

HENRY KNIGHT MILLER

Essays on Fielding Miscellanies



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ESSAYS ON FIELDING'S

Miscellanies

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Miscellanies

A COMMENTARY ON VOLUME ONE

BY

HENRY KNIGHT MILLER

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*TO MY TWO JESSIES
AND MY TWO BERTITAS*

PREFACE

A LITTLE more than a year after the appearance of *Joseph Andrews*, Fielding published by subscription a three-volume set of *Miscellanies*, by Henry Fielding Esq; (April 1743). The second and third volumes of this collection offered two plays and two works of prose fiction, *A Journey from This World to the Next* and *The Life of Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great*. The first volume, which alone is the concern of the present study, was truly "miscellaneous," including most of his short poems, several important formal essays, a translation from the Greek, and a group of satirical sketches and Lucianic dialogues.

The first volume of the *Miscellanies* is almost a microcosm of Henry Fielding's intellectual world, offering explicit commentary on most of his major themes and attacking most of his abiding antipathies. The reader seeking to assess the full richness of Fielding's novels may find here a peculiarly useful guide to his thought and his habits of composition; for the varied contents of this volume epitomize the literary activity of his early years and in many respects anticipate the work to come. The dramatic movement of the novels, confronting idea with idea in comic action, has sometimes misled those seeking from particular aspects of this interplay to derive Fielding's own values and commitments. Again, the novels so transmute their materials that it is no easy matter to assess their debt to earlier traditions. The first volume of the *Miscellanies* presents more directly some of the multitude of literary and intellectual traditions that touched Fielding the novelist. It offers what one may call a prolegomenon to the novels—and to criticism of the novels—that really deserves more scrupulous attention than it has received.

The length of this study perhaps requires apology. If the reader interested in Fielding and his time finds the work of service I need say no more. But I may explain what I

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have sought to do beyond summarizing the individual pieces and placing them in the broader frame of Fielding's thought and in the context of the literary and intellectual traditions upon which he drew. The first volume of the *Miscellanies* has seemed to me to offer a particularly fruitful point of departure for thinking about Fielding: and I have therefore enlarged upon the given material to consider in some detail its significance in his total view of man and society. The poem *Of Good-Nature*, for instance, does not say the last word about this conception in Fielding's thought: but it raises certain crucial questions that force the reader (or commentator) into some attempt to explain the total conception. So also with such topics as "true greatness" and "liberty." In addition to these titular themes, some other relevant ideas have been explored: namely, "good breeding" under the *Essay of Conversation*, "hypocrisy" and Fielding's image of human nature under the *Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men*, and his attitude toward Stoicism under the *Remedy of Affliction*.

I have attempted, further, in connection with each major grouping of the materials, to deal with some narrower aspect of his work that did not seem to me adequately to have been investigated. The essay on the *Poems* speculates upon the relationship between Fielding's apprentice work in verse and the style of his prose; the comment upon the *Essays* analyzes Fielding's formal prose style; that upon the *Satires*, the rhetorical and parodic techniques employed in two formal satires. The remarks upon *Translation* are primarily concerned with the question of Fielding's knowledge of Greek; and the essay upon the *Lucianic sketches* is simply an analysis of the fellowship in tone and style between Lucian and Fielding.

I should perhaps set forth some of my assumptions. To be brief, I assume in the first place that comedy is among the most profound of literary activities. This would scarcely require enunciation did not a strong current in modern

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criticism derive from the fashionable institution of the Marchioness of Chaves (at which solemn house in *Gil Blas*, it will be remembered, comedy was treated as a weak effort of the brain, whereas the "most microscopical work in the serious style . . . was trumpeted to the skies as the most illustrious effort of a learned and poetical age"). As "it not unfrequently fell out that the public reversed the decrees of this chancery for genius," so also the student of the comic in our own time may hope to reverse the decrees of the Solemn School and insist upon the human need for and the aesthetic depth of comedy.

A particular difficulty that arises in this endeavor, however, stems from the double duty that is required of the word "serious." One cannot avoid the ambiguity (at least I have not been able to), but one can be conscious of it. In a sense, "serious" is all that we have to place opposite the word "comic"; and we mean by it simply the nonemployment of devices of humor and irony. But a very, well, *serious* confusion has thus been spawned, because we also use the term to mean those things about which we are morally (or aesthetically) in earnest, the things that "matter." This is the confusion that lies at the heart of objections to the serious discussion of comedy or of a comic author: the assumption that, somehow, to take comedy seriously is to falsify it. Doubtless the heavy elaboration of obvious jokes represents an extreme condition of what the serious treatment of comedy can fall into: but for any person not totally unresponsive to the comic muse, comedy is highly deserving of inclusion among those things that *matter*, and it is demonstrably among the things that many great artists have been morally and aesthetically in earnest about. Fielding, we may be sure, was most vitally serious about his artistic and moral aims and we may seriously discuss them. He was only occasionally dull, it is true: if his analyst must be more often so, it is only in part, I fear, because the modes of creation and of analysis differ.

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My second obvious assumption, and one that I have not attempted in this book to "prove," is that Fielding holds a high place among the world's major literary figures, that he occupies (with, say, Dickens and Joyce) a comparable place in English literature to that which Aristophanes and Lucian hold in the Greek, Cervantes in Spanish, and Rabelais in French literature. Each of these masters of the comic remains *sui generis*: the greatness of each lies not in the tradition that he inaugurated (later dramatic comedy, for example, owes relatively little to the characteristic structure and techniques of Aristophanes), but in his own unique masterpieces. Hence I can quite agree with those modern scholars who have argued that our contemporary novel does not descend in a direct line from Fielding (though for the modern comic novel, as Mr. Kingsley Amis assures us, Fielding is still a major inspiration) without believing, as some of them seem to, that Fielding's magnitude as a writer is thereby diminished. This would surely be to allow too great an importance to the teleological view that our modern novel is what the world has been aiming at all along. I should prefer to take the indubitably fascinating and various modern novel in its place, and honor greatness wherever I find it.

Fielding's reputation (among critics if not the reading public) did, I think, suffer for a time from the combined effect of being taken for granted by the readers who loved him and asked no questions, and of being neglected by those who sought—with entire legitimacy, let me add—to make of the novel something more plastic, more responsive to the pressures of the modern age. That he is being seen, however, with a fresh eye in our own time is attested by the appreciation of critics so broadly different as the late Mr. Middleton Murry and Professor Empson, as well as by the attention of scholars so eminent as Professor R. S. Crane and Professor George Sherburn. Recent detailed studies by responsible younger critics like Martin C. Battestin and

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Wolfgang Iser seem to me further to indicate that a significant reappraisal of the terms of Fielding's greatness, of his unique contribution to the literature of England, is now underway. The aim of the following essays is to contribute in some modest degree to this reexamination through the detailed scrutiny of an important but little-studied group of Fielding's lesser works. It is my cheerful hope that they will lend some clearer illumination to his aims as a writer and highlight some of the literary and intellectual traditions upon which he sharpened his mind and genius.

Acknowledgment is made to the following for permission to quote from copyrighted material: The Clarendon Press, for *The Literary Works of Matthew Prior*, ed. H. Bunker Wright and Monroe K. Spears (Oxford, 2v., 1959); the Harvard University Press, for *Lucian*, transl. by A. M. Harmon (Loeb Classical Library), vols. 1-v (Cambridge, Mass., 1913-1936); the Oxford University Press, for *The Poetical Works of John Gay*, ed. G. C. Faber (London, 1926); the Yale University Press, for *The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope*, ed. John Butt: Vol. III, i, *An Essay on Man*, ed. Maynard Mack (New Haven, Conn., 1950), and Vol. III, ii, *Epistles to Several Persons*, ed. F. W. Bateson (New Haven, Conn., 1951). Part One of Chapter IV incorporates material from my article upon "The Paradoxical Encomium," which appeared in *Modern Philology* (copyright, the University of Chicago Press, 1956); Part Two of Chapter IV, in slightly different form, originally appeared in *Studies in Philology*. They are here employed with the kind permission of those journals.

To name all the friends who have helped and encouraged me during the years in which I have been engaged upon this study would be a pleasant task, but would extend my Preface beyond reason. I must express my warm thanks to the library staffs of Princeton, Yale, and Harvard universities, and to the Folger Shakespeare Library, the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library, the library of the University

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of London, and the British Museum. Miss Miriam Brokaw and Miss Judy Walton of the Princeton University Press have been most helpful and considerate in their attention to my manuscript.

I am indebted to Princeton University for the award of the John E. Annan Bicentennial Preceptorship, which gave me the opportunity to read in England and to bring this work to completion.

