

= The Vicar of Bullhampton =

The Vicar of Bullhampton is an 1870 novel by Anthony Trollope . It is made up of three intertwining subplots : the courtship of a young woman by two suitors ; a feud between the titular Broad church vicar and a Low church nobleman , abetted by a Methodist minister ; and the vicar 's attempt to rehabilitate a young woman who has gone astray .

Trollope expected his depiction of a fallen woman to be controversial , and unusually for him wrote a preface defending it . But the anticipated controversy never materialised , and contemporary reviewers tended to ignore that subplot , focussing instead on the courtship in the novel . Reviews were generally less than positive ; many reviewers and readers who had acquired a taste for Trollope from the 1850s ? 60s Barchester novels were unhappy about the darker tone of later novels such as this one .

Trollope 's fortunes suffered because of the mode of the novel 's publication . Owing to mismanagement by the publishers , it was not serialised in a popular magazine , as originally intended . Instead , it was issued as monthly numbers , a form of serialisation that had become unpopular with the reading public , and Trollope lost readers as a result .

= = Plot summary = =

The Vicar of Bullhampton is set in a small town in Wiltshire . It develops three subplots , all connected with Frank Fenwick , the eponymous vicar .

= = = Mary Lowther = = =

The first subplot involves the courtship of Mary Lowther , a childhood friend of the vicar 's wife . Harry Gilmore , a Bullhampton squire and a friend of the Fenwicks , falls deeply in love with her . Mary recognises that Gilmore is a good man , but she fears that she does not adore him as a woman should adore the man she marries . The Fenwicks and her guardian aunt all urge her to accept his proposal , telling her that the affection she does not now feel will come after marriage . In the face of this advice , she does not reject Gilmore outright , but asks for time to consider .

Mary finds the love she seeks in her second cousin , Captain Walter Marrable . He falls in love with her , and she joyously accepts his offer of marriage . However , misfortune strikes in the form of Colonel Marrable , the Captain 's father , who swindles his son out of the fortune left him by his late mother . The impoverished Captain fears that he will have to return to India with his regiment ; he and Mary , each unwilling to inflict poverty on the other , end their engagement by mutual consent and with mutual regret .

Mary , dissipated , yields to Gilmore 's importunements , warning him that theirs must be a long engagement and that she will end it if Captain Marrable finds himself able to marry a woman without a fortune . This comes to pass : the death of the Captain 's cousin , the heir to the family 's baronetcy , makes him the likely eventual heir . The current Baronet accepts the Captain as his heir , buying out the Colonel 's interest to prevent his squandering the family fortune . The two lovers are reunited , leaving Gilmore bitter and despondent .

= = = Brattle family = = =

The second subplot involves the family of Bullhampton 's miller , Jacob Brattle . His youngest son , Sam , is a hard worker at the mill , but has fallen in with bad companions , and is often absent from home . Sam 's sister Carry is worse off yet : having yielded to a seducer , she has been disowned by her father , and is living a life of sin in an unknown location .

When a Bullhampton farmer is murdered in the course of a burglary , suspicion falls on Sam Brattle and his associates . Fenwick believes in Sam 's innocence , and acts as one of his bondsmen . Through Sam he discovers Carry 's whereabouts , and resolves to rescue her if he can . He finds her a temporary home , but it becomes clear to him that the only permanent solution must involve

bringing her back into the Brattle family , which means winning her father 's forgiveness .

Carry leaves the home that Fenwick has found her and wanders distraught . Eventually , she returns to the mill , half resolved to see her old home and then drown herself in the millstream . There she is greeted lovingly by her mother and sister . Her father reluctantly allows her to remain in the family home ; eventually he too forgives her , although he can never forget the shame she has brought on the family . Carry remains with her family for the rest of her life , but although she has returned to decency , her past ensures that she will never find an honest husband .

Sam is never charged with the murder , although one of his former associates is hanged for it . He continues to work at the mill , and eventually marries a Bullhampton girl .

= = = Marquis and Methodist = = =

A third subplot centres on the relationship between Fenwick , Mr. Puddleham , the village 's Methodist minister , and the Marquis of Trowbridge , Bullhampton 's principal landowner . The marquis believes that Sam Brattle is guilty of the murder , and is angered by Fenwick 's support for him . He spreads rumours about Fenwick 's relations with Carry Brattle , and grants Puddleham permission to build a chapel on a piece of land neighbouring Fenwick 's residence , where he hopes that the sight of it and the sound of its bell will annoy the vicar . Fenwick tries to reconcile himself to the existence of the chapel , but it subsequently comes to light that the land does not belong to the marquis , and is instead part of the parish 's glebe . The embarrassed marquis pays to move the chapel to a new location , and through the intervention of his son , a suave Member of Parliament , he and Fenwick are reconciled .

