National Upper Class', *Social Problems*, 28: 1 (1980), 63-94; Although Pyle was an American, his nationality does not hinder a discussion of his work in this chapter which explores the presence of the public school ethos in Robin Hood books. Pyle did, after all, attend an American private school (the equivalent of a British public school).

[6] Barczewski, *Myth and National Identity*, p. 224.

[7] H. E. Marshall, *Stories of Robin Hood Told to the Children* (London: T. C. & E. C. Jack, [n.d.]), p. 3.

[8] Anon. *The Story of Ivanhoe for Children*, (London: A. & C. Black, 1899), p. vii.

by side in peace, and as brothers shall hold their own against the world'.[9] The message is that once the nation has united it will then be able to hold its own 'against the world'.

As this chapter will show, the relationship of Robin Hood to imperial ideology in the nineteenth century was more nuanced than Barczewski's statement admits: late-nineteenth century authors certainly did critique some of the domestic problems caused by the expansion of empire in their works, but none of them argued that Britain *should not* participate in imperial adventures. Even when they did criticise imperial expansion, these works represented the qualities that young men would need if they were to serve their country, and thus were subtly imperialist. This was the era of popular imperialism, when songs such as *By Jingo* (1879) and *Another Little Patch of Red* (1900) were sung in music halls, and when people lined the streets to celebrate the relief of Mafeking in 1900. That Robin was seen by many people as a symbol of patriotism by the late nineteenth century is beyond doubt, and given the fact that patriotism was closely linked to the empire in this period, this means that Robin Hood cannot be divorced from imperial ideology. While these books were certainly not condemned by press moralists as the penny dreadfuls were, however, they cannot be called gentrified, as this chapter will show. First, the public school ethos was a middle-class ideology and not the preserve of the gentry or aristocracy. It was supposed to train the sons of the upper middle classes for a life of service to the empire. Secondly, if the model supposedly laid down by Munday for a gentrified Robin Hood means that he allegedly eschews violence, then for this reason in these works he cannot be called gentrified in any of these texts, in much the same way as penny dreadfuls cannot. As we have seen thus far with most nineteenth-century works, respectable is a more suitable term than gentrified.

2) The Public School Ethos & the Circulation of Children's Books during the Late Victorian and Edwardian Eras

It is necessary to give a brief overview of how and why the public school ethos emerged during the late nineteenth century. Public schools had been established during the medieval period to educate the sons of the poor for the Church. The oldest Public School is King's School, Canterbury (est. 597). More institutions were established in the succeeding centuries, such as Warwick School (est. 914), Eton (est. 1440), Harrow (est. 1572), and Charterhouse (est. 1611). Although they were centres of learning and

[9] Escott Lynn, *When Lionheart was King: A Tale of Robin Hood and Merry Sherwood* (London: Blackie & Son, 1908), p. 48.

culture in the medieval and early modern periods, by the early nineteenth century these schools had fallen into decline, and they were doing little to advance Britain's cultural and scientific achievements.[10] It was only during the 1860s that the public schools once more witnessed a rise in status. This was after the government passed the Public Schools Act in 1868 and the schools became free of government control, and they became attractive places for the upper middle, gentry, and aristocratic classes to send their children to be educated.

While the public schools did not produce great thinkers in the first half of the nineteenth century, after the middle of the century, when the upper middle and aristocratic classes began to send their children there, the schools became training grounds for the future officer class of the British Empire.[11] The increasing focus on imperialism in the public schools reflects the fact that the late nineteenth century was a period that witnessed the expansion of the British Empire.[12] In the aftermath of the Indian Mutiny in 1857, the government passed the India Act (1858) which initiated direct political control of the subcontinent.[13] Between 1884 and 1914, European powers took direct political control of virtually the whole of Africa – a process known as 'the scramble for Africa'.[14] Men imbued with an imperial ethos were needed to run this empire, and the public school system began to develop 'distinctly militaristic features' in order to produce such men.[15] While the public school system trained healthy boys from the middle classes, working-class boys – the future manpower of the empire – at this period were generally unhealthy, living in cramped overcrowded conditions and malnourished. This became especially apparent at the beginning of the Boer War (1899-1902) which highlighted what seemed to the establishment to be a case of national

[10] See Eric Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire: The Birth of the Industrial Revolution* rev. ed. (New York: New Press, 1999), p. 147; Hobsbawm gives a particularly damning assessment of the anti-intellectual nature of these public schools, being concerned more with producing Christian gentlemen than advancing science, industry, and the arts in Britain. Indeed, many of them were seen as anti-intellectual by the late eighteenth century. It is significant, indeed, that none of the people who would today be classified as leading lights of the early-to-mid Victorian era such as Charles Dickens, Joseph Bazalgette, John Stuart Mill, Thomas Carlyle ever attended one of these public schools.

[11] See Rupert Wilkinson, 'Political Leadership and the Late Victorian Public School', *The British Journal of Sociology* 13: 4 (1962), 320-330.

[12] See Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire* (London: Abacus, 2004).

[13] K .T. Hoppen, *The Mid-Victorian Generation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 194; Although, as K. T. Hoppen notes, this Act merely formalised what had gradually become standard practice during the first half of the nineteenth century, as the government took an ever greater interest in the affairs of the East India Company.

[14] See Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa* (London: Abacus, 1990).

[15] G. R. Searle, *A New England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 36-37.

deficiency as one third of working-class volunteers were turned away from enlisting for being too unhealthy.[16] Additionally, the growing rivalry from other emerging great powers such as the USA and a newly-unified Germany made the British authorities anxious that Britain would lose its preeminent international standing. It was this anxiety over Britain's declining international supremacy which contributed to the emergence of militarism in the Public Schools. While the public schools were mainly attended by the wealthy sons of the middle and upper classes, in theory the ideals of the public school ethos were values to which all classes could subscribe. Robert Baden Powell (1857-1941), the founder of the Scout movement, for example, deliberately avoided using the word 'class' in his works'.[17] The public school ethos, then, which stressed the values of sportsmanship, manliness, and devotion to duty, sought to prepare boys of all classes for a life of imperial service.[18] The end result of this ethos was intended, as intimated by Baden-Powell, that boys would be trained to do their duty to God while carrying out service for others.[19]

While it was the wealthier classes' children who were exposed to the imperialist public school ethos in the schools, concomitant with the advent of new imperialism was the emergence of a large body of children's literature that promoted imperial values. While violent penny dreadfuls had flourished between c.1840 and c.1880, by the late nineteenth century there was an attempt to reclaim the realm of children's books from figures such as Dick Turpin and Jack Sheppard who had dominated it. For example, Charlotte Yonge illustrates the need for the type of literature produced by imperialist authors such as G. A. Henty and H. Rider Haggard as respectable children's literature in *What Books to Lend and What to Give* (1887) when, perhaps as a response to the Education Act of 1870 and increasing literacy among children, she notes that:

> Wholesome and amusing literature has become almost a necessity among the appliances of parish work. The power of reading leads, in most cases, to the craving for books. If good not be provided, evil will only too easily be found […] If the boy is not to betake himself to 'Jack Sheppard' literature, he must be beguiled by wholesome adventure. If the

16 Searle, *A New England*, p. 302.

17 Robert Baden-Powell, *The Scouter* September 1919 in *US Scouting Service Project - Baden Powell's Outlook: Some Selections from his Contributions to The Scouter from 1909 – 1941* [Internet <http://usscouts.org/history/bpoutlook3.asp> Accessed 12 August 2016].

18 Searle, *A New England*, p. 65.

19 Robert Baden-Powell, *Scoutmastership: A Handbook for Scoutmasters on the Theory of Scout Training* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1920), pp. 141-142.

> girl is not to study the 'penny dreadful,' her notions must be refined by the tale of high romance or pure pathos.[20]

The shadow of Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard* evidently still loomed as a spectre over the genre of children's literature, serving as an example of unwholesome entertainment. As we have seen, Robin Hood penny novels were often grouped alongside Jack Sheppard as examples of pernicious reading. It was only in late-Victorian children's books that Robin Hood would provide juvenile readers with 'wholesome adventures', even if in practice these books could be just as violent as some of the penny dreadfuls which moralists such as Yonge complained about. Books with an imperial message, such as those by Henty, therefore, promoted respectable reading for children at a time when middle-class moralists assumed that it was badly needed.

Many of these late-Victorian children's books, including the Robin Hood novels discussed in this chapter, were thought to be essential and respectable tools for the teaching of history and English in schools.[21] With the exception of Howard Pyle's *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*, which retailed at fifteen shillings,[22] many of these books were relatively cheap compared to editions of Scott's *Ivanhoe* in the early nineteenth century (as a rough guide, the average annual wage for a skilled manufacturing labourer in 1900 was around thirty-eight pounds).[23] Escott Lynn's *When Lionheart was King* retailed at three shillings and sixpence.[24] Henry Gilbert's *Robin Hood and the Men of the Greenwood* sold for seven shillings and sixpence.[25] McSpadden's Robin Hood retailed at twelve shillings and sixpence,[26] and Newbolt's

[20] Charlotte M. Yonge, *What Books to Lend and What to Give* (London: [n. p.], [n. d.]), pp. 5-6.

