



UK READING EXPERIENCE DATABASE

Notes on Filling in the Contribution Form

UK RED actively seeks contributions from anyone who has found evidence of reading in period 1450-1945. It is only through the contributions of as many people as possible that we can attempt to uncover patterns of reading in the past. We especially welcome contributions of material contained in private collections.

Given the nature of historical evidence, we do not expect you will be able to complete every field on the contribution form. However, in order to validate an entry, we do need the following information: your name and contact details (section 1.1), a description of the evidence that contains the reading experience (section 1.2) and the source where you found the reading experience (section 1.3).

If you do not think you have enough information to complete section 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3, but you still wish to contribute to the project, please do get in touch. Contact details can be found on our website.

In addition to the following instructions, we have compiled a range of sample completed forms to assist you which are available on the website.

Section One: Contributor's Details and Reading Experience

1.1 Contributor's details

Please enter your name and email address in the relevant fields. On submitting the form to the database, an email acknowledging receipt of your contribution will be sent to the address provided. If you have any queries relating to your submission, including any mistakes you wish to correct, please email the UK RED Team quoting the record id number.

NB: Unattributed contributions CANNOT be entered into the database.

1.2 Reading Experience

For our purposes, a 'reading experience' means a recorded engagement with a written or printed text - beyond the mere fact of possession. We are keen to gather

evidence of all sorts of reading, not only books but also newspapers, journals, posters, advertisements, magazines, letters, scripts, playbills, tickets, chapbooks and almanacs. We include the compilation of albums, commonplace books, etc. and the experience of reading aloud. For the moment, we do not include library catalogues, professional public readings such as Dickens's; fictional depictions, illustrations or photographs of reading; the reading of music; theatre or cinema attendance; readings over the radio; or theories of reading.

1.2 Evidence

Please note here the words that act as evidence of the reading experience. If there is no quotation to enter, please describe in your own words the evidence for the reading experience (for example underlinings, asterisks, highlightings). See note on Marginalia (below) for further information. If you do not have enough space here, please continue in the Additional Comments section at the end of the form (Section 3.11).

Please note that we have limited contributions in this field to 400 words. In submitting material to RED you should be aware that we will not include anything in breach of copyright regulations. If you are entering direct quotations from copyrighted material (such as a work of criticism), and you quote more than is permitted under the Fair Dealing provisions of The Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988, we reserve the right to edit the material in whatever way we deem necessary in order to comply with the Act. In submitting material to RED you also agree to your contribution being used for educational and research purposes. For practical purposes, copyright extends for 70 years after the death of the author. So quotations from any author who died before 1936 will be out of copyright. Quotations of less than 400 words from authors still in copyright are also acceptable under the terms of the 1988 Act.

Was the evidence of reading originally published or written in another language? You can enter the text in its original language in the second evidence box. Click on the link in the form to reveal the second box.

Examples of Evidence of Reading Experiences:

Diary entry

'12 May 1869. Every evening this week I have read a chapter of Jane Eyre and find the heroine insipid in the extreme'.

Letter

'17 August 1819: We read the newspaper this morning together. You will know by now of the horrible events yesterday here in Manchester. The city is now strangely calm after yesterday's ferment.'

Memoir

'When I was a young girl, despite my aunt's disapproval, I frequently stole into my uncle's library and there read my way steadily through the works of the great poets. I there discovered Shakespeare for the first time.'

Commonplace Book

[Transcribed in Mary Mitford's handwriting]: 'She walks in beauty, like the night./ Of cloudless climes and starry skies;./ And all that 's best of dark and bright./ Meet in her aspect and her eyes.'

Witness statement in trial proceedings

'I am a pawnbroker and live in Houndsditch... I was reading the Daily Advertiser, and I saw an advertisement of a box, and some garden seeds, and a gown and thirteen yards of blue silk, lost from the 'George' on Snow-hill.'

