MARK TWAIN AND HIS ILLUSTRATORS: 1867 TO 1889

Dissertation for the Degree of Ph. D.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
BEVERLY R. DAVID

1976

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Ph.D. degree in English

Russel B Nye

Major professor

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ABSTRACT

MARK TWAIN AND HIS ILLUSTRATORS: 1867 TO 1889

by

Beverly R. David

Mark Twain entered the subscription publishing business in 1867. From the publication of his first complete book, Innocents Abroad, until his descent into bankruptcy after publishing A Connecticut Yankee, Mark Twain's writings and the profusely-illustrated subscription book were inseparable entities. The subscription book's style requirements, especially design and illustration, had a great impact therefore on Mark Twain's writing and his success as an author.

This study attempts to investigate the multi-faceted and mysterious relationship between the visual and verbal arts and uses as resource Mark Twain's major publications in the subscription market from 1867 to 1889. The study follows chronologically the author's education in book illustration. At first, Mark Twain merely appreciated the art of fine design when it appeared in his books. He soon was initiated, however, into the many ways illustration functioned in the total concept of a volume. By the later years he thoroughly understood the art of design and illustration and how these could be employed and manipulated by author, illustrator, and publisher in the production of a successful and saleable book.

The physical properties of Mark Twain's first book, The Celebrated Jumping Frog, gave him pleasure and promoted interest in the format of his work in book form. Innocents Abroad, however, involved him personally, almost despite himself, in the production of prints for

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his book. The illustrators made use of his personal photographs and information about the people and places included in the "Quaker City" sea voyage. Because Innocents Abroad was financially successful it served thereafter as a model for many of Mark Twain's later subscription books.

With the printing of his next book, Roughing It, Mark Twain and his co-workers came close to failure. The author foolishly allowed control of all but the text to fall into the hands of subordinates who were at times incompetent and more often uninterested. The completed volume was a patch-work creation in both text and illustrative design. It failed to sell in the marketplace the way Innocents Abroad had.

Next, in The Gilded Age, Mark Twain experimented with innovative practices in two areas with some success. The concept of The Gilded Age, a book written by two eminent authors and a novel rather than the usual travel or history book, broke the familiar restrictions of the subscription publishing market. The book's illustrating ideas also showed innovation by making use of satirical political cartoons to interpret and decorate the text. These new trends set the guidelines for the publishing of some of Mark Twain's later books.

Two years later with The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Mark Twain involved himself in a production nightmare and a commercial disaster. Tom Sawyer was again a novel, still not the most saleable item on the subscription books listings. Moreover, Mark Twain misunderstood or deliberately inteferred with the routine procedures involving the illustrating process. He unfortunately made a last minute decision to change the size of the prints in the book. This caused a publishing delay that allowed a Canadian edition to precede the American

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edition's publication. With the American market flooded with the cheaper imported editions, Tom Sawyer's sales and the author's profits were small.

Having learned this costly lession, Mark Twain penitently returned to the tried and true formula of the subscription book: a travel narrative with voluminous text and prolific illustration. With the printing of A Tramp Abroad Mark Twain and his publishers added and even multiplied the sure-fire elements of the well-designed subscription book. The text ran to over six hundred pages and there were three hundred and twenty-eight drawings. The exapnded formula brought handsome profits, almost equal to those of the prototype, Innocents Abroad.

Despite this commercial success, Mark Twain found himself in the midst of an increasingly difficult personal struggle between the quantity and success of his work and the quality and artistic merit of his efforts. This conflict attained full force when Mark Twain changed publishers and began the production of The Prince and the Pauper. For this book, quality was the foremost guideline. A "deluxe" format and an unusual historical narrative produced predictable results for The Prince: superb reviews from the critics but poor sales in the marketplace. Mark Twain did not again allow his personal conflict between quality and quantity to interfer with his writing until his issuing of Joan of Arc many years leter.

By 1883, Mark Twain had taken over control of his own publishing company and with it control of all the manufacturing problems of his newest book, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. The book was successfully designed according to subscription standards but it was only marginally profitable. Ultimately, however, this book proved to signal the pinnacle of Mark Twain's literary genius and established him

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"FULLY ILLUSTRATED

as America's foremost writer for centuries to come. And E.W. Kemble's Huck Finn with his "Irish grin" became the visible symbol of nineteenth century American literature.

Mark Twain's anger with a corrupt society produced A Connecticut Yankee. Though originally the book's illustrations were meant to soften Mark Twain's harsh treatment of controversial issues, the original plan misfired. Mark Twain's explosive text was coupled with the drawings of an over-zealous and politically motivated illustrator, Daniel Carter Beard. As a result the book became a visual and verbal diatribe against the times rather than a volume that could gain literary merit.

Mark Twain learned his greatest lessons as writer-editor-publisher during his tumultuous twenty-seven years in the subscription publishing world. Unfortunately, financial failure brought an end to his ability to completely control the design of his books. Though he would live, lecture, and write for another twenty years, he would never again personally fight the battles or reap the rewards of a subscription book with the title page flaunting the idea:

"FULLY ILLUSTRATED BY EMINENT ARTISTS: SOLD BY SUBSCRIPTION ONLY."

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MARK TWAIN AND HIS ILLUSTRATORS: 1867 TO 1889

By

Beverly R. Rose David

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of English

1976

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Beverly Rose David

1976

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Introduction

> The large public who read your books have become accustomed to seeing them characteristically illustrated. A book with Mark Twain's name attached to it, without illustrations, would be a disappointment and materially injure its sale. [1]

Late nineteenth century literature was filled with illustration. The "illustrated edition was the rule, not the exception. Advances in technology allowed wood cuts to be machine processed rather than hand printed, inexpensive reproduct on steel engravings made possible fine designs at low prices, and the invention of fast and economical photo-engraving expanded the use of illustration to an unlimited audience. With all these innovations, the average American reader demanded and received pictures with his print material.

Nowhere was this more evident than in the emerging and lucrative world of subscription publication. The typical subscription volume was six hundred pages with two or three hundred wood cuts or steel engravings distributed throughout the text. There was always a choice of elegant bindings with decorative cover designs, an elaborate frontispiece, fifteen to twenty full-page prints and various sizes of inserted cuts. Each chapter started with an ornate initial letter and ended with a detailed tailpiece. Though the quality of the art was not always the best, "everything [was] filled with type or pictures."[2]

This was the publishing business that Mark Twain entered in 1867. From the publication of his first complete book, Innocents Abroad, until his descent into bankruptcy after publishing A Connecticut Yankee, Mark Twain and the profusely-illustrated subscription book were inseparable. The subscription book's requirements in style, design, and illustration therefore had a great impact on Mark Twain's writing and his success as an author.

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Few scholars have probed the relationship between illustration and text, even fewer have studied the influence of illustration on an author's work. The major pioneers in this area have been scholars in children's literature, who have studied the inter-relation of these separate arts for years. They have realized, perhaps more astutely than the students and scholar of adult literature, that pictures fundamentally influence the text read by young minds yet does this visual literacy stop when a reader reaches maturity?

The shrewd subscription publishers, in their greed and wisdom, understood the power of pictures. They knew that the graphic arts could either promote a best seller or consign a book to storage in the publisher's warehouse. Sales often depended on illustrations: who made them, how well they were processed, and how many were included in a book. A well-known illustrator often could sell as many copies of a new edition as a well-known author.

This study attempts to investigate that multi-faceted and mysterious relationship between the visual and the verbal arts. It focuses on Mark Twain's major publications in the subscription market from 1867 to 1889, following chronologically Mark Twain's education in illustration. At first he was an author who merely appreciated the art of fine design, he was then initiated into how illustration functions, and finally came to understand how illustration could be employed by author, illustrator, and publisher in the production of successful works.

A study of this kind depends fundamentally on primary source material. The essential components necessary are the correspondence between Mark Twain, his illustrators and editors, the author's first editions, and the major reviews of Mark Twain's books. From these

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primary sources emerge: information on the association between author and illustrator, the abilities and attitudes of the artist to the writer's work, the practices and pressures of the subscription publishing industry, the effects of the combination of pictures and prose, and the reactions of nineteenth century readers and reviewers to the author's first editions. From this material can be pieced together a history of the design of Mark Twain's books during his subscription publishing career.

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Innocents Abroad

In 1867 Mark Twain was an innocent abroad in the publishing business. He had been a journeyman typesetter, an amateur illustrator, a part-time editor, a traveling journalist, and a recognized short story writer. He had even published a book. Yet he had never experienced the logistics of production, the assembling of all the pieces of a book to make the product ready for the marketplace. In December of that year his schooling in the publishing business began under the tutelage of a master, Elisha Bliss, editor of the American Publishing Company. The lessons learned from Bliss, as much salesman as publisher, influenced both Mark Twain's writing career and his personal life.

Mark Twain's only previous experience with book publication had been with his first volume of short stories, The Celebrated Jumping Frog. The Frog story had first appeared in New York's Saturday Press under the title "Jim Smiley and his Jumping Frog." Two years later Clemens persuaded his friend, San Francisco editor Charles Henry Webb, to produce this story and several others in book form. Webb "selected the contents, read proof, designed the book,"[1] and evidently even retitled the original Smiley sketch. Clemens wrote his approval of Webb's work in a self-promotional column for the Alta California:

> Webb . . . has fixed up a volume of my sketches . . . . He has gotten it up in elegant style, and has done everything to suit his taste, which is excellent. I have made no suggestions. He calls it 'The Celebrated Jumping Frog, and Other Sketches, by "Mark Twain," edited by C.H. Webb.' Its price is $1.50 a copy. It will have a truly gorgeous gold frog on the back of it, and that frog alone will be worth the money. I don't know but what it would be well to publish the frog and leave the book out. 2

Only one other time would Clemens give more credit to a book's design

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Clemens' remarks in the Alta California were probably based upon a communication from Webb rather than an inspection of the book itself. The "gorgeous" design he wrote of appeared not on the back but "on the front . . . a gold-stamped frog . . . usually placed at the lower left hand corner in a diagonal position with the head pointing up."[3] On the back "the frog decoration is blind-stamped."[4]



Exact drawing of the frog from the cover of the first edition of Mark Twain's *The Celebrated Jumping Frog* (cover title) 1867.

Figure 1

Clemens' delight over the frog, an emblem that would become a Mark Twain trademark, was replaced with frustration when he finally had the book itself in his hands. "The book is full of errors of grammar and deadly inconsistencies of spelling in the Frog sketch, because I was away and did not read proof."[5]

This indifference towards production matters, followed by a sense of guilt and recrimination after the product was completed, set a pattern that would reoccur throughout Mark Twain's writing career. For years he would find it difficult to select a title. The choice of

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Clemens was, obv

publishing business.

cover, title page, and illustrations was often left to an editor's or artist's discretion. Proofreading was usually delegated to acquaintances or subordinates. Despite his own shortcomings in the mechanics of production, Clemens never hesitated to express his anger towards others when carelessness and poor quality marred the final design of his books. He knew an attractive book meant better sales. And, even though The Celebrated Jumping Frog had made him no richer, he would make sure he remedied that problem if he ever published a book again.

After the Webb publication, Clemens put the idea of writing books for fame and profit out of his mind. He returned to his job of roving journalist. In December, however, Elisha Bliss tempted him to publish a book again.

> We are desirous of obtaining from you a work of some kind, perhaps compiled from your letters . . . If you have any thought of writing a book, or could be induced to do so, we would be pleased to see you. 6

Mark Twain lost no time in responding to Bliss's offer. He suggested that a volume could easily be assembled of his Quaker City excursion letters that had been running in the Alta California. Naively, he also asked:

> If you think that such a book would suit your purpose, please drop me a line specifying the size and general style of the volume; when matter aught (sic) to be ready; whether it should have any pictures in it or not? 7

Clemens also added a significant financial question: "and what amount of money . . . might [I] possibly make out of it? The latter clause . . . has a degree of importance for me which is almost beyond my comprehension."[8]

Clemens was, obviously, unaware of the nature of the subscription publishing business. He had no conception of how format influenced

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finance in the subscription marketplace. The attributes necessary for selling a subscription book were simple:

> People in those days would not pay for blank paper and wide margins. They wanted everything filled with type and pictures. Part of the subscription book's appeal was bulk. . . . One way to expand a book was to saturate it with illustrations, usually woodcuts that looked as if they had been engraved with a tablespoon. Cheap engravings meant a big savings in production costs. 9

The Quaker City letters were perfect material for a subscription book. The major publications of Bliss's American Publishing Company included histories, biographies, and travel books. Clemens' travels ideally fitted subscription merchandizing. They would, however, have to be carefully tailored in size and design to fit the criteria of the trade.

Though pernicious as any man in the publishing line and a master at cutting corners in publication, Elisha Bliss offered Mark Twain a choice of two unusually handsome contracts: a flat $10,000 or a 5% royalty on profits after production. Clemens conferred with another of Bliss's writers, A.D. Richardson, on the vagaries of the subscription market. He was persuaded by Richardson that there were favorable financial gains from such publication. Clemens, therefore, accepted the royalty contract. At the same time he sent Bliss a statement of commitment. Clemens would

> furnish the American Publishing Company, through you [Bliss] with Mss sufficient for a volume of 500 to 600 pages, the subject to be the trip of the Quaker City . . . to be ready about the first of August . . . I [Clemens] to give all the usual and necessary attention in preparing said Mss for the press, and in preparation of illustrations, [and] in correction of proofs. 10

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Mark Twain had committed himself to a number of production demands that he had never met before: the writing of a massive and cohesive manuscript, attending to matters of illustration, and the complicated chore of correcting proof for an illustrated text.

Bliss, evidently, did not take Clemens' commitment statement too seriously. When the official contract was signed on October 16, 1868, the provisions carried only obscure references to author responsibility in practical publishing matters:

> And the said book company agrees to publish said manuscript bringing it out in Book form with illustrations. . . . The said Clemens is to give all necessary time and attention to the reading of proofs and correcting them, if necessary, and to all other matters connected with the bringing out of the Book, usually done by authors. 11

Unfortunately, even with these vague commitments, both Mark Twain and Elisha Bliss had difficulty meeting the terms of the contract. Mark Twain ran into complications in completing the mammoth 600 page manuscript. Elisha Bliss came close to default when he encountered trouble with his board of directors. The board tried to cancel the contract because they thought the book too humorous to sell successfully in a subscription market.