[21] See H. Courthope Bowen, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Historical Novels and Tales for the Use of School Libraries and Teachers of History* (London: E. Stanford, 1905).

[22] Anon. 'Advertisements', *The Athenaeum*, 15 December 1883, p. 796. According to the National Archives Currency Converter, 15s was the equivalent of approximately £36 in 2005.

[23] Robert C. Allen, 'Real Incomes in the English Speaking World, 1879-1913', in *Labour Market Evolution: The Economic History of Market Integration, Wage Flexibility and the Employment Relation*, ed. by G. Grantham and M. MacKinnon (Abingdon: Routledge, 1994), pp. 107-83 (p. 120).

[24] Anon. 'Books Received', *The Academy*, 21 December 1907, 277-78 (p. 277). According to the National Archives Currency Converter, 3s 6d was the equivalent of £10 in 2005.

[25] Anon. 'Robin Hood and the Men of the Greenwood', *The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and* Art, 8 December 1912, p. 5. According to the National Archives Currency Converter, 7s 6d was the equivalent of £21 in 2005.

[26] Anon. 'Advertisements', *The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art*, 12 December 1921, p. 14.

The Book of the Happy Warrior sold for seven shillings.[27] None of these books was out of the reach of those from the middle classes, and maybe even more affluent members of the working classes. For those of the working classes who could not afford to buy the books outright, many of these books were given away as prizes: most of the editions consulted for this thesis bear an *ex libris* label in the front which indicates they were presented as rewards to schoolboys and schoolgirls for high achievement or good attendance. In addition, many of them were given as Sunday school prizes.[28] At the same time, it should be noted that moralistic books written specifically for children were not the *only* books given out as prizes.[29] The issue about how these books were received will be discussed below – the mere fact that they were given out as prizes did not always mean that they were read and enjoyed. Decoratively bound and with a moralistic edge to them, these were books which were deemed respectable enough to be read by both the middle classes and also passed down to, or foisted upon, the working classes.

3) Muscular Christianity and Athleticism

Muscular Christianity and an emphasis upon physical fitness was one of the key elements of public school ethos in the late-Victorian period. As Nick Watson, Stuart Weir, and Stephen Friend argue, 'the basic premise of Victorian muscular Christianity was that participation in sport could contribute to the development of Christian morality, physical fitness, and "manly" character'.[30] This was a view propagated by Thomas Arnold (1795-1842), the headmaster of Rugby School who, in the words of Pierre de Coubertin (1863-1937), 'gave the precise formula for the role of athletics in

[27] Anon. 'The Christmas Season's Yield of Books', *The Manchester Guardian*, 26 November 1917, p. 6. According to the National Archives Currency Converter, 7s was the equivalent of £20 in 2005.

[28] Interestingly, I have not yet encountered any library editions of the penny dreadful Robin Hood tales that bear an *ex libris* stamp indicating that they were given out as prizes, which suggests that they were indeed considered as 'low' reading.

[29] My personal copy of a nineteenth-century edition of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1596), for instance, was given as a Sunday School prize, and my copy of *Forty-One Years in India: From Subaltern to Commander in Chief* (1901) similarly bears an *ex libris* label that was given from a schoolmaster to a boy for high achievement.

[30] Nick J. Watson, Stuart Weir & Stephen Friend, 'The Development of Muscular Christianity in Victorian Britain and Beyond', *Journal of Religion and Society*, 7 (2005), 1-21 (p. 1).

education. The cause was quickly won. Playing fields sprang up all over England.'[31] In other arenas of public life the cultivation of physical fitness was also promoted. For example, the late-Victorian period was the era of the strong-man, when body builders such as Eugene Sandow competed topless on stage, displaying what was considered to be the perfect male physique.[32] Boys' books such as *The Boy's Own Volume* (1865) covered the annual games of Rugby, Charterhouse, Eton, Harrow, Westminster, Marlborough, and Winchester schools in the hope that reporting upon these 'tests of prowess' would induce young male readers to 'take pattern and example by the discipline and skill evinced by their brethren'.[33]

The cultivation of physical prowess would, in theory, enable young boys to spread the gospel when they served the empire in often inhospitable environments. Thus we can see a shift from a domestic muscular Christianity to an outward-looking imperial Christian ethos. There were precursors to this emphasis upon imperial Christianity in Robin Hood penny bloods and eighteenth-century texts. Stocqueler's *Maid Marian* sees the first signs of imperial ideology creeping into the Robin Hood tradition. A significant portion of the novel is set in the Holy Land, detailing the glorious adventures of Richard the Lionheart upon his crusade. Tuck's attempted conversion of two Muslim characters and a Jewish lady are also praised in the novel.[34] Earlier texts such as Ritson's *Robin Hood*, had presented Robin as a very pious man indeed, despite the fact that he often robbed clergymen.[35] If one of the aims of the public school ethos was to build 'a

[31] Pierre de Coubertin, 'Physical Exercises in the Modern World: A Lecture Given at the Sorbonne, November 1892', in *Pierre de Coubertin, 1863-1937: Olympism – Selected Writings* ed. by Norbert Muller (Lausanne: International Olympics Association, 2000), pp. 287-97. For a critical discussion of the emergence of team games in British public schools during the nineteenth century see H. S. Ndee, 'Public Schools in Britain in the Nineteenth Century: The Emergence of Team Games and the Development of the Educational Ideology of Athleticism', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 27: 5 (2010), 845-871. See also Mangan, *op cit.*

[32] See David Waller, *The Perfect Man: The Muscular Life and Times of Eugene Sandow, Victorian Strongman* (London: Victorian Secrets, 2011).

[33] Anon., *The Boy's Own Volume of Fact, Fiction, History, and Adventure* (London: S. O. Beeton, 1865), p. 447.

[34] Stocqueler, *Maid Marian*, p. 146.

[35] Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: x; [Robin Hood] was a man of exemplary piety, according to the notions of that age, and retained a domestic chaplain (Frier Tuck no doubt) for the diurnal celebration of the divine mysteries. This we learn from an anecdote preserved by Fordun […] one day, as he heard Mass, which he was most devoutly accustomed to do, (nor would he, in whatever necessity, suffer the office to be interrupted,) he was espyed by a certain sherif […] Some of his people, who perceived what was going forward, advised him to fly with all speed, which, out of reverence to the sacrament, which he was then most devoutly worshipping, he absolutely refused to do. But the rest of his men having fled for fear of death, Robin, confiding

Christian gentleman', then it was easy for late-Victorian authors to transpose earlier ideas about Robin's piety on to the new public school ethos. The Robin Hood of late-Victorian children's books is always a pious man. In Henry Gilbert's *Robin Hood and the Men of the Greenwood*, when Robin gathers his band together, he is insistent that they should hear mass daily.[36]

In addition to his piety, in late-Victorian Robin Hood books there is an emphasis upon Robin and his men's physique that is absent from earlier popular works such as Egan's *Robin Hood* and Stocqueler's *Maid Marian*. In J. E. Muddock's *Maid Marian and Robin Hood* (1892), Robin is described in the following manner: 'Robin Hood was a striking personage, for his figure was suggestive of muscles of steel, while his sunburnt face told of resolute will, and no man with such fearless, brilliant eyes could be a coward'.[37] That statement is, of course, informed by Victorian ideas of physiognomy.[38] It is not only Robin Hood's physique and physical prowess which sets him apart from other men, but his face as well. Here is a hardy, tough Englishman. Similarly, in McSpadden's tale, in his youth Robin is 'a comely, well-knit stripling, and as soon as his right arm received thew and sinew he learned how to draw a bow',[39] while Robin in his boyhood is described by Creswick as 'muscular'.[40] Similarly, in Howard Pyle's *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*, Robin is 'stout of sinew'.[41] Robin is not merely skilled in the use of the bow, however, but is also an excellent wrestler, and the outlaws, when they are not robbing people upon the highway, are said to regularly 'amuse themselves in athletic exercises'.[42] Gilliat's *In Lincoln Green*, which is perhaps the most 'public school' of all the works examined in this chapter, as it opens in a very 'Victorianised' medieval public school which Robin's son Walter attends, tells

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in him whom he reverently worshiped, with very few, who by chance were present, set upon his enemies, whom he easyly vanquished'.

36 Henry Gilbert, *Robin Hood and the Men of the Greenwood* (London: T. C. & A. C. Jack, 1912), p. 51.

37 J. E. Muddock, *Maid Marian and Robin Hood: A Romance of Old Sherwood Forest* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1892), p. 8.

38 See Sharrona Pearl, *About Faces: Physiognomy in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

39 McSpadden & Wilson, *Robin Hood*, p. 12.

40 Paul Creswick, *Robin Hood and his Adventures* (London: E. Nister, 1917), p. 25.

41 Howard Pyle, *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood of Great Renown, in Nottinghamshire* (London: Brandywine, 1938), p. 2.