= = Major themes = =

= = = Plight of the fallen woman = = =

According to Trollope , the plight of Carry Brattle was at the center of the story . " The Vicar of Bullhampton was written chiefly with the object of exciting not only pity but sympathy for fallen woman , and of raising a feeling of forgiveness for such in the minds of other women . " In the Autobiography , he argued that the punishment for fornication is far heavier for women than for men , although in most cases the latter are more to blame than the former ; and that women are given no opportunity of returning to decent lives , however repentant they might be .

On 5 August 1869 , shortly after The Vicar had begun to appear in the form of monthly numbers , Dion Boucicault 's *Formosa* ; or , *The Railroad to Ruin* opened at Drury Lane . The title character of Boucicault 's play was a harlot , and her representation on stage provoked an exchange in the pages of The Times . Critics argued that the depiction of a prostitute in the theatre would tarnish the innocence of unmarried girls attending the performance . Supporters , including Boucicault himself , responded that worse women were regularly portrayed in Italian operas such as *La traviata* and *Lucrezia Borgia* , which were considered eminently suitable for young women , and in the police and court news of The Times itself .

Trollope leapt into the fray somewhat belatedly , in the pages of Saint Paul 's in October 1869 , with an article on the *Formosa* controversy that can be read as a defence of and an advertisement for The Vicar . He took exception to several of the arguments in The Times : young women of the 1860s , he wrote , were not unaware of the existence of prostitution ; and attempting to keep them in ignorance would not conduce to virtue . Rather than promoting vice , an accurate depiction of the squalid and miserable life of a woman of the streets would arm young people to resist temptation .

The harm done by *Formosa* lies in this , ? that the character is utterly false , false to human nature and false to London life . She is a wretch , abominable almost beyond conception , so as to be odious , if known , to the most odious . She is sharper as well as prostitute , ? and is false to all with whom she comes in contact , to those whom she is supposed to love and to those who love her . Her peculiar profession is represented as causing her no personal remorse . And yet she is

exhibited to us as a fine creature , a noble woman , one whom a man might be honoured by loving ; ? and at last she ends with a success ! ... That which is vile and dirty , squalid and miserable , ? that , of which we may say that were its horrors known such knowledge would deter more thoroughly than any ignorance , ? is exhibited as a bright existence , full of danger indeed , but still open to all that is noble , and capable of final success .

When the book edition of *The Vicar of Bullhampton* appeared in April 1870 , it bore a preface ; Trollope , who ordinarily scorned prefaces and dedications , felt compelled to justify the presentation of a character like Carry Brattle . He reiterated the points he had made regarding Formosa : that while depicting a fallen woman as glamorous or noble might lead impressionable readers to vice , a true depiction of such a woman 's misery might deter readers from yielding to temptation ; and might soften the hearts of parents whose daughters have fallen , and thus afford an opportunity of returning to decency .

= = = Love and courtship = = =

A recurring theme in Trollope 's work is the difficulty of choosing between two suitors . As Henry James expressed it ,

Trollope has described again and again the ravages of love ... His story is always primarily a love @-@ story , and a love @-@ story constructed on an inveterate system . There is a young lady who has two lovers , or a young man who has two sweethearts ; we are treated to the innumerable forms in which this predicament may present itself and the consequences , sometimes pathetic , sometimes grotesque , which spring from such false situations .

To illustrate this point , James cited *The Vicar* , with Mary Lowther 's vacillation between Gilmore and Col. Marrable .

Unlike the majority of Trollope 's triangles , Mary is not called upon to judge between a good suitor and a bad one , but between two good men . Gilmore is presented as a sympathetic and admirable character ; the reader learns far less about Captain Marrable 's character , and is given no reason why Mary should prefer him to his rival . To Trollope , a woman does not necessarily fall in love because of a man 's merits ; and it is very wrong for a woman to marry where she does not love , regardless of her suitor 's worthy qualities .