I am deeply grateful to Professor George Sherburn and Professor James Thorpe for their generous and searching criticism of the manuscript. To Professor Louis A. Landa, whose suggestions originally led me into this study and whose patience and wisdom have sustained me throughout its development, I owe a debt that only friendship can justify or repay.

I could not conclude without here recording, in justice and in love, the part that my wife has played in this work. Helpmeet, secretary, research staff, and cheering section, she has touched every page of the book, and continues stoutly to insist that she has enjoyed the entire labor as thoroughly as I.

H. K. M.

Princeton University
November 1, 1960

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A NOTE ON ABBREVIATIONS AND TEXTS

I have used the "Henley" edition of Fielding's *Works* (which, for all its faults, is the most inclusive yet issued) except, of course, for those materials not therein reprinted and for the items to be found in the *Miscellanies*. The reader should perhaps be reminded that the first edition of *Jonathan Wild*, printed in the *Miscellanies*, has an extra chapter in the Second Book and another in the Fourth Book that will change the chapter numbering from that of Henley and most modern editions. The edition of the Everyman *Spectator* that I have used is the edition of 1945, not that of 1907.

Cross. Wilbur L. Cross, *The History of Henry Fielding* (3v., New Haven and London, 1918).

Dudden. F. Homes Dudden, *Henry Fielding, His Life, Works and Times* (2v., Oxford, 1952).

Henley. *The Complete Works of Henry Fielding, Esq. With an Essay on the Life, Genius and Achievement of the Author, by William Ernest Henley, LL.D.* (16v., London, 1903).

Jensen. Henry Fielding, *The Covent-Garden Journal. By Sir Alexander Drawcansir Knt. Censor of Great Britain*, edited by Gerard E. Jensen (2v., New Haven and London, 1915).

Misc. Henry Fielding, *Miscellanies, by Henry Fielding Esq; in Three Volumes* (3v., London, 1743).

CGJ *Covent-Garden Journal*

JA *Joseph Andrews*

JW *Jonathan Wild*

TJ *Tom Jones*

The titles of learned journals are abbreviated according to standard practice. The place of publication of all works cited is London, unless otherwise indicated.

ESSAYS ON FIELDING'S

Miscellanies

CHAPTER I.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF PUBLICATION

And now, my good-natured Reader, recommending my Works to your Candour, I bid you heartily farewell; and take this with you, that you may never be interrupted in the reading these Miscellanies, with that Degree of Heart-ach which hath often discomposed me in the writing them.—PREFACE

THE first reference that we find to Fielding's *Miscellanies* is a note in the ledger of Henry Woodfall, the London printer who had handled the first edition of *Joseph Andrews* (and soon would print the second).¹ On 3 June 1742, Woodfall entered in his ledger that he had printed "700 proposals for Mr. Fielding, paper print."² Two days later, the *Daily Post* advertised the proposals (see page 4). The apology for delay and the reference to "his last Receipts" make it clear that although this is the first public notice we have of the subscription, it must have been underway for some time. Apparently the *Miscellanies* had been projected before the winter of 1741-1742, hence well before *Joseph Andrews* was sent to the printer's in February of 1742.

There is more evidence than the allusion here to "a Train of melancholy Accidents" to suggest that these were indeed difficult times for Fielding, now settled with his

¹ There were two Henry Woodfalls, father and son. Woodfall the elder, a friend of Pope, had an establishment without Temple Bar after 1724; he seems to have died about 1747. His son was a printer in Paternoster Row and other locations from about 1737 to 1764. Extracts from the ledgers of both men were published in *Notes and Queries* in a series of articles by "P. T. P.": 1st Ser., XI (1855), 377-78, 418-20; XII (1855), 197, 217-19. It is clear from these excerpts that Woodfall the elder was the printer of *Joseph Andrews*.

² P. T. P., "Woodfall's Ledger, 1734-1747," *N&Q*, 1st Ser., XI (1855), 419.

This Day are publish'd,
 Proposals for printing by Subscription,
 MISCELLANIES in Three VOLUMES
 Octavo.

By HENRY FIELDING, Esq;

The first Volume will contain all his Works in Verse, and some short Essays in Prose.

The second Volume will contain, a Journey from this World to the next.

The third Volume will contain, the History of that truly renowned Person Jonathan Wyld, Esq; in which not only his Character, but that of divers other great Personages of his Time, will be set in a just and true Light.

The Price to Subscribers is One Guinea; and Two Guineas for the Royal Paper. One Half of which is to be paid at Subscribing, the other on the Delivery of the Book in Sheets. The Subscribers Names will be printed.

Note, The Publication of these Volumes hath been hitherto retarded by the Author's Indisposition last Winter, and a Train of melancholy Accidents scarce to be parallell'd; but he takes this Opportunity to assure his Subscribers, that he will most certainly deliver them within the Time mentioned in his last Receipts, viz. by the 25th of December next.

Subscriptions are taken in by Mr. A. Millar, Bookseller, opposite St. Clement's Church in the Strand.

As the Books will very shortly go to the Press, Mr. Fielding begs the Favour of those who intend to subscribe to do it immediately.³

³ *Daily Post*, No. 7098, 5 June 1742; cf. *Cross*, 1, 380-81.

little family in Spring Garden, near Charing Cross. Things had quite obviously gone from bad to worse since the Licensing Act ended his dramatic career in 1737. For, although he had been called to the bar in June 1740, the practice of law did not afford him enough remuneration to maintain his household. Arthur Murphy tells us, in his usual vague way, that Fielding's pursuit of the law was hampered by want of means and by attacks of the gout;⁴ and Dr. Dudden says (I, 245) that "his name does not appear in connexion with any important case" between 1740 and 1748. In November of 1740, Fielding surrendered (possibly because he could not maintain them) the chambers in Pump Court which had been granted him for life by the Benchers of the Middle Temple.⁵ In 1742, one Joseph King instituted suit to force payment of a note that Fielding had given him for £107 in March 1741.⁶ Moreover, the variety of miscellaneous writing in which he indulged from 1740 to 1743 gives the impression that Fielding was casting about almost frantically for some lucrative possibility, whether in "literature" or in mere "hackney-writing."

For example, in 1740, though he was contributing regularly to the *Champion*, and, as a novice man-of-law, attending Westminster Hall during term time and travelling the Western circuit in hopeful search for briefs, he never-

⁴ "An Essay on the Life and Genius of Henry Fielding, Esq;" in *The Works of Henry Fielding, Esq.* (4v., 1762), I, 28.

⁵ The granting of the chambers may, however, have been a mere formality in the first place (see B. M. Jones, *Henry Fielding, Novelist and Magistrate* [1933], pp. 71-72 and Dudden, I, 243). Normally, I believe, only bachelors occupied these chambers.

⁶ Cross, I, 376. At the same time (Trinity Term, 1742), Fielding apparently prosecuted a "judgment for debt" against one Randolph Seagrim (a relative of Black George?), though since the roll containing this case seems to be lost, we cannot say what the amount of the judgment was (cf. Cross, I, 376n.). It may have been at this point that Ralph Allen came to Fielding's rescue with the £200 that Samuel Derrick mentioned in later years (Cross, I, 376-77); but the praise of Allen's generosity in *Joseph Andrews* would suggest that Fielding had enjoyed his patronage well before this date.

theless managed to take some part in a translation of Gustaf Adlerfeld's *Military History of Charles XII.*⁷ In 1741, while engaged in writing *Joseph Andrews* and at least some of the material in the *Miscellanies* (one item, the poem *Of True Greatness* addressed to Dodington, was published in January), Fielding found time to write for the *Champion*, until mid-year at least, to dash off his satirical attack on Richardson, *Shamela*, and to turn out a number of commentaries on the current political situation: the mock-pedantic *Vernoniad*, *The Crisis: A Sermon*, and (late in the year), *The Opposition, A Vision*. Then for a time his political pen was silent. In the preface to the *Miscellanies* he defended himself against the charges that in the winter of 1741-1742 "two opposite Parties thought fit to cast on me, viz. the one of writing in the *Champion*, (tho' I had not then writ in it for upwards of half a Year) the other, of writing in the *Gazetteer*, in which I never had the Honour of inserting a single Word"; and he concluded: "To defend myself therefore as well as I can from all past, and to enter a Caveat against all future Censure of this Kind; I once more solemnly declare, that since the End of June 1741, I have not, besides *Joseph Andrews*, published one Word, except *The Opposition, a Vision. A Defence of the Dutchess of Marlborough's Book. Miss Lucy in Town*, (in which I had a very small Share.)"⁸

⁷ See John E. Wells, "Henry Fielding and the History of Charles XII," *JEGP*, xi (1912), 603-13.

