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Browse, search and serendipity: building approachable digital editions

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Large digital document collections ideally provide multiple routes into data imagined for different users and different use cases: thematic and hierarchical (drill-down) browsability for casual users, and precisely targeted complex search functionality to answer granular queries and generate subcollections for specific research purposes. This chapter investigates the affordances and challenges in building approachable digital projects for the imagined users, the issues involved in anticipating who the users might be as the process of building is ongoing, and the relationship between usability and the corpus. We will focus discussion on our in-progress *Digital Victorian Periodical Poetry Project (DVPP)*, a large-scale digital literary edition with a particular investment in responding to this challenge, which is complicated by the nature of its own collection. Victorian periodicals as a print genre, along with their poems, are notoriously heterogeneous and miscellaneous and often resist classification (Gooding 2017, Mussell 2012, Turner 2020). Our broad approach to the *DVPP* user experience is to facilitate browsing, searching and serendipity, as three ways into the corpus.¹ Browsing

¹ We define 'serendipity' as unplanned, random and valuable discoveries, with

is offered by, for example, facsimile collections of poem images arranged by periodical title and year, as well as indices of poem records and people records. Searching is supported by search pages with options for keyword searches and multiple filters, allowing for simple and complex queries. And serendipitous discovery is encouraged by a variety of curated subcollections hosted on the landing page. These three modes of usability – browse, search and serendipity – are also features of the contemporary Victorian experience of ephemeral serial print, which invited more casual reading (paging through separate issues and collated annual volumes), targeted reading (guided by issue contents and volume indices) and adventitious reading that, as Paul Fyfe (2015) argues, is fundamental to periodical print as ‘forms necessarily fragmented and networked, miscellaneous and serialized’ (264). Fyfe, who terms periodicals ‘a technology of serendipity in print’, calls for the development of ‘techniques of serendipity in digital scholarship’ to ‘remediate perhaps the most unique feature of the Victorians’ own machines of discovery’ (264). In the case of *DVPP*, search and discovery tools are especially important as our corpus contains a large number of marginalised figures, including women, working-class poets and non-British writers, who all circulated widely in Victorian serial print. These figures are findable through person-record descriptive metadata that includes assigned sex and nationality, and searchable biographical notes with controlled vocabulary that designate working-class writers. Discoverability, in other words, is an ideological as well as methodological issue.

Recent debates about the relationship between digital remediation and primary print explore connections between historical print cultures and the digital on conceptual and practical grounds. Many scholars (for example, Fyfe 2009 and Fyfe 2018) attend to the echoes between Victorian anxiety in the face of print explosion and scholars and students confronted by the recent mass digitisation of

no prior user intentions, browsing as a user-initiated casual search through collections (such as an index or set of scans), and searching as targeted user inquiries that can be simple, complex or anything in between.

Victorian print (exemplified by the *British Newspaper Archive*, Google Books and ProQuest). James Mussell (2016), in particular, argues that researchers must understand the differences between periodical print and the digital archive. We view the challenge for a digital edition such as *DVPP* based on periodical print, with inevitable varied user understandings of the primary print culture, to be even more pressing than Mussell contends is the case for researchers. We also view Fyfe's vision of the role of digital tools of discovery, as structured around the historical complexity of periodical print, as a design as well as conceptual challenge for a digital edition. How should we guide users into and through the site, when they might be a student drilling down into the project to harvest a specific poem out of a corpus of many thousands or a researcher familiar with the primary material performing complex search queries? And how can a digital edition encourage anticipated and diverse user groups to understand the data and perform their searches meaningfully and critically? What are the wider issues in building a digital project for a diverse and interdisciplinary audience?

Building the edition, imagining the user

Our project is based on capturing and making discoverable a specific aspect of nineteenth-century ephemeral print culture: periodical poetry that, although until recently totally overlooked by critics (Hughes 2007), was the primary means by which Victorian readers consumed poems, and that represents an entirely different corpus from the conventional literary canon. During the Victorian era, periodical publishing grew exponentially with industrial printing, the elimination of newspaper stamp duty and the rise in literacy, and many periodicals regularly featured poems that varied extensively in their poetic and material qualities. Andrew Hobbs (2012) estimates, for example, that the provincial British newspaper press alone published five million poems. *DVPP*, funded by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Insight Grant (2018–23) and available in beta at the time of writing, offers a digitised collection of poetry from 21 periodicals, magazines and newspapers from the long Victorian period

