Virginia Woolf, Penguin Paperbacks, and Mass Publishing in Mid-Century Britain

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"I am anxious to obtain the author's signature to enclose with my copies of ORLANDO and A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN. Could you possibly help me in my quest?"[1] In July 1946, Allen Lane, director of Penguin Books, approached Leonard Woolf with an unusual, some might say inappropriate, request. Four years earlier, Penguin Books had published a cheap paperback edition of Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* (1928) and Lane's company had also been given permission to republish *A Room of One's Own* (1929) as a paperback in 1945. Since setting up his business in 1935, Lane had developed the habit of asking authors to sign one copy of a first Penguin edition of their books for him to keep. In Woolf's case such autograph hunting was more complicated because the author had died in 1941. Unperturbed, Lane continued to request Woolf's autographs from her widower, who sent Lane "old cheques" which contained her signature (D 1107/2159). Whenever a Woolf title appeared for the first time as a Penguin, Lane would paste Woolf's signature into a book that would then be added to his rapidly expanding private collection (Figures 1 and 2).[2]

This article explores the financial, logistic, and ideological transactions that resulted in the re-packaging of Virginia Woolf as a mass-produced Penguin author, a process that began toward the end of her career and had been mostly seen through by the time of Leonard's death in 1969. By turning to the so-far unexplored archival resources held at the University of Bristol, the article takes note of the different stages, key actors, and main considerations that contributed to Woolf's gradual assimilation into Britain's paperback industry. While Leonard would continue to publish her books under the Hogarth imprint, Lane's company negotiated deals that allowed

Penguin Books to gradually lease the rights to most of Woolf's major works. As the archive reveals, financial considerations regularly determined decision-making processes on both sides, proffering uncomfortable suggestions that Woolf's cultural legacy was controlled by two men who had different, at times coordinated, views on how to package and circulate her authorial signatures for maximum profit. The un-authorized autographs in Lane's first editions already evoke the image of called-off economic transactions: Woolf never sent the cheques she had signed and her own negotiations with Penguin Books were cut short in 1941. After her death others stepped in to settle accounts for her. Anyone encountering them in the archive today would be aware of the act of cutting and pasting that had transposed her signatures into their new locations. The process of transposing them from husband to editor, from discarded check to posthumously published paperback, strongly evokes the idea of misappropriated cultural capital and unintended ownership. The materials in the Penguin archive work in support of critical narratives arguing that Woolf's works were posthumously seized by a patriarchal, institutional culture she had repeatedly, and vociferously, criticized.

While it acknowledges the logic and the importance of this feminist-inflected argument previously made by Woolf scholars, this article also hopes to bring it into conversation with a slightly different critical narrative about the construction of Woolf's cultural afterlife in twentieth-century Britain. By examining Penguin-related archival materials through the lens of Woolf's comments about book-reading and publishing and by reading them alongside existing records about her own professional encounters with Allen Lane and his company, I will suggest that Woolf's step-by-step re-branding as a Penguin author was a process broadly in line with her suggestions about the need to democratize access to reading through the distribution of cheaply produced books. As Melba Cuddy-Keane observes, "Woolf modeled a future in which the

attainment traditionally reserved for a privileged few would be available to all. Democratic highbrowism was her ideal […] making books and knowledge accessible to all on an equitable basis was one reform to be achieved" (111). "Money is no longer going to do our thinking for us," Woolf had argued in 1940 in "The Leaning Tower"; "Wealth will no longer decide who shall be taught and who not" (Woolf 2011, 277). Lane, Woolf must have realised, had put into practice some of her own, perhaps idealistically conceived ideas about a more equitable distribution of literary culture. As such, Woolf's gradual, posthumous emergence as a Penguin author was a practical extension of her own socio-political commitments.

This is not to suggest that Leonard Woolf acted on his wife's wishes whenever he agreed to have one of her books released as a Penguin. Before the Lady Chatterley trial created an unprecedented demand for modernist titles and authors in the 1960s, he granted Penguin the lease of select Woolf titles only if these publications did not compromise sales figures of Hogarth counterparts. Simply put, Leonard had to keep the financial health of the Hogarth Press firmly in view and sales figures of the Uniform Edition of Woolf's works were his principal concern when dealing with Penguin.[3] As long as these titles sold well, he would not lease rights to Lane's company. This meant that only Woolf's lesser-known titles, her essays and non-fiction, were initially signed over to Penguin Books. It also meant that Lane's company primarily and by necessity promoted a particular image of Woolf in post-war Britain: that of the politically committed essayist.[4] As a consequence, Penguin Books readers of the 1940s and 1950s would have had the chance to become well-acquainted with Woolf the cultural critic who had demanded the affordability of books and who had championed the "common reader" as a model for creatively inspired but non-professional engagements with literature. That Lane's paperbacks got to mass-circulate her ideas about a democratic redistribution of literary culture was a curious

but extremely fitting historical coincidence. Re-printed as cheap paperbacks, Woolf's essays and criticism were given a highly appropriate material wrapping in the post-war period.

Allen Lane and the Paperback Revolution

When Allen Lane, the chairman of the Bodley Head, began to print his sixpenny paperbacks in 1935, he had encountered derisive remarks from book traders, many of whom dismissed his scheme as financially unsustainable. Allegedly, he had come up with the business idea for the Penguins a year earlier when he was travelling home from a weekend visit to Agatha Christie's holiday home in Devon. Realising that he had nothing to read on the train, he was so "appalled by the rubbish on offer at the railway bookstall on Exeter station that he decided, there and then, that he would remedy matters by producing a line of paperbacks that cost no more each than a packet of cigarettes, looked bright and elegant rather than garish, and included worthwhile work of literature instead of lightweight ephemera" (Lewis, 71). Soon thereafter, he launched the first Penguin series under the Bodley Head imprint, asking other publishers for the rights to re-print the work of leading authors on their lists. Jonathan Cape, privately convinced that his competitor's idea for cheap paperbacks would end in bankruptcy (Penguin Books 1985, 15-16), provided the first six of the original ten Penguin titles in exchange for hefty royalties: Susan Ertz's *Madame Claire* (1923), Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), Eric Linklater's *Poet's Pub* (1929), Beverley Nichols's *Twenty-Five* (1926), Mary Webb's *Gone to Earth* (1917), and E. D. Young's *William* (1925). From the backlist of the Bodley Head came Agatha Christie's *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (1921) and André Maurois's *Ariel* (1924). Lane also secured the rights for Dorothy Sayers's *The Unpleasantness at the Bellona Club* (1928) from Ernest Benn

Limited and for Compton Mackenzie's *Carnival* (1912) from Chatto & Windus. His plan was simple: to re-issue and mass-produce an eclectic list of ten attractively presented best-selling titles and offer them for the lowest possible price. It was estimated that he would break even if he sold at least 17,500 copies of each title. With a surprise order for 63,500 copies from Woolworth that came in shortly before the first ten Penguins were released on 30 July 1935, Lane's good fortune was sealed. His venture was hailed in the press as "a publishing triumph" with the "[n]eatly bound, well printed and perfectly pocketable" volumes praised as "a marvel of mass-production" (qtd. in Penguin Books 1985, 18). Only one year after the first ten Penguins had been released, Lane could announce "sales of over three million books and a turnover for the book trade of £75,000" (Penguin Books 1985, 20). Encouraged by his success, he founded Penguin Books Limited in January 1936 and launched the Penguin Shakespeare series in 1937. In that year, he also re-released George Bernard Shaw's *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism, Capitalism, Sovietism and Fascism* (1928) as the first title in a new non-fiction Pelican series.