42 Stephen Percy, *Tales of Robin Hood* (London: John F. Shaw [n.d.]), p. 8.

the reader how Robin has 'well-made arms and massive shoulders'.[43] Gilliat was the assistant headmaster of Harrow, thus it is no surprise that the values of the public school ethos should be apparent in his tale. In McSpadden's tale, as Robin competes in the archery contest, 'he felt his muscles tightening into bands of steel, tense and true'.[44] In his description of Will Scarlet, McSpadden says that he is 'not a bad build for all his prettiness […] those calves are well-rounded and straight. The arms hang stoutly from the shoulders.'[45] Even Friar Tuck is more muscular than fat in Lynn's *When Lionheart was King*, bearing 'arms almost as brawny as Little John's'.[46]

Cultivating physical prowess would enable boys – the future servants of the empire – to survive and endure in the often inhospitable environments in the colonies. In Henty's *With Clive in India* (1888), for example, the hero of the novel, the young Charlie Maryatt, from an early age always participates in sports at home, and he is chosen for a mission that will test his physical prowess, requiring the surmounting of dangerous rivers, mountains and passes for its completion.[47] While a lot of medieval Robin Hood texts celebrate the summer time and give no consideration to how a body of outlaws living in the forest might survive in a harsh winter,[48] some of these children's books do recognise the fact that life for an outlaw might at times be difficult. H. E. Marshall's work reveals a little about Robin's life in the cold winter months:

> In winter the roads were so bad, and the weather so cold and wet, that most people stayed at home. So it was rather a quiet time for Robin and his men. They lived in caves during the winter, and spent their time making stores of bows and arrows, and mending their boots and clothes.[49]

Even plays that were published specifically to be acted out by children at home give tips on how to survive in harsh environments. For example, in W. R. Snow's *Robin Hood and his Merrye Men*, Robin gives an idea of how the outlaws cook food and boil water

[43] Edward Gilliatt, *In Lincoln Green: A Story of Robin Hood* (London: Seeley & Co. 1897), p. 45

[44] McSpadden *Robin Hood*, p. 23.

[45] McSpadden & Wilson, *Robin Hood*, p. 80.

[46] Lynn, *When Lionheart was King*, p. 33.

[47] G. A. Henty, 'With Clive in India', in *British Empire Adventure Stories* (London: Carlton Books, 2005), pp. 465-774 (p. 570). Editor not credited.

[48] The one exception to this is in the *Gest* when Robin kidnaps the Sheriff and commands him to stay and live his life in the forest with the outlaws, and the suggestion is that the Sheriff does not wish to do so because he knows that it will mean living in harsh conditions.

[49] Marshall, *Stories of Robin Hood Told to the Children*, p. 11.

while living out in the greenwood.[50] Living outdoors makes the outlaws even tougher: McSpadden tells how 'the wind blew the ruddy colour into his cheeks'.[51] They are men who love being outdoors, and as indicated in Percy's *Tales of Robin Hood*, they are not domesticated but ever since their youths have 'longed for adventure'.[52] The outlaws in Gilbert's *Robin Hood* additionally undergo very rigorous training drills on a daily basis to keep themselves sharp.[53]

The greenwood, as in the earlier ballads, is more often than not an exclusively male environment. The Robin Hood of Egan's penny blood, while a radical figure, is still relatively domesticated: he marries Marian and even has a child with her, which reflects the mid-nineteenth century middle-class ideal of domesticity. But as John Tosh shows, by the late-Victorian period there was a 'flight from domesticity'.[54] Domesticity was totally at odds with the values of the public schools,[55] which is why there is often little emphasis upon Robin's relationship with Marian in these later texts. In contrast, it might be recalled, the relationship between Robin and Marian was central to earlier texts such as those by Peacock and Stocqueler, although an exception to this is Muddock's *Maid Marian and Robin Hood* in which the former plays a large part and lives in the forest with the outlaws. In most of these late-Victorian and Edwardian texts, Marian does appear but she is very much a background figure. Instead, Robin's family in these texts is his band of outlaws: they are his 'comrades' with whom he faces the tough life of an outlaw, which is presented as no place for a woman.[56]

4) Sportsmanship and Fair Play

A Victorian public schoolboy had to cultivate physical prowess, but he also had to be a good sport who knew how to play by the rules. The ideals of sportsmanship and fair play were easily superimposed onto Robin-Hood-meets-his-match scenarios by late-Victorian writers, and indeed there had been a precedent for portraying the outlaws as acting according to the rules of fair play: in Scott's *Ivanhoe*, after a playful quarterstaff

50 W. R. Snow, 'Robin Hood and his Merrye Men', *Routledge's Every Boy's Annual* (London: Routledge [n.d.]), p. 477.
51 McSpadden & Wilson, *Robin Hood*, p. 33.
52 Percy, *Tales of Robin Hood*, p. 8.
53 Gilbert, *Robin Hood and the Men of the Greenwood*, p. 48.
54 John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 170-194.
55 Tosh, *A Man's Place*, p. 177.
56 Percy, *Tales of Robin Hood*, p. 44.

match between the Miller and Gurth Robin exclaims, 'Fair play and Old England forever'.[57] According to John Finnemore in *The Story of Robin Hood* (1909), these types of situations in the old broadside ballads display 'the old English love of fair play and straight dealing'.[58] In Marshall's *Stories of Robin Hood*, when Robin first meets Little John and the fight with quarterstaffs ensues, in which Robin is beaten, he says to Little John, 'it was a fair fight and you have won the battle'.[59] In Escott Lynn's *When Lionheart was King*, when Robin and his men hold up a traveller named Ralph, Robin orders that Ralph should fight Friar Tuck with quarterstaffs, saying 'You shall fight the Friar, and you shall have fair play'.[60] A scene of fighting according to the rules of fair play is acted out in Charles Herbert's *Robin Hood* as, after having fought Little John, Robin exclaims: 'you've proved yourself the best man. I own I'm beaten, and the fight's at an end.'[61] Similarly in McSpadden's work, when Little John and Will Scarlet first meet and have a fight with quarterstaffs, they laugh about the fight afterwards and make friends.[62] In Gilliatt's *In Lincoln Green*, Robin's son Walter, at the public school he attends, is taught to play 'by all the fair rules of fighting'.[63] The ideal of fair play was not, furthermore, restricted solely to the Robin-Hood-meets-his-match scenarios. It is seen in Creswick's novel when Robin fights Sir Guy of Gisborne:

> Next instant Sir Guy of Gisborne went staggering backward with a deep groan, Robin's sword through his throat. "You did bring this upon yourself," muttered Robin, eyeing the body of the knight in vain regret. "Yet you did fall bravely, and in fair fight. You shall be buried honourably."[64]

The fact that these mini-skirmishes in the greenwood had to be conducted according to the rules of fair play meant that real fighting is often portrayed as game in these texts. In Herbert's novel, when Robin asks Little John to join his band, he proposes: 'there is plenty of fighting: a hard life, and fine sport. Wilt throw in thy lot with us, John Little?'[65] On a more sombre note, in Muddock's *Maid Marian and Robin Hood*, a bout at quarterstaff between Robin and another character named Allan Weir ends with the death of the latter, at which Robin regretfully says 'I killed that villain in

57 Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 127.
58 John Finnemore, *The Story of Robin Hood* (London: A. & C. Black, 1935), p. x.
59 Marshall, *Stories of Robin Hood*, p. 16.
60 Lynn, *When Lionheart was King*, p. 32.
61 Charles Herbert, *Robin Hood* (London: John F. Shaw [n.d.]), p. 18.
62 McSpadden & Wilson, *Robin Hood*, pp. 37-41.
63 Gilliatt, *In Lincoln Green*, p. 116.
64 Creswick, *Robin Hood and his Adventures*, p. 271.
65 Herbert, *Robin Hood*, p. 19.

fair fight; an' he be dead, it is no murder'.[66] Even when the outlaws are faced with real danger –when they face the sheriff's forces – this is described as nothing more than a 'sport'.[67] The portrayal of fighting as a sport reflects how warfare was often presented by prominent imperialist ideologues during the late-Victorian and Edwardian eras. Sir Henry Newbolt in his poem *Vitae Lampada* (1897), for example, equates the field of battle to a 'pitch', and further exhorts young men to 'play up! play up! and play the game!'[68] Newbolt's poem is quoted on the war memorial at Charterhouse College which lists the alumni who have fallen in various campaigns, where it is said that the deceased, 'played up, played up, and played the game'.[69] Similarly, Baden Powell's *Sport in War* (1900), the very title of which confirms the idea of war as a sport, says,

> "What sort of sport did you have there?" is the question with which men have, as a rule, greeted one on return from the campaign in Rhodesia; and one could truthfully say, "We had excellent sport." For, in addition to the ordinary experiences included in that head, the work involved in the military operations was sufficiently sporting in itself to fill up a good measure of enjoyment.[70]

In addition to the fact that war was presented as a game in order to entice young boys to enlist for a supposedly enjoyable life in the army, sport was connected to masculinity during the late-Victorian period. This in turn was linked to the idea of masculinity that was promoted in public schools: boys had to be ready to fight, but because they were from a 'civilised' nation, they also had to play by the rules in order to differentiate themselves from the indigenous peoples of the empire, who were largely viewed as 'savages' with no honour.[71] The sad truth is that war, in fact, was not a game in the Victorian era, no matter how 'brave', 'gallant', or 'sporting' it was made out to be by imperialist writers.