⁸ Misc., i, xxxvi-xxxvii, misnumbered xxvi-xxvii. The minutes of a meeting (1 March 1742) of the partners in the *Champion* say that Fielding had withdrawn as a writer "for above Twelve Months past"; the last meeting that he had actually attended was on 29 June 1741 (G. M. Godden, *Henry Fielding: A Memoir* [1910], pp. 138-39 and 115-16). John E. Wells observed that the *Champion* in June 1740 "is written in such a manner as to indicate that its author meant it as a sort of gathering up, perhaps as a farewell" ("The 'Champion' and Some Unclaimed Essays by Henry Fielding," *Englische Studien*, xlvii [1913], 363). As Fielding was admitted to the bar 20 June 1740, this is a likely supposition; but Wells is surely correct in further assuming that Fielding continued to make random contributions to the periodical until sometime in the summer of 1741.

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Miss Godden is doubtless correct in suggesting that Fielding "may by now have found that politics afforded, in those days, but scanty support to an honourable pen."⁹ Certainly the portrait of himself and Ralph as starved asses in *The Opposition* would indicate that his pamphleteering against Walpole had not proved very lucrative. But it is equally likely that his vacation from political writing was simply the result of a thoroughgoing disillusionment with the "Patriots" who, as the hour of their triumph approached, began more to resemble hungry place-seekers than patriotic statesmen. A recent study of Fielding's activity in this period has argued with great cogency that he had indeed broken with the Opposition sometime in 1741, and that his pamphlet upon them represented a definite alignment with the Walpole forces.¹⁰ Be this as it may, the conflict between Walpole and the Opposition, which had provided the focus of Fielding's early political activity, came to an effectual end in February 1742, with Walpole's retirement and elevation to the peerage.

In this same month, *Joseph Andrews* was published, launching Fielding on a new career. It scarcely satisfied his immediate needs, however: the £183/11s. that he received for the rights to this novel fell short of the amount that he owed to Joseph King. Hence his ardent defense of the Duchess of Marlborough in April was probably a bid for patronage, rather than a purely chivalrous gesture (as Cross would have it).¹¹ In May he took part in his first dramatic activity since the passage of the Licensing Act, with the "very small Share" in the production of *Miss Lucy in Town* (for which he had, small share or no, already sold the copyright in April, receiving £10/10s.). And he hopefully set out

⁹ Godden, p. 120.

¹⁰ Martin C. Battestin, "Fielding's Changing Politics and *Joseph Andrews*," *PQ*, xxxix (1960), 39-55.

¹¹ Cross, I, 360-62. Miss Godden finds (I think correctly) an expression of Fielding's disappointed hopes in the laconic obituary notice in the *True Patriot* some years later: "A Man supposed to be a Pensioner of the late Duchess of Marlborough. . . . He is supposed to have been Poor" (cited Godden, p. 138).

with William Young to translate all of the plays of Aristophanes. Their first effort, *Plutus, The God of Riches*, apparently did not succeed, for we hear no more of the enterprise. It is in this context, then, that the announcement of 5 June appears: "Proposals for printing by Subscription, MISCELLANIES in Three VOLUMES Octavo. By HENRY FIELDING, Esq;,"—and we can see it as another in a series of Fielding's attempts (themselves of the most miscellaneous nature) to augment a bare legal income through the resources of his indefatigable pen.

Two more items (besides the earlier poem addressed to Dodington) eventually to appear in the *Miscellanies* were first published separately: the satire on the Royal Society and a five-act play, *The Wedding Day*, both published in February 1743. In extenuating the faults of the latter work, Fielding incidentally provided us with a vivid sketch of the pressures under which the *Miscellanies* were composed: he resurrected the play from his papers, as a last-minute replacement for another that he had written especially at Garrick's request but that had proved unsatisfactory:

"I accordingly sat down with a Resolution to work Night and Day, during the short Time allowed me, which was about a Week, in altering and correcting this Production of my more juvenile Years; when unfortunately, the extreme Danger of Life into which a Person, very dear to me, was reduced, rendered me incapable of executing my Task.

"To this Accident alone, I have the Vanity to apprehend, the Play owes most of the glaring Faults with which it appeared. . . .

"Perhaps it may be asked me, Why then did I suffer a Piece, which I myself knew was imperfect, to appear? I answer honestly and freely, that Reputation was not my Inducement; and that I hoped, faulty as it was, it might answer a much more solid, and in my unhappy Situation, a much more urgent Motive. If it will give my Enemies any

Pleasure to know that they totally frustrated my Views, I will be kinder to them, and give them a Satisfaction which they denied me: for tho' it was acted six Nights, I received not 50 *l.* from the House for it"—(Misc., I, xii-xv).

The person very dear to him was, of course, his wife Charlotte, who did not survive another winter. Fielding wrote from the heart when he later declared in *Amelia* that "the kindness of a faithful and beloved wife" is a blessing "which, though it compensates most of the evils of life, rather serves to aggravate the misfortune of distressed circumstances, from the consideration of the share which she is to bear in them" (IV, viii; Henley, VI, 215-16). Besides the straitened circumstances of their life in London, Charlotte had shared with Fielding illness, vilification, and grief. In June 1741, his father had died; and in March 1742, his first-born child, Charlotte, had died just short of her sixth birthday. One of the essays that Fielding wrote for the *Miscellanies*, "Of the Remedy of Affliction for the Loss of Our Friends," surely derives from this troubled period; and its elegiac note conveys some sense of the trials of spirit that he had faced and mastered. That he should have been able to bring together (and compose much of) the material of the *Miscellanies* in these disheartening circumstances is nothing short of incredible. Fielding himself seems to have regarded his powers of recuperation and concentration with reasonable pride, as is suggested by his words near the conclusion of the preface:

"It remains that I make some Apology for the Delay in publishing these Volumes, the real Reason of which was, the dangerous Illness of one from whom I draw all the solid Comfort of my Life, during the greatest Part of this Winter [1742-1743]. This, as it is most sacredly true, so will it, I doubt not, sufficiently excuse the Delay to all who know me.

"Indeed when I look a Year or two backwards, and survey the Accidents which have befallen me, and the Distresses I

have waded through whilst I have been engaged in these Works, I could almost challenge some Philosophy to myself, for having been able to finish them as I have; and however imperfectly that may be, I am convinced the Reader, was he acquainted with the whole, would want very little Good-Nature to extinguish his Disdain at any Faults he meets with.

“But this hath dropt from me unawares: for I intend not to entertain my Reader with my private History: nor am I fond enough of Tragedy, to make myself the Hero of one”—(*Misc.*, 1, xxxii-xxxiii, latter misnumbered xxxi).

2

Aurélien Digeon has described Fielding's *Miscellanies* as “une liquidation de son passée littéraire”;¹² and this is true both in the sense that these volumes sum up his career to that point and also that he doubtless filled them out with whatever material he had at hand. Most of the short poems, for example, were clearly youthful work. Nevertheless, I believe that many of the pieces in the collection were written especially for it. Fielding's observation upon the “Year or two backwards . . . whilst I have been engaged in these Works”; the many allusions that can be dated about 1741-1743 in the individual pieces themselves; and the fact that although he specifically identified most of the poetry and his two dramatic productions as early work, none of the other pieces was so characterized—all point to the supposition that much if not the greater part of the *Miscellanies* was composed in the years immediately preceding its publication. Some of the pieces may well have been reworkings of earlier material, but it is perhaps a futile exercise to attempt to separate these refurbished items from those originally composed between 1741 and 1743.

One thing, at any rate, is certain: Fielding's personal difficulties and his other commitments led to several post-

¹² *Les romans de Fielding* (Paris, 1923), p. 118.

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ponements of the original publication date. On 18 November 1742, about a month before the date for which the *Miscellanies* had been promised, Fielding repeated the announcement of 5 June in the *Daily Post*, substituting for the final paragraphs this appeal:

Whereas the Number of Copies to
to be printed is to be determin'd by
the Number of Subscribers, Mr. Field-
ing will be oblig'd to all those who
have subscrib'd to those *Miscellanies*,
or who intend him that Favour, if
they will please to send their Names
and first Payment (if not already
made) to Mr. Millar, Bookseller, op-
posite to Katharine-Street in the
Strand, before the 5th of December
next.¹³

December came and went without further word, however. On 12 February 1743 the *Daily Post* carried the following notice:

*On Monday the 28th Instant will
be deliver'd to the Subscribers,*

By A. MILLAR, Bookseller, opposite
Katherine-Street in the Strand,

MISCELLANIES. In Three Volumes,
Octavo.