With hindsight, the story of Lane's publishing venture has the appearance of inevitable success. His affordable reprints democratized reading habits by making books available to millions of readers who had thus far been unable to pay the conventional price of new (7s6d) or re-issued hardbacks (3s6d). As the socialist activist Margaret Cole summed up in a Hogarth publication in 1938: "To put it quite simply, until this present generation, reading for culture's sake, and the ownership of books, was a class privilege belonging to the well-to-do" (*Books and the People*, 13). As of now, however, members of the so-called "new reading public"—defined by Cole as individuals who come "from age-classes and income-classes, which until now had hardly ever read a book at all except under some sort of compulsion; from children, from

students in trade and technical schools, and from all manner of people who were afraid to be seen entering a bookshop" ("Books for the Multitude-III," 42)—could get their hands on good books.[5] Although Lane was hardly the only publisher in interwar Britain who experimented with paperbacks or with low-cost publishing—Victor Gollancz, Collins, and J. M. Dent & Sons are cases in point—he was exceptional in turning his vision for socio-political progress into substantial profit.[6]

But this retrospectively created success story fails to acknowledge the deeply engrained and widely accepted cultural stereotypes about the appearance of books that could easily have guillotined Lane's project. When he began to distribute his sixpenny, identically looking reprints in the mid-1930s, many people continued to associate paperbacks with the lurid "yellow-backs" of the nineteenth century: cheaply produced books printed in double columns, whose sensationalist plot lines were advertised by colorful, often sexually titillating covers. Implicitly, that is to say, interwar readers made value judgments about a book's content by looking at its cover. In the case of paperbacks, the flimsiness of its wrapping strongly suggested stories of inferior quality.[7] Entertaining these books might be. But that a paperback could be the conveyor of serious, good literature must have been inconceivable for many of Lane's contemporaries. For them, its material conditions loudly proclaimed poor taste. How could the cheap binding contain reading material that was anything but diverting and disposable?

Lane hoped to contest the paperback's lowbrow stigma by emphasizing the quality of the texts he had selected for re-printing. By choosing easily recognizable, modern-looking covers and an "affable mascot" for his books, he also made sure that the Penguins were visually distinct from the notorious "yellow-backs."[8] "My concept of the paperback," he explained in an interview in 1966, was "to produce the best books I could get, to produce them in a style which

had some regard for aesthetics and to get the price down as low as possible; at the time it was the price of ten cigarettes, sixpence."[9] However, no other image evokes inexpensive (addictive) pleasure and ephemerality in the same manner as that of the cigarette. By using the concept of this affordable throwaway, Lane was in danger of reinforcing cultural stereotypes relating to the cheapness of his Penguins. Right from the start his business idea also fueled fears among competitors that his revolutionary publishing venture would put them all out of their jobs. As George Orwell proclaimed in 1936, Penguin paperbacks, although beneficial for consumers, were "a disaster" "for the publisher, the compositor, the author and the bookseller" because the new trade in cheaper books meant that "less money is spent on books" (166). Woolf was a celebrated author by the time Lane launched his first Penguin series. She was also the owner of a publishing house that had initially specialized in printing experimental, often untested writing by authors who belonged to her own social and intellectual circle. But her Hogarth Press had more recently become more commercialized.[10] What was her response to Lane and to his proposition that the mass-production and consumption of books could be portents of progressive social change?

"Do they pay? Do they sell?" Virginia Woolf and Penguin Books

Few records survive that reveal Woolf's thoughts about Allen Lane and Penguin Books. A lot of Hogarth correspondence from the interwar and war years was destroyed when the company's offices were bombed during the Blitz. Comments in Woolf's published letters and diaries are also sparse. But it is clear that Lane repeatedly reached out to the Woolfs in the 1930s to recruit them and other prestigious Hogarth authors for his expanding list. Woolf, however, who was

cautiously intrigued by but also dismissive of Lane's publishing project, was reluctant to strike up a professional relationship with Penguin Books. Compared to other women modernists such as Elizabeth Bowen, who had many of her titles re-printed as cheap Penguins as soon as the opportunity arose, Woolf was hesitant about Lane's suggestion to issue paperback versions of her books.[11] By examining her decisions for accepting or rejecting his offers and by doing so in light of her views on cultural literacy and (mass) publishing, we can gain a better understanding not only of Woolf's views about Lane's publishing project. This investigation will also reveal interesting continuities between her negotiations with Penguin Books and those that Leonard undertook on her behalf after her death when the Hogarth Press and Lane's company jointly created a new platform for Woolf's work and consolidated her reputation as a leading author of the modernist period in Britain.

Lane first contacted the Hogarth Press to ask for one of Woolf's fiction titles. According to a letter she wrote to Vita Sackville-West on 14 May 1936 from Falmouth, Woolf had been on Lane's wish list when he began commissioning titles for the second and third Penguin series in 1935. As Woolf's letter reveals, Lane had asked the Hogarth Press for the rights to re-print *Orlando*,[12] the Woolf novel which had thus far sold the most copies (Woolmer 74). The book had already proven to be commercially successful and its intriguing mix of genres—biography and fiction—would have appealed to Lane who was keen to diversify his list. But as Woolf also reveals in her letter to Sackville-West, she had haughtily, and perhaps too hastily rejected the request: "I was asked to give them Orlando and in my hoity-toity way refused" (Woolf 1980, 40-41). Woolf is self-deprecating but it is worth stating that she might have had good reasons for turning down the chairman of the Bodley Head when he first approached her with the suggestion to be part of his new publishing venture. It is entirely possible that both Woolfs would have

looked at Lane's trial project with a good amount of skepticism that mirrored that of other publishers and booksellers of the period. By the mid-1930s the Bodley Head, the formerly reputable publishing firm that had such eminent writers as Oscar Wilde, Arthur Machen, Max Beerbohm, and Ford Madox Ford on its list, was known to be in dire straits, barely staving off bankruptcy. In 1926 Lane had also gained notoriety as the editor who had hastily accepted Hesketh Pearson's *The Whispering Gallery*, a book presented as a diary of recorded conversations between a diplomat and a number of highly visible politicians and cultural workers that, it turned out, were actually the produce of Pearson's imagination (Rose and Anderson 40-44). The case created a minor scandal in the publishing world, bringing financial loss and reputational damage to the Bodley Head. It is understandable that for these reasons alone Woolf might have been disinclined to get involved with Lane's paperback project. The first series had been successfully launched. But at the time when he contacted the Hogarth Press editors in September 1935 to ask if he could include Woolf's title in one of his forthcoming series, the Penguin enterprise might have looked too much like a reckless endeavor launched by someone who was trying to save his company. A month before contacting Woolf, Lane had also approached Sackville-West with the request to re-print her novel *The Edwardians*, which had been published by the Hogarth Press in 1930. At that point, on 17 August 1935, Sackville-West had claimed in a letter addressed to Leonard Woolf that she "had never heard of the Penguins books before" (MS 2750/417). Woolf, it seems, was not the only Hogarth author who was oblivious to the scale of the cultural revolution Lane had initiated in the summer of 1935.