66 Muddock, *Maid Marian and Robin Hood*, p. 16.

67 McSpadden, *Robin Hood*, p. 152.

68 Henry Newbolt, 'Vitae Lampada (1897-98)', in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: Representing the Great War: Texts and Contexts* <https://www.wwnorton.com/> [Accessed 21 June 2016].

69 Niall Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World* (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 262.

70 Robert Baden Powell, *Sport in War* (New York: F. A. Stokes, 1900), p. 18. For a critical discussion of Baden Powell see Allen Warren, 'Citizens of the Empire: Baden-Powell, Scouts, and Guides and an Imperial Ideal', in *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, ed. by John MacKenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), pp. 232-56.

71 See the following for background reading on the connections between war, sport, and masculinity: Ndee, *op cit*. and Dean Allen, '"A Man's Game": Cricket, War and Masculinity, South Africa, 1899-1902', *The International Journal for the History of Sport*, 28: 1 (2011), 63-80.

5) Duty and Patriotism

Above everything else, in these novels Robin is portrayed as being unwaveringly loyal to the king and his country. Thus it is the concept of the state as the nation, as articulated by Hobsbawm that is adhered to in these works, in contrast to the revolutionary and democratic idea of the people as the nation that is manifested in Egan's work.[72] As we have seen, in Egan's *Robin Hood* and the anonymous *Little John and Will Scarlet*, Robin Hood's duty and patriotism is connected to the people of the nation, rather than the king. Later penny dreadfuls adopt a more conservative approach. It is in George Emmett's *Robin Hood*, as well as Will Williams' *Bold Robin Hood* and the anonymous *The Prince of Archers*, for example, that Robin Hood becomes the loyal servant of both the King and the nation. Emmet was born in London in 1834 and, it is thought, spent his younger days in the army, having fought at the Battle of Balaclava in 1854 and the Siege of Lucknow in 1857.[73] Given that this tale is both badly written and has a very thin plot, Emmett should perhaps have pursued another career to that of a professional writer, for none of his works sold particularly well and he was constantly in financial difficulty.[74]

In Emmett's work, once again we see Scott's idea of racial conflict between the Normans and the Saxons utilised. As we have seen, Egan's novel utilises this idea, although he did so in order to highlight problems associated with nineteenth-century class divisions. Similarly, Scott's Anglo-Saxonism was not racist, and there is no sense in *Ivanhoe* that Robin Hood, a Saxon, is biologically superior to the Normans. Scott makes it clear that the nation will be at its best when Anglo-Saxon and Norman identity is subsumed into a new English national identity.[75] Emmett's *Robin Hood*, however, utilises the Saxon versus Norman theme in order to instil pride in Englishness and English heroes. This pride is connected to contemporary ideas of race and the

[72] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 14-44.

[73] Robert J. Kirkpatrick, *Pennies, Profits, and Poverty: A Biographical Dictionary of Wealth and Want in Bohemian Fleet Street* (London: CreateSpace, 2016), p. 420.

[74] Kirkpatrick, *Pennies, Profits, and Poverty*, pp. 421-23.

[75] T. A. Shippey, 'The Undeveloped Image: Anglo-Saxon in Popular Consciousness from Turner to Tolkien', in *Literary Appropriations of the Anglo-Saxons from the Thirteenth to the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Donald Scrabb & Carole Weinberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 215-236 (p. 218).

superiority of the Anglo-Saxons.[76] According to Emmett, the medieval Robin Hood texts were 'rude in composition [but] suited our sturdy Saxon ancestors, [expressing] all that was manly and brave'.[77] This belief is also apparent in some of the minor pieces which were published during the nineteenth century. The story of *Robin Hood's Last Shot* (1887), for example, states that Robin was 'a true Englishman'.[78] Echoing Emmett's words is *The Boy's Own Magazine* which, in its commentary upon *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*, urges its young readers to study the old Robin Hood ballads because it will introduce them to 'strong, Saxon English'.[79] After the mid-nineteenth century, statesmen such as Charles Adderley were discussing how 'the Anglo-Saxon race [was] the best breed in the world'.[80] It was this belief that allowed Cecil Rhodes to think that to be born English was to have 'drawn the greatest prize in the lottery of life'.[81] Thus the connection between Anglo-Saxon heritage and racial superiority in late Robin Hood serials reflects wider cultural attitudes regarding the supposed superiority of the English 'race'. By the late nineteenth century, Anglo-Saxonism had begun to assume new meanings. Emmett's novel, published in 1869, anticipates the Social Darwinism of the late Victorian period when Anglo-Saxon heritage had become considered as a marker of racial superiority. Charles Darwin's principles of the "survival of the fittest" were applied to international geopolitics of the nineteenth century. Britain was the world's pre-eminent superpower, and to the Victorians it seemed obvious that Britain, and often specifically the English, enjoyed their status as a great power over other races due to the fact that they were racially superior to them. Social Darwinism was consequently used to justify imperialism, laissez-faire capitalism,

[76] For a discussion of Anglo-Saxonism in Victorian Britain see the following works: B. Melman, 'Claiming the Nation's Past: the Invention of an Anglo-Saxon Tradition', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Special Issue on The Impact of Western Nationalisms, 26: 3-4 (1991), 575-97; *Anglo-Saxonism and the Construction of Social Identity*, ed. by Allen J. Frantzen & John D. Niles (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1997); Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981).

[77] Emmett, *Robin Hood and the Archers of Merrie Sherwood*, p. 2.

[78] Fred Myron Colby, 'Robin Hood's Last Shot', *Young Folks' Paper: Literary Olympic and Tournament*, 24 July 1886; p. 51.

[79] Anon., 'A Ballad of Robin Hood', *The Boy's Own Magazine*, 1 January 1855, p. 25.

[80] Charles Adderley, cited in William H. Pritchard, *Talking Back to Emily Dickinson and Other Essays* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998), p. 100.

[81] Matthew Lewis, *The Life and Times of the Right Honourable Cecil John Rhodes, 1853-1902*, 2 vols (London: Mitchell Kennerley, 1910), 2: 178.

and class division.[82] Emmett stated that much of the research for his novel came from reading the various ballads of Robin Hood, for like Scott before him he frames his novel as an antiquary's research.[83] By finding traces of 'sturdy' Anglo-Saxon racial superiority in the ballads, and retelling the ballads in prose, he is claiming an historical foundation for a belief in the pre-eminence of the Anglo-Saxon race.

The nationalism of Robin Hood stories reaches a high point in late-Victorian children's books. In Newbolt's *The Book of the Happy Warrior* (1917) which tells stories of various heroic figures from English history, including Robin Hood, the reader is told how they might best benefit from reading these tales of heroic deeds:

> You will not get the best out of these stories of great men unless you keep in mind, while you read, the rules and feelings that were in their minds while they fought [… the] main ideas that were in the minds of all these great fighters of the past were these: First, service, in peace and war.[84]

Gilliat's *In Lincoln Green* sees Robin's son Walter participating in an archery contest 'for the honour of [his] house and country',[85] and at another point in the novel Robin emphasises his own commitment to 'duty' by exclaiming 'I am never tired when honour and duty call me'.[86] Similarly, in Marshall's story, when the outlaws are made to recite their chivalrous oaths, they are loyal to the King first, and vow to protect the weak and needy second.[87] Towards the end of Marshall's tale, Robin proudly exclaims 'God Bless the King […] God bless all those who love him. Cursed be all those who hate him and rebel against him.'[88]

Serving the king and the nation is presented in late-Victorian texts as a means by which a boy might advance in the world. In Paul Creswick's *Robin Hood and his Adventures*, young Robin is taken to his uncle Gamwell's estate. Upon surveying his

82 James Epstein, 'Taking Class Notes on Empire', in *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, ed. by Catherine Hall & Sonya Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 251-274 (pp. 270-74). For a definition of 'Social Darwinism' see *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, s. v. 'Social Darwinism' <https://www.britannica.com/topic/social-Darwinism> [Accessed 10 September 2016]. Further scholarship on Social Darwinism includes: Gregory Claeys, 'The "Survival of the Fittest" and the Origins of Social Darwinism', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 61: 2 (2000), 223-40; Mike Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought, 1860-1945: Nature as Model and Nature as Threat* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

83 Emmett, *Robin Hood*, p. 2.

84 Henry Newbolt, *The Book of the Happy Warrior* (London: Longman, 1917), p. vi.

85 Gilliat, *In Lincoln Green*, p. 45.

86 Gilliat, *In Lincoln Green*, p. 180.

87 Marshall, *Stories of Robin Hood*, p. 8.

88 Marshall, *Stories of Robin Hood*, p. 101.

uncle's vast land holdings, he enquires how he became so rich, and he is informed that he was given lands as a reward for serving in the king's army. Robin then expresses a desire to serve in the army when he becomes an adult, with a hope that he too will be similarly rewarded with land and money.[89] This is a message that is seen repeated in the works of Henty as well, as in *With Clive in India* in which a young parish boy rises through the ranks of the British army and returns home rich. Thus, there is a message of social mobility here: service to the nation could be the making of a man: morally, physically, and financially.