Interviews by social investigators

'One of the appliances of the street sweet-stuff trade which I saw in the room of the seller before mentioned was –Acts of Parliament. A pile of these, a foot or more deep, lay on a shelf. They are used to wrap up the rock... The sweet-stuff maker bought his "paper" of the stationers or at the old bookshops. Sometimes, he said, he got works in this way in sheets which had never been cut, and which he retained to read at his short intervals of leisure, and then used to wrap his goods in. In this way he had read through two "Histories of England".'

Biography

'One of the books that Morgan [E.M.Forster] had recently re-read, in the June of 1907 just after going to Clun, was Jane Austen's Mansfield Park'.

Edited collection of letters

'[comment by the editor] "In this letter, which I have truncated in the interests of brevity, Mitford mentions reading the following works: Cowper's The Task, Jane Austen's Persuasion, a novel by Thomas Love Peacock (unidentified) and a work by Thomas Gisborne, probably his well-known conduct book An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex (1797)".'

For further guidance, see the sample completed forms.

1.2 Marginalia

If you are recording a marginal note/ marginal notes to a text, please enter the marginalia exactly as it is written (for example "Pish!!!!!!", "Why?", "Yes", "finished 11 June 1845", "THE AUTHOR IS A FOOL") and also provide any further details (for example density of annotation, evidence of more than one hand, extensive underlinings, evidence of correction of the original author, etc) within square [] brackets. If you do not have enough space here, please use the Additional Comments section at the end of the form (Section 3.10).

Please also specify the section of the book or poem to which the reader's comments refer – for example 'Paradise Lost, Book X, lines 12-15'; 'Mary Wollstonecraft's argument that all conduct literature written by men inculcates the same precepts'; 'Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice, Vol 1, Chapter 5, From "If a woman conceals her affection" to "In nine cases out of ten a woman had better show more affection than she feels"'; 'Written over the blank pages at the front/back of the volume'. If you do not have enough space here, please use the Additional Comments section at the end of the form (Section 3.10).

For example: '[Marginal notes in Macaulay's copy of Shakespeare's Hamlet. By the lines "Dost thou not hear" to "Hath sealed thee for herself"] Macaulay writes: "An exquisitely beautiful scene. It always moved me more than any other in the play." The annotations throughout are in pencil.'. Example 2: '[Marginal notes in Keats's copy of John Milton's ParadiseLost. In Paradise Lost, Book 1, by the lines 53-75] Keats writes "One of the most mysterious of semi-speculations is, one would suppose, that of one Mind's imagining into another." He underlines the words "round he throws his baleful eyes", "sights of woe" and "Regions of sorrow, doleful shades."'

1.3 Source

The work in which you found the reading experience. Please choose EITHER Print OR Manuscript OR Other.

Note: please ensure that the correct radio button is selected before you submit your form. Text entered in fields where no radio button has been selected will not be submitted to the database.

1.3 Print

Example 1:

Author: Jane Austen

Editor: Deirdre Le Faye

Title: The Letters of Jane Austen

Place of Publication: Oxford

Date of Publication: 1995

Volume number: n/a

Page numbers: 22-23

Any other information: (this goes in the Additional Information box below) Letter from Jane to Cassandra Austen, 15 Feb 1817

Example 2:

Author: Nicola Beauman

Editor: n/a

Title: Morgan: A Biography of E.M. Forster

Place of Publication: London

Date of Publication: 1993

Volume number: n/a

Page numbers: 211

Any other information: (this goes in the Additional Information box below) Beauman cites Forster's 'Notebook Journal', 31 Dec 1907 to substantiate this claim.

1.3 Manuscript

Example:

Author/ Editor: John Aubrey

Title: Monumenta Britannica

Location: Bodleian Library

Call Number: MS Top.Gen.c.24

Page/ Folio numbers: fols 23v-24r

1.3 Other

Some sources may not fit within the above formats, for example, official records, journal articles, digitized sources, transcriptions of interviews. Please enter these in this box.

For example:

Parliamentary Papers, Select Committee on Public Libraries [Commons] 1849

(Facsimile edition by Irish University Press, Shannon, 1968) p. 3.