It was the illustrators, however, who caused the most trouble and produced the most lengthy delays in publication. In early autumn of 1868, Mark wrote Mrs. Fairbanks of his frustrations:

> It [the book] cannot be illustrated profusely enough to get it out in December, and therefore we shall make a spring book of it and issue it the first of March. The publishers are ready to snatch it out at once, with the usual full page engravings, but they [Bliss and artists] prefer to have pictures sandwiched in with the text & [I] do too. 12

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The decision to have the book "profusely" illustrated and have cuts inserted into the text would, unfortunately, postpone even a spring publication.

Interestingly, Mark Twain involved himself in the preparation of illustration for his book almost by accident. Early in his correspondence with Bliss he told the publisher that both he and Moses Beach, editor of the New York Sun and companion on the Quaker City voyage, had taken photographs of their fellow passengers and had purchased tourist cards in each of the visited ports. Clemens suggested that the illustrators copy these photos and cards for their drawings. As an added feature, then, the book would contain pictures of real people and the exact locations Clemens described in the book.

Bliss responded enthusiastically to the idea. It would save time in selecting subjects for illustration, insure a sizable number of interesting and relevant drawings, and be a factor that could be exploited in sales promotion.

Early in February, 1868, Bliss wrote to Clemens that the illustrations were well under way. He said he had planned for over two hundred drawings and by his latest estimate, the artists had already completed one hundred and fifty. In truth there were nowhere near that number finished. (Bliss had a nasty habit of exaggerating progress on books in production.) It would, in fact, be well over a year before all two hundred and thirty-four drawings were completed.

Bliss followed quite closely his normal routine regarding illustration. He had put the matter in the hands of

> Faye (sic) and Cox, illustrators, with an order for about two hundred and fifty pictures. Fay and Cox turned it over to True Williams, one of the

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> well-known illustrators of that day. Williams was a man of great talent--of fine imagination and spirit--but it was necessary to lock him in a room when industry was required, with nothing more exciting than cold water as a beverage. 13

True Williams' affinity for alcohol was only one of the problems frustrating the illustration of Innocents. He was a free-lance artist, working sporadically for Fay and Cox and other engraving firms, usually trying to handle two or three jobs at the same time. "He was not a first-rate draughtsman . . . [though] he was . . . responsible for most of the drawings [in Innocents], although his initials appear on only 4."[14]

At least two other artists formed the team that worked on Innocents, a man named Evans, about whom nothing is known, and a New York artist named Shurtleff. Evans drew "two of the illustrations signed 'Evans'."[15] R.M. Shurtleff contributed "3 of the illustrations . . . signed R.S. and 1 . . . signed 'Shurtleff.'"[16] Shurtleff's drawings for Innocents were routine location cuts, mostly views of ruined Grecian columns. He would, however, produce many and more interesting drawings for Clemens' Roughing It.

To Bliss's credit he allowed an important addition to the normal illustrating routine. He sent Williams and the other artists to New York to work on the drawings. They stayed at Moses Beach's home where "Beach was a great help in making houseroom for the artists while they sketched from his foreign pictures."[17] The artists were so pleased with the results of their New York adventure that they insisted on placing a drawing of Beach in the book.

In spite of Beach's hospitality there was a second publishing delay. Hope of a spring issue was finally abandoned. Again, the

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> involved the illustrations. . . . On March 13 he [Clemens] had seen proofs of only 80 of the 234 illustrations. In April and May he commented again on the illustrations. 18

Bliss, so expansive in February, now refused to commit himself on the progress of Clemens' book. He was involved with the canvassing of other books published by the company and wanted to put off a confrontation with Clemens on a publishing date. He tried to divert the author's attention by boasting that the illustrations were costing over $7000.

If Bliss's figures were accurate, which is doubtful since he always padded the books, he had commissioned possibly the best but also the slowest team of artists available. By late spring three-quarters of the drawings were still unfinished. Proofreading had to begin without them.

In April and May some galleys of Innocents were sent to Clemens for proofing. He complained in exasperation that it was impossible to do justice to the job since many of the illustrations were still not included. He was diverted from his anger, however, as he was visiting the lovely Livy Langdon on an extended stay in Elmira. He alleviated some of the drudgery of proofreading by sharing the task with her. Livy's help would also cause some problems.

Unusual difficulties plagued Clemens' correction of the galleys. With many of the pictures absent from the sheets he was reading, he had no opportunity to check coordination between text and illustration. Also, last minute revisions in the text had left a few drawings set into the letterpress that would be irrelevant since the stories were

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eliminated. In addition, as the final publishing deadline neared, Clemens pushed more and more of the major illustrating decisions onto Bliss. The author assumed little responsibility for the final design of the book.

One of Clemens' constant proofreading problems was the fact that often he found blank spaces on the pages where cuts were supposed to appear. Many of these uncompleted drawings were to depict real people described by Clemens in the text. Without pictures Clemens could do little more than pray that the right drawing would eventually fall into the correct space. In some instances, prayer did little good.

For example, in the first printing of Innocents, a blank space remained on page 129 where a portrait of Napoleon III was supposed to appear. The second printing run carried the picture but a puzzled Clemens remarked, "Napoleon, I think?"[19] Apparently, the portrait was a poor likeness.

There was also a problem with the Queen of Greece. A frustrated Clemens, working with separate packets of drawings and text, told Bliss to "Jam the Queen of Greece in anywhere. She is the daughter of the Emperor of Russia and can stand it." When his temper cooled he added, "No--put her in the Grecian chapter--that will be better."[20]

Prudence had won over vexation. A fortunate thing for, as Clemens admitted later, the drawing was "a poor picture of the Queen of Greece."[21] Correctly placing her in the Greek chapter at least solved one identification problem for the reader.

Other identity confusions turned up when Bliss tried to correct some of the illustrated proof. Many of the photographs used by the illustrators for their portraits were from Clemens' extensive

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personal collection. In many cases only he knew the identities. Apparently, he had handed over great batches of photos without markings. When the artists finished their copying job, Bliss or other editors had the tricky task of placing the right picture on the page where Clemens described the person. In one instance, Bliss asked for help and Clemens laughlingly solved the riddle:

> I suppose I put Ab (Abdel Kader) in by mistake among the pictures. I don't mention him anywhere. I simply bought his photograph in Constantinople because his father and mine were about of an age. . . . But if you have a picture of the old Alligator made, don't waste it--put it in and call it "Specimen of how the Innocents usually appeared, in the Orient"--or something, no matter what. 22

Elisha Bliss, though he stressed accuracy, also agreed it would be imprudent to waste an already engraved cut. He included the portrait of Ab but declined Clemens' humorous caption. The cut was simply labeled "Eastern Monarch" and no text was supplied to explain his presence in the book.

Similar problems plagued author and editor in placing sketches of described locations in the correct pages of the book. Replying to one question from Bliss on where to insert a particular picture, Clemens supplied Bliss with a geography lesson:

> You will find Scylla and Charybdis mentioned before you come to Athens--perhaps the cut you speak of comes in there. (If it is a picture of the Acropolis, though, put it along with the description of the Acropolis in the chapter on Greece.) 23

That was little help to Bliss. In the chapter on Ancient Greece there were nine illustrations, seven of them containing views of the Acropolis.

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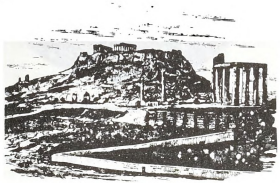
There was still another problem: the location sketches in Innocents constantly stretch visual probabilities. They often extended reality beyond normal limits. For instance, when the Quaker City was anchored in Piraeus harbor, a full five or six miles from Athens, the accompanying drawing showed a remarkably accurate close up of the famous Grecian hilltop.



VIEW OF THE ACROPOLIS, LOOKING WEST.

Figure 2

No passenger aboard the ship could possibly have had this view.

Other cuts in this chapter were also pictures--sketches of the Acropolis. The famous hill even appeared over the shoulders of the voyagers when they had jumped ship and gone on their grape-stealing adventure, despite the assertion in the text that the raiders "could not see the Acropolis nor the high hill either."[24]



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Figure 3. HO!

Nevertheless, there was the ever present view.

Rather than censor these improbable scenes, Bliss probably encouraged the illustrators to take visual license. There were logical reasons to do so. Satisfying the reader's appetite was more important than accuracy. Since subscription book buyers used their volumes as surrogate travel brochures, the engravings provided visual reinforcement for their imaginary adventures. They wanted literally to see the legendary sights that they read about. Full page prints had no text on the back, for the publisher understood that they would be used to decorate the walls of the readers' homes. Attractive scenes, well engraved, were a vital part of the subscription package. No book could have too many. Inaccuracy was a minor flaw.

Not all of the problems of illustrating Innocents came from poorly drawn portraits or improbable views. Confusion also grew out of Clemens' peculiar habit of cutting and censoring material even after it had been set in galleyproof. There are two interesting examples.

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Bliss, busy in Hartford determining which sections of the text should be illustrated, read with interest Clemens' counting of the echoes in the Plaza Simonetti:

> We could not say one, two, three, fast enough but we could dot our notebooks with our pencil points almost rapidly enough to take down a sort of shorthand report of the result. My page revealed the following account. 25

Bliss wondered, did Clemens still have the notebook? If so, a reproduction of this particular page would be a perfect illustration. Clemens assured Bliss that his notebook indeed existed and had the page with the pencil dots. He sent the book to Bliss with a note: "Your idea about the 'Echo' diagram is correct--glad it is to be engraved."[26]

Bliss gave the notebook to an artist who faithfully drew what he saw: the pencilled page and the facing page.



Figure 4. FIFTY-TWO DISTINCT REPETITIONS

Bliss's artist incorrectly included the handwritten observation Clemens had noted in his book about a "Picture by Titian." The artist had "copied Clemens' handwriting with remarkable fidelity."[27] But these Clemens' notes had nothing to do with the sequence of the echoes in the Plaza Simonetti. These were other notes Clemens' had written while touring a Cathedral in Milan. He had used the incident of the Cathedral visit in one of his Alta California articles, specifically, letter number eight.

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Indications are that this letter was originally to be part of the Innocents text. While Clemens was reading the galleys, however, he decided the Milan chapter ran too long. Clemens logically struck the final portion of the chapter, the section where the priest-tour director described the Titian canvas that was painted in the dark. With the striking of this section, Clemens' note about the painting copied in the illustration lost all meaning.

Clemens may never have seen the drawing in proof. Or, he may have seen it and neglected to strike it at the same time he deleted the text. A third possibility also seems plausible. An ever prudent Bliss may have kept the already drawn and inserted cut in, rather than spend both time and money preparing a new plate. Bliss was never one to throw away usable material.

Another example of an illustration that was included in the text though there was no related story appeared at the end of the Mount Tabor chapter. A lovely cut, inserted on page 524 of the first edition, looked like an innocent tailpiece.



Figure 5

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In reality, this picture tells quite a **story.**

The two maidens **are shown**

> in a task **that, strangely enough, receives not the** slightest mention anywhere in the text of the book. Instead, **their unexplained task is minutely described in the first paragraph of the text of "Home of** the Prodigal Son," omitted from Innocents. . . . Obviously, the publisher of Innocents would not have gone to the expense of making the cut of the two women, unless he had fully expected that the text, relating to the cut, would appear on the same page in the customary manner. The artist made the drawing to accompany the tale of "Home of the Prodigal Son," but in between the time when the cut was made and the time the book went to press, something happened. 28

What happened can be easily explained. Initially, both Mark Twain and Elisha Bliss had intended to include the "Prodigal Son" chapter in the book. True Williams drew the cut for the section as ordered. It was inserted as a tailpiece for the story. Unlike the Titian section, however, the Prodigal Son was not cut because of length.

During a proofreading session at Elmira the genteel eyes of Livy Langdon read the exact description of the women's work: "Everyday you see the young ladies of Palestine revelling in masses of the refuse of animals with their gentle hands and putting the treasure in baskets to be dried and used for fuel."[29] The handling of manure was too vulgar for Livy. The description of the women's work was omitted from the book. The caption for the drawing, hidden away in the "List of Illustrations," remained as the only clue to what the women were handling in the picture: "Tailpiece, Gathering Fuel." The dainty and innocuous cut provided the necessary filler for an almost empty page.

Mark Twain was as satisfied with the drawings for his book as he had been with Webb's design of the "gorgeous gold frog." "I think all

the engravings are han

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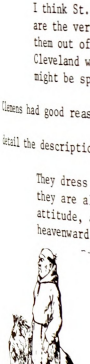



the engravings are handsome and attractive."[30] Clemens' judgment, on the whole, was fair. The drawings were humorous without being grotesque. Though not always well printed they were far superior to most subscription editions. And Clemens' idea of the illustrators working from original photographs added a note of authenticity perfectly suited to a travel book.

The humorous drawings for the Old Masters chapter especially delighted the author:

> I think St. Mark and the others "by the Old Masters" are the very funniest pictures I ever saw. I cut them out of the proof to send to Mrs. Fairbanks of Cleveland who always pleaded that the Old Masters might be spared blackguarding. [31]

Clemens had good reason to be pleased. The drawings matched detail for detail the descriptions in the text:

> They dress alike in coarse monkish robes and sandals, they are all bald-headed, they stand in about the same attitude, and without exception they are gazing heavenward. [32]



Figure 6. THE OLD MASTERS

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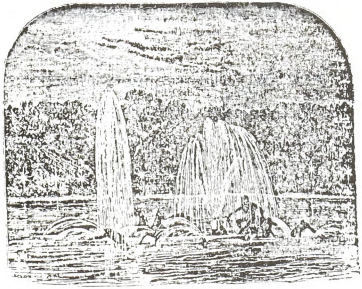
True Williams' saints had more than just precise detail. He had perfectly matched the tongue-in-cheek attitude of Clemens' prose: Mark with his lion led by a ring in his nose; Matthew sucking quizzically on his quill; a tranquil Jerome with his ever-present human skull; Sebastian, staunch despite his affliction of arrows; and the added, "undesignated" monk, as Mark Twain had deemed him, with a clown nose and all the religious trappings. The subtle blend of humor and irreverence that Clemens had caught in words the illustrator sketched in pictures. When Clemens sent the drawings to Mrs. Fairbanks, he couldn't help commenting that "the irreverence of the volume appears to be a tip-top good feature of it, diplomatically speaking."[33]

Clemens did reserve judgment on a few of the drawings. In one note he gently chided Bliss for substituting a picture of his own fountain for the original at Versailles:

> I did "copper" that fountain, but since it looks like the one you got in Paris (Ky.) yourself, I haven't another word to say. You see I thought it looked like a lot of niggers and horses adrift in a freshet--but I don't say a word now Bliss. I guess it will work well when neatly printed. [34]



FOUNTAIN AT VERSAILLES.