= = = " The Girl of the Period " = = =

In David Skilton 's view , the Carry Brattle and Mary Lowther subplots together comprise a rejoinder to Eliza Lynn Linton 's " *The Girl of the Period* " . In her 1868 essay , Linton accused contemporary English girls of imitating prostitutes in their dress , speech , and manner , and declared that " the Girl of the Period has done away with such moral muffishness as consideration for others , or regard for counsel and rebuke " . Trollope was well aware of Linton 's views , and made two references to them in the novel . According to Skilton , the highly unromantic portrayal of Carry Brattle 's condition was a denial of Linton 's claim that demimondaines were " gorgeously attired and sumptuously appointed ... flattered , fêted , and courted " ; and the trouble that Mary Lowther brought upon herself and others came about not because of her disregard for counsel and rebuke , but because she attempted to follow the advice of her friends and elders . Near the end of the novel , Trollope writes :

[The author] has endeavoured to describe a young woman , prompted in all her doings by a conscience wide awake , guided by principle , willing , if need be , to sacrifice herself , struggling always to keep herself from doing wrong , but yet causing infinite grief to others , and nearly bringing herself to utter shipwreck , because , for a while , she allowed herself to believe that it would be right for her to marry a man whom she did not love .

In Skilton 's opinion , since the stories of the two women are both essential to Trollope 's refutation of Linton , neither can be given " titular pre @-@ eminence " ; thus the book had to take its name from the vicar . (The title was changed at some point in the novel 's development ; in the early planning stages , it was tentatively named *I Count Her Wrong* .)

== Religion ==

The Vicar of Bullhampton has been described as Trollope 's most religious novel , and Frank Fenwick as his " most explicitly religious character " . Although the author won renown for his depictions of the lives of the clergy in the Barsetshire novels , he wrote of their social rather than their spiritual lives . In The Vicar , however , Fenwick 's object is " to apply Christian doctrine to life in the world . "

A variety of religious beliefs are represented among the novel 's characters . Jacob Brattle is an unbeliever . Puddleham is a Primitive Methodist . The Stowte family , to which the marquis belongs , are Low Church Anglicans , and Fenwick is High church and latitudinarian . Their charity is tested by their response to Carry Brattle , and it is Fenwick who passes the test . As William Cadbury expresses it , Puddleham has been hardened by too much doctrine , Jacob Brattle by too little .

Fenwick 's beliefs are similar to Trollope 's own . In his early life , the novelist was a supporter of the Tractarians . However , beginning in about the mid @-@ 1860s , his sympathies tended increasingly toward the Broad church . He defended Bishop Colenso , expressed doubt about the literal truth of the Old Testament , and questioned the doctrine of eternal punishment contained in the Athanasian Creed .

Indeed , Fenwick resembled his creator in more than belief . To T. H. S. Escott , who was personally acquainted with Trollope , Fenwick ? generous , outspoken , broad @-@ minded , and a bit pugnacious ? was very much like a portrait of the author in clerical dress . Puddleham 's discomfiture " proves , to Trollope 's naively undisguised satisfaction , that Providence is on the side of the State Church " .

== Publication history ==

== Once A Week ==

Early in 1868 , Trollope was approached by E. S. Dallas , a fellow member of the Garrick Club . Dallas had just been appointed editor of Once A Week , a magazine published by the firm of Bradbury and Evans . Trollope agreed to provide a novel of the length of The Claverings , to be serialised beginning in May 1869 , for a fee of £ 2800 . In the course of his correspondence with Dallas , Trollope wrote , " Of course it is understood that it is intended for your periodical , Once A Week . "

Trollope wrote The Vicar of Bullhampton between 15 June and 1 November 1868 . The novel was begun in Washington , D.C. , where the author was on a mission to negotiate a postal treaty and international copyright arrangements with the United States . It was concluded after his return to England , in the early stages of his unsuccessful campaign for a Parliamentary seat in the borough of Beverley .

As the publication date neared , difficulties arose . In January 1869 , Dallas asked Trollope for permission to defer serial publication by three months . As Trollope had agreed not to allow another of his novels to run serially during the first six months of The Vicar 's career , the editor 's request would have diminished the author 's income . Trollope initially refused , but subsequently agreed to a delay of two months , with publication to begin in early July .

