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Maria Edgeworth and the Collaborative Composition of *Harry and Lucy Concluded*

Maria Edgeworth’s novels have long been recognized as collaborative works influenced by her larger family community. Although Richard Lovell (her father) provided feedback on her fictions and co-wrote several educational works, including early volumes of *Early Lessons*, he was not the only person who influenced her writings: her larger family circle played an active role in the composition and revision of her novels. I would argue, however, that Edgeworth's composition process and the content of her *Harry and Lucy Concluded* (the final four volumes of *Early Lessons*, 1825) considerably widened the net of her collaborators.  I am co-editor of the *Maria Edgeworth Letters Project* and am continuing to find that Edgeworth was pushing boundaries in her composition by enlisting different inventors and business entrepreneurs (such as Josiah Wedgwood II, pottery magnate, and William Strutt, cotton spinner and engineer) to edit and expand her manuscript pages for *Harry and Lucy*.  The final *Harry and Lucy* volumes, I believe, take her composition practice to the level of crowdsourcing, well beyond coterie or small-group practices we usually see in Romanticism. When writing Wedgwood in 1823, she claimed she was “ignorant of science” and that the “only way in which I can venture to finish this little book is by asking the assistance of his [her father’s] friends in the different scientific parts which they particularly understand,” instructing him “cut & carve freely” the included manuscript pages. *Harry and Lucy* is filled with mechanical and scientific knowledge as the characters and their parents tour the industrial Midlands, and Edgeworth, who did know some science, is marshalling forth scientists, inventors and entrepreneurs to produce accurate and compelling information that Humphry Davy hoped would "have the effect of making the rising generation agile thinkers on subjects, which have not sufficiently occupied the thoughts of their fathers & grandfathers," adding, "I am sure all Men of Science have great obligation to you as their fair advocate."