The emphasis upon Robin Hood's loyalty to the king, and his duty to the nation is to be found in every late Victorian text, and so the point need not be laboured with more quotations illustrative of this. From a twenty-first century standpoint, it seems odd that authors might adapt Robin Hood, a figure who had been radical and anti-establishment in some previous incarnations, to serve the middle-class ethos of duty to the nation and, indirectly, the empire. But the appropriation (or misappropriation depending upon one's point of view) of medieval heroes to this end was not only applied to Robin Hood: in Henty's *A March on London: Being a Story of Wat Tyler's Insurrection* (1898), for instance, Wat Tyler and the peasants revolted, not simply because of the Poll Tax, '[but] above all, they felt that they were not free men, and were not even deemed worthy to fight in the wars of their country'.[90]

There was, furthermore, a class dimension to these ideas of loyalty and duty. Robin is *always* the Earl of Huntingdon in these books. They lack the democratic political sentiments that are present in Ritson's and Egan's earlier works. Unusually for Robin Hood, in Lynn's *When Lionheart was King*, Robin manifests a condescending attitude to some of the downtrodden Anglo-Saxon serfs because they have bent the knee to the Normans in order to procure more lenient terms of feudal service than those they enjoyed under the Anglo-Saxon nobility before the Conquest.[91] A similarly condescending, though slightly friendlier, attitude to 'the lower orders' is found in Creswick's text, as he writes that 'it was scarce a proper thing for one of gentle blood

[89] Creswick, *Robin Hood and his Adventures*, p. 25.

[90] G. A. Henty, 'A March on London: Being a Story of Wat Tyler's Insurrection (London, 1898)', in *The Literature Network* <http://www.online-literature.com/ga-henty/march-on-london/1/> [Accessed 21 June 2016]; For the record, the historic Wat Tyler and his fellow men were not fighting for the right to be able to fight in Richard II's wars.

[91] Lynn, *When Lionheart was King*, pp. 40-41.

[Robin Hood] to mix with commoners'.[92] Robin does not have to be elected as he is in Egan's *Robin Hood and Little John* and *Little John and Will Scarlet*: there is a clear sense that he is the natural leader of his 'lower class' counterparts, who knows what is best for them. In McSpadden's tale, Robin is the leader of the outlaw band because he possesses 'birth, breeding, and skill'.[93] When Robin does associate with outlaws of 'lower breeding', it is as their clear and undisputed leader, or an officer among the lower ranks.

6) Reception

As we have seen thus far, imperial ideology is present in late-Victorian children's books by virtue of the fact they emphasise the ideals of the public school ethos. It is also present in Stocqueler's earlier *Maid Marian* penny serial. These were not, however, the only Robin Hood texts during the late-Victorian period to have propagated an imperial message. George Macfarren's opera *Robin Hood* (1860) ends with Richard I pardoning the outlaws and inviting Robin and his men to 'employ their well-trained valour in their country's service', meaning the Crusades.[94] Even more overtly imperial was Alfred Lord Tennyson's Robin Hood play *The Foresters* (1892) which also made explicit references to the empire and Britain's navy:

> There is no land like England
> Where'er the light of day be;
> There are no hearts like English hearts
> Such hearts of oak they be.[95]

The reference to English hearts being 'hearts of oak' conjures images of the eighteenth-century age of sail when all of Britain's ships were built from oak, and a time when Britannia ruled the waves. From its first performance in 1760, the song *Hearts of Oak* slowly became the *de facto* official march of the Royal Navy. Stephen Knight, who examines Tennyson's play at some length, argues that the phrase 'Where'er the light of day be' refers to the idea that the sun never sets on the British Empire.[96]

Many of the aforementioned children's books had a wide circulation and went through numerous editions, although many of them lack publication dates on their title

92 Creswick, *Robin Hood and his Adventures*, p. 28.
93 McSpadden, *Robin Hood*, p. 30.
94 George A. Macfarren, *Robin Hood: An Opera in Three Acts* (London: Cramer, Beale & Chappell, 1860), p. 48.
95 Alfred Tennyson, *The Foresters* (London: MacMillan, 1892), p. 41.
96 Knight, *Robin Hood: A Mythic Biography*, p. 139.

pages, rendering accurate dating of each edition difficult. As we have seen, many of these books were presented as prizes for various achievements in schools and Sunday Schools to working-class children. However, this does not mean that they were always read avidly by those who received them. Leah Price's research has uncovered several examples of children receiving these books and never reading them. One particularly humorous example which Price relates is of a working-class girl whose brothers passed on their book prizes to her 'in disgust'.[97] Furthermore, the pristine condition in which many of these books survive perhaps testifies to the fact that many of them probably largely went unread by those who received them as prizes. On the other hand, that many of these books still exist could equally indicate that they were both read and held in high regard by their former owners.

Andrew Thompson suggests that, of the children who did read these books, they were most enthusiastically received among the youth of the middle classes.[98] Contemporary critics certainly approved of these Robin Hood novels. *Vogue*, for example, praises Creswick's novel as being 'vividly told […] interest is maintained at a high pitch throughout the well-told narrative and the generous mingling of telling dialogue'.[99] But the most important question in relation to the late Victorian children's literature that Thompson raises is this: 'how far, then, did children's literature instil the qualities of courage, justice, and fair play that had made and would keep Britain great?'[100] It is precisely the influence of books like these, and indeed of imperialism upon British society in general, that forms the focus of debate between 'old' imperial historians and 'new' imperial historians. The first group argues that the empire had little effect upon metropolitan culture,[101] while the second group argues that its influence was all pervasive.[102] That Britain was an imperial nation during the late-nineteenth century is beyond doubt; what is debatable is whether Britain was an imperial *society*. As with all academic debates, the truth is likely to be somewhere in between the two positions, and of course it is important to note that the British public who were subjected to the imperial message was not a homogenous group. The reception of the imperial message

97 Leah Price, *How to Do Things with Books in Victorian Britain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), p. 163.

98 Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back*, p. 102.

99 Anon. 'Robin Hood by Paul Creswick', *Vogue*, 15 December 1917, p. 89.

100 Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back*, p. 103.

101 For a recent example of an 'old' imperial history, see Bernard Porter, *op cit*.

102 As well as the works of John Mackenzie, see also *At Home with the Empire*, ed. by Catherine Hall & Sonya Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

between different social groups would have been uneven and complex across the classes, but also within the classes themselves. It is unlikely that any army officer cited having read Robin Hood books as a reason for enlisting in the late-Victorian period. For middle-class boys, however, reading tales of Robin, Earl of Huntingdon, leading his men and exhorting them to act according to the principles of the public school ethos, might have inspired them to similarly lead their working-class 'inferiors'. One of the main aims of the reformed public school system, as we have seen, was to produce leaders – both political and military leaders – as well as those who would serve in the Civil Service. What these books may have done, furthermore, is inculcate a pride in being British, or English, and patriotism was specifically linked to the empire in the late-nineteenth century. The production and dissemination of these pro-imperial books must be set in context alongside other imperialist events. For example, there was the Colonial and India Exhibition in 1886, in addition to the annual celebration of Empire Day which began in 1904. Street celebrations often marked military victories. Thus, such imperialist children's tales must have made the idea of 'fighting for the honour of your country', and of demonstrating their skills as natural leaders of men, appealing to young middle-class readers longing for adventure.

The preceding discussion has focused upon the reception of these texts primarily among young middle-class boys. Let it now be assumed that working-class schoolboys were actually reading these texts (even if some evidence suggests that sometimes they did not), in order to facilitate a discussion of how they were received among working-class boys. Thompson suggests that, since it was only the sons of the middle classes who could realistically look forward to a career in army, tales of overseas adventures 'simply could not have had the same relevance for working-class children who rarely ventured far from home'.[103] This is too much of a generalised statement to be wholly convincing, and Thompson does not state clearly what he means by 'relevance', although it seems to be linked to a boy's prospects of imperial service. Moreover, it seems to neglect the fact that, while many of the officers were drawn from wealthier backgrounds, the rank-and-file of the army was made up of men from the working classes. Furthermore, the testimony of Percy Wall suggests that some working-class boys loved the overseas settings, for in 1900 Wall stated that, 'I could view the future through the words of H.G. Wells, participate in the elucidation of mysteries with

[103] Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back*, p. 102.