By HENRY FIELDING, Esq;

Those who are pleased to subscribe
to these *Miscellanies*, and have not yet
sent in their Names, are desir'd to do
it before the 22d Instant, on which
Day the Subscription will be closed.
And all such as have disposed of any
Receipts, and have not yet sent in the
Names of the Subscribers, are re-
quested to do it within the above-
mention'd Time.¹⁴

¹³ *Daily Post*, No. 7240, 18 November 1742.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 7314. The notice was repeated on 14 February in the *Daily Post* and also in the *Daily Advertiser* of that date.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF PUBLICATION

Despite this promise, however, the volumes were not ready on 28 February. In the latter part of March, the *St. James's Evening Post* again advertised the *Miscellanies* as forthcoming, this time on 7 April, and the *General Evening Post* for 5 to 7 April also advertised that delivery to subscribers would be made on that date.¹⁵ And this time they were correct. On 7 April the *Daily Post* announced:

<p><i>This Day will be deliver'd to the Subscribers, MISCELLANIES in three Volumes, 8vo.</i></p> <p>By HENRY FIELDING, Esq;</p> <p>Printed for the Author, and to be had of A. Millar, opposite to Katherine-Street in the Strand.¹⁶</p>

Andrew Millar, the bookseller who published all of Fielding's novels and much of his other work, acted merely as distributor for the subscription edition, the proceeds of which (after printing costs) went entirely to Fielding. The printing of the three volumes was divided by Millar among three different houses—a not unusual practice. Thus an entry in the ledger of William Strahan (who handled a number of Fielding's other works for Millar) describes the printing of Volume 1: "April 2 [1743]. For printing the first Volume of Fielding's *Miscellanies* 26½ Sheets Pica 8^{vo} N^o. 1000 Coarse and 250 fine @ £1:2:6 p Sheet [£] 29/16/—" ¹⁷

¹⁵ Cf. John E. Wells, "Fielding's 'Miscellanies,'" *MLR*, xiii (1918), 481-82. One cause of the further delay may have been Fielding's revision of *Joseph Andrews* for the elaborate third edition, which was published on 24 March (*Daily Post*, No. 7346, of that date).

¹⁶ *Daily Post*, No. 7358, 7 April 1743. The *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, No. 2640, 7 April 1743, also advertised the *Miscellanies* as "published, And ready to be delivered to the Subscribers." This notice did not appear in the *Daily Advertiser* until 8 April.

¹⁷ British Museum Add. MS. 48800, p. 38 verso. This entry was previously cited by J. Paul De Castro ("The Printing of Fielding's Works," *The Library*, 4th Ser., 1 [1921], 250); he erred in recording the number of copies printed on "fine" paper as "200." The printing was charged to Andrew Millar, not to Fielding, which suggests that Millar financed

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The paper-stock ledger of another printer often associated with Millar, William Bowyer (the younger), contains a series of entries recording delivery of copies to the publisher under the heading:

Jonathan Wild for Mr. Millar	Coarse	Fine
1743	27 sh.	1000
		250 ⁴⁸

This, then, is obviously Volume III. The printer of Volume II cannot be so easily identified. The most likely possibility would be Henry Woodfall the elder, who had printed Fielding's proposals, as well as the first two editions of *Joseph Andrews*; but the excerpts from his ledger reprinted in the nineteenth century, though recording these items, make no mention of the *Miscellanies* in 1743.¹⁹ Nevertheless, I venture to assign Volume II tentatively to Woodfall on the basis of the printer's devices that appear in it. Since this is largely unexplored territory in eighteenth-century bibliographical studies (with a few brilliant exceptions, such as Professor Sale's study of Richardson),²⁰ I speak in a smaller voice than I otherwise should; but the appearance of printer's ornaments found in Volume II in other works known to have been printed by Woodfall is reasonably convincing evidence that he is our missing printer.²¹

the project until the final receipts were in. He settled with Strahan for the printing of the volume on 11 May 1744 (MS., p. 39).

¹⁸ Bodleian Library MS. Don. b. 4., fol. 112 recto. This entry was kindly transcribed for me by Professor D. W. Robertson, Jr.

¹⁹ The transcriber, "P. T. P.," might well have overlooked an entry recording the *Miscellanies*, for he did not understand the significance of the entry previously cited: "The '700 proposals' I must leave to the interpretation of the better informed" (*N&Q*, 1st Ser., XI [1855], 419).

²⁰ William M. Sale, Jr., *Samuel Richardson: Master Printer* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1950).

²¹ Thus: (1) the device on the title page of Fielding's second volume seems to be the same as that in the *Works of Mr. [James] Thomson* (2v., 1738), II, 56 (sig. Eiv), printed by Woodfall.

(2) The device of Fielding's II, 253, had appeared in Volume II of Thomson's *Works* (no pag., sig. C.), in Samuel Johnson of Cheshire's *Vision of Heaven* (1738), p. 41, in William Hatchett's *Chinese Orphan* (1741), pp. 14 and 44, and in William Collins' *Persian Eclogues* (1742), p. 10.

(3) Fielding's tailpiece (II, 420) is found in Johnson's *Vision*, pp. 37

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Later in the month of April 1743, a "second edition" was variously proclaimed,²² as in this notice in the *Daily Advertiser* on 27 April:

This Day is publish'd,
(Price bound 15 s.)
The SECOND EDITION of
MISCELLANIES, in three Volumes,
Octavo.

By HENRY FIELDING, Esq;

Printed for A. Millar, opposite
Katherine-Street in the Strand. Such
Gentlemen and Ladies as were Sub-
scribers for these Miscellanies, are de-
sir'd to send for their Books to the
said A. Millar's.

Despite the advertisements, however, and the brave inscription on the new title page of Volume 1 ("The SECOND EDITION"), these volumes represented merely the remaining unsold copies of the first impression, with the subscriber's list removed and new title pages substituted.²³ Their sale to the general public must have been slow, for Millar was still advertising them in the *True Patriot* of 18 February 1746 and after, as Cross noted (I, 381), and indeed as late as October and November 1748, in the *Jacobite's Journal* (nos. 44, 46, 48, and 49). There was a

and 63, in Hatchett's *Chinese Orphan*, p. 28, in *Persian Eclogues*, pp. 9, 19, and 24, and as the tailpiece of the first edition of *Joseph Andrews* (2v., 1742), II, 310. Several of these devices are poorly inked or printed, but the figure is identifiable. The possibility that another printer could have imitated Woodfall's ornaments must be kept in mind.

²² The *Daily Post* of 23 April and the *General Evening Post* of 21-23 April advertised the "second edition" as forthcoming "next week"; publication was noted in the *General Evening Post* of 23-26 April and in the *Daily Post* of 2 May.

²³ Wells (*MLR*, XIII, 482) said that he possessed "two copies of this Second Edition. One copy contains the list [of subscribers]; the other omits it." I have not come across any copies that retain the subscription list.

Dublin reprint by John Smith of the *Miscellanies*, in two volumes, in 1743.

3

The "LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS [*sic*]" in the original edition came to a total of 427 individual subscribers and 556 sets, 214 of which were on royal paper. At two guineas for the royal and one guinea for the regular paper, this represented (on the cheerful supposition that everyone paid according to promise) a comfortable gross of 770 guineas for Fielding, the largest sum—even after he had reimbursed Millar's printers—that he gained from the publication of any of his works except *Amelia*. The *Miscellanies* created no great literary splash; but the three volumes were definitely a financial success, and the preface makes clear that this satisfied Fielding's most "urgent Motive" in publishing them. The idea of subscription publication was, of course, nothing new in Fielding's time: the practice had been employed throughout the seventeenth century by authors and booksellers in the fields of music, divinity, law, and the sciences (not to mention the travel books of John Taylor, the Water Poet) before the elder Tonson published *Paradise Lost* and Dryden's *Virgil* through subscription and made it a standard practice for literature as well. By 1741, Fielding had before him as a spur the phenomenally successful subscriptions of Prior, Rowe, Pope, and Gay, as well as other modestly fortunate examples.²⁴ Moreover, he could at this time count upon a reputation for wit and ingenuity if not for "literary" genius (his name had not appeared on the title page of *Joseph Andrews* until the third edition of March 1743); and it must have struck him as an entirely happy idea, particularly in his financial straits, to engage in a labor whose return was pledged beforehand.

²⁴ Cf. Mr. Wilson's brief history of the practice of subscription: "Thus Prior, Rowe, Pope, and some other men of genius, received large sums for their labors from the public. This seemed so easy a method of getting money that many of the lowest scribblers of the times ventured to publish their works in the same way . . ." &c. (*JA*, III, iii; Henley, I, 244).