1.3 Additional Information

Use this box to include any additional information about the source, such as details of an individual letter, date of a diary entry, details about an oral source, or any other information you think relevant for example: 'diary entry for 1 January, 1832';

'Letter from Mary Russell Mitford to Mrs Ouvry, 14 July, 1840'; 'the editor cites Darwin's Reading Notebooks in a footnote to substantiate this information'.

1.4 Century of Reading Experience

Please fill this in whether or not you know the exact date of the reading experience. If you know that the reading experience took place between a particular set of dates, and these cover more than one category (e.g. 1760-1810), please tick as many boxes as necessary (in this case, the box for 1700-1799 and the box for 1800-1849).

1.4 Date of Reading Experience

Do you have an idea of when the reading experience may have taken place?

If you know the exact date of the reading experience, please select 'Exact date' and fill in the boxes Day/Month/Year (eg. 23 Apr 1888).

However, there are often cases in which we know that a text was read sometime during a general period. In this case, select 'Date range' and complete the appropriate boxes. For example:

If you know that the subject read a book sometime between 1815 and 1827, please record this fact in the two 'year' boxes as '1815' and '1827'.

If you know that a text was read at some point during a particular month, please put the first day of the month in the first set of boxes and the last day of the month in the second set of boxes (for example, a text read during January 1618 should be entered as between 1 Jan 1618 and 31 Jan 1618).

If you simply know that the subject read a book before a particular date (for example, you are working from a letter dated 18 August 1910 in which the subject mentions having read a particular text), please record this date in the last set of boxes. Similarly, if you know that the text was read after a particular date, enter this date in the first set of boxes.

If you do not have the information to complete either of these fields, please select 'Unknown'.

1.5 Who was involved

Who was involved in the reading experience? A single reader, or a reader with people listening, or a reading group? The form provides three options:

(Note: please ensure that the correct radio button is selected before you submit your form. Text entered in fields where no radio button has been selected will not be submitted to the database.)

a) Reader

If you know the identity of the person reading the text, please enter the name of the person under 'reader'. You can enter the reader's full name, or part of his or her name. In some cases you may only have the initials of a reader; please type these in the appropriate boxes. If you do not know the name of the reader, but you do have a detailed description, enter anon in the firstname box, and enter descriptive details in the fields below.

For example, for this piece of evidence: 'In chapel this morning, the parson read from St Luke's Gospel', enter anon as the reader, and then under socio-economic group select 'clergy' and enter 'parson' under reader's occupation.

Please also enter the gender and the age of the reader, if you have that information.

NB: Although we are aware that definitions of childhood change in different eras, for the sake of clarity and ease of searchability, we have defined a 'child' as someone under the age of 18 years.

Please enter any useful information about the identity of the reader – for example, their maiden name, any pseudonyms, any family relationships (mother of, father of, son of, etc) in the comments box provided.

Was the reader reading this text aloud? And if so, were any listeners present? Please enter their names in the listeners box. If you do not know the names of the listeners, you can enter a description instead, e.g. servants, or classmates.

For example: You are working from the diary of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. She writes: 'Bro [EBB's eldest brother, Edward Barrett Moulton-Barrett] read prayers. Afterwards he read Lord John Russell's speech on Reform, in the midst of which, I who am interested in reform & admire Lord John Russell, fell fast asleep.' In this example, you should fill in Edward Barrett Moulton-Barrett as the name of the reader and record, under listeners present: 'Elizabeth Barrett and the rest of the Barrett family'.

b) Listener

If you know nothing of the identity of the reader, but you do know who the listener was, you can enter that information under this option.

You can enter the listener's full name, or part of his or her name. In some cases you may only have the initials of a reader; please type these in the appropriate boxes. If you do not know the name of the listener, but you do have a detailed description, enter anon in the firstname box, and enter descriptive details in the fields below.

For example: in the case of a prisoner on Norfolk Island, listening through a small opening in his cell to a reading, enter anon in the firstname box here, and then 'prisoner' under occupation below.

