Wilkie Collins was one of the most popular writers of the nineteenth century. He is best known for *The Woman in White*, which inaugurated the sensation novel in the 1860s, and *The Moonstone*, one of the first detective novels; but he wrote more than twenty novels, plays and numerous short stories during a career that spanned four decades. This Companion offers a fascinating overview of Collins's writing. In a wide range of essays by leading scholars, it traces the development of his career, his position as a writer and his complex relation to contemporary cultural movements and debates. Collins's exploration of the tensions that lay beneath Victorian society is analysed through a variety of critical approaches. A chronology and guide to further reading are provided, making this book an indispensable guide for all those interested in Wilkie Collins and his work.

**Jenny Bourne Taylor** is Professor of English at the University of Sussex.
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List of illustrations</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes on contributors</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note on references and abbreviations</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronology of Collins's life</td>
<td>xiii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny Bourne Taylor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  Collins's career and the visual arts</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim Dolin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  The early writing</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthea Trodd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Collins's shorter fiction</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Bowen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Collins and the sensation novel</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyn Pykett</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  The Moonstone, detective fiction and forensic science</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronald R. Thomas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  The later novels</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny Bourne Taylor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7  The professional writer and the literary marketplace</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graham Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTENTS

8 The marriage plot and its alternatives 112
   CAROLYN DEVER

9 Collins and Victorian masculinity 125
   JOHN KUCICH

10 Collins and empire 139
    LILLIAN NAYDER

11 Disability and difference 153
   KATE FLINT

12 Collins and the theatre 168
   JIM DAVIS

13 The afterlife of Wilkie Collins 181
   RACHEL MALIK

Further reading 194
Index 200
ILLUSTRATIONS

1 Photograph of Wilkie Collins 1864 by Cundall Downes & Co. Reproduced with the permission of Paul Lewis. page 11

2 John Everett Millais’s frontispiece to the 1864 edition of No Name. 184
CONTRIBUTORS

JOHN BOWEN is Professor of Nineteenth-Century Literature at the University of York. He is the author of Other Dickens: Pickwick to Chuzzlewit (2000) and has edited Barnaby Rudge (2003) for Penguin and, with Robert L. Patten, Palgrave Advances in Charles Dickens Studies (2005). He is a member of faculty of the University of California Dickens Project and a Fellow of the English Association.

JIM DAVIS is Professor and Chair of Theatre Studies at the University of Warwick. Formerly he was Head of the School of Theatre, Film and Dance at the University of New South Wales. He has written extensively on nineteenth-century British theatre, is the author of books on the actor John Liston and on the Britannia theatre, and is the co-author (with Victor Emeljanow) of Reflecting the Audience: London Theatregoing 1840–1880 (2001).

CAROLYN DEVER is Professor of English and Women’s and Gender Studies and Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Science at Vanderbilt University, Tennessee. She is the author of Death and the Mother from Dickens to Freud (1998) and Skeptical Feminism (2004), and co-editor of The Literary Channel: The Inter-National Invention of the Novel (2001). She is currently working on a book entitled Queer Domesticities: Art and Intimacy in Victorian Britain.

TIM DOLIN is Research Fellow in the Australia Research Institute at Curtin University of Technology in Perth, Western Australia. He is the author of George Eliot (2005) in the Oxford ‘Authors in Context’ series and co-editor of Thomas Hardy and Contemporary Literary Studies (2004). He has written essays and chapters on the Victorian novel, and is currently working on an empirical study of fiction reading in Australia between 1888 and 1914.

KATE FLINT is Professor of English at Rutgers University, New Jersey. She is the author of The Woman Reader 1837–1914 (1993) and The Victorians and the Visual Imagination (2000), as well as numerous articles on nineteenth- and twentieth-century literary and cultural history. She is currently completing The Transatlantic Indian, 1776–1930.
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS


GRAHAM LAW is Professor in Literary and Media History at the School of International Liberal Studies, Waseda University, Tokyo. In addition to a wide range of articles on nineteenth-century literary and publishing history, he is the author of *Serializing Fiction in the Victorian Press* (2000) and *Indexes to Fiction in the ‘Illustrated London News’ and the ‘Graphic’* (2001). He has produced scholarly editions of many Victorian novels, including Collins’s *The Evil Genius* (1994); he is also editor of the *The Public Face of Wilkie Collins: The Collected Letters* (2005) and co-editor of the *Wilkie Collins Society Journal*.

RACHEL MALIK teaches literary studies at Middlesex University. Her most recent publications are ‘Fixing Meaning: Intertextuality, Inference and the Horizon of the Publishable’, *Radical Philosophy* 124 (March/April 2004) and ‘We are Too Menny: Literature’s Proletariat’, *New Left Review* 28 (July/August 2004). She is currently working on a book about the relations between publishing, reading and writing practices from the mid-Victorian period to the present.