The enterprise might not have proved such a resounding economic success, however, had not his fellows in the legal profession (some of whom, apparently, had also contributed to the *Champion*)²⁵ given it their whole-hearted support. In his preface Fielding gratefully observed, "I cannot . . . forbear mentioning my Sense of the Friendship shewn me by a Profession of which I am a late and unworthy Member, and from whose Assistance I derive more than half the Names which appear to this Subscription" (*Misc.*, I, xxxii). Analyzed even superficially, the list of subscribers shows how very large a role the Inns of Court play in it: seventy-five names are specifically attached to their respective Inns ("William Abney, Esq; of the Inner Temple," "Mr. Adamson of Lincolns-Inn," and so on); and to this one would have to add the names of at least seventy-five more who had at one time or another been members of the Inns.

A full-scale analysis (à la Namier) of the subscribers would doubtless provide some interesting hints concerning the range and character of Fielding's social acquaintance at this day, but unfortunately one cannot by any means assume that he personally knew everyone whose name appears. As he said in the preface, in thanking "those Friends who have with uncommon Pains forwarded this Subscription": "I believe I owe not a tenth Part to my own Interest" (*Misc.*, I, xxxi). This is sufficient to discourage any detailed attempt to picture his immediate circle from the list of subscribers. Yet, a great many of the names fall naturally into groupings—professional, geographical, political, and the like—which, when analyzed, do not surprise us but do pleasantly support our presuppositions with fact.

For instance, we should expect to find a strong representation from the anti-Walpole "Patriots" with whom Fielding had been so closely associated in the previous decade;

²⁵ Cf. the letter in the *Champion*, 8 April 1740, signed "MORPHEUS" and dated from the "Inner-Temple," and the letter from "SOMNUS" of Gray's Inn, 13 May 1740 (coll. ed. [2v., 1741], II, 80-86 and 205-11). The addresses may, of course, be fictitious.

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and of course we do. Heading the list was His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, with "Fifteen Setts"—on royal paper naturally. In this group also were most of Fielding's patrons: the Duke of Bedford, the Duke of Argyll, the Duke of Roxburghe (styled Marquess of Bowmont in the thirties), the Earl of Chesterfield, Lord Cobham, Lord Barrington, George Lyttelton, Bubb Dodington, and Lord Talbot, to whom Fielding and Young dedicated their translation of the *Plutus* in 1742.²⁶ Also represented were such anti-Walpole peers as the Duke of Queensberry, the recently "converted" Duke of Newcastle, the new peer William Pulteney, Earl of Bath, the "architect Earl" of Burlington, and his cousin the Earl of Orrery, later Swift's biographer. In the Commons, there were Lord Thomas Gage, Lord Arthur Doneraile, and Lord John Perceval whom Fielding or a close imitator of his style (cf. Cross, II, 93-95 and III, 339) severely attacked in the pamphlet of a decade later, *A Genuine Copy of the Tryal of J[ohn] P[erceval], Esq; &c. Commonly Call'd, E[arl] of E[gmont]* (1749).

Among the fifty or so other M. P.'s that the subscription list could boast were Sir Francis Dashwood of later Hell-Fire Club fame, less notorious baronets like Sir Edmund Thomas, Sir James Dashwood, Sir Cordell Firebrace, Sir Robert Long, and Sir Erasmus Philipps, and various busy politicians like Henry Furnese, Thomas Bootle (Chancellor to the Prince of Wales), and that rising young man, William Pitt. Not all M. P.'s but of some political importance were such affluent country gentlemen as Peter Bathurst of Clarendon Park, Wiltshire (at whose home Fielding "had lived for victuals," according to Horace Wal-

²⁶ Cross (I, 382) is mistaken in listing the Duke of Richmond as a subscriber. Strangely enough, although Fielding's poem *Of Good-Nature* is dedicated to him, his name does not appear in the list. However that of his duchess does. She was linked with the Countess of Shaftesbury in a compliment to beauty in the same poem (*Misc.*, I, 19).

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pole's malicious anecdote);²⁷ Edward Bayntun-Rolt of Spye Park, Wiltshire; Norreys Bertie of Weston-on-the-Green, Oxford; Anthony Henley of the Grange in Hampshire, good-humored son of the Queen Anne wit of the same name (another of whose sons, Robert Henley, later Earl of Northington, was also a subscriber to the *Miscellanies*); Norborne Berkeley of Stoke Gifford, Gloucester (who was, with Lord Barrington, one of the Earl of Halifax's inner circle); William Strode of Punsborne, Hertfordshire; and George Vandeput of Twickenham, who is remembered for his vast expense in later contesting the Westminster election of 1749.

It is impossible to determine whether Fielding knew all these gentlemen personally; but they surely knew one another, and Fielding's subscriptions probably came through such acquaintance or in such a chain as that suggested by the interrelationship of the Harris-Knatchbull-Wyndham families. It is well known that James Harris of Salisbury, the author of *Hermes*, was intimate with Fielding and his family; he was a subscriber and so also were his mother-in-law Lady Elizabeth Harris (sister of the third Earl of Shaftesbury) and his brother Thomas.²⁸ Thomas had married Catharine Knatchbull, daughter of Sir Edward Knatchbull, Bart., of Mersham-Hatch in Kent; and although Sir Edward (having died in 1730) was not himself a subscriber to the *Miscellanies*, a son-in-law, a son, and a brother-in-law of his were—for he had married Alice Wyndham, sister of Thomas, Lord Wyndham of Finglass (a subscriber), and his third son Edward Knatchbull was also a subscriber. It is even possible (to expand the circle further) that the John Clark and John Clark, Jr. whose names appear in the sub-

²⁷ *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence* (New Haven, Conn., 1937, in progress), Vol. ix (*Correspondence with George Montagu*, Vol. 1, ed. W. S. Lewis and Ralph S. Brown, Jr., 1941), p. 84.

²⁸ There was also a London bookseller named Thomas Harris, and I cannot prove that it was not he or some other personage of the name who subscribed; but James Harris' brother seems the most likely candidate: the "Esq." connotes a gentleman.

scription list were the father and brother of James Harris' wife Elizabeth; but with so common a name it is difficult to be certain. This kind of circle of interrelationships does suggest, however, the way in which Fielding came by his subscriptions.²⁹

An even more famous illustration can be found in the "Cobham cousinhood," the family group of Richard Temple, Viscount Cobham, of Stowe. He and his wife Lady Anne were subscribers. His sister Christian had married Sir Thomas Lyttelton, and their son George was Fielding's friend and patron. A second sister Hester had married Richard Grenville, and their sons Richard and George were prominent among the "Boy Patriots"; hence if the "George Grenville, Esq; of the Inner Temple" who subscribed to the *Miscellanies* is George Grenville, as seems quite probable, we have another link (as well as a name memorable to young students of American history, who are taught to associate this gentleman with the Stamp Act and tyranny).³⁰ In any case, *his* sister Hester later married William Pitt, who was assuredly a subscriber. And finally, a third sister of Cobham, Penelope, married Moses Berenger; and their son Richard Berenger, a poet of modest pretensions and a most elegant gentleman, was also a subscriber to Fielding's work.³¹

²⁹ This Wiltshire group may also remind us that some three dozen or more of the subscribers were associated with that county. They included Arthur Collier, the Salisbury metaphysician, father of Jane and Margaret Collier; and Dr. John Barker and the surgeon Mr. Edward Goldwyre (see J. Paul De Castro, "A Forgotten Salisbury Surgeon," *TLS*, 13 January 1927, p. 28, and comment by Arthur E. Du Bois, *TLS*, 19 March 1931, p. 234, with reply by De Castro, *TLS*, 26 March 1931, p. 252). The seats of the Earl of Pembroke, Lord Thomas Wyndham, Lord Windsor (who magnanimously subscribed to ten copies on royal paper), Peter Bathurst, Edward Bayntun-Rolt, and Sir Robert Long were all in Wiltshire.

³⁰ Likewise, the "James Grenville, Esq; of Lincolns-Inn," who subscribed to the *Miscellanies* is probably James Grenville, one of the less famous brothers of George and Richard. The latter seems not to have subscribed, unless he is the "—— Grenville, Esq;" who took one copy on royal paper.

³¹ Another family well represented in the subscription list was that

If Fielding drew the majority of his subscriptions from such strongly Whig groups as this, he also found a number of Tories who had no great love for Walpole. They ranged from those of true Jacobite sympathies like Lord Gower, Sir John Hynde Cotton and Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn to Tories like the Duke of Beaufort, the Earl of Cardigan, Lord Leigh, Lord Craven, the unfortunate Lord Deerhurst (who died the next year at 23), and Henry Bathurst, whose famous father Allen, Lord Bathurst, that indefatigable patron of letters, is strangely missing from Fielding's list.

