

# The Widow and Wedlock Novels of Frances Trollope

General Editor: **Brenda Ayres**

Volume Editors: **Ann-Barbara Graff, Abigail Burnham Bloom, Tamara S Wagner and Elsie B Michie**

*The Pickering Masters*

4 Volume Set: c.1600pp: June 2011

978 1 84893 079 7: 234x156mm: £350/\$625

The writings of Frances Trollope have enjoyed increasing academic interest in recent years and are now widely studied. In this four-volume critical edition her comical, yet subversive, treatment of Victorian marriage provides an interesting contrast to some of the more earnest but conventional fiction of the time. She believed that her books should deal with social issues, and influenced other social commentators such as Charles Dickens and Elizabeth Gaskell.

The novels included here are among her most successful although they have not previously been available in scholarly editions. Published between 1839 and 1849, they were written when Trollope was a widow herself. They are significant in their focus on more mature women and their social and sexual significance. The third book, *The Widow Wedded*, draws directly on Trollope's experiences in America, allowing her further commentary on social conditions and making this a useful counterpart to her best-known non-fiction work *Domestic Manners of the Americans*. Trollope saw first-hand the Nashoba commune for freed slaves, as lived in Cincinnati for two years, involving herself in the town's development.

This set includes a general introduction, volume introductions, headnotes and endnotes. It complements Pickering & Chatto's previous collection, *The Social Problem Novels of Frances Trollope* (2008).



“Interview between Lord Mucklebury and his ‘Magnifica O’Donnaccia’” by Robert William Buss, in *The Widow Married* (1840)

- First critical edition of the novels, with full scholarly apparatus
- Allows insight into Trollope's impact on both British and American audiences
- Trollope's wit and subversive female characters provide a more nuanced view of Victorian literary traditions

## Editorial Board

**Brenda Ayres** is at Liberty University

**Ann-Barbara Graff** is at Nipissing University

**Abigail Burnham Bloom** is at Hunter College

**Tamara S Wagner** is at Nanyang Technological University

**Elsie B Michie** is at Louisiana State University

**The Pickering  
Masters**

## Volume 1

(edited by Ann-Barbara Graff)

*The Widow Barnaby* (1839)

In the first novel of this series, Frances Trollope created a vulgar, overweight and older heroine who suffers no remorse and little retribution. Trollope satirizes the marital and social strivings of the middle class through the Widow Barnaby's duplicitous and selfish machinations. This first modern scholarly edition of the novel will appeal to modern readers as much as it did to Trollope's contemporaries because of the equanimity of the heroine; her adaptable nature allows her to accept her limitations and her set-backs while retaining her good humour.

## Volume 2

(edited by Abigail Burnham Bloom)

*The Widow Married; A Sequel to the Widow Barnaby* (1840)

This is Frances Trollope's first sequel to her prodigiously popular novel, *The Widow Barnaby*. It once again delights the reader with the Widow's savvy expertise in transversing gender and class boundaries; however, this time she is not alone. She has teamed up with a third husband, Major Allen, and between the two, the reader never knows for sure who gets the upper hand. What is certain is that no decent member of British society stands a chance in not being duped, disturbed, or at least astounded by their cunning infiltration into their ranks. The couple are even more resolute for they must manoeuvre within a marriage plot novel to get their daughter well married. But to such an end, although hardly possible to believe, their fair offspring manages to outmanoeuvre them all.

## Volume 3

(edited by Tamara S Wagner)

*The Widow Wedded; or The Adventures of the Barnabys in America* (1843)

The third and final novel in France Trollope's 'Widow Barnaby' series. It is at the same time her most self-reflexive work and part of a series of 'American novels'. As she returned once again to her American material, material that had already informed her sharply critical *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, Trollope made the Widow Barnaby likewise resort to writing a travel account of the United States, but one that Americans would want to read.

The Widow's hilariously comical exploitation of prevalent prejudices and common clichés is juxtaposed with the creation of British fiction's first American heroine in a subplot that testifies to Trollope's continued commitment to abolition. The result is an intricate *tour-de-force* that revisits Trollope's own failed efforts to run a business in America with pointed irony.

## Volume 4

(edited by Elsie B Michie)

*The Lottery of Marriage* (1849)

Echoing Shakespearean and Restoration comedy, *The Lottery of Marriage* follows the marital fates of a diverse group brought together at the resort of Dover. Containing several hilarious scenes on yachts and more than one widow with a marriageable daughter, Frances Trollope's novel is a fictional lottery where those who marry for money and status are foiled while those moved by intellectual and spiritual aims are rewarded.

Including virtuous characters that are readers of Fourier and believers in social justice, Trollope's light and frothy plot of marital misunderstandings works through early nineteenth-century anxieties about the tension between materialist and idealist social goals.

## Related title

### The Social Problem Novels of Frances Trollope

General Editor: **Brenda Ayres**

Frances Milton Trollope (1779–1863) was a prolific, provocative and hugely successful novelist. She greatly influenced the generation of Victorian novelists who came after her such as Charles Dickens, George Eliot and Elizabeth Gaskell. This is the first modern, scholarly, annotated edition of Frances Trollope's social problem novels.

- Restores a neglected voice to the nineteenth-century canon
- Texts reprinted in full, re-set and annotated
- Full scholarly apparatus

*The Pickering Masters*

4 Volume Set: 1904pp: 2008

978 1 85196 972 2: 234x156mm: £350/\$625

[www.pickeringchatto.com/francestrollope](http://www.pickeringchatto.com/francestrollope)