Figure 7

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Clemens' hopes were unfulfilled. When printed the silhouette-like figures reinforced Clemens' comment about "niggers and horses." The plate had been poorly engraved. The ink had filled the crudely cut burring lines and smudged the details of the drawing. There was little similarity between this image and the magnificent fountains Clemens described in the book: "Vast fountains whose great bronze effigies discharged rivers of sparkling water into the air and mingled a hundred curving jets together in forms of matchless beauty."[35] True Williams' rendition of Bliss's Paris, Ky. fountain did not match Clemens' Versailles original.

Clemens took special satisfaction in the many photograph-like portraits that illuminated the pages of the book. The author probably felt a personal pleasure because he had been, in part, responsible for the idea. The technique was not new. E.A. Abbey and F.C.C. Darley, top illustrators in trade publication in the nineteenth century, had pioneered the use of photographs. The method was, however, a breakthrough in subscription publication. Poorly conceived and crudely printed woodcuts had always been the stock in trade of a subscription house.

The portraits for Innocents were meticulously done, down to the last hair and whisker. Clemens appreciated both the skill in drawing and the results of careful printing. "The pictures are good, if I do say so myself. There is a multitude of them--among them good portraits of Dan, Duncan."[36] The easily recognizable Dan Slote, faithfully copied a Clemens photo, had been Clemens' cabin-mate on the Quaker City. Clemens had described him as a "splendid, immoral, tobacco-smoking, wine drinking, godless, roommate . . . . As good and true and right-

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after his partnership



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minded a man as ever lived."[37] Clemens would change his opinion of Dan after his partnership in the Kaolatype illustrating machine venture.



Figure 8

Duncan was "Captain Charles C. Duncan [who] commanded the Quaker City" on its celebrated voyage. Duncan was a temperance supporter whom Clemens disliked more after the voyage than he had during the passage. He later called him "the loudest, the longest, and the most irrepressible supplicant among the Quaker City's pilgrims."[38] Duncan's portrait confirms both a fatherly and a rather self-righteous image.



Figure 9

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True Williams had made the pages of Innocents into a kind of family album. The features of each person, drawn from photographs, were distinct enough for the reader to feel himself personally acquainted with the voyagers. The ship's passengers became friends who accompanied the reader on his imaginary journey.

Several methods of illustration were used for Innocents. At times, in order to further explain a detail and yet allow a character to remain sympathetic to the reader, both portraiture and caricature were supplied. For example, Jack Van Norstand, a young and loveable New Jerseyan who was the butt of many jokes on the trip, was formally portrayed on one page. In another section where Clemens commented on his absurd dress "Pea jacket, tasseled red fez, buckskin patch and all,"[39] a cartoon graphically located Jack's patch.



JACK.



REAR ELEVATION OF JACK.

Figure 10

The characters in the book meant to be viewed with compassion were always drawn in life-like portraiture. The members of the cruise who were to be interpreted as unsavory or disreputable were drawn

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For instance, Frederick Greer, the "young and green, and not bright, not learned, and not wise"[40] questioning fellow, was shown as fuzzy-headed. Dr. Edward Andrews, who "appears in IA as 'the Oracle,' a gross and bitter burlesque 'who eats for four and looks wiser than the whole Academy of France,"[41] was seen gesturing in a know-it-all manner.

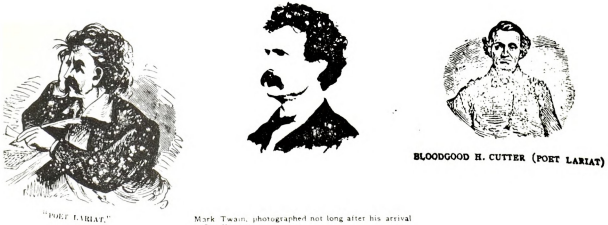


"INTERROGATION POINT."

Figure 11. THE ORACLE

Just by viewing the pictures, a reader would have little difficulty choosing--or refusing--a companion for the long trip.

Mark Twain, as author-narrator-fellow traveler, was pictured liberally through the pages. His image, however, was not a staid portrait but always a humorous caricature. He was, however, no less



"POET LARIAT."

Mark Twain, photographed not long after his arrival in San Francisco.

BLOODGOOD H. CUTTER (POET LARIAT)

Figure 12

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recognizable with his abundantly wavy hair and luxuriantly flowing mustache. In one cut he was incorrectly portrayed as the voyage's obnoxious "Poet Lariat," the self-styled bard who insisted on reading his poetry on all occasions."[42]

The "Poet Lariat" of Innocents was, in reality, Bloodgood H. Cutter. It must have been embarrassing to Clemens to be portrayed as the odious Cutter. Yet readers probably found the relationship laughable, a way of the author poking innocent fun at himself. The drawings became a visual, distinguishable extension of the writer. To his audience he was seen as foolish and vulnerable as they. Though embarrassing, it made an interesting attention-getting tool.

Bliss immediately capitalized on the cartoons showing Mark Twain in ridiculous situations. These caricatures were used widely as a promotional device. Thousands of circulars were printed and sent to all the



Figure 13. CIRCULAR: INNOCENTS ABROAD

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publishing company's agents showing Mark Twain dressed in an absurd costume, looking certainly like an innocent abroad. Funny enough to provoke laughter, they also served to stimulate sales for the book.

This practice of making book promotion a more personal experience for a reader-buyer through identifiable portraits and cartoons became important to Mark Twain throughout his subscription publishing career. Promotion of Roughing It and Life on the Mississippi followed essentially the same pattern as that for Innocents. An extension of this technique was used for A Tramp Abroad. An interesting twist in portraiture was added to The Gilded Age. A most extraordinary illustrating idea appeared in A Connecticut Yankee. It almost destroyed it.

Clemens' own features appeared on promotional material, circulars, ads, and in the newspapers so often that his face became internationally known.

The exchange of correspondence in late spring of 1869 proves that Bliss, with Clemens' approval, had some control over deciding the title and ultimate control over design and details of illustration for Innocents. He argued with Clemens about using "Pilgrims" or "Crusade" in the title. He chose most of the passages to be illustrated and suggested how the subject matter should be presented. He decided which subjects were important enough for full page prints, which deserved only small cuts, and where all the drawings should be placed in the text.

These decisions were logically within Bliss's authority as editor. Bliss was the technician in design and illustration; Clemens was only an amateur sketcher. The function of illustration was understood by Bliss; it was still a developing idea to the writer. Clemens was

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By the end of March Clemens had still not selected the title for his book. He would only admit that he liked "'The Innocents Abroad' rather the best."[43] In mid-April Clemens quizzed Bliss again, "How is the name business?"[44] Bliss, tired of making all the decisions, replied to Clemens testily "that either The Innocents Abroad or Crusade of the Innocents will do if MT could not get something better."[45]

Clemens' final choice was The Innocents Abroad: or The New Pilgrim's Progress because it "seems to be the neatest and easiest understood--by farmers and everybody."[46] Mark Twain was beginning to understand his audience.



Figure 14

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At the same time, however, Clemens again deferred to Bliss's expert opinion on a crucial illustration. "You suggest to the artist an idea for a title page--you are good at it--remember your idea about it before? What they expected to see--and what they did see?"[47] This was one of the simpler decisions for the editor. He merely ordered the illustrator to rework the already completed cover design and add a group of passengers. Visualizing what the passengers did see would have involved a whole new design. And there was little time for additional illustration.

Clemens was constantly questioning Bliss about the illustrations: "What became of the beautiful view of the Spires (Milan Cathedral)?"[48] Bliss had to admit that there were still a number of major illustrating decisions to be made and many problems to be worked out in putting the book together. Some of the problems were almost out of control:

> The Spire is a full page cut & not yet done . . . . shall have 16 full page cuts . . . . Printers slower than d--d-- I wish I was a typesetter, I'd push it . . . I am sticking the cuts in the last chapters now. 49

Bliss was boasting; sixteen full plates would impress Clemens. Furthermore, he was also informing his author about the difference between handling full-page cuts and inserted cuts.

The full-page prints were drawn, engraved, and printed at any time during the production of a book. They did not have to fall into paged sequence like textual cuts because they contained no print material. They were, therefore, placed into the text last, when the signatures were bound.

An even more practical reason for dealing with full-page prints was that any full-page cuts still unfinished at publishing time could

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easily be supplied from plates of already published books. This was a fairly common, if unethical, practice.

Bliss had been clever in his choices for full-page cuts. Most were famous locations: Lake Como, Jerusalem, the Pyramids, etc. The frontispiece was also a full-page cut. This kind of print both appealed to the subscription buyer and could be supplied by substitution if the drawings were too late.

Bliss had promised "16 full-page cuts." Near the deadline only fourteen, counting the title page, had been engraved. He reached for an ever-popular engraving of a ship. "The frontispiece of Innocents Abroad, 'The Quaker City in a Storm,' doubled as 'The Steamer Wright' in Overland through Asia . . . and 'A steamship in a Gale' in The American Publisher."[50] Although pirating succeeded in this instance, it caused trouble in the production of Roughing It.

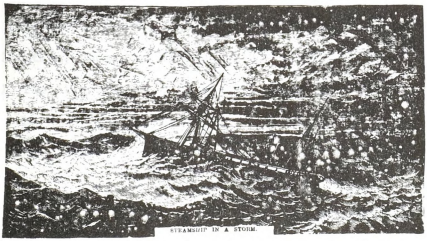

Figure 15

With such important topics as title, title page, and inserted cuts still being debated in late April, the book obviously had to be shelved until summer. But summer proved too busy for Bliss. He tried to explain the problem to Clemens: "Unfortunately, we have delayed too long

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to make a summer book of it--but unavoidably we propose to make a fall book of it."[51] This last postponement could no longer be blamed on manuscript delay, printer's laziness, or even drunken illustrators. It was pure Bliss.

He was busy with canvassing campaigns for other books of the American Publishing Company. He was also coyly trying to put Clemens off until the heavy summer schedule was over. But Clemens had had enough delay. He exploded. In a bristling letter to Bliss he threatened legal measures if Innocents was not off the presses and in the hands of salesmen in twenty-four hours. Bliss complied. "On July 20, 1869, 68 cloth, 60 gilt-edged, 250 Leather Library, and 25 morocco copies of Innocents Abroad were delivered to the American Publishing Company from the bindery."[52] The book was copyrighted and delivered to salesmen, buyers, and reviewers by August.

The reviewers, used to seeing the slipshod products of subscription publication, commented favorably on all aspects of the book, especially the illustrations. Packard's Monthly noted:

> The book is a ponderous one, containing over 650 pages, splendidly illustrated, and produced in the best style of art by the American Publishing Company. . . . In the language of many others, "It must be seen (and read) to be appreciated." 53

An anonymous reviewer in Nation re-emphasized Packard's comments:

> It might have been a thinner book. . . . The rural-district reader likes to see that he has got his money's worth even more than he likes wood engravings . . . and no man ever saw a book-agent with a small volume in his hand. 54

The Pennsylvania Northern Tier Gazette expanded on the same theme:

> In the portly volume . . . the illustrations in kind and abundance, originality, and humor, are a portion of the original design, and fit comfortably into the letter press as the book, with its clear paper, good

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Innocents Abroad had met and exceeded the basic criteria for a best seller in the subscription market. It was bulky, had a beautiful binding and plenty of engravings. In fact, Innocents would become Mark Twain's model for the "ideal" subscription book for many years to come. An ideal that would seldom be reached again.

But it was William Dean Howells' review in the Atlantic--such a prestigious journal seldom stooped to reviewing books from subscription houses--that gave the crucial impetus to Mark Twain's writing career. Howells praised not only Mark Twain's style, humor, and originality, but he also pointed out the value of the illustrations:

> The artist who so copiously illustrated the volume has nearly always helped the author in the portraiture of his fellow passengers, instead of hurting him, which is saying a good deal for an artist; in fact, we may go further and apply commendation to all the illustrations; and this in spite of the variety of figures in which the same persons are represented, and the artist's tendency to show characters on mules where the author says they rode horseback. 56

Howells' reference to the mules pointed to the section where Clemens, as narrator, found himself traveling to Jericho on "a notoriously slow horse."[57] The accompanying drawing had Clemens beside a mule.



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Howells' comments spotlighted the right illustrating decisions made by Clemens and Bliss: prolific illustrations and the use of actual photographs for portraits. Unfortunately, they also revealed some of the flaws; repetitious figures and carelessness on the part of the artist and proofreader.

Mark Twain, of course, carefully read Howells' review and probably smarted over the remark about the mules. He was, however, more in awe of Howells' enthusiastic response than chagrined about such minute carelessness. He was so pleased that he went to the Atlantic offices to meet the famous critic. It was the beginning of a long professional relationship and a close personal friendship.

Many years later, when A.B. Paine was writing his monumental biography of Mark Twain, he singled out Innocents and its illustrator for special commendation:

> The Innocents Abroad is Mark Twain's greatest book of travel. . . . there is a glow . . . in the tale of that little company. . . . Perhaps it could be defined in a single word . . . "youth." That the artist, poor True Williams, felt its inspiration is certain. We may believe that Williams was not a great draughtsman, but no artist ever caught more perfectly the light and spirit of the author's text. Crude, some of the pictures are, no doubt, but they convey the very essence of the story; they belong to it, they are part of it, and they aught never to perish. . . . The public, which in the long run makes no mistakes, has rendered the verdict. The Innocents to-day far outsells . . . any other travel book. [58]

The reviews and Mark Twain's royalty checks--"$1200 to $1500 monthly",[59] proved that the subscription audience had taken Innocents to its heart. Clemens, Bliss, and Williams had been a winning combination for Mark Twain's first subscription book.