(1817–1901), representing a variety of Victorian-era serials which varied widely in terms of publication frequency, political outlook and socio-economic class of readership.² *DVPP* provides users with a range of ways to research the emergence and development of periodical poems from the perspective of key features such as authorship, genre, illustration, page layout and publication. Users can also access and generate statistics (for example, on rhyme schemes), sonic devices (such as anaphora and epistrophe), number of stanzas and poem length. As three interconnecting projects – an index of periodical poetry, an edition of sample encoded poems and a personography – *DVPP* offers users a variety of tools to explore the most popular Victorian poetry while investigating its literary, historical and material heterogeneity, making discoverable the poetry that Victorian readers most read and allowing users to track any patterns.

The *DVPP* poetry corpus has over 15,000 poems with key descriptive metadata, editorial notes and page images, giving users access to the material through two poetry indices (an index of all poems and of a subset of transcribed and encoded poems), search pages, a facsimile browser, as well as hyperlinks between material that facilitates cross-referencing. With a large corpus based on multiple inter-relationships between individual poem records, rich metadata and large poem indices, *DVPP* attempts to mimic the Victorian reader's experience of a poem as a reflective and visual pause in the overwhelming flood of serial print (Ehnes 2012, Kooistra 2014), as well as part of the wider serial rhythms of periodicals (Chapman 2022c). Our goal is to offer varying ways to access the data without overwhelming the user. *DVPP*'s corpus is based on periodical print holdings in the University of Victoria's Special Collections, a pragmatic corpus for copyright reasons as well as a broad set of major Victorian serials, providing an achievable scope for the number of periodical poems the project can reasonably index and also highlighting the library's impressive collection of nineteenth-century periodicals. As indexing

2 *DVPP* covers a wide spectrum of periodicals, from the conservative and high-brow *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* to the progressive feminist *English Woman's Journal*. For a full list of titles see <https://dvpp.uvic.ca/periodicals.html>.

full runs of periodicals is essential for our project, so that the corpus is complete within our parameters, where there are missing volumes in the print runs, we have filled the gaps through agreement with other research libraries, including the University of British Columbia's Special Collections, the Beinecke, and the University of Roehampton's children's literature collection. From these periodicals, *DVPP* indexes all complete poems in English, including poems translated into English from other languages (from over 40 languages, including Arabic, French, German and Persian) and poems included in prose articles (such as fiction and review essays), but excluding poetic fragments and poems written in other languages.³

Although our project principles emphasise completeness, in the inclusion of full runs and complete poems, exhaustiveness is in fact illusory in the messy print genre of Victorian periodicals – as Fyfe says of periodical print's serendipity, incompleteness is a feature, not a bug (Fyfe 2015, 261). No full authoritative periodical bibliography exists for titles and their separate issues and volumes, despite the stellar work of indexes like the ongoing *Waterloo Directory* (currently at 73,000 periodical titles). Even among *DVPP*'s limited periodical corpus, supplementary issues are not always bound with print volumes (such as extra Christmas numbers, which are often missing from collated volumes). Determining whether a poem is printed in its entirety is challenging for the many poems not reprinted in any other venue, as is identifying what illustration and decoration belongs to a poem, when the verbal-visual page layout is especially complex. And, given the wide range of types of translations, identifying the sources from which translations were made, and their original language, is highly problematic.⁴ Consequently, *DVPP*'s poetry corpus is based as closely as possible on periodical studies principles, so that indexing decisions are print-centric. These principles in particular acknowledge the collaborative work of Victorian periodical publishing (the index metadata includes identifying

3 See https://dvpp.uvic.ca/about_dvpp.html for *DVPP*'s full editorial principles.

4 *DVPP* defines translations broadly, to include loose renderings and faux translated poems.

translators and illustrators, as well as the poet), varieties of poetic authorship (the metadata includes pseudonyms and allonyms, tracks unsigned poems and notes all alternative signatures), and the reader-centric quality of serial print culture (our editorial and encoding approach is oriented around how contemporary readers would have identified poems, translations and illustrations).⁵ *DVPP*'s focus on the agency of the contemporary Victorian reader has parallels with our focus on the agency of the site application's users.