Unlike Woolf, however, Sackville-West was immediately won over by Lane's "paying proposition," as she called it in her letter to Leonard. *The Edwardians* was published as Penguin No. 16 in the second series in January 1936.[13] Only three months later Woolf reported in her

letter from Cornwall that “Falmouth has a row of Penguin Edwardians.” Beginning to feel intrigued by the Penguin business, she asked her friend inquisitively: “Do they pay? Do they sell?” (Woolf 1980, 40). It was September 1936 before Vita’s first royalty check from Penguin Books arrived at the Hogarth Press, but at this point it must have been clear to the Woolfs that Lane’s was truly a “paying proposition.” In its first months as a paperback, *The Edwardians* had sold 64,349 copies. Further royalty statements in the Hogarth Press Business Archive show that this title continued to sell well, providing Sackville-West with a steady income until war broke out in 1939 (Figure 3).[14] It is little wonder that Vita speedily agreed when Penguin Books approached her in 1939 with the suggestion to include her other best-selling Hogarth title *All Passions Spent* (1931) “in a special list of publications for Christmas.”[15] Although royalty scales had been lowered due to an increase in the cost of production, this title—selling 79,676 copies—still generated £82 19s 10d in royalties in the first year of the war.[16]

Other Hogarth authors had similar experiences. In 1938, Lane had contacted Leonard Woolf with the suggestion to “add [C.H.B.] Kitchin’s DEATH OF MY AUNT to [their] Detective Section.”[17] The proposal was accepted by the author and by the Hogarth Press, and Kitchen’s paperbacked title sold even more copies than Sackville-West’s in the first two years after being re-issued as a paperback.[18] In this particular case, however, the Hogarth Press insisted on receiving 25% of the royalties—as opposed to the 10% agreed upon in the contract drawn up for *The Edwardians* a few years earlier.[19] By the late 1930s, Leonard and Virginia Woolf must have been aware that money could be made by leasing Hogarth titles to Lane. In the three years since he had first approached them with the suggestion to re-print Woolf’s *Orlando*, Penguin Books had established itself as a presence in Britain’s interwar publishing scene. Lane’s company was steadily expanding. Not only did Penguin Books begin to introduce more series

but Lane was also beginning to set up outlets in other parts of the English-speaking world.[20] By 1938 it must have been clear to the Woolfs that Penguin Books was there to stay. Viewed from a purely commercial perspective, the Hogarth Press was well advised to strike up occasional deals with Lane's company.

But Leonard was, as John Lehmann stated in a letter to Anna Freud in 1942, "very anxious to release […] rights when a book is selling well" as a Hogarth title.[21] This was in spite of Lane's reassurance that the publication of the first ten Penguin paperbacks "has not affected adversely the sales of more expensive editions." On the contrary, he had claimed back in 1935, "we have definitely been able to trace sales of more expensive editions of books by the same author directly to sales of Penguin Books."[22] As Lane intimated, a paperback edition of a book was synonymous with free advertising for publishers holding the rights to hardback titles written by the same author. But Leonard remained cautious, establishing business relations in the mid-1930s that would determine his dealings with Penguin Books over the next two decades. Fearful that a Penguin edition would adversely affect sales figures of its Hogarth counterpart, he would not allow Lane to publish a paperback version of a Hogarth title if it was selling well or if it had recently been re-issued in a cheaper (3s. 6d.) or Uniform edition.[23]

He was especially protective of Virginia's work and remained reluctant to relinquish editorial control. Some years earlier he had already rejected Jonathan Cape's proposition to publish a collected edition of Woolf's work "under the joint imprint of The Hogarth Press and Jonathan Cape." As he explained in a letter to Cape from 1929, "we feel that as long as we continue to publish her books under the Hogarth imprint, we had better go the whole hog and also do the collection edition."[24] By the mid-1930s Virginia Woolf had become an internationally acclaimed writer. Her novels continued to sell well and she drew the public's

attention to other authors on the Hogarth list. For this reason—because she was one of the press's most significant assets—the Woolfs would have had reservations about allowing one of her novels to be mass-produced as a Penguin paperback. To those members of the reading public in 1930s Britain who could afford the price of her Hogarth publications, it must have seemed that Woolf's identification with her press was absolute. To publish one of her novels under the Penguin imprint might have diluted the strength of this particular author-publishing house brand.

But by 1938 both Leonard and Virginia Woolf had become Penguin authors. On 9 July 1937 Lane had contacted Leonard Woolf to ask if he "would consider leasing [him] the sixpenny rights" for his *After the Deluge*, a study of political history that has been published by the Hogarth Press in 1931. The book, Lane reported, was to be included in the new non-fiction Pelican series. Leonard promptly agreed, suggesting an advance of £25, and the book was re-printed as a Pelican three months later.[25] At about the same time negotiations got under way to publish the first Virginia Woolf tile in the Penguin imprint. In July 1938, the Hogarth Press sent Penguin Books "eighteen reviews" of *The Common Reader*, together with advice on how to obtain biographical information and a copy of Virginia Woolf's photograph.[26] In October that year, Woolf's collection of essays, first published by the Hogarth Press in 1925, appeared as a Pelican paperback. Penguin Books printed 50,000 copies, sold them for 6d, and paid the Hogarth Press an advance of £150 for the paperback rights.[27]

This title was a fitting choice for Woolf's first appearance in paperback. In praising the "common reader" as opposed to the "critic and the scholar," it had been Woolf's aim in this collection to champion an inclusive concept of reading that valued non-specialist engagements with literary culture. She deliberately denied class-based, privileged education an advantage over human experience and argued that "the common reader" was a model for cultural literacy to

which everyone—independent of class, race, and gender—should and could aspire. What the collection did not address explicitly, however, was how readers from low-income or otherwise marginalized groups could gain access to books. Unlike contemporary publishers and booksellers who used the term "the new reading public" to designate a yet to be explored market of readers,[28] Woolf did not see her "common reader" concept as a socio-economic category or a commercial opportunity. Hers was a philosophy of reading and her thoughts on democratic book distribution remained tied to more established ideas about reformed access to education through the improved use of libraries (Woolf and Woolf 2006: 242). "We can begin, practically and prosaically, by borrowing books from public libraries; by reading omnivorously, simultaneously, poems, plays, novels, histories, biographies, the old and the new," she had argued in "The Leaning Tower" (Woolf 2011, 277).

Penguin Books had been launched to bring good books to the attention of "the new reading public." Its business model was a practical opportunity to make concrete aspects of Woolf's model of reformed reading. Lane's paperbacks, in other words, would have been suitable vehicles for her progressive but perhaps somewhat idealistically conceived political propositions. Unfortunately, there are no surviving documents that tell us how Woolf felt about a synergy between her essay collection and Penguin Books that seems so perfectly pitched. At the end of the previous decade, however, she had made a case for cheap, disposable books. "In France," Woolf had observed in 1927 in the broadcast "Are too Many Books Written and Published," "it is as simple to buy a book and read it as it is to buy a packet of cigarettes and smoke them" (Woolf and Woolf 2006: 243). When Lane published his first paperbacks in the mid-1930s it might have looked to her as if he had acted on her suggestion to create a market for throwaway books.

Woolf's desire for disposable books, professed a few years earlier, might have been one reason why she agreed to have one of her titles repackaged as a paperback. But the fact that *The Common Reader* is a collection of essays is also worth noting. Leasing the paperback rights for one of her non-fiction titles to Lane might have been appealing to the Woolfs in the late 1930s because it gave Virginia the opportunity to use two dissimilar publishers to strengthen her authorial profile as a cultural critic. Surviving publicity material in the Penguin Archive suggests that Lane's company deliberately drew attention to Woolf's significance as a political essayist in marketing campaigns accompanying *The Common Reader*'s paperback publication. *Penguins Progress*, the company's publicity in-house magazine, ran an advert with the headline: "An Uncommon Critic: The Common Reader Virginia Woolf" (Figure 4) in 1938.[29] It contained endorsements and a number of glowing reviews but any comments about Woolf's reputation as one of Britain's most famous and successful contemporary novelists are conspicuously absent. During her career as a writer, the distinction between Woolf, the novelist, and Woolf, the author of politically engaged prose, was never that clear-cut.[30] But to the Penguin (or rather Pelican) reading public of late 1930s Britain, Woolf was intentionally presented as a cultural critic.