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Moreover, with the production of Innocents, the author had learned many valuable lessons about the business of subscription publication. He understood now that illustration functioned in a number of interesting ways: as a visual reminder of characters and locations, as a helpful interpreter of people and text, and as a necessary, vital feature to promote sales in the subscription market. Even the problems associated with the illustrating of Innocents--inconsistency, inaccuracy, and the frustrating delays--became worthwhile lessons for Mark Twain. He had acquired some knowledge and was ready to tackle some of the same problems in his next major publication, Roughing It.

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Roughing It

A year after the publication of Innocents Abroad, Mark Twain was again struggling with manuscript for the American Publishing Company. Through the production of Innocents he had learned many of the factors in the complicated formula of subscription publication. He now tried to structure the writing of his new book to fit these factors.

First, he knew that travel books were the delight of a subscription audience and so he reasoned, "I doubt if I could do better than rub up old Pacific memories & put them between covers along with some eloquent pictures."[1] Second, he understood that the number of pages had a considerable influence on the sale of a subscription book and so he pushed himself to produce page after page of copy: "Am to the 570th page and booming along. . . . Tell Bliss to hatch up lots of pictures for the book--it is going to sell bully."[2] The third, and most obvious, element in Clemens' mind for the production of his western tale was illustration. Almost every letter during these hectic months stressed Clemens' desire for generous amounts of good quality pictures. "If I get half a chance I will write a book that will sell like fury provided you [Bliss] put enough pictures in it."[3] "This book [Roughing It] will be pretty readable, after all; and if it is well and profusely illustrated it will crowd Innocents."[4]

The three essential elements for a saleable subscription book: content of travel, history, or biography; a massive text of at least five hundred pages; and abundant drawings related to the narrative, had worked well for Innocents. Clemens and Bliss decided it would be foolhardy to disrupt this successful pattern.

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Even the smaller illustrating devices that had been worked into Innocents appeared again in Roughing It. Original photographs of important people were engraved and inserted as portraits. Caricatures of Mark Twain and several of the characters important to the story were also included. Full page, frameable engravings of famous western locations were inserted liberally throughout the text.

Mark Twain even trespassed beyond the bounds of normal illustrative practice in his new book. For the first time he relied heavily on graphic design. Confident that illustrations would accompany his text, he wrote lines, paragraphs, and even a whole chapter that depended specifically on related drawings. The drawings, in these particular instances, became integral parts of the book. An interpretation of some incidents would have become meaningless without the pictures for support. A letter, written to Orion during the final stages of the writing of Roughing It, demonstrates Mark Twain's new confidence in visual material: "I mean to make it [Roughing It] a good one in spite of everything--then the illustrations will do the rest."[5]

Though Mark Twain had learned well the major factors of production, he unfortunately overlooked or thought unimportant several other crucial elements in the manufacture of a saleable book. He imposed on himself a heavy writing schedule and thereby was prevented from doing the demanding job of choosing material for a most important tool of the subscription trade, the prospectus. He busied himself with extraneous writing and shunned the necessary consultations with editors and artists on the concepts for the illustrations. He pleaded poverty and left on a tightly scheduled lecture tour, leaving subordinates to correct the massive amounts of illustrated proof. And finally, he innocently

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trusted Elisha Bliss in all manufacturing matters. He had not yet learned that Bliss was a business man first and an editor and friend second. Mark Twain's neglect of significant detail, his aloof attitude toward pictorial design, and his naive faith that others would do the work and treat him fairly, seriously damaged the book. The inevitable result paved the way for Mark Twain's eventual paranoia and ultimately helped destroy the relationship between the author and his editor.

Meanwhile, Mark Twain's lifestyle had undergone extensive change since his writing and publishing of Innocents Abroad. He had married the lovely Olivia Langdon, and he had entered into a new business venture as partner and editor of the Buffalo Express. He was living in an impressive mansion with a multitude of servants. His brother, Orion, had come east, persuaded by Clemens and Bliss to accept an editorship on Bliss's new illustrated monthly, The American Publisher. Pressures of married life, extravagant accommodations, and family entanglements weighed heavily on the author's shoulders.

In this new and oftentimes exasperating atmosphere, Mark Twain was fitfully trying to put together material for a massive manuscript with a cohesive storyline that would feed the appetite of the ravenous subscription audience. He had difficulty.

Elisha Bliss was insisting that Clemens complete the manuscript. The canvassers were waiting for the samples to start taking orders. Unfortunately, Clemens no longer had at hand a handy backlog of completed material as he had had with the Alta California letters used for Innocents. He was forced to write from scratch, to lift material from other books, and borrow episodes from Orion's journals.

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He was also tentatively negotiating with several trade firms with the thought that a trade book would require a less bulky manuscript and add to his own prestige. He found their profit margins too skimpy to be worth his while. Bliss persuaded him that the sales for Innocents proved his financial future was with a subscription house. The contract for Roughing It, a proposed six hundred page volume with heavy illustration, was signed by both men in July, 1870.

As soon as Bliss received the first batch of manuscript, he began searching for a new illustrator. Orion, as Clemens' spokesman in Hartford, informed Bliss that one of Clemens' prime concerns for his new book was the number and quality of the illustrations. Orion's letter to Clemens documents how he acted as go-between for his brother: "I told him [Bliss] the illustrations was (sic) one point with you--that you said something about illustrations."[6]

Bliss, therefore, determined to commission a new artist. He wanted to appease Clemens but, more importantly, he remembered the delays that illustration had caused Innocents and he knew that True Williams' sobriety was still in constant question. He narrowed his choices to two possible candidates: Mullin, a Hartford artist known by Clemens, and a New York illustrator, H.L. Stevens, who worked for Sheldon and Company, a small trade publishing firm.

Mullin had been suggested by Clemens. He was a local illustrator, sick, and in financial trouble. His name was first mentioned when Clemens tried to cajole Bliss into publishing his small book, Autobiography (Burlesque). "You must illustrate it [Burlesque]--mind you, the man to do the choicest of pictures is Mullin--the Sisters are reforming him and he is sadly in need of money. Write to Lant Thompson,

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Clemens was over-enthusiastic about the quality of Mullin's work. His drawings were reputedly "somewhat coarse and overly exaggerated."[8] Possibly Mark Twain was interested in just that kind of "over-exaggeration" to coincide with the "tall-tale" humor of his stories in Roughing It.

Comic details of Bliss's attempt to contact Mullin were related to Clemens by his new agent-editor-spy at the American Publishing Company, Orion Clemens:

> He [Bliss] hunted for Mullin and Lant Thompson, or whatever his name is, two days. He found the latter's office in the hands of plasterers. He is going back tomorrow and will find Mullin. . . . A New York engraver has just come in. He says he has a judgment against Mullin. . . . Bliss charges him [Mullin] with pawning blocks for whiskey and charging fancy prices without doing them better . . . Still, he says he is going to get him to do some work. [9]

Many Hartford illustrators, evidently, had an affinity for alcohol. Bliss, despite his stated intention, never went back to find Mullin.

He next met with Isaac Sheldon of Sheldon and Company. Sheldon was the editor who had published Clemens' Autobiography (Burlesque). In their conversation Sheldon tried to add stature to his small and financially vulnerable firm by boasting to Bliss about the quality and high cost of engravings and how he had to pay exorbitant fees for good artists and engravers. Bliss was unimpressed. He "ridiculed Sheldon's talk of expensive cuts, saying those in Innocents cost $60 a page--the full page cuts."[10] Cooperation between two such one-up-manship editors was obviously not to be.

With Mullin lost to the bottle and Sheldon's illustrators apparently too expensive, Bliss was forced to return to True Williams.

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Having solved the problem of the **illustrator,** Bliss proceeded to the next most important task at hand, the prospectus. Clemens' enthusiasm was waning. Bliss pleaded **with the author to provide more manuscript in order to supply subject material for the illustrators:**

> We go to work on Prs. [prospectus] Monday, and shall get it out very quickly. I fear your brother has written in a manner to give you the wrong impressions of my views. I have said to him that the first part of a book alone is not sufficient to make a proper prospectus . . . I of course cannot get up full plate engravings until I know the subject. . . . I feel particularly anxious to get out a splendid prospectus. 11

Bliss's worry about Orion's gossip and Clemens' procrastination was well founded. The illustrators and engravers were sitting on their hands, and the salesmen-canvassers could not proceed on their door-to-door journey throughout the countryside without their canvass copy.

> The subscription agent, with a prepared talk in his head and . . . his canvassing book on the parlor table . . . showed his prospect . . . the ornate title page, the voluminous table of contents, the text, . . . illustrations, and sample binders. 12

Bliss was stymied. He knew neither story content nor the number of pages needed for illustration. He could not supply the title page, the table of contents, nor the list of illustrations. A prospectus from half of Roughing It would make a poor promotional tool, for the sample always emphasized the number of pages and the number of original engravings. And copy usually ran to at least one hundred pages or twenty per cent of the total in the first edition.

To save time and money in producing the book and the prospectus, plates were drawn and engraved for the entire book. The editor then carefully chose particular plates that contained the most appealing subject matter for a subscription buyer. These plates were printed,

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the pages bound, and the samples sent to agents to collect orders. The presses waited for sufficient orders before rolling with the first edition. Bliss again wrote to Clemens emphasizing his plight concerning time:

> I do not think there is much of a desire to see another book from you as there was 3 months ago. Then anything offered would sell--people would subscribe to anything of yours without . . . looking at it much. Now they will inspect a Prospectus closer and buy more on the strength of it than they would have done a few months ago. 13

Apparently, Mark Twain began to understand Bliss's time bind. He offered to help select material for the prospectus but soon backed out of his offer.

> Clemens suggested that the Slade material . . . the Bemis and the Bull story, and an unspecified chapter at page 750 of the manuscript ought to be included in the prospectus. "I would like to select the specimen chapters myself" . . . but by May he decided he was too thoroughly interested in his work to go to Hartford with the chapters for the agent's dummy. Bliss suggested that Twain send him a "batch" of "particularly good" manuscript and allow Bliss to choose the prospectus chapters from it. 14

Clemens' help on the prospectus ended with the selection of these token chapters. He returned to writing and the occasional excursions on the lecture circuit. Bliss was left clamoring for more copy. "Let's have the last stuff . . . I will put bully cuts into it such as will please you."[15] "Would like all the Mss. you have to be able to select subjects for full page engravings--want all I can of these to go into the Prospectus."[16] By July, however, Bliss was still frantically pleading even for the title:

> What is to be the title--This is a matter of some importance you know & necessary for the Prospectus unless we say we don't know it yet & call it the "Unnamed" & wait for developments to christen it. 17

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Finally, Bliss gave up the idea of receiving a title, completed manuscript, or subjects for the drawings. He named the book Roughing It[18] and started the illustrators working on subject matter chapter by chapter as the pieces arrived. He printed the circulars, ads, and the first run of prospectuses. Most ads featured a characteristic drawing of Mark Twain and estimated the size of the volume.



Figure 17. CIRCULAR: ROUGHING IT

This ad stressed the illustrations: "Hundreds of Characteristic Engravings, executed by Some of the Best Artists in the Land, Add Interest to the Text." One Prospectus read "over 600 pages, Beautifully Illustrated with Nearly 250 Engravings."[19] A month later another prospectus proclaimed "Between 600 and 700 Octavo Pages."[20]

All Bliss's promotional material was aimed at convincing the subscription buyer that Roughing It would be built on the same expansive scale as the best-selling Innocents:

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> One Large Octavo Volume **of About 600** pages, Beautifully Illustrated with **Nearly 300** Engravings, From Original photographs, and **sketches from** the pencils of some of **the most eminent artists. These** engravings have been prepared **with the utmost care, and,** in beauty, **effectiveness, and humor, will equal** those **of any other work in the country. No expense or pains have been spared to make this book one of real merit and value--creditable to the Author, the** Artists, and the Publishers. 21

A close examination of the early prospectus proves how cleverly Bliss wrote advertising copy. Since he was unsure of exact numbers he constantly generalized or used such ambiguous terms as "Original photographs"; There were two: Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, nowhere near the number for Innocents. The "eminent artists" were the usual True Williams and his staff. The engravings for Roughing It issued more from frustration than care and the matter of expense remained an arguable point between Bliss and Clemens for many years.

The text of the agent's sample reveals the problems with which Bliss had to cope. Of the material Bliss had received, he included most of the early Overland chapters and the later Sandwich Island letters. Since the compositors had set type only to page 102, the prospectus plates were engraved separately and coded by page and chapter number so they could eventually be fitted into the consecutive runs for the first edition. Plates were printed and drawings inserted. This was the early prospectus. Clemens was reasonably pleased: "I think Bliss has gotten up the prospectus book with taste & skill."[22] Considering the material Bliss had to work with the sample copy was a creditable job. Even in December, a month before publication, only three hundred consecutive pages had been set in type. This was after the first prospectus had been sent out and orders gathered.

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During the fall of 1871, the problems and bills for expensive living had forced Mark Twain back to an extensive lecture campaign. Admittedly, his lectures were geared to promote sales of his new book: "Notify all hands that from this time I shall talk about nothing but selections from my forthcoming book."[23] But, unfortunately, his speaking engagements precluded his making necessary editorial decisions, revising copy, writing much new material, or reading the galley proof for corrections.