The criteria we use to determine which poems to include in our corpus have implications which distinguish *DVPP* from other periodical indexes. In particular, we count poems beyond those featuring in separate poetry columns, to include whole poems (rather than extracts) appearing anywhere in the issue, such as within fictional and nonfictional prose contributions. Where we lack extraneous information about whether a poem is complete, we make a decision on the basis of the periodical codes that signal to the reader whether or not it is a fragment (such as the preceding prose, which often makes a claim for the kind of poem about to be quoted). In addition, we include illustrations and decorations when a reader would have clearly understood them to belong to a poem, such as facing page illustrations that have no overt relationship with the poem, but that appear as a double page spread alongside poetry and that invite interartistic reading (for example, illustrated poems in the late Victorian magazine *Atalanta*). And we index poems as translations when the periodical codes signal this, typically in a title (such as 'After the Japanese', 'From the Hungarian'), despite the difficulty in verifying what kind of translation it is and who the original poet might have been. Along with translations, the corpus also includes poems in a range of Anglophone literary languages, particularly in dialect, and we plan in the future to tag these so they are easier to find, responding to the emerging trend in diverse literary languages.⁶ But, from its inception, *DVPP* excluded non-English-language poems,

5 For more on periodical studies as a specific print genre, see Latham and Scholes, 2006 and Brake, 2016.

6 See, for example, the work of the Victorian Literary Languages research network.

determining that they were outside the reasonable limits of the project and too challenging to index and encode. Our current inclusion principles are thus guided by project members' expertise and realistic pragmatic and conceptual boundaries, and we make these transparent in the front-end copy and project documentation. But what counts and what does not count as a poem in *DVPP* also reflects the miscellaneous and heterogeneous qualities of periodicals themselves: while we categorise them in our indexing protocols and encoding taxonomies, as other scholars point out, periodicals and their poems tend to resist completeness and classification as an integral feature of their print genre. And, in the process of creating our documentation and then building the site, we focused at every stage on anticipating a spectrum of user knowledge about the complicated context to the corpus, to aim for both methodological transparency method and site usability. The process of building a digital edition, as we discovered in our collaborative work, necessitates imagining and engaging diverse users from the ground up.

DVPP anticipates that scholars of periodical studies will constitute a significant portion of its user base, and therefore its metadata schema was developed to support end-user queries that reflect an understanding of these principles and publication contexts; for example, identifying serially published poems, which we identify with a related poems tag, and distinguishing poems published in extra Christmas issues. At the same time, we aim to create intuitive routes through complex material for less experienced users. For each indexed poem, *DVPP* indexers capture key descriptive metadata, including poet name/pseudonym, poem title, first line (the first line stands in for the poem title if there is none), bibliographical citation, illustrator and translator (if applicable), whether the poem is included in a prose article and whether there are any related poems (such as in a poem series). Each piece of information represents an access point or a possibility for discovering a poem from within the *DVPP* search page and for connecting it with other poems.⁷ Users can also

7 See the 'Search for poems' page on the *DVPP* web application: <https://dvpp.uvic.ca/searchPoems.html>.

navigate among poems through extensive hyperlinks which connect poems that share particular features (for example, unsigned poems or poems with a common rhyme scheme). *DVPP*'s use of hyperlinking within the web application aims to increase resource discovery by allowing users to adopt serendipitous search strategies (such as similarity searching), in addition to running targeted queries through the search page. We aim to make every significant attribute of a poem (poet, translator, dominant rhyme scheme and so on) into a link to other poems which share the same values.

DVPP also collects and displays metadata about periodical poets and illustrators within a personography. *DVPP* editorial principles for meta-data creation and control within the personography develop out of best practices for nineteenth-century digital editing, modelled by ongoing projects such as *Digital Mitford* (Beshero-Bondar, 2013), the *Yellow Nineties Online* (Kooistra, 2010) and *Digital Dinah Craik* (Bourrier, 2015).⁸ Although *DVPP* was originally designed to be a poem-centric project, rather than a person-centric project like the *Yellow Nineties Personography* (Hedley 2017), the process of indexing poems led to extensive poet, translator and illustrator attribution research, involving primary historical sources such as publisher's ledgers, which we plan to expand and complete in a later phase. This rich information is detailed in the poem and person record editorial notes. *DVPP* provides users with key information about the poets, translators and illustrators of nineteenth-century periodical poetry, facilitating insight and inquiry into historical and sociological trends in poetic authorship. For example, because we anticipate a subset of end users who research authorship history, as well as Victorian literature and gender studies, our metadata schema supports queries related to patterns in the gendering of unsigned and pseudonymous authorship (for example, how many women published poetry pseudonymously in *The Nineteenth Century*, a prominent highbrow monthly?). Metadata fields within the personography include display name (that is, the poet's or illustrator's name as