For Lane the year 1938 turned out to be an opportune moment to promote and exploit Woolf's status as a cultural critic. Only three months before his company published the paperback version of *The Common Reader*, the Hogarth Press had issued Woolf's political essay *Three Guineas*. The production and marketing of one title would have given sales figures of the other a considerable boost. Very briefly in that year, Penguin Books and the Hogarth Press entered into a relationship of mutually beneficial promotion that centered on Woolf's image as an essayist. By the autumn of 1938 she and Leonard must have been aware that Penguin Books provided a useful platform for bringing her political writing into wider circulation. As Alice

Staveley has established, the idea was certainly presented to them when Jane Walker, the septuagenarian founder of the Medical Women's Federation who had published a supportive review of *Three Guineas* for the *Quarterly Review of the Women's Medical Federation*, "wrote privately to Woolf (they were acquainted)," arguing that "the book should be widely read." In particular, she had recommended that *Three Guineas* should be re-printed "in the new series of 'Penguin Specials' priced at sixpence" (Staveley 2009, 319-20).[31] By the end of 1938, Walker could hardly have been alone in assuming that Woolf's political prose would be well placed in affordable Penguin reprints. She had also brought it to Woolf's attention that Lane's books were ideally suited to deepen the impact of her political essays by making them available to a mass readership who might not be able to purchase a Hogarth edition of *Three Guineas* (7s. 6d.).

Woolf did not act on Walker's suggestion even though the Hogarth Press had published Margaret Cole's Day to Day pamphlet *Books and the People* that year. In this book, Cole had added her voice to those of other social reformers who celebrated publishing initiatives such as Lane's for giving new readers access to books. Ending her book on an optimistic note, Cole had argued that "the Penguins and Pelicans" and "the Book Clubs, headed by Mr. Gollancz" will increase "the chance of England becoming a book-reading country" and turn "books and book-reading from the privilege of a class into the possession of all" (9, 5, 47). Woolf had been given opportunities to be part of this revolution in publishing offering books at affordable prices. But during the last few years of her life she did not enter into more sustained business relations with Penguin Books. As a diary entry from November 1937 indicates, she had been asked to work in an advisory capacity for Lane's company when the Society of Authors had invited her on behalf of Penguin Books to select new titles for the Pelican series. She had refused "by way of a snub to Lane" because he had first approached Leonard with the request before shifting "sans apology"

to her (Woolf 1985, 120).[32] In this particular case, Woolf might have had personal reasons for rejecting Lane's offer. But in another letter from July 1939, Woolf also informed Lane—curtly and without offering any kind of explanation—that she could not "agree" to have *The Common Reader* included in Penguin Books' newly launched American list.[33]

In light of recent scholarship on Woolf's interest in reaching out to American readers, this unwillingness to consider Lane's proposition to disseminate her work in the US is surprising. Publishing a cheap edition of her collection of essays in America would have given her the opportunity to bring her socially progressive pedagogies into wider circulation. As Lise Jaillant has pointed out, Woolf had already agreed to a "cheap" US edition of *Mrs Dalloway* (Modern Library, 1928) because it "allowed her" to "widen her audience" and "cross the gap between common and professional readers" (2014, 83). There was also no apparent competition for the publication Lane was proposing since the only edition of *The Common Reader* available on the US market in 1939 was the hardback version that had been issued in 1925 by Harcourt, Brace (2000 copies; $3.50) (Kirkpatrick, 20-1). But since there are no other records that represent Woolf's opinion on Lane and his Penguins, it is difficult to determine why she rejected his offer. It is well known that she was emotionally attached to the Hogarth Press, which started out as a hobby but became an all-consuming passion and child-substitute for the Woolfs as they gradually expanded their publishing remit. In her diary Woolf often used this simile to describe the press, noting as early as 25 November 1921 that the "Hogarth Press, you see, begins to outgrow its parents" (Woolf 1978, 144). It is possible that the suggestion to take on regular work for another publisher was incompatible with Woolf's personal dedication to her press—especially in the year after she had relinquished executive control by transferring her shares in the company to John Lehmann.

But Woolf's emotional commitment to her publishing house can hardly have been the only reason why her dual-imprint experiments remained sparse. During her lifetime, the Hogarth Press only leased rights to her books to other British-based publisher in one-off agreements.[34] And while Woolf agreed to write a preface for a new edition of Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey*, which was published in the Oxford World's Classics series in 1928, she declined subsequent requests to write similar prefaces for other titles issued in the same series (Jaillant 2017, 37-42). Most likely, these sporadically arranged professional associations with other publishing firms were meant to be profile-raising. They were struck up to increase the sale of her Hogarth publications. They also occurred in highly concentrated bursts, suggesting that they were part of marketing campaigns launched by the Woolfs at strategically important moments. In 1928, the year in which *Orlando* was published as a best-selling title by the Hogarth Press, *Mrs Dalloway* was re-issued in the US Modern Library series only one month after *A Sentimental Journey* with Woolf's introduction appeared in the World's Classics series in Britain.

Almost ten years later, another publicity campaign was launched by the Hogarth Press on the back of the commercial success of *The Years* (1937). Only nineteen days after *The Common Reader* had been re-printed as a Pelican in October 1938, the London-based publishing firm J. M. Dent & Sons published 10,000 copies of *To the Lighthouse* (3s.) in its Everyman's Library series. Over in the US, the same title had been re-issued in the Modern Library series the previous year. Read in the context of synchronized attempts made by the Woolfs in 1937-38 to lean temporarily on other publishers' distribution lists to boost Woolf's reputation, the willingness to have *The Common Reader* published as a Pelican reprint confirms the professional intelligence of the Hogarth editors. Aware of the marketing opportunities provided by Lane's company, they were clearly hopeful that these Pelican reprints would direct attention of new

readers to her other, Hogarth-owned titles. Further suggestions for professional collaboration with Penguin Books were rejected by Woolf as this might have transferred too much of her cultural capital to another British-based publishing house. During her lifetime the publication of *The Common Reader* remained the only occasion on which she agreed to have one of her titles repackaged as a paperback.

Woolf's Afterlife as a Penguin Author in Mid-Century Britain

Only six months after her death negotiations began between Leonard Woolf and Penguin Books about a paperback publication of one of Woolf's novels. As surviving correspondence shows, it was due to John Lehmann's efforts that these negotiations were initiated. He had returned to the Hogarth Press in 1938 as Leonard's partner but had moved his literary periodical *New Writing*, originally published by the Hogarth Press, to Penguin Books in 1940 where it would appear as *Penguin New Writing* for the next decade.[35] As someone who had a stake in both publishing companies, Lehmann was in a position to broker this deal, prompting Eunice Frost, editor at Penguin Books, to send a letter to Leonard on 10 September 1941 "to discuss the possibility of leasing […] the rights of one of [Virginia Woolf's] books" (DM 1107/381). Penguin's title of choice was *Orlando* and less than three weeks later a contract was sent to Leonard Woolf, confirming payment of "an advance of £150" for the lease of the rights in this particular title (DM 1107/381). In July 1942, the month during which the First Battle of El Alamein began in Egypt, 75,000 paperback copies of *Orlando*, priced 9d, arrived in book shops in Britain. For the first time, a Virginia Woolf novel had become an easily obtainable commodity.[36]