He had left a short time open in August to work on the book, "Planning to stay in Hartford only two weeks just long enough to cull and trim."[24] Roughing It needed more than a perfunctory glance. Illustrators had been working barely a month. They had very little material ready: no full page prints and few sheets of insert cuts. In fact, when Mark Twain arrived in Hartford he found he had barely enough manuscript to comply with his six hundred page contract. He had to include sketches he had planned to drop--the Overland trip which was featured so prominently in the prospectus--and even whip up a fresh chapter to add bulk. He then returned to the lecture platform and Orion remarked in October that

> the manuscript was just going into the printer's hands. MT was engaged on a strenuous lecture campaign during the autumn of 1871 . . . and presumably did little proofreading for Roughing It. 25

Most scholars and bibliographers working over the original manuscript at later dates were less charitable. They maintain that "a careful inspection of textual marks suggests that the author corrected no proof."[26]

The major concepts, total design, as well as the name of Roughing It were, therefore, left to editor Bliss. Frank Bliss and Orion Clemens had been delegated minor authority over some editorial and illustrating

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The major artist was, of course, **True Williams. Officially "53** [prints] . . . bear the **name or initials of Williams. No doubt a great** many of the **others are his work."**[27] **Rosell Morse Shurtleff teamed** again, as he **had for** Innocents, **with Williams. His contributions to** Roughing It, **however, were more extensive here:**

> The full-page illustration facing the frontispiece and that facing p. 100 are both signed "Shurtleff." Others signed "S" or "R.S." . . . may also be his, as may be some others . . . signed with a monogram which could be either "R.S." or "S.R." [28]

Over seventy percent of the drawings were unsigned. Not an unusual practice at this time but it did allow Bliss some interesting substitutions.

Engraving credits on the "List of Illustrations" page were given to Fay and Cox. Many other free-lance engravers' names, however, appeared on the prints themselves: Roberts, Langridge, Richardson, E.F.M., Lauderback, and T.M. Three of these signatures denote known engravers and/or firms in New York and Philadelphia: "William E. Roberts, wood engraver, . . . active in N.Y.C. from 1846 to 1876;"[29] James Richardson, . . . wood engraver of the firm Orr and Richardson, and "Lauderback of Lauderback and Hoffman, wood engravers and designers, Philadelphia, 1853-1860."[31] Then of the prints for Roughing It were signed by these names or initials.

These signatures on the blocks signalled some strange kind of activity in the engraving of prints for Clemens' book. The author, having read none of the proof, was oblivious of the problem. Elisha and Frank Bliss, hardly impartial members of the proofing team, remained silent. Only Orion, busy with his editing job on The American Publisher and moonlighting by reading proof for Clemens' book, suspected the truth

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The first batch of drawings came into the publishing office on the fourth of July. Orion, part-time proofreader, was the perfect man to ferret out inconsistencies in the drawings. He had been to Nevada with his brother, and much of the material in Clemens' book was taken from his journals. Orion wrote of his proofing duties to Clemens"

> Some of the artist's drafts for the pictures have come. I told Frank to take the tree out of Carson and put the auctioneer on the horse. He said he could take the tree out, but the people here wouldn't understand the idea of an auctioneer on a horse. 32

Orion's small, exasperated note provides several clues as to how the illustrations were conceived, drawn, proofed, and revised.

Illustrators were, as Mark Twain would find out, notoriously poor manuscript readers. Had they but read the text that they were working from they would have known: "There was not a tree in sight. There was no vegetation but the endless sagebrush and greasewood."[33] These facts were pointed out to Frank Bliss and the artists. All trees for Nevada were cut.

Another problem, more difficult to solve, arose over the illustration of the auctioneer and the famous Mexican Plug. Frank Bliss may have been right in saying that an eastern audience would never understand the appearance of an auctioneer on a horse. Clemens' auction incident, however, concerned the horse, not the auctioneer. The sale of the horse was contrived to be more farcical than factual. Bliss and the artist missed the point entirely.

Clemens' text read, "The auctioneer came scurrying through the plaza on a black beast that had as many humps and corners on him as a dromedary and necessarily uncomely."[34] Putting the auctioneer on the

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horse, therefore, solved only one problem of inconsistency. The horse, more camel than horse according to Clemens' description, was visualized by the illustrator as a fine-looking animal.



"YOU MIGHT THINK HIM AN AMERICAN HORSE."

Figure 18

Unfortunately, the artist did not understand the exaggerated humor of the situation. He made no concession to Clemens' "lumpy dromedary." With the horse wrong the whole comical sequence is wrong. The picture clouds the issue and the whole point of an Easterner having been conned into buying a worthless old beast is sacrificed. Mark Twain's wordy joke falls flat.

Seating the salesman on a nag was far from the only correction needed for this zany episode. Clemens had described the proud owner's first ride as a series of painful bucking falls which left the rider so



UNIVERSALLY UNSETTLED.

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unsettled he "sat down on a stone with a sigh."[35] The drawing has him accurately disgruntled but seated on a log, not a stone.

The next adventure for the Plug involves different riders but again the situations were visually misrepresented and, more importantly, misinterpreted. When the Plug rushes off with the Speaker of the House, "the first dash the creature made was over a pile of telegraph poles half as high as a church."[36] The drawing showed an attractive horse jumping an eastern rail fence, the jump itself so uneventful, the rider barely left his seat.



RIDING THE PLUG.

Figure 20

Concessions could be made for relatively minor points of inaccuracy. However, losing the comical absurdity of Mark Twain's "tall-tale" does damage to the sequence in the book. Viewing the horse auction and the wild rides in a cartoon-strip fashion, the reader sees a rather ordinary horse providing the routine discomforts of horsebackriding. Visually, this is a far cry from Clemens' western yarn of the duping of an innocent into buying a disreputable beast and a series of super-animated feats. The pictures shift the point of view from horse to rider and from comedy to reality.

This same kind of inaccuracy and lack of zaniness was in most of the drawings for Roughing It. Unlike Innocents, where the spirit of the

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illustrations matched and extended the text, the drawings in Roughing It were a series of hodge-podge, uninteresting sketches at cross-purposes with the story.

At least one, the last drawing for the Mexican Plug series, fits perfectly into sequence where the text has a rider unseated and dejectedly walking back home. The only disconcerting element is a signature, "Richardson," clearly cut into the left-hand corner of the plate.



Figure 21

This drawing is one of the famous "borrowed" prints that had originally appeared in Albert D. Richardson's Beyond the Mississippi, a book published by Bliss in 1869.

The imprint, Richardson, has two possible explanations. It could be the signature of the engraver or a label marking it as from the Richardson book. Whatever the true explanation, a clever Bliss would never have allowed the signature to appear if he had been, as Orion and Clemens later claim, attempting to fraudulently charge Clemens for drawings already engraved. The tangled mystery of Bliss's borrowings will become clearer when more of the pirated drawings are examined.

Clemens' feeling for authenticity in portraiture had held fast since the actual portraits in Innocents. Portraits were again much in

evidence in Roughing

fashion, those of Yo

Represented were Cal

Jim Gillis, "pocket-

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evidence in Roughing It. Though only two appeared in formal portrait fashion, those of Young and Kimball, a multitude appeared in caricature. Represented were Calvin Higby, to whom the book was dedicated, and Jim Gillis, "pocket-miner and a superb storyteller who handed on to Mark some of his most delightful tales (Dick Baker's cat in Roughing It.)"[37]

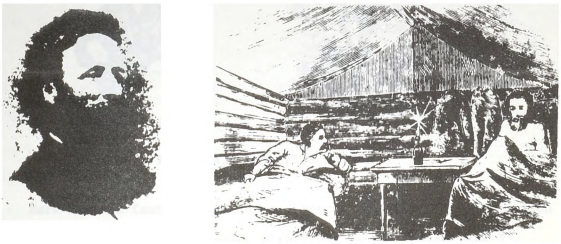

Figure 22. CALVIN HIGBY

Steve Gillis and Mark Twain remained companions until Mark went East in 1866. This picture of Steve was taken long after, in 1907.



Figure 23. STEVE GILLIS

Even Charles Henry

Frog" appears but

ckent for alcohol



Mark Twain's

drawings for the

"Drinking Slumgul

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Even Charles Henry Webb, designer and publisher of Clemens' "gorgeous Frog" appears but remains unidentified in the text, except for his penchant for alcohol and his literary turn of mind.

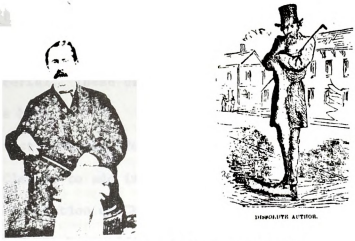
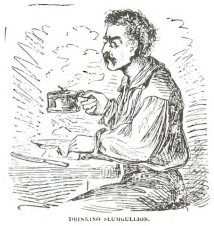


Figure 24. DISSOLUTE AUTHOR

Mark Twain's features, of course, appear the most often in cartoon drawings for the book. Portrayed with Higby in the "Blind Lead," "Drinking Slumgullion" Figure 9, and "Frozen with Stagefright" which Bliss used for circulars, Mark Twain became very familiar to his readers.



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With all the obvious care in caricature, what happened to the features of Senator Stewart in Roughing It is puzzling.

The Senator Stewart drawing and three other engravings for Roughing It have special interest. They were called for in the text and show, for the first time, Mark Twain's awareness of and reliance on graphic material. These drawings, therefore, were necessary and integral to the book.

The first drawing, "Portrait of Mr. Stewart," was especially required by Clemens to add interest to an episode. Clemens, in the Stewart stock section of Chapter 44, related his own cupidity in refusing a gift of stock certificates from "Mr. Stewart (Senator, now, from Nevada)."[38] Days after, according to the story, the offered stock climbed from five to a hundred and fifty dollars. Clemens considered the profit his; the Senator thought differently. Feeling cheated, Clemens reminisced, "I suppose he sold that stock of mine and placed the guilty proceeds in his own pocket. (My revenge will be found in the accompanying portrait.)"[39] A picture was provided, but unfortunately,



Senator William M. Stewart of Nevada. Mark Twain was his private secretary briefly in 1867. When Stewart wrote his memoirs, he did not remember Mark fondly.



PORTRAIT OF MR. STEWART.

Figure 26

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the illustrator, Shurtleff, did not or could not copy from a photograph. The sketch is not even a recognizable caricature. A prime opportunity, and one that Clemens clearly desired, was missed: to make a caustic visual comment on a cheating Senator.

Stewart was, in reality, a crafty western politician well known by Mark Twain.

> Clemens roomed in the same house in Washington and served as his private secretary. The two men quarreled before Clemens left Washington. The comment here and . . . accompanying "portrait" in the first edition may be echoes of this rupture. Stewart chose to regard them as such, for in his memoirs he charged that in Roughing It Mark Twain had accused him of cheating, had printed the scurrilous "portrait," and had claimed to have given him a thrashing. 40

Communication between the author and the illustrator had obviously broken down or there would have been a more savagely recognizable Stewart portrait in Roughing It.

A second illustration was interesting because it contained one of the first original signatures submitted to the illustrators by Mark Twain.

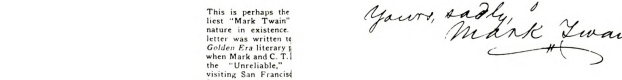

Figure 27. "MARK TWAIN"

The artist's copy accompanied an incident in Clemens' "Secretary's Salary" story where an illiterate Indian had been taught by Clemens to sign a voucher with "a cross . . . and then I witnessed it."[41]



Figure 28. SATISFACTORY VOUCHER

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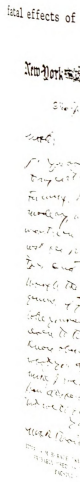
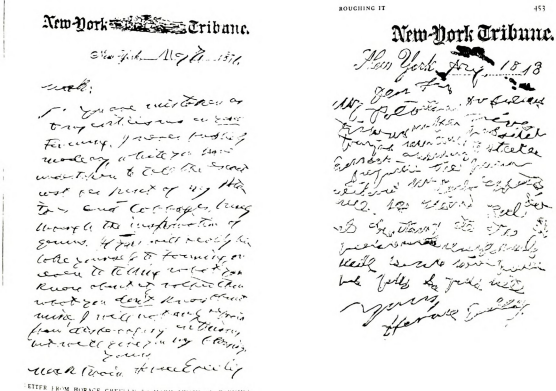


Mark Twain had always been fascinated with signatures and handwriting, his own and others. He would use copies of authentic handwriting many times in the ensuing years in Tom Sawyer, The Prince and The Pauper, and Huckleberry Finn. Clemens' own strong-stroked "Mark Twain" would become, through the years, an official emblem, as familiar to readers as his craggy-browed features.

Another handwriting original was copied for the most famous illustration in Roughing It: the Horace Greeley letter. Mark Twain had written a skit about the merits of farming for the Territorial Enterprise. He sent it to Horace Greeley soliciting an answer. Greeley, himself an amateur agriculturalist, replied in a letter which held the seeds of inspiration for the whole chapter on turnips and the fatal effects of undecipherable handwriting.



LETTER FROM HORACE GREELEY TO MARK TWAIN ON FARMING. PROBABLY USED AS THE MODEL FOR THE GREELEY FACSIMILE IN "ROUGHING IT"

Figure 29. GREELEY LETTERS

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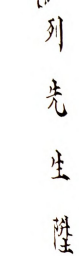

Figure 30. WA

The original Greeley letter, which talked of potatoes and cabbages rather than turnips, undoubtedly served as the model for the full-page cut featured in Roughing It. The artist who copied the drawing for the book obviously needed a copy of Greeley's letter to work from. The letterhead, closing, and Greeley's signature were too accurate to be accidental. But, as is evident, Greeley's scrawl needed no altering to make it illegible and provide the impetus for Clemens' whole chapter. The original letter was probably supplied by Clemens and sent along when he sent in the manuscript to Hartford.

A fourth drawing, integral with the text, appeared in the humorous and yet somewhat maligning chapter on the Chinese in San Francisco. In this section Mark Twain had again directed the reader's attention to a specific drawing to appear on the same page:

> The chief employment of Chinamen in town is to wash clothing. They always send a bill, like this below, pinned to the clothes. It is mere ceremony, for it does not enlighten the customer much. (italics mine) 42

There was more reason for customer curiosity than Mark Twain could realize. The "bill", listed in the List of Illustrations as "Chinese Wash Bill", was not an estimate of cost but a Chinese identification tag. It meant, literally, "Belonging to, or offered to, honorable teacher, Mr. Lieh." The top character was for some unknown reason written sideways. The inaccuracy of the writing or meaning was, of course, unimportant to Clemens' readers. The bill is, however, intriguing for other reasons. The design, like the last drawing in the Mexican Plug series,



Figure 30. WASH BILL

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was another "borrowed" print from Beyond the Mississippi. Inaccuracy was, therefore, inevitable. Bliss's practice of "borrowing", however, increases and begins to form a pattern.