8 Two of *DVPP*'s long-standing research assistants helped to develop these editorial principles, building on expertise they gained in bibliographic and personographical metadata while working on two of the projects cited in this paragraph.

it commonly appeared within the periodical), surname and forename, known pseudonyms, assigned sex, nationality and dates of birth and death. The person records also include editorial notes with key biographical information (including historical information on less canonical poets, translators and illustrators, referring to primary sources such as census records) and Virtual International Authority File (VIAF) numbers where available. While *DVPP* is very specifically focused on indexing and editing Victorian era periodical poetry, and attributing the poetry's authors, translators and editors, the imagined user groups are multidisciplinary and with a diverse range of prior knowledge about the collection and its contexts.

DVPP encoders mark up a systematic sample of indexed poems based on decade years of publication (that is, we mark up all poems published at the start of each decade interval, from 1820 to 1900).⁹ This sample of decadal poems allows *DVPP* and its end users to assess and evaluate trends in periodical poetry and authorship across a large historical sample frame, but also reflects a reasonable judgement of *DVPP*'s resource availability (that is, how many poems can be encoded during the project's first stage). The project's initial goal for the descriptive markup with TEI/XML and CSS is to accurately represent each poem as it appears on the periodical page. Alongside this diplomatic style of editing, *DVPP* offers a normalised/standardised view which removes periodical-specific layout features, in line with the conventions of print editions. In order to offer both diplomatic and normalised views for every encoded poem, *DVPP* encoders needed to categorise visual features as either non-substantive (those that are not intrinsic to the poem itself but which arise from its extrinsic contexts) or substantive. Examples of these categories include titles printed in all capital letters across a periodical run (nonsubstantive) and line indentations within stanzas (substantive). The interactive capabilities of our digital edition afford users the opportunity to engage with each poem within its historical print

9 Some periodical titles had short runs and so, in cases where titles do not have a decade year publication, *DVPP* marks up poems from the periodical's first year of publication.

context or to remove the nonsubstantive visual features. Thus we are able to support users whose primary focus is on *mise-en-page* aspects of print culture, alongside others who are concerned with the poetry rather than its print context. A fundamental portion of *DVPP*'s TEI/XML markup is dedicated to identifying poetic features (such as rhyme type, rhyme scheme and refrains) and material features (such as illustration content, type and placement). The major guiding principles for deciding which features to mark up, and thus make findable, stem from anticipating what an end user of a nineteenth-century poetry site might be interested in investigating, and what information may yield unique and/or valuable insights to Victorian poetics research when accumulated and studied at scale.

The translation of *DVPP*'s underlying metadata and text encoding into intuitive, approachable and user-centric search pages has required an iterative and discursive team approach. *DVPP* designed its principles for metadata creation and control (within the database) and for descriptive encoding (within the XML) to be as information-rich as possible while operating under the purview of the project's central research questions. *DVPP* developed nuance and complexity over time through project members' sustained interactions with its growing data set and in response to early user feedback. Consequently, it was crucial for our project team to be open to performing multiple rounds of encoding and re-encoding to support the ease of end user queries and poem discoverability. For example, the encoding of end rhymes and rhyme patterns within line groups has always been one of *DVPP*'s primary activities because end users of a periodical poetry site are likely to be interested in investigating historical trends in rhyme and repetition. During *DVPP*'s first encoding pass, encoders described rhyme at the line and line groups level. Though encoding each poem's major rhyme pattern was an early project goal, we quickly discovered that many poems did not have a consistent rhyme pattern, while others were printed in such a way that encoders could not immediately recognise the form.¹⁰ This

10 For example, some Petrarchan sonnets are printed with white space separating the octave and the sestet. On the first encoding pass, an encoder might not

encoding strategy afforded insight into individual poems, but failed to offer meaningful results when studied at scale. The unexpected complexity of our data set necessitated a second encoding pass to allow for more robust rhyme-related inquiries. In 2020, encoders applied the dominant rhyme scheme (a rhyme scheme that occurs in more than 50 per cent of a poem's stanzas) to every poem, with options for 'irregular' and 'none'.¹¹ As a result, unconventional rhyme patterns are discoverable through *DVPP's* search page, allowing for serendipitous discovery. The need to expand such encoding practices for poem discoverability only emerged once sets of encoded poems could be thoroughly explored by team members and test users.