This first agreement paved the way for future collaborations between the Hogarth Press and Penguin Books that resulted in the availability of "Virginia Woolf" on the mid-century literary marketplace in Britain. But for several years to come, *Orlando* would be the only fiction title that Penguin Books issued as a paperback. As shown in the Appendix, *The Second Common Reader* (1932) was re-printed as a Pelican in July 1944 with a print run of 50,000 copies, followed by *A Room of One's Own* (1929) in the next year (100,000 copies). In both cases, these paperback titles were sold for 9d. The Hogarth Press re-printed 3,000 copies of these titles in its Uniform Edition within a year of the paperback publication (see Appendix), thereby strengthening Lane's claim that the availability of cheap paperbacks increased demand of more upmarket editions of an author's work. In general, it can be concluded from surviving correspondence between Leonard Woolf and Penguin Books editors that, in the 1940s and 1950s, the two publishing firms came to mutually beneficial arrangements that allowed them to promote different aspects of Woolf's oeuvre. At stake for Leonard was the task of curating his wife's cultural afterlife as a twentieth-century literary icon by gradually making her work available to a mainstream audience. With the exception of *Orlando*, however, he retained exclusive rights for her most popular novels. In 1949, he agreed to have *The Waves* (1931) re-printed as a Penguin—a paperback issue of *Between the Acts* (1941) was to follow in 1953—but he did not give his consent to a paperback version of *To the Lighthouse* in 1949,[37] which, he explained in his autobiography, was among those of Woolf's titles that "went on selling year after year and had to be continually re-printed." This particular novel, he stated, "sold in Britain a total of 7,000 copies in its first five years of existence, but in 1967, forty years after it was first published, sold over 30,000 in the year" (Woolf 1969, 106-07).

From the beginning, Leonard's curatorial choices were motivated by entrepreneurial as well as custodial concerns. Before her novels became widely available as Penguins in the 1960s, Woolf's paperback existence was approved only in cases in which it did not jeopardize sales figures of her titles published in the Hogarth Press Uniform Edition. In 1958, Leonard agreed to offer Penguin the rights to re-print *The Death of the Moth* (1942) (another non-fiction title) because, he informed Frost in a letter, the collection was "just going out of print." "If," he continues, "you would care to" publish this title, "I would undertake not to reprint it for the uniform edition for at least 12 months after you publish it" (DM 1107/1644). The response from Penguin was affirmative and *The Death of the Moth* was published as a Penguin Modern Classic in 1961. But when Penguin editors contacted Leonard Woolf in 1948 with the suggestion to re-issue a paperback version of *The Common Reader*, they were told that the Hogarth Press had "just been able to reprint the First Series in our Uniform Edition [...] and the Second Series is at the binders." It is for this reason, the letter explained, that "Mr. Woolf feels that the issue of a 1/6d. Penguin reprint, at the same time, cannot fail to have an adverse affect [sic] on the sales of the Uniform Edition. In the circumstances, therefore," the writer concluded, he "would very much prefer not to renew the Penguin contracts, at any rate for the present" (DM 1107/A132). And as late as May 1960, Leonard was still reluctant to let Lane's company have more than a minor share in Woolf's fiction. Penguin Books had just approached him once more to ask for the rights to re-print *To the Lighthouse* or *Mrs Dalloway*. Leonard refused, explaining to Tom Maschler at Penguin Books "that we cannot give you permission to publish more than two books at a time."[38]

Surviving correspondence also shows that Woolf's widower and literary executor was frequently exasperated by the lack of editorial care given by Penguin Books to the presentation

of her titles. Leonard was known to be, as Chatto & Windus editor Ian Parsons put it in 1950, "rather particular about such things" (DM1107/808).[39] In 1942, for instance, he objected to a suggested biographical note for Woolf that was to appear on publicity material for *Orlando*. "I have revised the biographical note as enclosed," he notes. "I don't think I have read the note in the Common Reader before," he continues, stating that "it is rather absurdly inaccurate for <u>Orlando</u> is notable among my wife's books for having absolutely no 'stream of consciousness technique' in it at all." Eunice Frost at Penguin Books responded diffidently, explaining that "it was as we felt you would like the opportunity of re-writing the personal details that we asked for your advice about it." She also tried to reassure him that "we would not have left in the reference to 'stream of consciousness technique' from the original COMMON READER note" (DM 1107/381).

When prompted to comment on a draft of a biographical note that was to appear in the paperback version of *The Waves*, Leonard also had to remind Penguin Books in September 1950 that the Woolf book they were publishing "in the Penguin was 'A Room of One's Own' and not 'A Life of One's Own'" (DM 1107/481). This incident alone must have strengthened his conviction that he had to become more directly involved with the paperback presentation of *The Waves*. On his suggestion, Frost contacted Stephen Spender with the request to write his "point of view about [*The Waves*] into some 125 odd words" that could be used "in lieu of the ordinary blurb that we always carry on the inside cover of our books." When Spender failed to respond immediately, a Penguin-authored blurb was submitted for Leonard's approval. It struck Parsons as "excellent" but failed to impress Woolf's widower, who "was not altogether happy with the draft" and sent a "revised version which he would like used instead" (DM 1107/808). Fortunately, Spender provided, just in time, an alternative blurb that passed muster (Figure 5).

By 1950, when *The Waves* was about to go into production at Penguin Books, Leonard was obviously aware that Lane's company had become an influential taste and opinion maker. Lane's company was now an important partner in popularizing Woolf's work in mid-century Britain.[40] But as the example of the Spender preface shows, Leonard was also aware that the process of transferring her authorial signatures to Penguin Books had to be carefully managed. Whereas the Penguin version of *Orlando* had included a collection of randomly selected critical endorsements published at the time of the title's first publication, Spender's newly written one-page introduction celebrating *The Waves* as "one of the great poetic achievements of our time" explicitly foregrounds the novel's stylistic idiosyncrasies and its amalgamation of different literary genres. It informs readers that the dialogue found within is "never realistic, but always real" and that "birth, love and death" are the "ever-presented background," not the focus of the novel's attempts to render visible the interior lives of its characters in "purely poetic passages" and "interior dialogue." As it began its life as a mass-produced Penguin paperback, Britain's mid-century readership was encouraged to welcome Woolf's most formally experimental novel as an example of modernist difficulty. Access to her work was no longer predicated on financial terms. When the novel was re-printed in 1951, 40,000 copies were sold at 1s6d. But with the Penguin publication of *The Waves* a different set of barriers began to be erected. Woolf retreated, once more, into the mists of highbrow inaccessibility, beginning to be re-claimed by an expert readership precisely at the time when mass production and distribution promised to end its exclusive access to modernist literary culture in Britain.

A paperback publication of *Between the Acts* appeared two years later,[41] but it took more than another decade for Woolf's most popular novels to be published by Lane's company. In May 1960, as already stated, Leonard refused to lend Penguin Books the rights for *Mrs Dalloway*

and *To the Lighthouse*. Only four years later, however, both titles were available in the Penguin Classics Series. By then, Penguin Books had also re-issued *Orlando* (1963) and *The Waves* (1964) and would bring out a first paperback edition of *Jacob's Room* in 1965 with *The Years* following three years later. By the end of 1965, six Woolf novels were already available as Penguins. It is likely that the outcome of the Lady Chatterley obscenity trial had changed the public's perception of Penguin Books.[42] After Lane's company was acquitted in November 1960, Penguin Books became associatively connected, in the public imagination, with freedom of expression but also with the social, sexual, and formal experimentation endorsed by many modernist authors. It was at this point, as Rachel Potter has argued, that "the modernist books that once caused outrage" were "gradually accommodated by US and UK publishers, courts, and universities" (201). By the mid-1960s, Penguin Books might have begun to look like a suitable publisher for Woolf's novels—a publisher with newfound cultural prestige that could safeguard her bestseller status without eroding her standing as a highbrow writer of distinction.