The most surprising thing, however, in terms of political alignments, is the dozen or so names that appear of men who were associated with Walpole's government or very closely with Walpole himself. Unless one accepts Martin Battestin's argument (cited above) that Fielding had joined the Walpole camp in 1741, this group of names seems difficult to explain. We might dismiss Walpole's own subscription ("The Right Hon. the Earl of Orford") to ten sets on royal paper as a gesture, like the earlier gesture of Bolingbroke in giving Booth fifty guineas for his portrayal of Addison's Cato. But how does one account for the name of the Duke of Devonshire, one of Walpole's most loyal supporters, or the Duke of St. Albans, or Earl Cholmondeley (Walpole's brother-in-law), the Earl of Pembroke, Lord Cornwallis, or General Churchill? Battestin's argument apart, there are several possible explanations for particular names in the list. Thus the garrulous old General Churchill (natural son of Marlborough's brother) was close to Walpole through his marriage with Anna Maria, Sir Robert's natural daughter; but he was also a brother-in-arms of Fielding's father. Edmund Fielding, Charles Churchill, and the Earl of Pembroke had in fact all been

of the Stanhopes, with three branches: (1) William, first Earl of Harrington; (2) Philip, second Earl Stanhope; and (3) Philip, fourth Earl of Chesterfield, as well as his brothers, Sir William and the Hon. John Stanhope.

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created major-generals on the same date in 1735:³² it seems colorable that this old association accounts for the latter two names, mere political differences being overlooked. It is even more probable that this kind of explanation may account for the presence of such further associates of Walpole as the young Duke of Marlborough (who deserted the Opposition in 1738, to the old Duchess' horror), Lord De La Warr, Henry Fox, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, and the Earl of Harrington (although the latter was never very cordial with Walpole in any case): the explanation here, of course, being that they were all Old Etonians—though not all schoolmates nor even necessarily acquaintances of Fielding. Hanbury Williams alone could have garnered most of the subscriptions in this group, for despite his loyalty to Walpole he is numbered among Fielding's most generous and constant friends.

Pitt also, Lord Talbot, George Grenville, and Sir Francis Dashwood, among those we have previously mentioned, were of the *amicitiae Etonienses*. Altogether Etonians account for about twenty-five subscriptions, including those of the Duke of Rutland and Fielding's distant cousin the Duke of Kingston, the Earls of Halifax, Rockingham, Westmorland, and Radnor, Earl Fitzwilliam, Lord Lymington, Lord Romney, Lord Montfort, whom he praised in *Of Good-Nature* (*Misc.*, I, 19), and such commoners as the learned Andrew Ducarel (who, quite incidentally, followed Fielding's example and married his maid-servant in 1749) and his brother James Coltee Ducarel.

Mention of the Duke of Kingston, who was Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's nephew, may remind us that other of Fielding's nearer relatives also could have offered entry into their circles. Thus his noble kinsman, William, fifth Earl of Denbigh, probably opened doors for him. It certainly seems likely, for instance, that the Marchioness of

³² John Chamberlayne, *Magnae Britanniae Notitia: or, the Present State of Great Britain* (1737 ed.), Pt. II, p. 97.

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Blandford is on the subscription list because she was sister to Denbigh's countess.³³ Less aristocratic but probably even more helpful would have been Henry Gould, son of Fielding's maternal uncle. Gould, a subscriber, had become a barrister of the Middle Temple in 1734 (he became a bencher in the year of Fielding's death, 1754); and, besides smoothing the way for his cousin in his legal studies, he may have been responsible for some of the older barristers on Fielding's list.

The legal profession, as we have seen, accounted for a sizeable proportion of the subscribers. Names of interest include John Cay, whose *Abridgement of the Publick Statutes* (2 v., 1739) was in Fielding's library; William and Robert Salkeld, sons of the William Salkeld whose *Reports of Cases Adjudg'd in the Court of King's Bench* (2 v., 1717-1718) was also among Fielding's law books; Wentworth Odiarn, Sergeant-at-Arms to the House of Commons; the distinguished Matthew Skinner, His Majesty's Prime Sergeant-at-Law, who appeared for the Crown against the Jacobite rebels in 1746; Thomas Garrard, who had earlier succeeded Skinner in his place as one of the four common pleaders of the City of London; the Hon. John Sherrard (a son of the Earl of Harborough), who in 1745 proposed the regiment of volunteers that was raised by the gentlemen of the law to fight against the rebels; and the Hon. Heneage Legge, a son of the Earl of Dartmouth, and later the justice who tried the case of the famous parricide, Mary Blandy, at the Oxford assizes in 1752.

Perhaps closer to Fielding were men like Richard Willoughby, whom Cross (II, 174) is surely correct in identifying as the "Justice Willoughby, of Noyle, a very worthy good gentleman," alluded to in *Tom Jones* (VIII, xi; Henley, IV, 122); Robert Henley; William Wright and William

³³ A striking example of pure coincidence is to be found in the case of another relative, Lady Evelyn Pierrepont (who died in 1727): she was aunt to one subscriber, the Duke of Kingston, wife to another, Lord Gower, and mother to a third, Gertrude, Duchess of Bedford.

Wynne, later neighbors of Fielding when he resided in Old Boswell Court (cf. Cross, II, 11); and Robert Ketelbey, a Sergeant-at-Law known to history primarily, it would seem, for his magnificent full-bottomed wig. Some of the younger men of law enjoyed distinguished careers in other fields: Andrew Mitchell, for instance, was Under-Secretary of State for Scotland, 1741-1747 (under the fourth Marquis of Tweeddale, also a subscriber), and later the British envoy to Frederick the Great; Owen Salusbury Brereton became a well-known antiquary and was vice-president of the Society of Arts for thirty years; and James Dawkins was to become intimately associated with the discovery of the famous ruins of Palmyra and Balbek.

Other professions were less generously represented. The sprinkling of clergymen is notable only for two of the Prince of Wales's chaplains, Philip Sone and John Hoadly, the latter also chancellor of the diocese of Winchester and (not coincidentally) son of the Bishop of Winchester. The "Dr. Hoadley" who subscribed to the *Miscellanies* is surely not the Bishop, as Cross (I, 382) believed, but his other son, Benjamin, physician to the royal household. The brothers Hoadly were literary amateurs and apparently quite close to Fielding. Linked with Dr. Hoadly in a line of Fielding's Juvenal (*Misc.*, I, 105) was Dr. William Wasey, physician of St. George's Hospital and later president of the Royal College of Physicians. Fielding numbered several other important medical men among his friends: John Ranby, Sergeant-Surgeon to the King, was a subscriber and remained a friend; Fielding alluded to him in *Tom Jones* and *Amelia*. Dr. Edward Harrington was also mentioned in *Tom Jones*, and so (probably) was Dr. Thomas Brewster, the "Glory of his Art," as Fielding called him in the *Miscellanies* (see below, poem "TO Miss H—AND at Bath" and the *Essay on Conversation*). Finally, if the Dr. Wilmot who appears on the list is Edward (later Sir Edward) Wilmot, we have another of the King's medical men, for he was Physician-

in-Ordinary both to George II and George III, and attended Frederick, Prince of Wales, in his last illness.³⁴

The only representative of the Navy who subscribed was Admiral Edward Vernon, whom Fielding had celebrated in the *Vernoniad*; and of the Army, we have already mentioned General Churchill and the Earl of Pembroke. The doughty old Earl of Westmorland and Lord Lymington, both of whom had fought under Marlborough at Oudenarde, might be included here. The only other persons of interest in this group are the brothers Fairfax—Robert, a Major in the First Troop of Life Guards, and Thomas, the elder, Baron Fairfax of Cameron. Thomas had held a commission in the Blues and had been intimate with Addison and Steele; but in the 1740's he retired to his estates in Virginia. Here he enters American legend through his encouragement of the young George Washington, to whom he gave the task of surveying his property in the Shenandoah Valley.