DVPP's core principles for descriptive encoding have also adapted as a result of emerging developments in the field. For example, *DVPP's* database has always included illustrations that accompany indexed poems, including textual ornaments (such as decorated initial letters). However, these illustrations and ornaments were not an initial focus of our poem-centric encoding. An increasing interest in periodicals' textual ornaments, largely prompted by the *Database of Ornament*, a subproject of the *Yellow Nineties*, inspired *DVPP* to develop a taxonomy to organise and separate illustrations and ornaments so they too can be studied meaningfully at scale. We contend that, although it is important to adhere to a vision and a core set of principles, the project teams of digital editions such as *DVPP* must be amenable to both small- and large-scale adaptations to process and product over time if they hope to adopt user-centred design in their final iterations.

Building active users

DVPP's collection of periodical poems can be frankly daunting in scale for new site users trying to navigate the interface, and so our

immediately identify the form, incorrectly encoding the poem as two separate line groups.

11 For *DVPP's* full dominant rhyme scheme criteria, see https://dvpp.uvic.ca/dvpp.html#poem_div_rhyme.

approach is to balance affordances (such as multiple pathways through the collection) with more expert guidance (such as detailed project documentation). In particular, though we provide users with robust search features that include multiple filters to narrow search parameters by fields such as periodical, publication date, poet and rhyme features, we anticipate that users may have difficulty in discovering poems on the site out of the many thousands in the corpus, and in sorting through search results, unless they have a predetermined research interest and expertise in the field. Even then, anticipated users may encounter difficulty with obtaining meaningful results until they gain some familiarity with *DVPP*'s data. And so we make accessible and obvious the project principles, such as the information we collect and display about each poem and why, and even what constitutes a poem in the corpus. In addition, we shape our front-end design and site guidance to address search functionality without overloading users with information. Curious about user experience, we invited informal feedback on the beta version of our site from scholars, attendees at multiple scholarly talks and conferences, and from undergraduate students in Alison Chapman's Spring 2022 Victorian Poetry course at the University of Victoria. In response to this feedback, we devised a strategy to help users engage meaningfully with the site's collection by creating a selection of curated subcollections as entry points on the web application's landing page. One consequence of this process of soliciting targeted feedback is that our sense of what users need, and how to adapt the site to their needs while the project is in development, is iterative and discursive, much like our encoding processes. While these entry points are not quite the full 'serendipitous machines' that Fyfe describes (2015, 262), they give users some accessible but limited thematic browsing options that in turn encourage further pathways of searching and discoverability. In other words, the curated subcollections give users an approachable version of serendipity.

The curated subcollections (Figure 6.1) offer suggested and engaging possible areas of interest from our corpus, in the form of a series of themed cards, with appealing graphics taken from illustrations in

the *DVPP* corpus, that users can mouse over to reveal descriptive information.