Virginia Woolf: The Birth of a Modern Classic

In April 1969, four months before Leonard's death and roughly seven months before publishing *Night and Day* (1919) as a paperback, Lane's company brought James Joyce's *Ulysses* to the attention of the paperback-reading public in Britain. Published as Penguin No. 3000 with an afterword by Joyce's biographer Richard Ellmann, the paperback version of Joyce's controversial novel marked a turning point in the reception of modernist literature in Britain. As Alistair McCleery has argued, "before Penguin 3000, *Ulysses* was perceived in the United Kingdom as an avant-garde work, with a minority readership found chiefly among the literati, or

as a select art object suitable for collection […], or as a notorious work celebrated for its pornographic passages, or as a combination of these three." After Lane made Joyce's novel available as a paperback, *Ulysses* began to be "regarded as a 'safe' classic of modern literature, taking its place as canon-fodder for the expanding number of students in a burgeoning United Kingdom higher education system" (2009, 56). Unlike Joyce's novel, Woolf's work had never been stigmatized as sexually explicit or morally corrupting but her case is similar to that of Joyce in that her most popular novels had newly appeared as Penguin paperbacks by the time the swinging sixties, a period characterized by renewed interest in social, sexual but also formal experimentation, had drawn to a close.

But the emergence of Woolf as a paperback writer was not the kind of socially progressive gesture it appears to be. In the first place, the price of a Penguin had risen considerably by the mid-1960s. For a paperback edition of *Jacob's Room*, readers would have had to pay 3s 6s in 1965. Amounting to £3.08 in today's money, this price is significantly higher than the 6d (£1.27) required to purchase a paperback copy of *The Common Reader* in 1938. More than a decade earlier, Leonard had also begun to curate his wife's cultural legacy more determinedly by presenting her as a highbrow writer committed to modernist experimentation, an image of Woolf that was promulgated in Penguin reprints of her work. It had been captured in Spender's preface to *The Waves* with the result that debates about Woolf's work began to move into a more scholarly direction. If the Woolf of the 1960s had become a mass-market phenomenon in Britain, her work was principally aimed at a highly educated, academically bound reading public who bought her titles because they now expected to find her among other modernist authors who were already appearing on university syllabi.[43]

Today many new readers of Woolf in Britain encounter her works for the first time in the Penguin Modern Classics series. In fact, in 1992, the year in which Woolf's work that was published during her lifetime came briefly out of copyright, Penguin issued a new, scholarly focused series under Julia Briggs's general editorship. It was designed to "provide reliable and accurate texts of her works, based on the first British editions, and to include any extra material such as the illustrative photographs originally published in *Orlando* and *Three Guineas*, as well as any further material in the way of notes or short texts that throw a further light on the text" (DM 1613/5/7).[44] These new titles were meant to function as critical correctives to more popular interpretations of the author that continue to "place Woolf in relation to other writers, most often to the Bloomsbury Group whose irregular and complex lives are a constant source of fascination" (DM 1613/5/7). Readers approaching her work for the first time in the 1990s and thereafter would have been introduced to this critically re-appraised Woolf, whose unique gift for composition and whose predilection for representing women's experiences were flagged up in Penguin's marketing campaign as the main reasons why she deserved attention (Figure 6).[45] In the 1990s, these newly issued Penguin paperbacks functioned as important vehicles for introducing Woolf to a new generation of academically trained readers. By emphasizing her place in twentieth-century literary history, they claimed academy ownership of her work. As Briggs suggested, these new Penguin editions of Woolf's works were published in anticipation of large sales, "promised not so much by the common reader as the common student" (1994, viii).

The project of publishing these new Penguin editions was also undertaken to support feminist reclamation of Woolf's work, being edited by a team of feminist scholars "all in sympathy with Woolf's central project" (DM 1613/5/7). Leading Woolf scholars on both sides of the Atlantic were writing introductions in defiance of a patriarchally minded institutional culture

that continued to dismiss the significance of Woolf's work or that withheld aspects of it from circulation among academics. As Woolf's biographer, Hermione Lee, notes, the latter issue was a reproach that had often been brought to Leonard's doorstep: his "'husbanding' of [Virginia Woolf's] posthumous resources controlled our access to Virginia Woolf for many years, for good and ill" (767). Irritatingly for feminist scholars, Leonard had carefully supervised the presentation of her work as it moved into the Penguin imprint. He had marked up mistakes in the biographical note for *The Waves* when the book was published by Lane's company in 1951. But very tellingly he had not changed the first few sentences that introduced her as "the daughter of Sir Leslie Stephen and the wife of Leonard Woolf." In the 1990s, however, Penguin Books gave academics the much-needed opportunity to emphasize those aspects of her work that presented Woolf as a feminist trailblazer, once more aligning mass publishing with one of the decade's most pressing, forward-looking political projects. Simultaneously, however, the company that had built its reputation on disseminating good books beyond readers belonging to Britain's socio-economic and intellectual elite also found itself working in support of cultural prestige and of the educational elite whose rule it had set out to topple in the interwar period. In the 1990s, Penguin Books assisted in academically ring-fencing Woolf's work rather than fostering her absorption by the kind of mainstream audience Lane had hoped to court with his sixpenny books in the 1930s.

Critics working in the wake of resurging interest in Woolf's work as political essayist often claim that, for much of the twentieth century, her reputation as a modernist writer had obscured her significance as a cultural critic. Nicola Luckhurst argued in 2002 that it is "possible to distinguish the broad outlines of what tends to be a three-phase reception of Woolf throughout Europe: she is known," Luckhurst states, "first as a novelist, a phase that coincides with her

modernist reception; subsequently as an essayist, the author of *ROO* and *TG* – this is the period of feminist reception; and, finally, as a diarist and letter writer, and, the subject of numerous biographies, as exemplary woman" (17). Jaillant similarly suggests, by pointing to the influence of the New Critics on postwar academic debate in Britain and the US, that "it took a long time for literary critics to reconsider Woolf as a major essayist" (2014, 102). But as this article has shown, for a brief period during the 1940s and before Penguin Books were able to seize more editorial control of Woolf's novels, Lane's company concentrated on the mass publication and dissemination of those of her essays that strongly articulated her politically progressive ideals. While *The Common Reader* championed a more democratic understanding of cultural literacy, the Penguin-reading public in post-war Britain was also able to read Woolf's feminist essay *A Room of One's Own* for the first time in 1945.

Academics working in British universities in the postwar period might have neglected Woolf's achievements as political essayist. But many of the so-called common readers of the 1940s—a decade in which the birth of the Arts Council and the introduction of the Butler Act of 1944 were the most obvious signs of the welfare state's commitment to social reform—might have been aware and would have been susceptible to her views about a more democratically organized access to literary culture. As her surviving comments relating to Penguin Books suggest, the author herself felt conflicted about letting her titles migrate into the Penguin imprint. In the 1940s, however, Lane's paperbacks provided appropriate vehicles for her socially progressive criticism. It was a brief moment of confluence as mass publishing offered an opportunity for combining the political vistas and commitments of two very dissimilar cultural workers. For Lane, it was advantageous to publish Woolf's work in the 1940s as her appearance on his list brought cultural capital to a publishing firm that had established itself by challenging

the low-brow stigma attached to the paperback. As Penguin Books developed into an important taste maker in mid-century Britain, it became equally advantageous for Leonard to see his wife's titles included in Lane's list. There is no doubt, as this article has acknowledged, that commercial considerations often outbalanced all other concerns whenever these two men negotiated new publishing deals for Woolf's book. But in the post-war years Woolf's visibility as a political essayist—whose demand that literature should be accessible to non-specialist enthusiasts had been a centerpiece of her criticism—was predicated on these financially orientated negotiations. As the Hogarth Press and Penguin Books came to its first mutually beneficial agreements on how to carve up her work, Woolf's much championed common reader temporarily emerged as the beneficiary.