That Fielding had not been forgotten by his old friends of the theatre is well attested by the illustrious names from that circle; but that he was still not seriously regarded as a "literary" figure may be inferred from the dearth of distinguished names in literature. The theatrical subscriptions (and indeed all others) were topped by the magnanimous order for twenty sets by Charles Fleetwood, manager of Drury Lane. David Garrick, Peg Woffington, and Fielding's favorite actress, Kitty Clive, were subscribers, as well as the lesser lights, Robert Hippisley and James Lacy—if the "Mr. Lacy" of the subscription list is this actor who took part in several of Fielding's plays and later succeeded Fleetwood as manager of Drury Lane. In literature the major names are those of Edward Young and Richard Savage—

³⁴ Most of these medical men were fellows of the Royal Society, as were over a dozen of Fielding's subscribers, including the Duke of Leeds, the Earl of Radnor, Earl Stanhope, Lord De La Warr, and Lord Gage. One wonders what they thought of the satire in *Some Papers Proper to be Read before the Royal Society*.

but even these are questionable, for the Edward Young of the list is not designated as "the Rev." and there were other men of the name in London (the "William Whitehead, Esq; of Grays-Inn" in the subscription list is definitely not the contemporary poet of that name); and Richard Savage had left London in 1739 and was, indeed, confined in Bristol prison when the *Miscellanies* appeared. Other than this, one finds only David Mallett, Benjamin Martyn,³⁵ Thomas Cooke, and a "Mr. Carey," who might be the author of "Sally in our Alley." Add the Hoadlys, Lyttelton, Hanbury Williams, and a few amateurs (like Richard Berenger) and scribbling peers, and the list is nearly complete.

It is not impressive. We know that Aaron Hill got a copy of the *Miscellanies* through Richardson,³⁶ and that Pope ordered copies for himself and for Fielding's self-effacing new patron, Ralph Allen—probably through Richardson's brother-in-law, the Bath bookseller James Leake, whose name is on the subscription list for twelve sets. But neither Hill nor Pope was inclined to grace Fielding's list with his name, although they had not hesitated to put themselves down a decade or so earlier for the ineffable Joseph Mitchell's *Poems on Several Occasions* (1729), along with Arbuthnot, Congreve, Richardson, Steele, and Swift, and a host of luminaries. It would appear that the publication of the *Miscellanies* was not greeted as a literary event: the majority of subscribers seem rather to represent political or professional or merely personal connections. Fielding was

³⁵ Mallett's appearance is probably a matter of political affiliation: he was in the train of the Prince of Wales. And Martyn was a kind of general factotum to the fourth Earl of Shaftesbury. The subscription process at work can, incidentally, be seen in Martyn's letter to Thomas Birch concerning the *Lives and Characters of Illustrious Persons of Great Britain* (Vol. I, 1743): "Lord and Lady Shaftesbury are desirous of subscribing to your Work, I should therefore be oblig'd to you if you could let me know the Terms, and would give me an Opportunity (the first time you come this way) of paying it for them" (Brit. Mus., Birch MS. 4313, p. 134; dated 17 January 1742/3).

³⁶ See Alan D. McKillop, *Samuel Richardson: Printer and Novelist* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1936), p. 77.

thought of at this time as a dramatic wit and political sharpshooter; but probably few of his subscribers really believed that they were furthering the career of a literary genius when they put down their friendly guineas.³⁷

4

The same impression is conveyed by the very quiet reception that the *Miscellanies* received when they were published. Even *Jonathan Wild*, the most important of the three volumes, seems not to have excited any general comment at the time. Perhaps Walpole's fall a year before (even though his administration was still being critically anatomized) made it seem out-of-date as political commentary—and no one was prepared to see it as a significant contribution to the world's literature. The principal notice taken of it was in the subsequent attacks upon Fielding by such noisy enemies as the periodical, *Old England*.³⁸ Richard Cumberland was genteelly disturbed in later years when he recalled that Dodington had read *Jonathan Wild* aloud before ladies at Eastbury.³⁹

³⁷ The names of a few other subscribers of interest may be mentioned: Jonathan Tyers, the amiable proprietor of Vauxhall whom Fielding celebrated in *Amelia* (ix, ix; Henley, vii, 167-68); Thomas Winnington, whose memory he later defended in *A Proper Answer to a Late Scurrilous Libel* (1747); the eccentric baronet Sir Henry Hoo Keate; and the equally eccentric William Holles, Lord Vane, husband of Smollett's notorious patroness; Robert Dodsley, the well-known bookseller; Abraham and Isaac Elton of the family that perennially supplied Bristol with mayors and aldermen; the Hon. John Spencer, a "frollicker" like his brother the young Duke of Marlborough; and the Hon. George Berkeley, an M. P. and sometime Master of St. Katherine's by the Tower, who married George II's mistress, Lady Suffolk.

³⁸ See Frederic T. Blanchard, *Fielding the Novelist* (New Haven, 1926), pp. 22 and 32-34. Cross (ii, 2) suggested that an anecdote in the *Annual Register* of 1762, referring to proposals Fielding was once supposed to have made for a new law-book, arose from a confused memory of the *Miscellanies*. B. M. Jones took issue with this interpretation, however, and cited some jesting allusions from *Old England* that apparently refer to Fielding's projected law-book (*Henry Fielding* [1933], pp. 93-96).

³⁹ *Memoirs of Richard Cumberland, Written by Himself*, ed. Henry Flanders (Philadelphia, 1856), p. 101.

The relative public indifference is shown in the fact that the "second" edition of the *Miscellanies* offered to readers at large had a very slow sale; and the Dublin publisher apparently had no call for an edition after the first. Again, comment in the private letters and diaries of the period is almost totally lacking or, when existent, perfunctory—on the order of Pope's remark to Allen in a letter of 12 April 1743: "Fielding has sent the Books you subscribd for to the Hand I employd in conveying the 20 ll. to him. In one Chapter of the Second vol. he has payd you a pretty Compliment upon your House."⁴⁰ And allusions in later years are usually such casual things as Goldsmith's observation that Fielding had said "that he never knew a person with a steady glavering smile, but he found him a rogue" (apparently based upon a passage in the *Essay on the Knowledge of the Characters of Men*),⁴¹ or William Creech's remark that Fielding was one of the "best writers on the subject of politeness," which one may take as an allusion to the *Essay on Conversation*.⁴² The author of *The History of Jack Connor* (1752) used some lines from the poem "Of Good-Nature," as a chapter-heading in his work,⁴³ and the first poem to Walpole in the *Miscellanies* was reprinted in a somewhat different form in Dodsley's *Collection of Poems in Six Volumes* of 1758. Gibbon's appreciation of Fielding as the "great master" whose *Journey from This World to*

⁴⁰ *Correspondence of Alexander Pope*, ed. George Sherburn (5v., Oxford, 1956), iv, 452.

⁴¹ *The Works of Oliver Goldsmith*, ed. J. W. M. Gibbs (Bohn Library, 5v., 1884-86), v, 202. Fielding's actual words were: "That glavering sneering Smile, of which the greater Part of Mankind are extremely fond, conceiving it to be the Sign of Good-Nature; whereas this is generally a Compound of Malice and Fraud, and as surely indicates a bad Heart, as a galloping Pulse doth a Fever" (*Misc.*, i, 189).

⁴² "According to the best writers on the subject of politeness (among whom I reckon Fielding, Swift, and Lord Chesterfield), 'he is the most polite man who makes his company easy and happy in his presence'" (*Edinburgh Fugitive Pieces, with Letters . . . by the Late William Creech* [Edinburgh and London, 1815], p. 150). Cf. Blanchard, p. 211.

⁴³ [William Chaigneau?], *The History of Jack Connor* (Dublin, 1752), i, 27, epigraph to Chapter iv.

the Next "may be considered as the history of human nature" led Lord Chedworth (in a letter of 1788) to wonder that he himself had been "so stupid as never to read" this work until he came across Gibbon's allusion.⁴⁴ But it is certain that neither the *Miscellanies* as a whole nor any of the individual pieces aroused anything like the amount of contemporary comment or discussion that attended *Joseph Andrews*, *Tom Jones*, and *Amelia*. This is not surprising, of course; but the actual paucity of reference to one of Fielding's most laborious and copious enterprises is disappointing.

All of the prose works in the *Miscellanies*, except the *Essay on Nothing*, were reprinted in the first collected edition of Fielding's *Works* in 1762. The omitted essay, which was reprinted by Isaac Reed in Volume iv of his *Repository* in 1783 (along with *Some Papers Proper to be Read before the Royal Society*), was first included in the collected works in 1806. But it was not until the edition of J. P. Browne in 1871-1872 that the whole of the *Miscellanies*, including the poems, was finally reprinted in a "complete" edition of the *Works*.

⁴⁴ Cited by Blanchard, p. 237. Gibbon's allusion, often mistakenly credited to *Tom Jones*, is in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. J. B. Bury (7v., 1897), III, 363, n. 13.