Sherlock Holmes [...] or penetrate darkest Africa with Rider Haggard as my guide'.[104] A case could be made that, as regards the question of 'relevance', Robin Hood books differ from the works of men such as Henty and Haggard, for stories of Robin Hood are always set in England, and their settings were perhaps more recognisable than reading a tale of a young boy in the colonies. However, it must be said that recognisability in regards to the settings of the novels is not the same as 'relevance'. Testimonies uncovered by Jonathan Rose complicate the matter even further: James Williams, a working-class boy from the early twentieth century says that,

> "I'd read anything rather than not read at all. I read a great deal of rubbish, and books that were too 'old', or too 'young' for me". He consumed the Gem, Magnet and Sexton Blake as well as the standard boys' authors (Henty, Ballantyne, Marryat, Fenimore Cooper, Twain) but also Dickens, Scott, Trollope, the Brontes, George Eliot.[105]

Quite interesting among the two preceding accounts is the fact that, while the works of Henty and other late Victorian children's writers are featured, they are simply amongst a pantheon of books available to young working-class readers, alongside the works of Scott, Dickens, and Trollope. In 1867, the Edinburgh-based publishers Adam and Charles Black released paperback versions of the *Waverley* novels which retailed at sixpence each, which were clearly within the reach of many working-class families.[106] Thus, Henty and Haggard are not dominating the market. Rarely do any of the testimonials uncovered by Jonathan Rose make reference to Robin Hood, except in the case of one anonymous speaker:

> Robin Hood was our patron saint, or ideal. We sincerely believed in robbing the rich to help the poor […but] our real heroes were robbers like Jack Sheppard, Dick Turpin, and Charles Peace, whose 'Penny dreadful' biographies we knew by heart.[107]

Perhaps Robin Hood by this period was simply too 'middle class' for a working class boy to identify with, and while this particular working-class lad enjoyed stories of

104 Percy Wall, cited in Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 233-34.

105 James Williams, cited in Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, p. 373.

106 It appears as though the publishers may have specifically targeted the working classes for these sixpence editions: the 1867 edition of *The Antiquary* carries an image on the front cover, not of the bourgeois characters Jonathan Oldbuck or Mr. Lovell, but of Mr. Mucklebackit, the fisherman. Thus a working-class purchaser would have seen someone from his own class on the front cover of the novel. See Walter Scott, *The Antiquary* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1867), p. i.

107 Anon., cited in Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, p. 368.

Robin Hood, it is clear that, according to him, real fun was still to be had with penny dreadful tales of Jack Sheppard. Working-class children were likely to be avid readers of anything they could lay their hands upon, and read primarily for escapism. They were certainly not passive recipients of the ideology foisted upon them through these books.

7) The Gentrification Question

To return to one of the central tenets of this discussion overall, it has to be asked whether these are actually gentrified texts. Certainly, as this chapter has shown, they do convey middle- and upper-class public school ideals to their readers, and so in that sense they could maybe be classed as gentrified. In another sense, however, these texts are not gentrified: they all contain healthy doses of violence. In a departure from the earlier ballad of *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*, in McSpadden's work Robin kills Guy by stabbing him in the throat.[108] The same episode in Pyle's novel is played out in a manner more in keeping with the ballad:

> Down fell the sword from Guy of Gisborne's grasp, and back he staggered at the stroke, and, ere he could regain himself, Robin's sword passed through and through his body. Round he spun upon his heel, and, flinging his hands aloft with a shrill, wild cry, fell prone upon his face upon the green sod.[109]

After killing Guy, Robin actually takes pleasure in his murder, saying 'of this I am as glad as though I had slain a wild boar that lay waste a fair country'.[110] In Gilbert's *Robin Hood and the Men of the Greenwood*, Robin shoots the sheriff when he is unarmed.[111] In Pyle's novel, the reason that Robin is outlawed is because he shoots several foresters who are ridiculing him on account of his age.[112] Although an earlier seventeenth-century ballad tells the same story, Pyle's writing of this story in plain prose, without being accompanied by a pleasant tune as seventeenth-century ballads were, makes Robin appear to be downright cruel. Although at first glance, these sources might appear to be gentrified, for the reasons cited above they serve to illustrate why 'gentrification' as a concept is inapplicable to the Robin Hood tradition: they may convey middle-class ideology but they may also be violent, in spite of the rhetoric of sport which is used by these authors to sanitise the violence. That last point of course

108 McSpadden & Wilson, *Robin Hood*, p. 148.
109 Pyle, *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*, p. 260.
110 Pyle, *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*, p. 260.
111 Gilbert, *Robin Hood and the Men of the Greenwood*, p. 271.
112 Pyle, *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*, p. 4.

raises a further question: by whose standards is Robin gentrified in any test? Do scholars mean gentrified by modern standards, and if so, can such an ahistorical word be applied to the nineteenth century? Modern portrayals of the Robin Hood legend aimed specifically at children often refrain from depicting Robin in the act of killing anybody. Even in the BBC television series *Robin Hood* (2006) Robin says 'I will not kill anyone' and he never does.[113] Late-Victorian and Edwardian children's books are certainly not gentrified from a modern perspective, but contemporaries viewed them as respectable works, in contrast to the penny dreadfuls. Hence it is difficult to apply such a broad concept as gentrification to an entire tradition, thus it is much better to speak in historically contextualised terms, and to discuss whether these particular works are respectable or not.

8) Conclusion

In the aftermath of World War One, many of the ideals of the Victorian age were reassessed. A 'stiff-upper lip' mentality could hardly be maintained in the face of mass bodily dismemberment and mental scarring. The Victorian ideal of manliness that was relevant in 1914 had changed irrevocably by 1918. Nor by 1918 was the reputation of the Victorian military hero sacred. Strachey, in his work *Eminent Victorians* (1918), described General Gordon, for instance, as 'alien to the subtleties of civilised statesmanship […] unamenable to official control […and] incapable of the skilful management of delicate situations'.[114] This is a far cry from Eva Hope's earlier description of Gordon in 1888 as 'a gallant and skilful leader […] to be trusted with the great interests at stake in Shanghai'.[115] Thus despite the repeated idealisation of public school qualities in biographies and fiction, these ideas began to lose their currency in a post-1918 England. But the British Empire did not fall in the immediate aftermath of 1918. It reached its greatest extent in the post war period as a result of having League of Nations 'Mandate Territories' added to it, and it could be said that enthusiasm for the empire increased further: the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley held in 1924 and 1925 was an especially popular event; Empire Day was still an annual celebration in the early part of the twentieth century; and the Empire Marketing Board produced posters such as *Highways of Empire* which exhorted consumers to 'Buy Empire Goods from

113 *Robin Hood*, S01E01, dir. Dominic Minghella (BBC, 2006).
114 Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorians* (London: Continuum Books, 2002), p. 255.
115 Eva Hope, *The Life of General Gordon* (Edinburgh: W. P. Nimmo [n.d.]), p. 80.

Home and Overseas'.[116] It should be no surprise, then, that in the post war period children's books were still continuing to present their heroes 'in the established mode'.[117] Robin Hood novels are no different in this respect, and in many post-war books he is presented much as before: an English gentleman who plays by the rules, is loyal to the king, and whose highest objective is to serve others. In Sarah Hawkes Sterling's *Robin Hood and his Merry Men* (1927) there is a similar emphasis upon Robin's 'sturdy build' as he applies himself to the athletic exercises which his father commands him to practice.[118] The anonymously authored *Robin Hood and his Merrie Men* (c.1930) similarly tells of how Robin 'grew up a manly, robust young fellow, who could run swiftly, ride with great skill, wing an arrow and fight with his fists or with staves'.[119] It was a frustration with this type of middle-class public school portrayal of medieval history and the legend of Robin Hood that inspired Geoffrey Trease to write the socialist children's story *Bows Against the Barons* (1934).[120]

What this chapter has shown is that the legend of Robin Hood was adapted to portray the middle-class public school ethos. To refer back to Hobsbawm's statement: 'the sad truth is that the heroes of remote times survive because they are not only the heroes of the peasants'.[121] The books written for children in this period do indeed illustrate Hobsbawm's point: in these books Robin Hood is a hero of the upper and middle classes, written primarily for middle-class children, and disseminated in the form of school prizes to readers of the working classes. Even though critics have argued before that Robin is an anti-imperial figure in this period simply because the novels do, on occasion, criticise overseas expansion, this chapter has shown that such an explanation is all too simplistic. Thus through the 'deeds of daring'[122] told in these tales, Robin is reconfigured as a middle-class supporter of the British Empire, embodying the ideal qualities that young readers, including working-class readers, would need to cultivate in order to become good servants of the nation and empire. Yet there is

116 Donald McGill, *Highways of Empire* (London: Empire Marketing Board, 1927) Kew, National Archives CO 956/537A.
117 Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, p. 218.
118 Sarah Hawkes Sterling, *Robin Hood and his Merry Men* (London: J. Coker & Co. Ltd. 1927), pp. 16-17.
119 Anon. *Robin Hood and his Merrie Men* (London: Thames Publishing [n.d.]), p. 15.
120 Michael Evans, '"A Song of Freedom": Geoffrey Trease's Bows Against the Barons', in *Images of Robin Hood: Medieval to Modern*, ed. by Lois Potter & Joshua Calhoun (Newark, Del: University of Delaware Press, 2008), pp. 188-96 (p. 193).
121 Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, p. 129.
122 Gilbert, *Robin Hood and the Men of the Greenwood*, p. vi.

evidence to suggest that the ‘noble’ imperial ideals of the public school ethos were either lost upon working-class children, or that they did not read them uncritically. Evidence suggests that they were reading mainly for escapism, and they were certainly not abandoning tales of Jack Sheppard and other highwaymen.