Appendix

Woolf's Works Published in the Hogarth Uniform Edition	**Woolf's Works Published as Penguin/Pelican Paperback**
The Common Reader (1929; re-printed 1933, 1942, 1945, 1948, 1951)	*The Common Reader* (1938)
Orlando (1933; re-printed 1942, 1949, 1954)	*Orlando* (1942; re-issued 1963)
The Common Reader: Second Series (1935; re-printed 1945, 1948, 1952)	*The Second Common Reader* (1944)
A Room of One's Own (1931; re-printed 1935, 1942, 1946, 1949, 1954)	*A Room of One's Own* (1945; re-issued 1963)
The Waves (1933; re-printed 1943, 1950, 1953, 1955)	*The Waves* (1951; re-issued 1964)
Between the Acts (1953)	*Between the Acts* (1953; re-issued 1971)
The Death of the Moth (1942, not Uniform Edition)	*The Death of the Moth* (1961)
Mrs Dalloway (1929; re-printed 1933, 1942)	*Mrs Dalloway* (1964)
To the Lighthouse (1930; re-printed 1932, 1941, 1946, 1949, 1951, 1955)	*To the Lighthouse* (1964)
Jacob's Room (1929; re-printed 1935, 1947, 1949, 1954)	*Jacob's Room* (1965)
The Years (1940; re-printed 1951)	*The Years* (1968)
Night and Day (1930; re-printed 1938, 1950)	*Night and Day* (1969)

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NOTES

[1] Letter from Allen Lane to Leonard Woolf, July 26, 1946, Penguin Archive, Special Collections, University of Bristol, DM 1107/381. All subsequent references to holdings in this archive will be included parenthetically.

[2] Lane, it should be noted at this point, also asked family members of other deceased authors for these cut-out signatures. The Penguin Archive contains a letter written on 29 August 1960 by Katia Mann, the widow of the German Nobel Prize-winning author Thomas Mann, who had died in 1955. Her letter indicates that she, too, had been asked for and had subsequently sent her husband's signature cut-out of a lapsed contract (DM 1294/12/2/2//8/3). Also worth mentioning in this context is the fact that during her lifetime Woolf's authorial signature had already been used by the Hogarth Press to negotiate her conflicting feelings about her public visibility as an author with snowballing celebrity status (see Hollis 19-23).

[3] The Uniform Edition of Woolf's work, launched in 1929 with re-prints of *The Voyage Out*, *Jacob's Room*, *Mrs Dalloway*, and *The Common Reader* was, as critics have shown, indicative of the Hogarth Press's desire to exploit "Woolf's growing marketability and recognition to encourage the consumption and collection of all her works" (Young 237). But while the Uniform Edition had already introduced the idea of a standardised, more affordable "Woolf," the price of these Hogarth publications (5s.) was beyond anything readers from low income groups could afford. As Georg Bernard Shaw noted, "millions of [his fellow countrymen" could "no more afford a twelve-and-sixpenny book than a trip around the world" (quoted in Lewis, 82). As the Woolfs must have realised, Lane's Penguins, which sold for a fraction of the price of a Woolf title released in the Uniform Edition, targeted a readership they had so far not been able to reach.

For more information on the Uniform Edition of Woolf's work see also Jaillant (2017, 120-37) and Plock (2017, 181-216).

[4] This is not to suggest that the Hogarth Press neglected readers who wanted to read cultural criticism at affordable prices. The Day to Day Pamphlets (1s.6d.) (1930-39) and the Hogarth Sixpenny Pamphlets (1939), among others, were series that brought the discussion of social-economic, political, or cultural issues within reach of readers with less disposable income (see Plock 2019, 142). Most of Woolf's own essays, however, were sold in more expensive editions by the Press. See, for instance, *A Room of One's Own* (1929; 5s), "On Being Ill" (1930; £1.1s), *The Second Common Reader* (1932; 10s. 6d.) (Kirkpatrick, 39, 43, 48).

[5] The term "the new reading public" was coined by the publisher Philip Unwin who had published an article with the same title in the *Bookseller* on 5 April 1934 (see McCleery 2007, 10).

[6] McCleery provides a full description of paperback publishing before Penguin Books (2007, 3-17).

[7] As Lane's biographer points out, in the 1930s paperback publishing remained associated with the 'yellowbacks' of the late Victorian period. These were books "reserved for the most rubbishy thrillers and romances, printed in double columns and with lurid covers to match" (Lewis, 75).

[8] For a discussion of the significance and the successful design of the Penguin mascot see Hornsey 2018, 812-39.

[9] Transcript of a discussion among Sir Allen Lane, Clarence Padgett, Pat Newman, Gareth Powell, Peter Williams, Gore Vidal, Andre Deutsch, Norman Bogner, Hammond Innes, transmitted on London I.T.V. "This Week," October 24, 1966 (DM 1819/10/3).

[10] The history of the Hogarth Press has begun to attract significant attention from critics. The Modernist Archives Publishing Project (MAPP) is a digital archive of early twentieth-century publishers with special focus on the Hogarth Press (https://www.modernistarchives.com/). Claire Battershill's *Modernist Lives: Biography and Autobiography at Leonard and Virginia Woolf's Hogarth Press* has also offered a very detailed account of the Hogarth Press, its output, size, and rapidly expanding market share.

[11] The first Bowen title to be released as a Penguin paperback was *The Last September* (1929). It was published in December 1942. *Friends and Relations* (1931) and *The Hotel* (1927) followed in October 1943 and March 1944 while *The House in Paris* (1935) and *To the North* (1932) were published in August and October 1946. See *Catalogue of Penguin Books to 1956* (DM 2485/6).

[12] See also the letter from Allen Lane to Margaret West, 20 September 1935, Hogarth Press Business Archives, University of Reading, MS 2750/417. All subsequent references to holdings in this archive will be included parenthetically.

[13] Lane proposed to print 40,000 copies of *The Edwardians* and pay a £40 advance with royalties of "30/- per 1000 copies." See letter from Allen Lane to the Hogarth Press, 14 August 1935 (MS 2750/417). In 1930, the Hogarth Press had printed 18,000 copies priced 7s 6d with a second and third impression of 8,000 and 3,000 issued the same year (Barkway 2010, 260).

[14] Royalties ranged from £56 10s 5d in 1936 to £35 16s 6d and £26 19s 2d in 1937, and to £69 3s 1d at the end of 1939 (MS 2750/417). According to the currency converter provided on the National Archives website, these sums are equivalent to the following sums in today's money: £2,863.49; £1,815.83 and £1,365.78; £3,503.53.

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[15] Letter from Richard Lane to the Hogarth Press, 22 June 1939 (MS 2750/412). The Woolfs had published *All Passion Spent* in 1931 with an initial print run of 12,050 copies (Southworth, 2010. 260).

[16] This would be the equivalent to £3,265.42 in today's money. Even though book sales plummeted during the war, the paperback *All Passion Spent* continued to provide Sackville-West with some extra income. According to royalty statement, the Hogarth Press received the following sums: £14 12s 8d (14,049 copies) and £42 11s 4d (40,864 copies) in 1941; £70 1s 3d (46,885) in 1942; £5 16s 9d (3894 copies) and £2 9s 11d (1,665 copies) in 1943; £2 0s 10d (1,360 copies) and £12 7s 5d (1,231 copies plus 10,025 copies in Australian sales) in 1944 (MS 2750/412).