CHAPTER II. POETRY

Accept the Muse whom Truth inspires to sing, Who soars,
tho' weakly, on an honest Wing.—*Liberty*

FIELDING is by no means a great poet, as he himself was quite ready to admit. A "correspondent" in the *Covent-Garden Journal* (No. 58, 8 August 1752) submitted his translation of Tibullus to Sir Alexander Drawcansir with the observation: "THO' your own Genius, I think, turns not much to Poetry, I do not suppose you are an Enemy to the Musical Inhabitants of Parnassus . . ." (Jensen, II, 74-75). In the preface to the *Miscellanies*, Fielding sounded a modest and extenuating note:

"The Poetical Pieces which compose the First Part of the First Volume, were most of them written when I was very young, and are indeed Productions of the Heart rather than of the Head. If the Good-natured Reader thinks them tolerable, it will answer my warmest Hopes. This Branch of Writing is what I very little pretend to, and will appear to have been very little my Pursuit, since I think (one or two Poems excepted) I have here presented my Reader with all I could remember, or procure Copies of"—(*Miscellanies*, I, ii).

Some of his light verse shows a flair for epigram and a satirical bite; but his longer poems display most of the defects common to those who attempted Popeian couplets without the rhythmical genius of a Pope. Yet, if Fielding cannot put ten good lines together without flaw, he offers a respectable number of satisfactory (or even striking) individual lines. And, though one must wince at the appearance of occasional candidates for the *Peri Bathous* (in nature, Fielding says, "Each [beast] freely dares his Appetite to treat, / Nor fears the Steed to neigh, the Flock

to bleat"),¹ the poems are nevertheless worth a thoughtful perusal. The verse essays in particular repay the reader's attention with a concentrated and explicit rendering of themes that were to maintain a prominent place in Fielding's narratives.

One finds, in surveying Fielding's poetic output, that so far as the shorter poems are concerned (theatrical work apart), he was as good as his word in claiming to have presented here the bulk of them: inclusiveness indeed is the only reasonable excuse for the appearance of a few of his trifles. Not much of his short verse besides that included in this collection has come to light. A poem entitled "Plain Truth," on one of the reigning beauties of Bath, was included in Dodsley's *Collection* of 1758; a song on *The Beggar's Opera* attributed to Fielding was rediscovered in 1943; and attention has been called to "A DIALOGUE between a BEAU'S HEAD and his HEELS . . . By Mr. FIELDING," which appeared in the sixth volume of Watts's *Musical Miscellany* (6v., 1729-1731), and which could possibly be Timothy Fielding's rather than Henry's. In addition, there are a few poems in the *Champion* and the *Covent-Garden Journal* which Fielding may well have written himself.²

¹ Misc., I, 21. The rhyming in some of the lyrics more befits an eager lover than a conscientious poet: Venus, in a poem "TO CELIA," sees Celia's "Bosom heave," because she "heard a distant Sound of Thieve" (Misc., I, 57). One thinks of the scribblers in *The Author's Farce*: "DASH. . . End rhymes very well with wind. BLOTPAGE. It will do well enough for the middle of a poem" (Henley, VIII, 217).

² Dodsley, v, 302-05 (the poem is reprinted in Henley, XII, 345-47); on the song, see Howard P. Vincent, "Early Poems by Henry Fielding," *N&Q*, CLXXXIV (1943), 159-60; the dialogue was also noted by Vincent and by Helen S. Hughes, "A Dialogue—Possibly by Henry Fielding," *PQ*, I (1922), 49-55. The suspicion that verses cited without attribution in Fielding's journals are often of his own composing is bolstered by the example of the lines in the *Champion*, 27 November 1739 (Henley, xv, 80), which are by him and reappear in his poem, *Of Good-Nature*. See also the *Covent-Garden Journal*, Nos. 28, 50, and 58 (Jensen, I, 298-300; II, 35-38; and II, 74-77). There are, in addition, such pieces as the song in *Joseph Andrews*, II, xii (Henley, I, 176-78) and the extemporary poem on Parson Adams made by the poet at the "roasting" squire's (*JA*, III, vii; Henley, I, 278).

The most notable omissions from this collection of his poetry are the long poem (his first published work, so far as we know), *The Masquerade*, of 1728;³ the mock-heroic *Vernoniad* of 1741; the three light-hearted poems attributed to him in the Dublin edition of *The Important Triflers* in 1749; various prologues and epilogues; and numerous songs from his plays. The songs, in particular, represent some of Fielding's best work in verse; and though he apparently was not concerned to collect them, they should be taken into account in any estimate of his poetic powers. At least two of them, "The Dusky Night Rides Down the Sky," and "The Roast Beef of Old England,"⁴ are worthy of inclusion in any anthology of eighteenth-century poetry. They seem to spring directly from the heart of England, as the best of the old ballads do, and they are free of that more formal poetic manner Fielding usually assumed when he applied himself to verse.

The thirty-seven poems included in the *Miscellanies* display a surprising range of types, despite the fact that with one exception they are all couched in heroic or tetrameter couplets.⁵ We are offered several verse essays and verse epistles, numerous epigrams and mock epitaphs, a rebus, two songs, a parody, a short translation, a burlesque imitation, and a number of light pieces in a romantic or satiric vein. Though perhaps no poet himself, Fielding shows a lively awareness of what other poets of his day were doing!

The models that Fielding set himself were apparently Pope (as one would expect) and Young, in the heroic couplet, and Butler and Prior in the octosyllabic line. This

³ Cf. L. P. Goggin, "Fielding's *The Masquerade*," *PQ*, xxxvi (1957), 475-87.

⁴ On the unresolved claim of Richard Leveridge to this latter song, of which there are several different versions, see Cross, I, 109-10, and Dudden, I, 94, n. 4.

⁵ Eighteen of the poems are in heroic couplets, fourteen in octosyllabics, four in anapestic tetrameter, and one (a song) has the form 868688 (ababcc).

was the usual pattern for young versifiers of the time. An anonymous poet of 1729 complained of the octosyllabic tradition:

As some will strain at Simily,
First work it fine, and then apply,
Add BUTLER'S Rhymes, to PRIOR'S Thoughts,
And chuse to mimick others Faults:
By Head and Shoulders, bring in a Stick,
To shew their Knack at HUDIBRASTICK.

("TO HENRY POWNEY, *Esq*;" in *Miscellaneous Poems*, ed. James Ralph [1729], pp. 174-75)

Hints and echoes from Gay and Swift may enter into Fielding's verse from time to time; but (though the Latin poets ever lurk in the background) this very nearly completes the range of significant influence that one can observe. No interest is shown in Miltonic or Spenserian imitations, in the pastoral or topographical poetry of his contemporaries, or in the lyric graces of Waller, Cowley, and Denham. Fielding owned the works of these latter influential poets and occasionally quoted them; but his own amorous lyrics strive for the good-humored ease of Prior, if anyone, not the liquid smoothness of the seventeenth-century group. The truth of the matter is that Fielding seldom displayed any very extensive enthusiasm for earlier English poetry. He was able to quote appropriately from Suckling ("and him of all the sweetest"—*Amelia*, vi, i) or Waller or Donne, as the occasion demanded; but he called upon the Restoration playwrights more frequently than the poets—and he manifestly preferred to quote Horace or Juvenal or Virgil to any of the English poets except Shakespeare. Doubts concerning the acuteness of his (English) poetic ear are unfortunately bolstered by noticing that when Fielding did cite something that pleased him, it frequently turned out to be—like the lines from Boyse's *Deity* in *Tom Jones* (vii, i)—a work of small poetic

merit. It would appear that what interested Fielding was primarily the matter, the particular ideas expressed, rather than the manner; and the same emphasis can be seen in his own verse.

2

On the other hand, it must be said that Fielding had obviously studied in some detail the techniques that enabled Pope to combine ease and dignity in the movement of the verse essay. If this ultimate mastery was beyond his skill, he nevertheless learned to impart a variety to his couplets and an energy to his phrasing that rescue the verse essays of the *Miscellanies* from the droning banality of most of the Popeian epigoni. Brief pedestrian analysis of a random passage from one of the essays may serve to illustrate this point:

While a mean Crowd of Sycophants attend,	1
And fawn and flatter, creep and cringe and	2
bend;	
The Fav'rite blesses his superior State,	3
Rises o'er all, and hails Himself the Great.	4
Vain Man! can such as these to Greatness raise?	5
Can Honour come from Dirt? from Baseness,	6
Praise?	
Then India's Gem on Scotland's Coast shall	7
shine,	
And the Peruvian Ore enrich the Cornish Mine.	8
(Miscellanies, I, 3-4)	

The iambic rhythm is firmly established; but Fielding gains variety by a sprinkling of anapests ("superior State," "India's Gem," and "Peruvian Ore");⁸ by substitution of trochees in the initial foot (lines 1 and 4), or even (in line 8) by beginning with an anacrusis of two unstressed

⁸ These apparent anapests may have been pronounced as iambs by synaeresis. Cf. Paul Fussell, Jr., *Theory of Prosody in Eighteenth-Century England* (New London, Conn., 1954), pp. 68-80.