This Chinese chapter had another mysterious illustration, uncaptioned and placed as a tailpiece. The print itself, like the Chinese laundry bill, had been "borrowed" from another book, this time Thomas Knox's Overland through Asia.

The drawing showed a rather startling scene; an Oriental with a clothesline full of mice, tagged and hung up by their tails. There was no related prose explanation except in the "List of Illustrations" where the drawing was called, "Chinese Merchant at Home--Tailpiece." The picture and label leads one to believe that the cut depicts a Chinaman who sells dead mice.



Figure 31

As it turned out that is the correct interpretation.

Originally, this chapter had incorporated a column Mark Twain had written for the Virginia City Enterprise, in which he had included "humorous cliches about the Chinaman as a mouse-eater, accounts of a Chinese lottery, and Chinese prostitutes."[43] Obviously the column had

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been submitted with the original manuscript for Roughing It. When mouse-eating and prostitution proved too distasteful subjects for the subscription reader, these sections were deleted. The stolen print of the grinning mouse seller remained to tantalize the reader's imagination.

Bliss's illegal and recurrent practice of using illustrations from other books published by his firm eventually touched off an explosion between Clemens and his editor. The story of these "borrowed" drawings has more interesting twists.

> In Roughing It, Bliss used pictures from at least two other books, Thomas Knox's Overland through Asia (1870) and Albert Richardson's Beyond the Mississippi (1869). From these two books alone there are seventeen illustrations that show up in Twain's book either altered or changed only slightly, and it is more than likely that other cuts were patched up in order to fit into the context of Roughing It. 44

If Elisha Bliss had already paid the artists for drawing and engraving the plates for two previously published books, who owned the plates? If Bliss owned them it seems reasonable that he could use the plates over and over again whenever needed. If the artists owned the work, which seems extremely doubtful in these early days, the charge of fraud is still debateable. Williams and Shurtleff had both worked on the illustrations for Beyond the Mississippi. They could have substituted the fourteen suspected Mississippi drawings themselves.

A more intriguing and unsolvable question concerns the strange and impenetrable problem of the plates with the curiously engraved signatures. They may also have been "borrowed" by Bliss to put in Roughing It. Counting these ten plates and the seventeen others, three from the Knox and fourteen from Richardson book, there would be a considerable saving for Bliss in production costs.

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Orion, aware of the questionable borrowing practice as early as March, 1872, alerted Clemens. "The author reprimanded his brother for the accusation but immediately went to Bliss and the battle was on."[45] The red-haired Clemens' temper was fired. He was not as concerned with the possibility of the fraudulent reappearance of pictures as the probability that he was being charged for work done on already engraved plates. These charges were serious to Mark Twain since his royalties were figured only after production costs.

An intrigued Orion fed the fire at every opportunity:

> Imagine the effect . . . on Bliss when he finds Hinckley (Bliss's bookkeeper) subpoenaed to testify as to borrowed engravings, the amount of paper received from the mill for Roughing It; the testimony of the paper man as to its quality; of the Churchman pressman as to the country newspaper style of printing the cuts. . . . Bliss can see then that there is only needed to be added the testimony of some prominent engravers, book-binders, and book publishers in the trade, at Boston and New York, to overwhelm with devastating ruin the subscription business and the American Publishing Company. 46

Wisely, Mark Twain postponed filing suit against Bliss. Though Bliss may have cheated him, he was still making more money than any of his literary friends publishing with trade firms. Trade publication had no such profits for their authors. Ruining the subscription houses, especially Bliss's firm, would be financial suicide for Clemens. This incident, however, caused Clemens to suspect his relations with Bliss for the rest of their partnership.

These problems with the illustrations for Roughing It point out Mark Twain's desires and his weaknesses in relation to the designing of his books. His reliance on visual material was steadily growing. Now he specifically requested and directed a reader's attention to particular drawings in the text. But he was still unable to adapt

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himself to the pressures of following through with the needed details. Once he had called for the designs he ignored the matters of selection or approval of the products. He depended on Bliss and others to supervise these matters and then cried foul when they were not carried through to his satisfaction.

Bliss, on the other hand, had had his own pressures. The title page for Roughing It was finally deposited in the Library of Congress on December 6, 1871. Unfortunately, on this same date

> the illustrations were not yet finished; Bliss complained that he had set up to page 300 but plates not finished of yet. They [the illustrators] are finishing as we have begun to print. We are kept back here and there a cut not yet done. 47

This last minute chaos was the culmination of a frustrating year of delay in manuscript, constant textual and illustrating revisions, difficulties in proofreading, and the continual sobriety problem of the chief illustrator. Orion wrote to his wife in October about True Williams' condition:

> I saw his [Clemens] artist [Williams] tonight climbing a lamppost, and offering to go to the top, for the amusement of some loafers in front of Tim Dooley's saloon. Bliss told me this morning that Williams was on a spell. He [Williams] brought a written affidavit, taken before a notary, sometime since, into the office, and wanted to borrow 50¢ to pay the notary, his real object being a ruse to get liquor money. 48

The first complete copies of Roughing It arrived from the bindery on January 30, 1872, almost two full months after the copyright page had been deposited. It was a bulky 591 page volume with 300 illustrations. The authorized English edition, prepared in time for simultaneous publication in England, bore the brunt of the illustrators' delay. "It was a cheap manufacture in garish yellow boards with illustrations only on

the front covers."

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the front covers."[49] Clemens' English editions constantly suffered from lack of illustrated copy and Mark Twain would spend much time on this problem with The Gilded Age and Tom Sawyer.

The first full month after publication the sales were good. By the end of July, however, sales had plummeted to just over 1,000 a month. Poor sales persisted in spite of the fact that Roughing It was turned into a play and dramatized on stages throughout the country. Clemens was still reading excerpts from the book on the lecture trail hoping to drum up business. But there were reasons, however, for public apathy.

Bliss had neglected one segment of the campaign for the book. "Reviews for Roughing It were too few and too scattered."[50] Howells, so flattering in his Innocents review, this time called Clemens' work "grotesque exaggeration . . . a thousand anecdotes, relevant and irrelevant, embroider the work; excursions and digressions of all kinds are the very woof of it . . . it is not unbrokenly nor infallibly funny; nor is it to be praised for all the literary values."[51] This was not exactly condemnation but it was far from the praise he had heaped on Innocents. Moreover, he had no comment for the illustrations. Perhaps his lack of comment was a way of being charitable. Orion had been right when he wrote of the "country newspaper style of printing the cuts" and Clemens and the reviewers knew it.

The Overland Monthly called the illustrations funny but criticized their execution:

> Of the three hundred wood-cuts that illustrate the volume we can say nothing complimentary, from the artistic point of view. But some of them are spirited, and many of them suggestive. Crude as they are in design, and coarse in execution, they have offered us much amusement; and the majority of readers would, we are sure, regret to dispense with them. 52

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The book verbally and visually, had been a cut and paste operation. Clemens' inconsistent text was hardly aided by inferior drawings and low quality printing.

Mark Twain expressed his disappointment to Elisha Bliss and also blamed him for all the problems that had led to the poor sales. "The fault is mainly in the engravings & paper, I think--that & the original lack of publicity. I believe I have learned."[53]

The combination of Bliss, Williams, and Clemens had not proved successful with Roughing It. But Mark Twain was catching on. An author had to do more than merely write the manuscript if he expected to reap financial rewards in the subscription market. Twain would become much more involved in the business end of publishing with his next book, The Gilded Age.

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Before Roughing It Mark Twain had been a journalist and sometime writer of books. After Roughing It he dedicated himself to writing, and books became the major source of his income. His attention to the mechanics of publication improved. The problems of his last book remained uppermost in Clemens' mind while he worked on The Gilded Age and negotiated with Bliss for its production. As a subscription book writer he had learned a number of practical lessons: high production costs reduced his profits, incompetent and irresponsible illustrators caused lengthy publishing delays, pirating of drawings was an illegal but normal practice for subscription editors, and inferior book design was reflected in lower sales in the market. Equally important to his writing style, Mark Twain had learned how to use illustration to his advantage. He could make visual material reinforce and complete the message of his stories. He understood more thoroughly how accompanying cuts could extend or short circuit humor in some situations. Beyond the aesthetic qualities of illustration, the author was grateful to use generous amounts of illustration to help produce the bulky manuscript needed to fulfill subscription volumes.

Clemens' newest work, written in collaboration with Charles Dudley Warner, was the product of an unfamiliar writing experience. It was Clemens' first partnership and his first novel. Because it fell out of the normal sphere of subscription publication, both Clemens and Warner were hesistant about publishing with the American Publishing Company. Subscription houses usually handled travel, biographies, and histories; not novels. This uneasiness was reinforced when Clemens

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was contacted by a New York trade publication house. He related his apprehensions to Elisha Bliss: "Sheldon and Co. think we make a serious and damaging mistake if we try to sell a novel by subscription."[1] Sheldon had published Clemens' Autobiography (Burlesque) through the trade market. Though the book was financially unsuccessful, Clemens had maintained friendly relations with the editor.

Sheldon's argument was persuasive. Clemens was still intrigued with the "status" of publishing with a trade firm though he knew Sheldon's remarks were primarily made with the hope of publishing another Clemens book. In the end, however, Elisha Bliss convinced both authors that his subscription house had promotional techniques that could work as well for a novel as they had for Clemens' other books.

A contract was drawn up and signed on May 8, 1873. This time detailed information on the total design of the book was specific:

> The book is to be after the style of "The Innocents Abroad" & equal it in the quality of its paper binding, engravings, & printing. The engravings inserted to be mutually acceptable to the said Warner & to E. Bliss Jr. Pres. of said American Publishing Com. 2

The penny-pinching Bliss, fearful of losing Clemens as a subscription author, was even talked into a substantial royalty figure:

> Bliss had contracted to pay me 10 p.c. on my next book (contract made 18 months ago) so I made him pay that on Gilded Age. He paid me 7-1/2 on Roughing It and 5 p.c. on Innocents Abroad. 3

The generous contract gave each author a five percent royalty and supervision over production of the book.

Clemens was leaving little to chance on the manufacturing details for this book. Even though the contract was written to avoid the engraving and paper mistakes of Roughing It, Clemens was not satisfied. He wanted control over the decision making process inside the company.

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"As soon as I can get some more stock, I want it. I want to be a Director, also."[4] He became a director in 1873 and remained in that capacity until 1881.

From the beginning, Clemens, Bliss and sometimes Warner, worked together to avoid the many errors that had plagued Roughing It. A major decision, one discussed even before the contracts were signed, concerned a new artist to illustrate the book. Clemens' first choice was the eminent illustrator, corruption fighter, and personal friend, Thomas Nast.

> Now Nast appears to be doing nothing in particular. I want him solitary and alone, to illustrate this next book, it being essentially an American book, he will enjoy doing it. Nast has only one first-class talent (caricature) and no more--but this book will exercise that talent, I think. I think he will be glad to do this work below his usual terms. If you say so I will write him. Tell me what you think, and tell me the total amount you think it best to put in the drawing of the illustrations. 5

After the distress of Roughing It, Mark Twain was taking control of matters he had ignored before. Dissatisfied with the results of his last book, Clemens was demanding to settle a number of questions on design before the manufacture of his new book.

First, and most importantly, he wanted an artist with a talent for caricature. In Clemens' estimation this was essential because of the satirical and political nature of the novel. Second, he wanted an artist with a characteristic style that would be difficult to duplicate. Clemens did not want to pay again for borrowed plates. Third, he wanted one artist so there would be consistency in illustration and one person responsible for all the drawings and deadlines. And finally, Clemens wanted Bliss to set down in writing a commission figure substantial enough to secure the services of such a talented man. Few of Clemens'

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Nast as an illustrator for The Gilded Age seemed a most logical choice. Clemens and Warner had written a satire attacking and condemming both the vicious financial speculation and the scandalous political corruption of the time. Nast's caustic political cartoons had pioneered this kind of visual exposé. Moreover, there would be a fantastic promotional advantage in having Thomas Nast, Charles Dudley Warner and Mark Twain listed on the title page. "Clemens assured Bliss that they could have free advertising from Maine to the Marquesas"[6] if they could pull it off.

As always, the biggest problem was money. Clemens hoped to handle most of the financial arrangements himself. If Bliss would guarantee a set commission figure commensurate with Nast's abilities, Clemens would take the offer to Nast. The attractiveness of the collaboration and his friendship for Clemens should make the plan work. It almost did.

As early as 1867 Nast had proposed "a collaborative lecture tour; Clemens to lecture and Nast to illuminate the remarks with his swift brilliant caricature."[7] At this early date, however, Clemens was not ready for the lecture circuit and the idea was dropped. Ten years later Clemens would propose the same scheme to Nast. By this time, however, Nast was famous, busy, and too ill to go on an extensive tour. Nast refused. No lecture tour was ever realized.

Clemens and Nast did collaborate, however, in print. In 1872, Clemens submitted four short stories to Nast's Alamanac: "The Beef Contract," "the little boy who never prospered," "Advice to Little Girls," and "Ben Franklin." Nast accepted two and both were printed with Nast illustrations: "Franklin in 1872 and "the boy" in 1873.

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NAST'S ALMANAC FOR 1873

THE STORY OF THE GOOD LITTLE BOY WHO DID NOT PROSPER.

BY MARK TWAIN.