Or: 'Last night I [Jane Smith] heard Southey's "Curse of Kehama" read most beautifully'. In this example, please fill in 'Jane Smith' in the listener box.

Please also enter the gender and the age of the listener, if you have that information.

NB: Although we are aware that definitions of childhood change in different eras, for the sake of clarity and ease of searchability, we have defined a 'child' as someone under the age of 18 years.

Please enter any useful information about the identity of the listener – for example, their maiden name, any pseudonyms, any family relationships (mother of, father of, son of, etc) in the comments box provided.

Were there any other listeners present? In the example I have just given, other prisoners also heard the reading. Their names, or a brief description can be entered in the Other Listeners box: for example, John Smith, or prisoners.

For further guidance, please refer to the sample completed forms.

c) Reading Group

If you do not know the name of the actual reader, but you know that s/he was a member of a particular reading group, fill in the name of the reading group here (for example Austen family; Beaverbrook reading group).

1.6 Text

Please fill in details of the text and author if known. If the author writes under a pseudonym, please use this. For example, 'George Eliot' NOT 'Marian Evans'. If you do not know the name of an author, but have a description, for example, a text 'by a widow', please enter this (in this example, 'a widow') in the 'First name' box.

If you DO NOT know either the text or the author, but you know the genre, please fill in 'unknown' for both Title and Author, and choose as many categories as appropriate from the Genre section.

If you DO NOT know any of this information (for example 'I was reading in bed last night'), enter 'unknown' for both Title and Author, and tick unknown for the genre.

1.6 Genre/ Subject matter

Please choose as many categories as seem appropriate. Genre and subject matter categories can shift over time, and many works do not fit neatly into categories. For example, Samuel Smiles' nineteenth-century best-sellers can be described simultaneously as Biography, Conduct books, Social Sciences, Classics and History.

At the end of Section One, you have the opportunity to review the data you have entered, and then to save it. If you want to complete the following sections, please IGNORE the 'Review' button here. However, if you DO NOT want to complete Sections Two and Three, please review and then save Section One, by clicking on the 'Review' and 'Save' buttons.

Section Two: Details of the text read

2.1 Form of Text

Please choose either Print OR Manuscript OR, if you do not know the form of the text being read, Unknown.

If the text seems to you to fit into more than one category, please choose as many as appropriate. For example, a handbill might contain an advertisement, or a pamphlet an open letter.

If none of the categories are appropriate, please use the Other box, and provide details (for example, a book circulated in manuscript before publication would fall into the Other category, and should be entered in the Manuscript section under Other, described as 'MS book' or 'proofs of book', depending on circumstances).

2.2 Publication Details

Please provide many details as possible about the edition being used. For example 'Bentley's edition of 1833'; 'in the translation from the French by Mary Shelley'; 'read in the reprint of 1932'; 'in the American edition of To the Lighthouse'; 'read in the original'; 'the 12 volume edition of Shakespeare of 1778, edited by Warburton'; 'the Railway Library edition'; 'the edition illustrated by Beardsley'.

2.3 Provenance

The provenance of the text refers to the text being read or heard by the subject, NOT to the source in which you have found the reading experience.

An Institution Library refers to the library of any institution – for example school, college, university, institute, workhouse, hospital, prison, factory etc.

The category Read In Situ refers to reading the text where you found it. For example, reading an advertisement in a shop window, browsing a book/journal/magazine in a bookshop or railway bookstand, reading a playbill posted on a wall, reading a book in a library without borrowing it, etc.

Section Three: Further Details

This section is optional. However, if you have any of the information requested below, please do enter it as this will be very helpful for charting historical patterns of reading.

3.2 Socio-Economic Group

Please choose a group. If the reading subject is particularly socially mobile (for example, born into a farm-labourer's family then educated at Dame school, apprenticed to a print-maker, and becomes a journalist), please choose the group that most closely represents his/her status at the time of the reading experience you are recording.