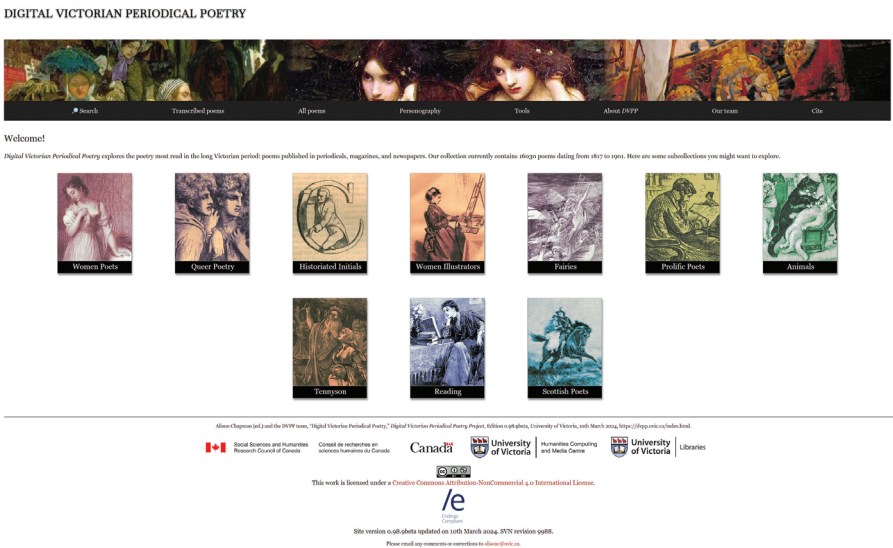


Figure 6.1. *DVPP* landing page featuring curated subcollections (<https://dvpp.uvic.ca>).

DVPP currently offers nine subcollections, intended to give a broad introduction to and sampling of the corpus: Women Poets, Historiated Initials, Women Illustrators, Fairies, Prolific Poets, Animals, Tennyson, Reading and Scottish Poets. The subcollection’s categories range from thematic (for example fairies) to features of the periodical page (such as historiated initials), demonstrating the kinds of information contained within *DVPP*’s collection that users may not anticipate. These collections provide an entertaining yet critically minded curation of poems, accompanying illustrations and poets, by highlighting potential areas of discovery by category. Helping users engage with the project, these subcollections model how users can approach the search functionality with a question or theme to produce meaningful results. The challenge is to offer curated introductions to the corpus without dictating themes of interest, which we approach by aiming for manageable entryways that offer possibilities for more expansive exploration.

The site generates these subcollections from the metadata and poem encoding. Users can click on each subcollection card, which will take them to an index of all the poems in that collection. Subsequently, users can then click on individual titles to bring them to the poem record page with associated metadata and page images. Each poem record also has multiple hyperlinks to related pages in the collection. For instance, the subcollection 'Animals' draws on our metadata to identify illustrations which have been categorised as 'Living thing: animal' using our taxonomy of illustration components, creating a sample collection of poems that are for browsing. Clicking on the first poem title in this index of illustrations featuring animals (Figure 6.2) takes users to the poem record (a satirical poem in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* with a woodcut of a donkey), where there are multiple further entry points to the collection through hyperlinks (to the related person records, to all poems indexed in this periodical and to a page with all the pseudonymous poems).

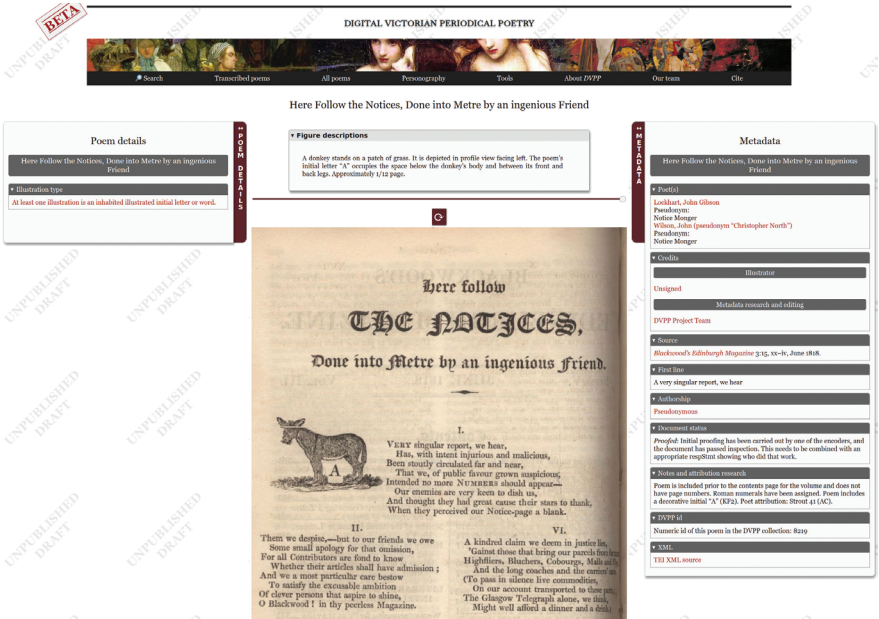


Figure 6.2 DVPP Poem Record Page for 'Here Follow the Notices' (https://dvpp.uvic.ca/poems/blackwoods/1818/pom_8219_here_follow_the_notices_done.html).