Once there was a good little boy by the name of Jacob Blivens. He always obeyed his parents, no matter how absurd and unreasonable their demands were; and he always learned his book, and never was late at Sabbath-school. He would not play hooky, even when his sober judgment told him it was the most profitable thing he could do. None of the other boys could ever make that boy out, he acted so strangely. He wouldn't lie, no matter how convenient it was. He just said it was wrong to lie, and that was sufficient for him. And he was so honest that he was simply ridiculous. The curious ways that Jacob had surpassed everything. He wouldn't play at marbles on Sunday, he wouldn't rob birds' nests, he wouldn't give bad peaches to organ-grinders' monkeys; he didn't seem to take any interest in any kind of rational amusement. So the other boys used to try to reason it out, and come to an understanding of him, but they couldn't arrive at any satisfactory conclusion; as I said

Figure 32. NAST'S ALMANAC FOR 1873

After accepting the pieces, Nast wrote to Clemens about the possibility of further collaborations:

> "The Beef Contract" is very good but I do not think it is suitable for my almanac. . . . The beef contract would make a good pamphlet I think by itself, with illustrations. . . . A good many of your other things too, aught to be illustrated. How does the idea strike you and upon what terms would you go into such a speculation? [8]

A remarkable offer from Nast; Mark Twain had good reason to believe he and the illustrator could work together on mutually agreeable terms.

A few months later Clemens wrote Nast about joining forces on a new venture; a book to be done during travels in England. "I do hope

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my publishers can make it pay you to illustrate my English book. Then I could have good pictures. They've got to improve on Roughing It."[9]

In Nast's answering letter he apologized. His poor health--a three year case of catarrh--and his constant need to work to support his large family kept him from traveling or working on any extensive project:

> I hope to see a book from you, before long, of your English travels. How much I would like to go with you and illustrate it. I think we could have fun, and I might forget to have the catarrh and the blues for a while. The recollections of my European trip eleven years ago, gin and great pleasure elite. Thanking you for your eulogistic remarks about my work. [10]

Unfortunately, Mark Twain never wrote that English book. With this letter he realized that it would be difficult to persuade Nast to leave his daily schedule and work exclusively on one book. Communications about illustrating The Gilded Age never even started.

Therefore negotiations for another illustrator had to begin. Bliss contacted the famous magazine illustrator, William S. Smedley. Obviously, Bliss was serious about obtaining a talented artist. He commissioned and "paid $150 for one illustration--a full-page one, probably --at that price--which would have gone on page 337 of the original edition had he used it."[11] The drawing was called "A Spray of Box." Smedley, for unknown reasons, was unavailable.

A third choice, probably suggested by Mark Twain, was Augustus Hoppin. Hoppin worked for James Osgood's publishing house. He had illustrated books for many trade authors. His illustrated copy of Holmes' Autocrat of the Breakfast Table had been read by Clemens and Livy as a "courting book, and after they were married they kept it in a green box along with their love letters."[12] Fortunately, Hoppin had

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just completed work on Howells' "first book-length work of fiction, Their Wedding Journey."[13] Howells regarded Hoppin as "the first of our illustrators to give a sense of actuality, and [the illustrations] were strictly of the time of the book."[14] Howells sent a copy of his new book to Clemens. Clemens therefore had ample opportunity to be well acquainted with the illustrator's work.

Hoppin had been an energetic and long-time practitioner in the illustrating trade:

> His work began to appear in magazines in the late forties and in book form in the early fifties. It was principally confined to drawings of polite society which he satirized in an amiable way . . . He might fittingly be called the American du Maurier. 15

His witty, socially conscious style had also included B.P. Shillaber's Knitting Works and Mrs. Partington's Knitting. Hoppin's Ruth Partington would turn up as Aunt Polly in Tom Sawyer a few years later.

One of Hoppin's latest commissions was Jubilee Days, a compilation of prose and pictures gathered during the World Peace Jubilee.

> The illustrations were drawn from day to day by Hoppin and engraved in three hours by a new process of the Chemical Engraving Company . . . . It is said to mark the beginning of illustrated daily journalism in the United States. 16

Hoppin's talents made him the perfect choice. His drawings had sharp social wit, he was reliable and worked quickly, and he was available.

Unfortunately, Hoppin was not the only illustrator for Clemens' new novel. Like most of Clemens' other books, The Gilded Age was the combined effort of many artists. Bliss had accepted Hoppin as "major" illustrator mainly to placate Clemens. But Hoppin, being a celebrated

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artist, was expensive. Three hundred drawings from such a man would set the production costs skyrocketing. Bliss compromised. They would use Hoppin for most of the full-page prints and other, lesser known men for the inserted cuts.

The title page of the first edition read: "Fully Illustrated From New Designs by Hoppin, Stephens, Williams, White, Etc., Etc."[17] For this edition Hoppin produced sixteen full-page cuts. Faithful True Williams drew "three full-page illustrations and at least 25 smaller illustrations."[18] The contributions of White and Stephens remain mysteries. None of the plates bear their signatures. Speculation, however, can be made on why their names appeared on the title page.

White, probably George G. White, was a free-lance wood engraver and designer who often worked for Fay and Cox, the firm most frequently used by the American Publishing Company. His duties were probably confined to tailpieces and insignificant inserts. His name did not appear on the prospectus or the "Fake" title page, a substituted page for the one that stated "For Sub Sale only," that was printed to allow Clemens' book into bookstores.[19]

Henry Louis Stephens' contributions, however, prove a more interesting case. He had been the principal illustrator for Vanity Fair during the 1860's.

> There is scarcely a number which does not contain some of his work. The principal feature of each issue was a full-page cartoon and most of these were done by Stephens. . . . The caricatures of H.L. Stephens in Vanity Fair entitle him to be ranked at or very near the top of the list of cartoonists who were prominent before Nast. [20]

He was "best known as a caricaturist."[21]

More interestingly, in 1871 when Clemens had gone to Sheldon and

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Company in New York to have his Autobiography (Burlesque) published, the editor, Sheldon, had hired Stephens to illustrate the Clemens' book. He drew "11 political cartoons relating to the scandal growing out of the Erie Railroad and the Erie Ring"[22] on explicit instructions from Mark Twain. The cartoons caricatured "Jim Fisk, and others."[23]

It would seem only natural for Clemens, thwarted in his desire to get Nast for The Gilded Age, to remember Stephens and his fine renderings of the people in the Erie gang. Clemens obviously wanted a man like Stephens for his novel. This becomes clearer as Clemens' directions for the illustrations unfold.

The manuscript for the book was in the hands of the American Publishing Company on May 17. Mark Twain then hurried off to England to lecture and supervise the English production of his book. The possible pirating of his work on the foreign markets and the poor quality of the English editions was becoming a matter of concern to Mark Twain.

Although absent, Clemens managed to maintain some control over the graphic designs of the book. He wrote Bliss instructions for the artists and, at times, sent personally drawn details of the ideas he wanted illustrated.

In Chapter XXVII of The Gilded Age, Clemens described Colonel Sellers laying out a "Map of the Salt Lick Branch of the Pacific R.R." with ordinary household objects: a pin cushion, scissors, a tea cup, etc. Clemens intended this unusual map to be included as a fold-out in the first edition.

> Clemens had at first written only the briefest description for Sellers to speak, sketching in the map bit by bit between lines as he went along. This interlinear map is drawn in pen and ink in Clemens' delightfully awkward, amateurish way. 24

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MS Page 622, Mark Twain Collection
Clemens' Interlinear "Map"

Figure 33

After examining this first draft, Clemens "felt more should be done with the drawings and Clemens redrew them as one continuous illustration on a long sheet of paper."[25] Clemens was again, as he had with the Horace Greeley letter in Roughing It, using illustration to visually force the reader to become involved in the homely humor of the situation. He wanted the map to be inserted in the space in the text where the reader is told of Colonel Seller's design:

> This sheet, made by pasting two or three smaller sheets together, was folded and inserted in the Ms. after p. 624 to indicate how it would occur in the finished book. P. 624 ends, ". . . Now here you are with your railroad complete, and showing its continuation to Hallelujah, thence to Corruptionville." At the bottom of the page is the note: "(Insert Map)"

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The illustrator--the copied map is unsigned--followed Clemens' sketch exactly, object for object. The completed design was folded and tipped into each signature by hand. See Figure 3.

A tipped-in map was an expensive addition to a book that was to have an initial press run of 50,000. Yet Bliss complied with Clemens' wishes. With costs running high, the editor turned the map into as much of a promotional advantage as he could in the ads: "Go wild over the haps and mishaps of the fine corps of engineers engaged in laying out of the Salt Lick Branch of the Pacific R.R. as it appears on the characteristic map of it which the book contains."[27]

Clemens' original and expensive idea did, however, strike a responsive chord with the reviewers:

> Who else (but Mark Twain) would have so contrived to mix up civil engineering and a schedule of the table and toilet furniture of a Western speculator, A.D. 1873? In a thousand years this cut will have immense antiquarian value, like the paintings of utensils at Pompeii. 28

The critic's whimsical remark held some truth. The map did become a collector's item. It disappeared from the next and later editions, probably because of high costs, though it remained on the list of illustrations.

Clemens' instructions to Bliss and the illustrators was not limited to detailing the graphics for his railroad. He also demanded careful visual handling of the semi-fictional characters in the novel. In talking about Colonel Sellers many years later Clemens commented:

> Many persons regarded Colonel Sellers as a fiction, an invention, and extravagant impossibility, and did me honor to call him a "creation," but they were mistaken. I merely put him on paper as he was; he was not a person who could be exaggerated. 29


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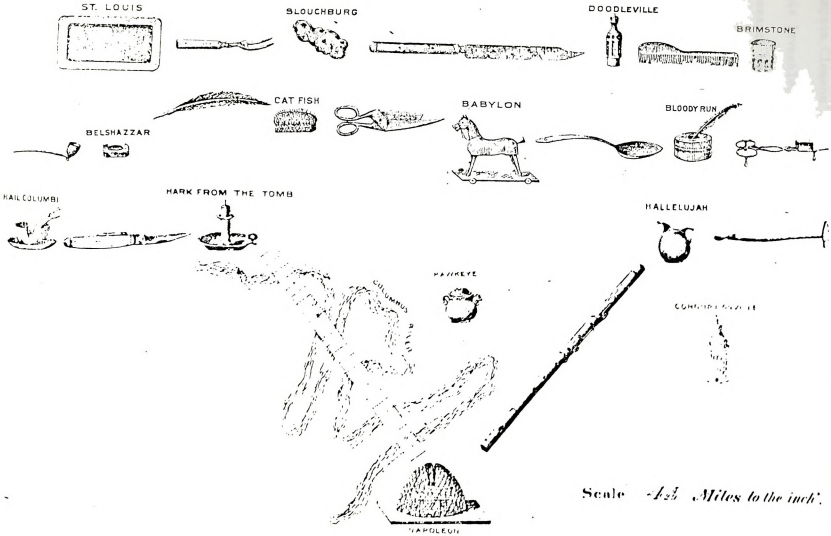

Figure 34. COLONEL SELLER'S MAP

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Clemens' model for Sellers was, of course, James Lampton, Jane Lampton Clemens' favorite cousin. Details for the characterization of this loveable, laughable character had been secured through meticulous research by Mark Twain's sister. Clemens had asked her:

> I wish you would get all the gossip you can out of Mollie about Cousin James Lampton & Family, without her knowing it is that I want it. I want every little trifling detail, about how they look & dress, & what they say, & how the house is furnished--& various ages & characters of the tribe. 30

Lampton's features were transcribed into a careful verbal portrait of the old Colonel. But Clemens also wanted an accurate visual portrait of the old gentleman.

> For goodness sake let no artist make of Sellers anything but a gentleman. . . . Even his dress (vide the scene where Washington first visits him at Hawkeye) is carefully kept and has the expression about it of being the latest charm in excellency of that kind. He always wears a stovepipe hat, . . . He must not be distorted or caricatured in any way in order to make a "funny" picture. Make him plain and simple. (The original was tall and slender.) However, I believe we have hinted that Sellers is portly in one place--which is just as well. 31

The illustrators, instructed by Bliss, paid particular attention to the author's wishes.



Figure 35. COLONEL SELLERS

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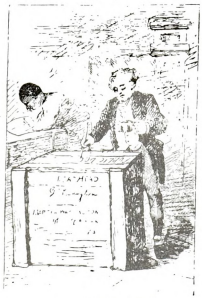
Throughout the novel the artists had Sellers elegantly dressed, tall but of average weight. The portly image was confined to Dillworthy. Sellers usually had his required top hat lending him that extra air of dignity.

All of the researchable characters of The Gilded Age, persons traceable to Clemens' childhood, Laura Hawkins as Laura Farr, Orion Clemens as Washington, etc., were treated visually with respect though there was no attempt to make them visually recognizable. Caustic caricature was reserved for others.

Clemens' original reason for wanting an illustrator of Thomas Nast's particular talent becomes evident with the representations of Senator Balloon and Senator Pomeroy. In manuscript, Clemens had named his two senators Bly and Blumeroy, tantalizingly close to their counterpart's names in real life, Nye and Pomeroy. In writing about the antics of these political figures, Clemens left little to the imagination:

Now, Colonel, can you picture Jefferson, or Washington or John Adams franking



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> Well Senator Balloon put fifteen cents worth of stamps on each of those seven huge boxes of old clothes, and shipped that ton of second-hand rubbish, old boots and pantaloons, and what not through the mails as registered matter. It was an ingenious thing and it had a genuine touch of humor about it to. . . . Now Colonel, can you picture Jefferson or Washington franking their wardrobes. 32

The franking privilege scandal had been publicly laid at the door of Senator Nye after he had lost his Washington Senate seat. How better to identify him in illustration than by this franking episode? A clever added touch was to place the cut with the words "A Trick Worth Knowing," right below the line "can you picture Jefferson or Washington." The drawing shows a barely recognizable old sender's and receiver's address on the packing case: "G. Washington . . . Martha Washington, Mt. Vernon, Va." The picture, caption, and placement made Clemens' political joke complete.

A more easily recognizable portrait was drawn of Senator Dillworthy-Pomeroy. Clemens' barely disguised narrative of the Senate investigation of Senator Dillworthy for vote buying was the direct parallel of the Pomeroy scandal, which had hit the front pages of all the newspapers. A reader couldn't help identifying Clemens' fictional character. But all readers were given added visual reinforcement. Justin Kaplan says that "Elisha Bliss's illustrators worked directly from pictures of the bearded and fatherly-looking Senator."[33] That the artist worked from photographs can be surmised by visual comparison. There are no extant instructions from either Bliss or Clemens on how the drawings were made.