LILLIAN NAYDER is Professor of English at Bates College, Maine, where she teaches courses on nineteenth-century British fiction. Her books include *Wilkie Collins* (1997) and *Unequal Partners: Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins and Victorian Authorship* (2002). She is writing a biography of Catherine Dickens and co-edits the *Wilkie Collins Society Journal* with Graham Law.


JENNY BOURNE TAYLOR is Professor of English at the University of Sussex. She has published a range of material on nineteenth-century literature and culture, including *In the Secret Theatre of Home: Wilkie Collins, Sensation Narrative and Nineteenth-Century Psychology* (1988); she has edited, with Sally Shuttleworth, *Embodied Selves: An Anthology of Psychological Texts 1830–1890* (1998), and
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS


RONALD R. THOMAS is President of the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, where he also has an appointment as Professor of English. The author of chapters in more than a dozen books on Victorian literature and culture, he has also written three books of his own, including Dreams of Authority: Freud and the Fictions of the Unconscious (1990) and Detective Fiction and the Rise of Forensic Science (1999). He is co-editor of and contributor to Nineteenth-Century Geographies: The Transformation of Space from the Victorian Age to the American Century (2002).

ANTHEA TRODD was Senior Lecturer in English, and is Honorary Research Fellow at Keele University. She is the author of Domestic Crime in the Victorian Novel (1989), and books and articles on Victorian and early twentieth-century writing. She is currently working with John Bowen on a study of the collaborative works of Dickens and Collins.
NOTE ON REFERENCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

Although *The Woman in White* and *The Moonstone* have remained in print since they were first published, until recently it has been difficult to obtain much of Collins’s work (the AMS press 30-volume edition is not annotated and is hard to locate). However, many texts have come back into print in the past few years: in the Oxford World’s Classics series, in the excellent Broadview editions and in the reprints by Alan Sutton Publishing. Yet there is still no authoritative edition of Collins’s work and in general this Companion makes parenthetical references to chapter numbers (e.g., ch. 3) when quoting from texts. There are, however, some important exceptions. Collins characteristically breaks with the conventional chapter format in his major works, so when quoting from the following texts, page numbers will be used (e.g., p. 65) to refer to the following Oxford World’s Classics editions:


The following short references will be used for frequently cited critical material and letters:

NOTE ON REFERENCES AND ABBREVIATIONS


CHRONOLOGY

1824  Born at 11 New Cavendish Street, St Marylebone, London, on 8 January, elder son of William Collins and Harriet Collins (née Geddes).

1826  The family moves to Pond Street, Hampstead.

1828  Brother, Charles Allston Collins, born.

1829  The family moves to Hampstead Square.

1830  The family moves to Porchester Terrace, Bayswater.

1835  Starts school at Maida Hill Academy.

1836–8  The family visits France and Italy.

1838–40  Attends Mr Cole’s private boarding school in Highbury.

1840  The family moves to 85 Oxford Terrace, Bayswater.

1841  Apprenticed to Antrobus & Co., tea importers.

1843  First signed publication, ‘The Last Stage Coachman’, appears in the Illuminated Magazine in August.

1844  Travels to Paris with Charles Ward. Writes first novel, ‘Iolâni, or Tahiti as it was; a Romance’.

1845  ‘Iolâni’ submitted to and rejected by Chapman and Hall.
CHRONOLOGY

1846  
Enters Lincoln’s Inn to study law.

1847  
William Collins dies.

1848  

1849  
Exhibits a painting, *The Smugglers’ Retreat*, at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition.

1850  
*Antonina, or the Fall of Rome* published by Bentley in February.  
The family moves to 17 Hanover Terrace.  
Collins goes on a walking tour of Cornwall with artist Henry Brandling in July and August.

1851  
*Rambles Beyond Railways* published by Bentley in January.  
Collins meets Charles Dickens for the first time in March, and acts with him in Edward Bulwer-Lytton’s *Not So Bad As We Seem* in May.  
‘The Twin Sisters’, Collins’s first contribution to *Bentley’s Miscellanies*, published in March, and his first contribution to Edward Pigott’s radical journal the *Leader* published in September.

1852  
*Mr Wray’s Cash-Box; or, The Mask and the Mystery* published by Bentley in January.  
Goes on tour with Dickens’s company of amateur actors in May.  
*Basil* published by Bentley in November.

1853  
Stays with Dickens in Boulogne from July to September; tours Switzerland and Italy with Dickens and Augustus Egg from October to December.

1854  
*Hide and Seek* published by Bentley in June.  
Stays with Dickens in Boulogne in July and August.
**CHRONOLOGY**

1855 Collins’s first play, *The Lighthouse*, performed by Dickens’s theatrical company at Tavistock House in June. Sails to Scilly Isles with Pigott in September.


1858 *The Red Vial* produced at the Olympic theatre in October. Collaborates with Dickens on *A House To Let* for the Christmas number of *Household Words*.

1859 Starts to live with Caroline Graves and her daughter Harriet. Lives at 124 Albany Street in January and February then moves to 2a Cavendish Street in April. *The Queen of Hearts* (collection of short stories) published in three volumes by Hurst & Blackett in October. *The Woman in White* serialised in *All the Year Round* from November to August 1860. Moves to 12 Harley Street in December.