These subcollections are complete in themselves, but the fact that they also lead to other parts of the project fosters the user's sense of agency as well as their critical understanding of search and discovery tools. The subcollections provide multiple sample entryways into *DVPP*'s data, offering a curated glimpse into our collection without the need for a predetermined research question, thus creating a variety of search pathways that model the kinds of information that users can generate. But *DVPP*'s subcollections are also designed to spark a research interest if users notice a fascinating detail within the collection, taking advantage of the multiple links between data that each page affords. The place of curated subcollections in *DVPP* encapsulates our multiple approach to user experience, as they afford models for serendipitous discovery, leading to pathways for browsing, and potentially inspiring active searching.

Conclusion: The Future of Approachability

DVPP has a twofold mission as an approachable digital edition: to make every single item in the collection available, findable, browsable and accessible; and, at the same time, to make the process of finding, navigating and browsing as frictionless and intuitive as possible for end users. Consequently, *DVPP*'s web application hides scale and complexity behind intuitive and user-friendly interface features such as simple links. Wherever users find themselves, they will have obvious pathways to move around the site. But users and builders are more than in a partnership: as Charlie Edwards (2012) argues, the acts of using and building are on a continuum. We found, for example, that features we added in building *DVPP*, designed to facilitate efficient team indexing and encoding, were also extremely valuable for the end users. The facsimile browser, for example, which was designed to aid the PI (Alison Chapman) to proof the poem index more efficiently, became a tool in the beta web application to facilitate simple scrolling through multiple page images of poems and illustrations. In addition, the project team's need to easily generate access to multiple poem pages for discussion led to the creation of a simple anthology builder tool. This feature allows end

users of the site to curate their own subcollections for research and teaching purposes, storing each anthology as a bookmark in the browser (shareable as a unique URL) and providing another approach for dealing with the scale and complexity of the overall collection.¹² Building projects and imagining the anticipated users' needs are closely intertwined in approachable digital editions. Resisting an imagined monolithic 'User', within the process of building and testing digital editions, is also the key to approachability, and needs to be iterative through the life of building a project from inception to publication, although it is also important to acknowledge the difficulty in fully anticipating all kinds of users and all of their needs. While, for example, we had imagined different user modes for *DVPP* (casual, drilling down, simple keyword searches, complex searches) and multiple kinds of users (students and scholars from a variety of disciplines, as well as the general public), we did not foresee the interest of genealogists who, discovering *DVPP* person pages when googling their ancestors' names, regularly contact us with information and corrections.

The example of *DVPP* also illustrates the integral relationship between the nature of the corpus offered by a digital edition and the search and discovery tools offered in the web application. In particular, given the extent and diversity of periodical poetry authorship in *DVPP*'s corpus, and widely varying authorship practices, the multiple search, browse and serendipity tools are vital to uncovering noncanonical and neglected kinds of poems (for example, middle-brow poems, low-brow translations), and poets (including amateur, occasional, non-British, working-class, women) at scale. In addition, while in periodical studies there is a critical resistance to 'parachuting' into a corpus to extract one thing (such as a single poem) outside of its rich complicated print ecology, in a digital corpus this kind of user activity is common. The experience of teaching *DVPP* in an exercise for a Victorian Poetry class, where undergraduates were asked to find an example of a working-class periodical poem for close analysis, exposed the rapid search-and-grab activities of time-

12 See <https://dvpp.uvic.ca/createAnthology.html>.

crunched students. But the challenge in building digital editions is to shape users as agents capable of engaging critically with the search and discovery tools (even at speed), allowing for passive browsing, random discovery and rapid drilling down, and all the while offering a framework that contextualises the data in a meaningful and approachable way.

The long-term value of any digital edition resource to future users is, of course, completely dependent on its continued existence and reliable functionality. *DVPP* is therefore built on the principles of the Endings Project, as an entirely static website that requires no back-end infrastructure other than a simple web server.¹³ To achieve this, we must proactively generate every single page we need in our build process, which entails careful premeditation and active discussion that has, in turn, enriched the affordances of the site. Building approachable digital editions from the ground up requires imagining multiple users and their varying needs, but also necessitates planning for the edition's end.

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13 See <https://endings.uvic.ca/>, and Holmes & Takeda 2019.

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