Conclusion

This thesis has addressed two questions: the first is whether Robin Hood was, as Barczewski argues, a hero of the working classes; the second is whether the concept of gentrification, posited by Stephen Knight, can be appropriately applied to Robin Hood texts during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In response to the above considerations, it has been shown that, more often than not, authors, editors, and publishers were producing their works with a middle-class audience in mind. It is also apparent that gentrification is too vague a term to apply to Robin Hood texts during the 1700s and 1800s because it obscures how contemporaries would have perceived these works, and prevents scholars from contextualising them fully.

1) Findings

Chapter one analysed the garlands as a cultural phenomenon, asking how readers would have encountered them. The numerous editions of *Robin Hood's Garland* published throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries do not present a singular view of Robin Hood. Many representations of Robin appear in these collections: the rustic and slightly buffoonish outlaw of ballads such as *Robin Hood and the Tanner*; the heroic sea captain of *The Noble Fisherman*; and the slightly brutish outlaw of tales such as *Robin Hood and the Valiant Knight*. In fact, Robin Hood did not enjoy a stellar reputation in the early part of the eighteenth century. As we saw in chapter two, he was compared in satire to a corrupt and widely-despised Prime Minister, Robert Walpole. Satire is a genre of literature that has not yet been reviewed in depth by Robin Hood scholars and the chapter itself presented, for the first time, an analysis of a hitherto unexamined eighteenth-century Robin Hood ballad, *Little John's Answer to Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster*.

Robin Hood receives a predominantly negative portrayal in eighteenth-century criminal biography. However, a more complete overview of the implications of my analysis of these works is given below in my discussion of Robin Hood's connection to historical crime literature. But he did not receive an entirely bad press during the eighteenth century. Thomas Percy (1729-1811) refashioned Robin Hood into a figure fit

for polite society to read about. Joseph Ritson (1753-1802), in his account of Robin Hood, depicts him as both a heroic but also a revolutionary outlaw, essentially a medieval Thomas Paine 'who maintained a sort of independent sovereignty, and set kings, judges, and magistrates at defiance'.[1] This radical Robin Hood gave voice to middle-class concerns about parliamentary corruption and kingly tyranny. Ritson's text was also a ballad anthology, and the diversity of Robin Hoods who appear in the book mean that it resists easy classification as an example of his gentrification, which is also the case with the garlands. Furthermore, as my thesis has pointed out, Ritson's was not the first radical interpretation of the outlaw legend, and *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time* (1819) was not the first Robin Hood novel. Contrary to all prevailing Robin Hood scholars' arguments, this thesis has shown that that this honour belongs to Robert Southey who authored *Harold, or, The Castle of Morford* (1791). Although it was never published, it is clear that when discussing the appearance of Robin Hood in fiction, scholars must now begin in the eighteenth and not the nineteenth century.

Ritson's version of the Robin Hood legend was undeniably influential, however, as it looks back to earlier criminal biography accounts of the outlaw's life and also gave rise to later interpretations: every novelist who authored books about Robin Hood was inspired by Ritson's work in one way. In three of these novels, Robin is represented as a yeoman: in Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819), Locksley is a man loyal to the King, who works with the monarch to restore the true social and political order; the yeoman outlaw of Thomas Miller's *Royston Gower* (1838) can justifiably be called 'the Chartist Robin Hood'; G. P. R. James' *Forest Days* (1843) depicts Robin as one of Simon de Montfort's allies in the Barons' War. In contrast, the anonymous *Robin Hood: A Tale of the Olden Time* (1819) and Thomas Love Peacock's *Maid Marian* (1822) depict Robin as the dispossessed Earl of Huntingdon. The former is the most uneventful of all Robin Hood novels, while the latter presents Lord Robin and Lady Marian's outlaw escapades as little more than a fun frolic for two aristocrats. While most of these texts have undergone thorough examination from a number of scholars, the originality of the analysis presented in this thesis lies in its contribution to the overall argument surrounding Robin's supposed gentrification, which shall be discussed shortly. The discussion of these books as expensive consumer commodities is also original, for

[1] Ritson, *Robin Hood*, 1: xi.

rarely are these works examined in relation to their status as high-end purchases within the literary marketplace.

The final chapter has challenged Barczewski's argument that Robin Hood in late nineteenth-century children's books was an anti-imperial figure.[2] I have argued instead that many of these works were subtly pro-imperial: these stories projected to their youthful readers the imperial ideal of the public school ethos. In these works, Robin and his men are gentlemen who are 'good sports', chivalrous, and not unnecessarily violent. These values of sportsmanship, fair play, and duty to the nation were the attributes which the authorities needed youths, the future servants of the empire, to cultivate. Yet these were not only the values of the gentry or of the aristocracy, but of the middle classes. It is they who sent their boys to be educated in the public schools.

2) Contribution to Knowledge

This thesis has challenged the assumption that Robin Hood was solely a working-class hero. It has confirmed Eric Hobsbawm's assertion that, 'the sad truth is that the heroes of remote times survive because they are not only the heroes of the peasants […] one might say that the intellectuals have ensured the survival of the bandits'.[3] In accordance with Hobsbawm's statement, which he leaves undeveloped in *Bandits*, this thesis has presented a more nuanced version of events than that offered by Barczewski. Robin was certainly a people's hero, but that is to say that he was a hero to the working classes, the middle classes, and even the aristocracy. In the words of A. J. Pollard, who writes of the medieval Robin Hood tradition, Robin Hood was 'all things to all men'.[4]

Upper and middle-class elites wrote about Robin, as is evident in Joseph Addison's quotation cited at the beginning of this thesis. For Addison, out of all the illustrious figures of English history, the only 'British Worthy' deserving of a place amongst classical heroes such as Achilles and Caesar is Robin Hood.[5] It is collectors such as Samuel Pepys (1633-1703) and Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford (1661-1724), whom Robin Hood scholars must thank for ensuring the survival of many Robin Hood ballads. The baronet, Hans Sloane (1660-1753), bequeathed to posterity one of the first prose accounts of Robin Hood's life. Most of those who wrote about Robin Hood, and

2 Barczewski, *Myth and National Identity*, p. 224
3 Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, pp. 131-33.
4 Pollard, *Imagining Robin Hood*, p. 211.
5 Addison, *The Tatler*, p. 181.

whose backgrounds can be traced, belonging to the gentry or the bourgeoisie: the radical, Joseph Ritson, was a lawyer and amateur scholar; Thomas Percy was a bishop; Scott was a lawyer and later a baronet; James, who came from an upper middle-class background, became Historiographer Royal. From similar social situations arose writers such as the more subversive Pierce Egan (1814-1880) and G. W. M. Reynolds (1814-1879), as well as numerous authors of Robin Hood children's books. Of all the known writers, the only one to have appeared in this thesis who could be said to have been truly working class is Thomas Miller (1807-1874). If Robin Hood really was a symbol of working-class identity during the nineteenth century, surely we might expect more working-class people to have written about him. Even the working-class Miller, who spent much of his life in poverty, was writing primarily for the middle classes, and his novel was published in the expensive three volume format.

A figure such as Robin Hood, realised by so many different writers, adapted in various contexts, to serve different purposes, and represented for a variety of audiences could never be subjected to a single *process* such as gentrification, of which Knight speaks. The issues surrounding definition arise because, despite the frequency of its use, the authors of existing studies rarely define what they mean by gentrification. Does it mean that Robin Hood texts are written by gentlemen, that they are aimed at a gentle or polite audience, or that they feature an aristocratic Robin Hood? According to existing studies it seems that the key requirements for a portrayal of Robin to be termed gentrified are that he has to be a lord and of high morals. Yet before we even begin to consider the fact that the idea of gentrification is anachronistic, problems arise when we consider the fact that the meaning of being 'of the gentry', or to be a gentleman, changed significantly over the course of the period studied here. During the seventeenth century, a member of the gentry could use the term 'gentleman' because he was entitled to it by birth.[6] By the eighteenth century, members of other classes, while not necessarily gentlemen, could be admitted into the ranks of polite society by virtue of their education, profession, and conduct. Fielding in *Joseph Andrews* show how even a plebeian individual such as the eponymous title character could be considered gentlemanly by virtue of his conduct. By the nineteenth century members of the middle classes were appropriating the term. Through his *Waverley* novels, Scott repeatedly stressed the idea that being a gentleman did not rest upon social status but upon whether

[6] See Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain, 1660-1800* (Harlow: Longman, 2000).

one acted as a ‘gentle man’. It was an idea taken up by Dickens and Thackeray, among others, who emphasised the fact that a person’s entitlement to the title of gentleman relied upon the values of decency and respectability.[7] This is why the respectable and (on the whole) good Robin Hood of *Ivanhoe* can be a gentleman, despite not being of aristocratic birth.