[17] Letter from Allen Lane to Leonard Woolf, 4 August 1938 (MS 2750/217). It is not known how many copies were printed when the Woolfs first released this title in 1929 (Woolmer 85).

[18] Information on royalty statements suggest that 69,921 and 62,801 copies were sold in 1939 and 1940 respectively, generating £69 18s 5d and £62 16s 0d in royalties to be shared by the Hogarth Press and the author. The figures for the following years confirm that detective fiction continued to sell during the war: £21 19s 3d (21, 963 copies) and £30 17s 10d (30, 890 copies) in 1941; £62 16s 10d (62,793 copies) and £65 12s 0d in 1942; £39 11s 0d (32,131 copies) and £38 16s 10d (35,284 copies) in 1943 (MS 2750/217). Numbers above do not include copies sold through the Forces Book Club that Penguin Books had launched in 1942.

[19] See the letter from the Hogarth Press to Vita Sackville-West about *All Passion Spent* from 29 September 1944 (MS 2750/412) and that from Leonard Woolf to C. H. B. Kitchen from 6 August 1938 (MS 2750/217).

[20] The New York office, for instance, was opened in 1939 shortly before the outbreak of the war (Lewis, 210).

[21] Letter from John Lehmann to Anna Freud, 27 February 1942 (MS 2750/113).

[22] Letter from Allen Lane to Leonard Woolf, 14 August 1935 (MS 2750/417).

[23] See, for instance, the letter from the Hogarth Press to Allen Lane from 18 January 1939 stating that the rights for Christopher Isherwood's *Mr. Norris Changes Trains* (1935) could not be released "as we have just issued a cheap edition ourselves" (MS 2750/412).

[24] See exchange of letters between Jonathan Cape and Leonard Woolf, 17 April 1929 and 22 April 1929 (MS 270/564).

[25] See exchange of letters between Allen Lane and Leonard Woolf, 9 and 12 July 1937 (MS 2750/534).

[26] Letter from the Hogarth Press to Miss Schurr, Penguin Books, 15 July 1938 (DM 1107/A132).

[27] See the letter from Leonard Woolf to Penguin Books, 13 February 1943 (DM 1107/A132).

[28] In 1934, a conference with the theme "The New Reading Public" was convened where all "fifty delegates unanimously concluded that a new reading public certainly existed, but that only Woolworth's and the tuppenny libraries were catering for it" (*Fifty Penguin Years*, 13).

[29] *Penguins Progress* (Winter 1938) (DM 1294/4/1/6-7).

[30] Alice Wood convincingly presents continuities in Woolf's thinking from her earlier novelistic work to her late cultural criticism: "Woolf's development as a cultural critic in *The Years*, *Three Guineas* and *Between the Acts*," she proposes, "can be interpreted as an attempt […] to push forward her literary experimentalism and feminist thinking by doing something new. From her earliest modernist fiction to her late cultural criticism, Woolf had framed literature as a powerful

tool, both in form and content, to rewrite, destabilize and, ultimately, to overthrow the patriarchal and nationalistic cultural values of the society around her" (147).

[31] For the letter from Walker to Woolf see Snaith 2000, 73-74.

[32] Woolf addressed the rejection letter to Denys Kilham Roberts, Secretary of the Society of Authors, who had approached her on behalf of Penguin Books (Woolf 1980: 188).

[33] "Dear Mr Lane," Woolf wrote on July 30, 1939, "[m]any thanks for your letter. It is very good of you to suggest including my book The Common Reader in your American list. I am sorry; but I am afraid that I cannot agree to it" (DM 1843/35).

[34] As Jaillant has shown (2014, 91), the case was slightly different with the cheap re-print Modern Library series published in the US, which re-issued *Mrs Dalloway* in 1928 followed by *To the Lighthouse* in 1937.

[35] See "Goodbye to *New Writing*: 1940-1950," *Penguins Progress* (1950), 19 (DM 1294/4/1/).

[36] Interestingly, only two months earlier the Hogarth Press had re-printed 2000 copies of *Orlando* in the Uniform Edition (Kirkpatrick, 35). Leonard Woolf might have been willing to put to the test Lane's observation that the publication of Penguin re-prints increased the demand for other editions of the same title.

[37] See the letters from Penguin Books to Ian Parsons from 13 December 1949 and from 7 and 17 February 1950 (MS 2750/547).

[38] See letter exchange between Tom Maschler and Leonard Woolf, dated 28 April and 4 May 1960 (DM 1107/1644). The two books Leonard refers to were *Orlando* and *A Room of One's Own*, both of which had been lined up for re-printing as Penguin paperbacks (see Appendix).

[39] Leonard's meticulousness also comes across in Hogarth Press business correspondence quoted by Nicola Wilson (2012).

[40] A letter from 6 April 1960 suggests that Leonard had realized that the inclusion of Woolf's titles in the Penguin series was essential in promoting her work among the next generation of readers. Judging by the tone of the letter, it even seems as if he was anxious to keep a share of his wife's work in print as paperbacks. Writing to Penguin Books he requested "the return of the rights" for the books by Woolf "previously published in Penguin Books" and now "all out of print" unless these were re-printed (DM 1107/1644). Thus prompted, Penguin Books agreed to re-issue *Orlando* and *A Room of One's Own*.

[41] Although *Between the Acts* was published under the Penguin imprint in 1953 to coincide with the publication of the title in the Hogarth Uniform Edition (see Appendix), archived correspondence shows that the agreement to re-print a paperback version had been reached by October 1951, seven months after Lane's company had published *The Waves* (DM 1107/896).

[42] In 1960, Penguin Books had published an unexpurgated edition of Lawrence's novel and was promptly taken to court for publishing an obscene book. The trial took place from October, 20 to November 2, 1960 and after six days of hearings, Penguin Books were acquitted. Allegedly, Allan Lane phoned his office as soon as the trial was over to order the distribution of "200,000 copies of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* stored in a warehouse in Harmondsworth, Middlesex" (Anon 1960: 12).

[43] As Julia Briggs points out, partly due to the Leavises' influence in "the years immediately after her death, Woolf's reputation sank to its lowest point." Their view that she was "frivolous, ignorant, a snob and an aesthete was widely accepted" with the result that she was "silently omitted from the Great Tradition, which now consisted of James, Conrad, Lawrence and Joyce." But as Briggs also notes, by the 1970s, the picture had changed as the debate about Woolf's person and work entered a new phase. While she was by now widely accepted as Britain's

greatest twentieth-century women writer, feminist critics argued about the ways in which her complex, often contradictory positions on women's rights and writing could be mobilised in the interest of second-wave politics (Briggs 1994, xvi, xviii-xxi).

[44] As Elizabeth Willson Gordon has shown, with "the expiration date on the copyright of Virginia Woolf's novels" looming large, the Hogarth Press had already launched its own "Definitive Collected Edition" in 1990. But unlike the critical editions to be published by Penguin, the Hogarth versions were aimed at non-specialist readers, containing no scholarly apparatus, only general introductions written by family members (256).

[45] "But Woolf's importance lies not in her family or her friends," the promotional booklet argues, "but in the series of brilliant and experimental novels she wrote, and in her essays, letters and diaries through which she pursued new forms to record the feelings, new ways of describing the relationship between the imagination and daily life, and the impact of cultural, social and political history on the way we think and perceive ourselves" (DM 1613/5/7).