Matters did not improve . In March 1869 , Dallas made a new request of Trollope . Once A Week had bought the rights to Victor Hugo 's forthcoming novel , L 'homme qui rit , expecting to begin serialisation in January 1869 . However , Hugo was behind schedule , and the novel would not be available until April . The magazine did not have enough space to run Hugo 's and Trollope 's novels side by side . Would Trollope , therefore , be willing to see The Vicar serialised in The Gentleman 's Magazine instead ?

Trollope would not . The Gentleman 's Magazine was , in Michael Sadleir 's words , " a very inferior paper with a lower class of reader and a poor general reputation " . Moreover , personal feelings

were involved : Trollope resented the fact that he , a punctual Englishman , was being asked to yield to a dilatory Frenchman .

My disgust at this proposition was , I think , chiefly due to Victor Hugo 's latter novels , which I regard as pretentious and untrue to nature . To this perhaps was added some feeling of indignation that I should be asked to give way to a Frenchman . The Frenchman had broken his engagement . He had failed to have his work finished by the stipulated time . From week to week and from month to month he had put off the fulfilment of his duty . And because of these laches on his part , ? on the part of this sententious French Radical , ? I was to be thrown over !

Trollope refused . Hugo 's novel was published in The Gentleman 's Magazine , beginning in May 1869 . However , by the end of June , the sale of Once A Week to a new publisher was in progress . Rather than serialising The Vicar in the magazine , Bradbury and Evans issued it in eleven monthly shilling numbers , running from July 1869 to May 1870 . Trollope could not object to this mode of independent publication ; but it was one that had fallen out of favour with the public , and Trollope suffered a loss of reputation and readership as a result . He also suffered a pecuniary loss of £ 300 , agreeing for reasons unspecified to accept only £ 2500 for the novel .

= = = Other publication = = =

The Vicar of Bullhampton was published serially in Lippincott 's Monthly Magazine of Philadelphia in 1869 ? 70 . At the same time , an American book edition was issued by J. B. Lippincott & Co .

Bradbury and Evans released the novel in book form in 1870 , as a single volume with thirty illustrations by Henry Woods . In the same year , English @-@ language books were published by Harper in New York and by Tauchnitz in Leipzig ; a Russian translation , Bullhamptonsky Vikaryi , was published in Moscow . In 1872 , a Dutch translation , De Predikant van Bullhampton , was published by Roelants of Schiedam ; in 1873 , a Russian Bullhamptonsky Vikaryi was released in St. Petersburg .

More recently , editions have been published by Dover Publications in 1979 ; by Alan Sutton in 1983 ; by Oxford University Press in 1924 , re @-@ issued with an introduction by David Skilton in 1988 ; and by the Trollope Society , with an introduction by John Halperin , in 1998 .

= = Reception = =

Trollope 's preface suggests that he anticipated controversy from the depiction of Carry Brattle in The Vicar of Bullhampton . This did not happen . The Times declared it " a nice , easy , safe reading book for old ladies and young ladies ... welcome in all well @-@ regulated families " . Contemporary reviewers tended to neglect the Carry Brattle subplot and focus on Mary Lowther , whose conduct was criticised by Blackwood 's Magazine , by The Times , and by Mrs. Oliphant . The Saturday Review complained that " [a] sort of savageness pervades the book " , and that " [n] obody is pleasant " , and described the novel as " third @-@ rate " and as a " not very satisfactory book " . This was in keeping with the reaction of many readers and reviewers who had grown accustomed to the wholesome tone and genteel characters of the Barchester novels , and were not happy with the darker and more pessimistic tone of Trollope 's later works .

Later critics varied in their opinion of the novel . Henry James , who had loudly derided several of Trollope 's novels of the mid @-@ 1860s , described it in an 1883 article as a " slow but excellent story , which is a capital example of interest produced by the quietest conceivable means " . In 1927 , Michael Sadleir wrote that it " has a sure title to enduring reputation " ; of Mary Lowther , whom earlier critics had found irritating , he wrote , " to @-@ day she seems sensible enough and , as a young woman , wholly natural . " . By 1971 , however , James Pope @-@ Hennessy labelled the novel " a lifeless , dull production " .

More recently still , Trollope scholars have looked upon it with increasing favour , describing it as a powerful work that has suffered undeserved neglect . Present @-@ day critics have focussed increasingly on the Carry Brattle subplot ; it has been suggested , supported in part by the similarity of passages from The Vicar , from the Autobiography , and from The Small House at Allington

referring to Johnny Eames , that some aspects of her portrayal are based on the novelist 's own early adulthood in London .