3.3 Occupation

You can enter more than one occupation – for example Thomas Babington Macaulay could be described as 'historian, literary critic and government official'; Benjamin Disraeli as 'politician and novelist'.

If you are recording the reading experience of a child or an 'unemployed' wife, you may like to enter the occupation of the father or husband of the reader or listener. For example, 'son of a farm labourer', or 'wife of a railway clerk'.

If you do not know the subject's occupation, this field can be left blank.

3.4 Religion

Please enter anything you know about your subject's religious beliefs. This can be general ('Christian', 'Buddhist') or specific ('Evangelical Anglican'; 'Shi-ite Muslim'). People's religious beliefs may change over time (your subject may experience a death-bed conversion, for example), so please enter details that best represent his or her religion at the time of the reading experience, if you know them. If you do not know anything about his or her religion, this field can be left blank.

3.5 Country of Origin

The country in which the subject was born. We are interested in readers of other nationalities reading whilst resident or visiting Britain.

3.6 Country of Experience

The country in which the reading experience took place. We are interested in the experiences of British subjects while travelling or on holiday abroad, as well as those of first- and second-generation British subjects whose parents had emigrated to other countries.

3.7 Time of Experience

Please select as many options as appropriate. Boxes are provided next to each field for any additional information that you might like to enter. For example, if you are working from a letter in which the subject describes reading *Paradise Lost* in bed until the early hours, you would click on the 'Night time' option, and enter 'until the early hours' in the box beside 'Night time'.

3.8 Place of Experience

Please select as many options as appropriate, and complete the accompanying box if applicable. For example, you are working from a witness statement that reads 'I was alone in my lodgings in London, reading the newspaper when I saw a shadow pass the window.' In this case, please click the 'City/ town/ village' button, and enter 'London' in the box beside it. Please also click the 'Other location' button and type 'lodgings'. Or, if you are working from a letter sent from 15 George St, Edinburgh, please enter details in both the 'City' and 'Specific Address' fields.

3.9 Type of Experience (Reader)

Choose as many as appropriate. Some reading experiences might be a combination of silent and aloud, solitary and in company (for example having a solitary reading experience interrupted by a child asking to have a bit read aloud). Similarly, some listening experiences might be a combination of passive and reactive (for example an unexpected outburst from an audience member).

3.9 Type of Experience (Listener Only)

As well as being interested in the type of experience of the reader of the text, we would also like details on the experience of any listeners present at the reading. Please specify the type of experience for any listener present at the time of the reading. If you know the type of experience for more than one listener (for example, a diary entry that recorded the following: 'When my father had finished reading aloud the first instalment of *Bleak House*, we all spontaneously broke into applause') please record this in the Additional Comments box (Section 3.11).

3.10 Additional Comments

Please use this space to add any comments/ further information you think necessary or valuable. For example, 'I am not certain of the reliability of this source', 'I have not entered all the relevant reading experiences from this book or manuscript', 'These are marginal notes in a book', 'This is editorial commentary or interjection', 'this information comes from a secondary source' 'I have transcribed the words of an interview on 23 June, 1990, with Mrs Jane Smith, born in 1920', etc.

When you have completed the form, click on the 'Review' button at the end of Section Three to check your entry. Once you have reviewed the data, please press the 'Save' button at the end of the form.

Please Note: Do NOT click on the 'Save' button at the end of Section One if you have also filled in Sections Two and/or Three.

Once you have saved your entry, you will be sent an email acknowledging your contribution to RED. This email will contain the record ID of your entry and contact information in case you want to change some details. If you find that you have entered information incorrectly, or if you have any concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the RED Team. We are only too happy to help.

If you are filling in a number of forms with information from the same source, you may find it useful to use the 'Duplicate to Continue' option which appears after an entry has been saved to the database. When you select this option, you will be taken to a new form which already contains all the data you entered in the previous form. You can then replace any material with new data where relevant. We advise you to check over material carefully when using this function, as it is easy to leave boxes checked by mistake (particularly in the 'Genre' section), or to fail to change dates, names or numbers!