In short, no Georgian or Victorian reader ever asked whether Robin Hood was gentrified or not. Consequently, it is more revealing to ask, in historicist terms, whether Robin is polite in the earlier period or respectable in the later one. Even the application of politeness to certain texts needs a caveat. Robin Hood books were published for a polite audience, but the image of Robin Hood depicted in such texts is not always polite. For example, Percy’s *Reliques* was considered to be polite reading matter, but the Robin Hood who appears in the ballad of *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne,* published in Percy’s *Reliques,* is violent and murderous. Furthermore, being an aristocrat does not necessarily mean that a thief is gentrified in terms of character. We have seen how Ainsworth’s depicted Jack Sheppard as being of noble heritage, but no scholar would ever call Ainsworth’s novel a gentrified portrayal of the famous boy thief. The texts that were published about both Robin Hood and Jack Sheppard during this period, however, did enter into contemporary debates regarding morality and respectability, as we have seen in the reviews of works by Egan, Whitehead, and MacFarlane. Perhaps the tendency of Robin Hood scholars to neglect criminal biography and penny dreadfuls in favour of more well-known, but not necessarily more popular, texts such as *Ivanhoe* and *Maid Marian*, has led to this seemingly uncritical acceptance of the idea of gentrification.

Indeed, much of this challenge to the idea of gentrification has been achieved through examining previously neglected texts, especially ones which present Robin Hood alongside other criminals. In Smith and Johnson’s *Highwaymen* books Robin Hood is depicted as a notorious criminal: an idle apprentice who ‘followed not his trade’ and took to a career of robbing upon the highway.[8] In this genre of literature, he is not particularly worthy of admiration, included as he is alongside other criminals such as James Hind, Jack Sheppard, and Sawney Beane, the Scottish cannibal. Furthermore, a number of hitherto unstudied penny bloods and penny dreadfuls were analysed, many of which were deemed by reviewers at the time to be part of the corpus of contemporary

7 Gilmour, *The Idea of the Gentleman in the Victorian Novel*, p. 11.
8 Smith, *Highwaymen*, p. 408.

crime literature. There was the highwayman Robin Hood of the 1836 penny serial *The History and Lives of the Most Notorious Highwaymen, Footpads, Murderers, Brigands, Pickpockets, Thieves, Banditti, and Robbers of Every Description* and the early twentieth-century periodical *Famous Crimes: Past and Present*. There are also numerous further references throughout this study which indicate that writers often thought of Robin Hood alongside other criminals. As an example of this, it is best perhaps to cite the eighteenth-century poem encountered in the first chapter again:

> With hideous face and tuneless note,
> The ballad-singer strains his throat;
> Roars out the life of Betty Saunders,
> With Turpin Dick and Molly Flanders.
> Tells many woeful tragic stories,
> Recorded of our British worthies.
> Forgetting not Bold Robin Hood,
> And hardy Scarlet of the Wood.[9]

Further confirmation of Robin's connection to historical crime literature is given by the title of the sixth chapter of this thesis, in which it is shown how, in the penny dreadful genre at least, the reception of Robin Hood texts was influenced to some degree by the moral panic surrounding Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard*. Although Robin Hood is depicted as a lord in virtually every penny dreadful, he is not gentrified. In Egan's novel, Robin Hood often eschews any pretention to nobility and he does not flinch from resorting to violence. Thus, these texts are not gentrified according to the definition given in the introduction.

I would suggest that portrayals of Robin Hood in our modern era have lost the connection between the outlaw's story and the wider genre of crime literature. Robin is now viewed as a special case and, to quote one very modern continuation of the Robin Hood story, the television series *Arrow*, 'people forget that Robin Hood was criminal'.[10] Unsurprisingly, this is most likely due to the fact that Robin Hood films today tend to *only* tell a story of Robin Hood. People never watch the story of Robin Hood *and* Dick Turpin together in the cinema. But often eighteenth- and nineteenth-century audiences were given Robin Hood's story alongside those of other notorious thieves, and as the research in this thesis has shown, this must be taken into account when discussing how Robin is perceived during the Georgian and Victorian periods.

9 Anon., 'The Humours of May-Fair', pp. 264-65.

10 *Arrow*, S1E09 'Year's End', dir. John Dahl (The CW Television Network, 2012) [DVD].

3) Suggestions for Further Research

This thesis has discussed some of the illustrations that appeared in Robin Hood books during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. A logical development of this would be a subsequent analysis of Robin Hood's appearance in Victorian high art paintings. Daniel Maclise's *Robin Hood and his Merry Men Entertaining Richard the Lionheart* (1839), based upon Scott's *Ivanhoe*, deserves greater discussion than it has received thus far (and we cannot class this particular painting as gentrified, due to the fact that it is Locksley the yeoman who appears in it, and not Robin Hood, Earl of Huntingdon). There are other Robin Hood paintings produced during the Victorian period which have not been the subject of critical essays in any recent scholarly works: Edmund George Warren's *Robin Hood and His Merry Men in Sherwood Forest* (1859); William Clarke Wontner's *Maid Marian* (1895); Thomas Frank Heaphy's painting of *Robin Hood and Maid Marian* (1866) which was only discovered in the basement of a working men's club in 2009;[11] and William Windus' *The Outlaw* (1861).[12]

Another possible avenue of research would be a comparative literature project which analyses the representation of outlaws in Victorian Robin Hood literature and other works which present less positive views of medieval outlaws. For example, while the 'public school' Robin Hood novels were being printed, works such as Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Black Arrow* (1888) were published, in which there is a mysterious and menacing outlaw who is unlike Robin Hood in morals and does not hesitate to resort to violence. The rebel leader, Jack Straw (d.1381), is portrayed as an outlaw who looks suspiciously like Robin Hood in Ainsworth's Wat Tyler novel entitled *Merry England; or, Nobles and Serfs* (1874). In contrast to the public school Robin Hood of late-Victorian children's books, however, Straw is quite a brute. Many late-Victorian Wat Tyler novels portray the eponymous revolt leader as a Robin Hood figure.[13] For

[11] 'Painting Found in Broom Cupboard', *BBC News* <http://news.bbc.co.uk> [Accessed 12 December 2016].

[12] The locations of these works are as follows: Thomas Frank Heaphy, *Robin Hood and Maid Marian*. Oil on Cavas (London: Private Collection, 1866); Edmund George Warren, *Robin Hood and His Merry Men in Sherwood Forest*. Oil on Canvas, (London: Royal Collection, 1859) RCIN450004; William Windus, *The Outlaw*. Oil on Canvas (Manchester: Manchester City Art Gallery, 1861); William Clarke Wontner, *Maid Marian*. Oil on Canvas (London: Private Collection, 1895); Daniel Maclise, *Robin Hood and His Merry Men Entertaining Richard the Lionheart in Sherwood Forest*. Oil on Canvas (London: National Gallery, 1839).

[13] Stephen Basdeo, *The Life and Legend of a Rebel Leader: Wat Tyler (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2018).*

example, there was a long-running penny dreadful in which Tyler is a green-clad outlaw and skilled archer who leads a band of outlaws that 'infest' the woods, and who later becomes the inadvertent leader of the rebellion of 1381.[14] Such a project would ask scholars to reassess how Robin Hood fits into the wider Victorian outlaw literature.

4) Concluding Remarks

Finally, it is clear that studying Robin Hood's various manifestations between c.1700 and c.1900 provides valuable insight into Georgian and Victorian cultural history. Robin Hood is used in a variety of ways to highlight a diverse range of issues such as dissatisfaction with the government and concern over rising crime rates. Alternatively, he functions as a symbol of national unity, or as a revolutionary who fought for the rights and sovereignty of the people. In some portrayals he is also a figure whose conduct young readers could emulate if they were to serve the British Empire. His representations cannot be adequately explored through the employment of one binary question of whether he is gentrified or not. Instead, Robin Hood was endlessly protean: realised in many different ways, by various authors with equally diverse authorial agendas, writing for a variety of audiences. It is the legend's malleability that has hitherto ensured its survival and which no doubt will continue to do so.

[14] Anon., 'Gentle Deeds: or, Serfdom to Knighthood; A Tale of the Olden Time', *Young Folks' Paper*, 8 May 1886, p. 806.

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