1860 *The Woman in White* published in volume form by Sampson Low in August.

1861 Visits Whitby in North Yorkshire with Caroline Graves.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>Resigns from staff of <em>All the Year Round</em> in January. <em>No Name</em> serialised in <em>All the Year Round</em> from March to January 1863 and published in volume form by Sampson Low in December. Begins to suffer seriously from rheumatic gout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td><em>My Miscellanies</em>, a collection of journalism from <em>Household Words</em> and <em>All the Year Round</em>, published by Sampson Low in November. Visits German spas and Italy for his health with Caroline Graves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td><em>Armadale</em> serialised in the <em>Cornhill Magazine</em> from November to June 1866. Moves to 9 Melcombe Place, Dorset Square, in December.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>Moves to 90 Gloucester Place, Portman Square, in September. <em>No Thoroughfare</em> published as the Christmas number of <em>All the Year Round</em>; the dramatised version opens at the Adelphi theatre on 26 December.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td><em>The Moonstone</em> serialised in <em>All the Year Round</em> from January to August; published in volume form by Tinsley in July. Harriet Collins dies. Forms liaison with Martha Rudd (‘Mrs Dawson’), and attends the marriage of Caroline Graves and Joseph Clow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td><em>Black and White</em> written in collaboration with Charles Fechter, and produced at the Adelphi theatre in March. Collins’s and Martha Rudd’s daughter, Marian Dawson, born.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Chronology**

1871

Collins’s and Martha’s second daughter Harriet Constance Dawson born.

*The Woman in White* produced at the Olympic theatre in October.

*Poor Miss Finch* serialised in *Cassell’s Magazine* from October to March 1872.

*Miss or Mrs?* published in the Christmas number of the *Graphic*.

1872

*Poor Miss Finch* published in volume form by Bentley.

*The New Magdalen* serialised in *Temple Bar* from October to July 1873.

1873

*Miss or Mrs? and Other Stories in Outline* published by Bentley in January.

Dramatic version of *Man and Wife* performed at the Prince of Wales’s theatre in February.

Charles Allston Collins dies.

Tours America and Canada, giving readings of his work, from September to March 1874.

*The New Magdalen* published in volume form by Bentley and the highly successful dramatic version is performed at the Olympic theatre in May.

1874

*The Frozen Deep and Other Stories* published by Bentley in November.

Collins’s and Martha Rudd’s son, William Charles Dawson, born.

*The Law and the Lady* serialised in the *Graphic* from September to March 1875.

1875

Copyright in most of Collins’s work transferred to Chatto & Windus.

*The Law and the Lady* published in volume form by Chatto & Windus in February.

1876

*Miss Gwilt* performed at the Globe theatre in April.

*The Two Destinies* serialised in *Temple Bar* and published in volume form in August.
Chronology

1877 Dramatic version of *The Moonstone* performed at the Olympic theatre in September.

1878 *The Haunted Hotel* serialised in *Belgravia* from June to November.

1879 *The Haunted Hotel and My Lady’s Money* published by Chatto & Windus in volume form. 
*The Fallen Leaves* serialised in *The World* and in *Canadian Monthly* and published in volume form by Chatto & Windus in July. The planned sequel to *The Fallen Leaves* never appeared, owing to the novel’s poor reception. 
*A Rogue’s Life* published by Bentley in April.

1880 *Jezebel’s Daughter* published in volume form by Chatto & Windus in March following syndication by Tillotson & Son of Bolton.

1881 *The Black Robe* published in volume form by Chatto & Windus in April. 
Starts to employ A. P. Watt as his literary agent.

1883 *Heart and Science* serialised in *Belgravia* and provincial newspapers and published in volume form by Chatto & Windus in April. 
Collins’s play *Rank and Riches* produced at the Adelphi theatre in June – a disaster.

1884 ‘I Say No’ published in volume form by Chatto & Windus in October, following serialisation in *London Society*. 
Becomes Vice-President of Society of Authors, founded by Walter Besant.

1886 *The Evil Genius* published in volume form by Chatto & Windus in September, following serial syndication by Tillotson & Son. 
*The Guilty River* published in *Arrowsmith’s Christmas Annual*.

1887 *Little Novels* published by Chatto & Windus.
CHRONOLOGY

1888  *The Legacy of Cain* published in volume form by Chatto & Windus in November, following serial syndication by Tillotson & Son. 
      Moves to 82 Wimpole Street, Marylebone.

1889  Collins dies at 82 Wimpole Street on 23 September, following a paralytic stroke. He is buried in Kensal Green Cemetery.

1890  The final third of Collins’s last novel, *Blind Love*, completed by Walter Besant following Collins’s detailed scenario, and the novel is published in volume form by Chatto & Windus in January.

1895  Caroline Graves dies and is buried with Collins.

1919  Martha Rudd dies.