But the probable truth of Kaplan's statement achieves validity by looking back at Clemens' ideas in working with illustration. In Innocents he had, coincidentally, provided Williams and his staff with the photographs of the real passengers on the voyage. The device had



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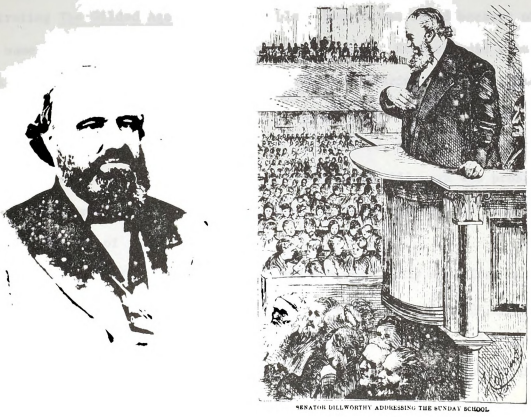

Figure 37

worked very well. Shortly thereafter, Clemens created a small work, Autobiography (Burlesque). Here he carefully instructed the illustrator, H.L. Stephens, to accurately render the figures of Jay Gould, Jim Fisk, and others in illustrations. Clemens, though not pleased with the text, was satisfied with the artist's results. In less than a year's time, Clemens wrote The Gilded Age, a novel dealing with thinly disguised real people as the major characters. Working again with political satire, it would seem logical that Clemens would again use caricature for illustration. In fact, he wanted Nast to illustrate the book mainly because of his talents in this field. Stephens, because of his similar talent and his work on Burlesque, would have next come to mind.

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Adding all these pieces together, the following sequence for illustrating The Gilded Age seems plausible: Hoppin was hired because of his name and he created the major full-page prints; Stephens did some work but acted mainly as an advisor for the caricaturing of people like Dillworthy and Balloon; White did only minor designs; and Williams again, because he was the workhorse and in Hartford, filled in wherever drawings were needed to support and fill the text. All work was probably done on orders from Clemens though he had little opportunity to supervise or approve of the final products.

Allusions to famous people and incidents were fully exploited by Bliss in the sales campaign. The ads stressed the fact that The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today "was written expressly to fit the times, its satire and humor being levelled at the public topics, persons, and follies of the day."[34] Other ads proclaimed that:

> Eminent artists have been engaged upon illustrations which adorn its pages (and will be) abundant and of the most finished character, while all else has been done necessary to the bringing out of a book in a manner worthy of its contents. [35]

Bliss made it no secret that "To make cuts effective, it requires a great many and a large outlay. We have expended on the plates for this book (The Gilded Age) nearly $10,000."[36] The prospectus featured some of these expensive cuts, the most prominent being the frontispiece where there was an unmistakeable portrait of Senator Dillworthy-Pomeroy.

The book had been copyrighted and even announced in April, 1873, because Clemens had been confident it could be rushed through production and issued in the fall. The American edition, however, was not officially published until a few days before Christmas, 1873[36] and then only because Bliss "ignored Twain's instructions about copyright and called

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LAURA RECEIVES HILLWORTHY'S BLESSING.

Figure 38

for the binding of The Gilded Age to begin in time to capitalize on the Christmas season."[37]

Clemens, meanwhile, had been in England expressly to secure the English copyright. All through late summer he was pleading with Bliss for proof:

> We shall issue a copyright edition of the novel here in fine style. . . send sheets and duplicate casts of the pictures by successive steamers always. And send these casts and proofs along as fast as you get a signature done. . . state as nearly as you can the exact day at which you can publish. [38]

Unfortunately, the English edition was delayed far later than anyone expected because the sheets and the casts failed to arrive. The edition came out, fully illustrated, in June, 1874, a full six months after

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the American publication. Most of Mark Twain's energies would be directed against this happening again for Tom Sawyer.

The reviews for the book were mixed but the reviewers did seem to get the message delivered by the content and the illustrations. Most reviewers confidently identified many of the characters: "Seventeen out of thirty-eight reviews, or nearly half, acknowledged that actual persons and events were portrayed, and nine of the seventeen named names."[39]

One of the reviewers praised the drawings but accused the author of greed:

> The book has the strong savor of lucre; it was evidently written to sell. . . . It is not witty, or in any respect interesting; the only feature that we can conscientiously praise is the illustrations. 40

Another reviewer read Clemens' preface and took it literally:

> The preface is Twain's beyond question. He says he does not expect the critic to read the book before writing a notice of it. Consequently we did not. We have looked at the pictures and found many of them funny and some quite startling. . . . It will sell like "hot cakes." 41

It was the Boston Saturday Gazette reviewer who most carefully documented Clemens' intent in the illustrations and used Thomas Nast as a spokesman for the concept:

> The others [characters in The Gilded Age] are scarcely disguised portraits of real personages. . . . Mr. Thomas Nast says that when he is in the habit of drawing public men in his cartoons, he finds there is no difficulty on the part of any individual, however obtuse to artistic apprehension, in appreciating the portraits of others; but when he shows one of the gentlemen his own lineaments, he is apt not only to fail to recognize his likeness, but he can seldom see any wit in what he calls pointless caricature. . . . Senator Nye may have similar feelings towards the book. . . . Pomeroy figures as Senator Dillworthy in the volume. . . . Nye is shown in his franking operations with exceeding humor. 42

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The novel has been roundly condemned for decades for lack of cohesiveness yet "the strength of the satire outweighed the weakness of the construction and made the novel an immediate best seller."[43]

> The sales remained brisk for two more months: in January the total rose to 26,821; in February, to 35,745. These sales were worth celebrating. Neither of the earlier American Publishing Company's books had sold so well in the first two and a half months. 44

Writing to his fellow author, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, about the paradox of publishing in the subscription market, Clemens lamented the production quality but applauded his rewards:

> There is one discomfort which I fear a man must put up with when he publishes by subscription, & that is wretched paper & vile engravings. I fancy the publisher don't make a very large pile when he pays his author 10 p.c. You notice that The Gilded Age is rather a rubbishy looking book; well, the sale has now reached about 50,000 copies--so the royalty now due the authorship is about $18,000. 45

Clemens' high spirits over profits were to be short-lived. The Gilded Age had been published during the panic of 1873-4. By March, 1874, sales had dropped appreciably never to fully recover.

Clemens' desire for production excellence and also for profit became increasingly evident. The "wretched paper"--though Bliss maintained he had paid a top price of eleven dollars a hundred-weight-- had dulled the sharpness of the drawings. Though Clemens had valiantly tried to control the illustrations by having the best artists, "vile engravings" had still resulted. Lack of author supervision over final production and assembly-line uninterested illustrators, and printing through inferior printing houses had cost Clemens his contract-stipulated "quality" design.

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Clemens wisely understood, however, that quality also meant lower profits:

> Now I think seriously of printing my own next book and publishing it thro' this same subscription house. It will thus be a might starchy book, but I reckon I won't get so much money out of it. 46

Unfortunately, Clemens' financial prophecy would come true when he seriously interfered with the printing and illustrating of his next book, Tom Sawyer.

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1874 and 1875 were to prove trying years for Mark Twain. The sales figures for The Gilded Age continued to go down. He had put away the manuscript for Life on the Mississippi and was only slowly proceeding with Tom Sawyer. His negotiations to publish a collection of his sketches with James Osgood had been cut short when Elisha Bliss produced a "contract four years old to give him [Bliss] all my old sketches, with a lot of new ones added!"[1]

Clemens accepted what seemed inevitable. The book of Sketches was published by Bliss in 1875. Clemens was critical of his own contribution: "I destroyed a mass of sketches, & now heartily wish I had destroyed more of them."[2]

Both author and editor had merely gone through the motions of getting out the book. Bliss, because he was unconvinced of the merits of the work, gave True Williams the manuscript to work on the illustrations. When completed they were indistinguishable as to character, devoid of all background detail, and overly dark so that any detail was indecipherable. A crude printing compounded the problems. The drawings were Williams' poorest efforts to date, though Bliss's sales pitch emphasized that it was "tastefully adorned with fanciful designs . . . [and] artistic illustrations."[3]

Moreover, the book was small, 320 pages, and there were just over 100 illustrations. There were no full page prints. Most of the material had already been published. Only seven of the sixty-three were new. One, "Hospital Sketches," was, by Clemens' own admission, not even his own work. Clemens remarked to Howells that Sketches: New and Old

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The reviews were predictably unfavorable and the sales poor. Eight years after publication sales figures had still not reached 50,000. The climate between Bliss and Clemens was hardly conducive to starting work on a new publication.

With this latest frustration, Clemens again flirted with the idea of publishing with a trade house. Hurd and Houghton had written to the author about a scheme for a form of cheap publication of American novels. The letter, marked "Confidential," talked of the scant attention paid American novelists compared to British fiction writers. Houghton planned to remedy this problem:

> It is our wish. . . to make a specialty of the publication of bright, short American novels . . . making them cheap, advertising them widely, and securing this popularity for the several books . . . as well as profit for its authors. 5

Mark Twain was curious but cautious. He had only one novel to his credit, The Gilded Age, though he had been struggling with another, Tom Sawyer. But this book was still far from completion. Moreover, the Houghton plan ran counter to all he had learned about production and sales. A short novel, of cheap construction, with no illustration, and depending principally on the author's name for sale did not seem a safe bet.

> I like the whole plan except the money side of it. I do not believe there would be much money in it, and I find that trying to support a family is such a thing which compels one to look at all ventures with a mercenary eye. I hope to see a day when I can publish in a way which shall please my fancy best and not mind what the banking result may be---but that time has not come yet. 6

Though Clemens would try with Tom Sawyer, the day for his ideal publication was still a long way off.

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Meanwhile, Clemens was still tied to the American Publishing Company. He owed Bliss $2000, an advance given for the ill-fated Riley diamond mine book. (Tom Sawyer would finally satisfy this Riley debt.) He was worried about publishing another novel with Bliss. Both Sheldon and Houghton had warned him against this and The Gilded Age had seemed to prove the point.

Still, Bliss had made money for Clemens. He decided to stay in the subscription market on the usual terms and make some new arrangements for the publication of Tom Sawyer through an English publisher. He directed all his attentions to this in his early negotiations with Bliss.

To insure against having to wait for print copy in England as he had for The Gilded Age, Clemens had had "an amanuensis copy (ultimately to be used for printing the English edition) made."[7] He gave the original manuscript to Bliss so that he could get on with the production of the American edition and kept the copy himself.

Clemens meekly accepted Bliss's usual arrangements for illustration without much comment:

> You may let Williams have all of Tom Sawyer that you have received. He can of course make the pictures all the more understanding after reading the whole story. He wants it, and I have not the least objection, because if he should lose any of it I have another complete MS. copy. 8

A new first! Williams was obviously interested in reading the complete manuscript before starting illustration. Clemens seemed unconcerned about Williams or the American edition at this time. He literally had turned all his energies toward overseas. In the same letter in which he accepted Williams as illustrator, he asked about Bliss's commitments to England:

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> What have you heard from England in the way of a proposition for Tom Sawyer? I have an offer from the Routledges (which I haven't answered) and if you have heard nothing from over there, I propose to write the "Temple Bar" people. 9

Clemens was putting out all his hooks in Britain. He finally appointed an American clergyman, Dr. Conway, as his literary agent in bargaining for the publication of Tom Sawyer. He had a special reason for his interest in England. He was formulating a new scheme for publication.

Dr. Conway made contact with two English firms eager to obtain a contract with Mark Twain: Routledge and Sons and Chatto and Windus. Routledge, however, balked at the author's new and unusual contract demands:

> He [Mark Twain] would like to . . . pay for the manufacture of his own book and pay the publisher for each copy sold. . . . He should bear the entire cost of production, and pay a royalty of 10 per cent upon the entire amount of sales. 10

This was Mark Twain's first attempt to turn the contract tables on a publisher. His history with Bliss had convinced him that publishers made most of the profits through fraudulent charges for poor quality merchandise. By controlling the financing he could not be cheated, he could put the money into excellent design, and he could reap the publisher's part of the benefits. Years later Clemens did negotiate this kind of contract with James Osgood for The Prince and the Pauper.

Fortunately for Clemens, Livy intervened. She persuaded him to take the royalty because "it simplified everything; removes all risk; requires no outlay of capital. . . a gain of 25 percent is hardly worth the trouble and risk of publishing on your own."[11] Chatto and Windus accepted Clemens' contract offer.

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The problems of publishing Tom Sawyer in England fell into three areas: how to coincide with the American publishing date to insure English copyright, adherence to a design that would "sell" in Great Britain, and the delays of shipping picture-plates overseas.

One of Conway's major concerns was the fact that the English contract stipulated that the English edition had to appear before the American in order to hold copyright. This was becoming a difficult crunch because progress on the Williams' drawings had hit a snag: "Hardly any of the pictures are finished yet. I have read only 2 chapters in proof, and they had blanks for the cuts."[12] Unlike the case of The Gilded Age, England had the print of text but no pictures. Williams' delay, however, was due almost entirely to Clemens' interference in illustration.

Conway had cautioned Clemens early that if he depended on a good English market "It will be positively necessary for the book to appear here in a difft. (sic) shape from the American--(which here is fatally unorthodox)."[13] Clemens was confused. He reasoned with Conway that the shape of the books had been taken from the English:

> My dear Conway, we borrowed our shape and style of book from England. We exactly copied the size, style, and getup of a half dozen of Cassel, Peter, and Galpin's pretty books. But still, you and Chatto must freely do as you like. If you do not want to make the book the size of ours and take a set of plates containing the cuts and everything, telegraph thus: "Twain--Hartford--pictures." I will then send any pictures that can be cut down to your size.--And send the original drawings of the rest.
>
> If you should take a notion to have full plates, just telegraph "Plates," instead of "Pictures." [14]

Two days later Clemens made his fatal decision on size that threw the manufacture of Tom Sawyer into chaos.

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As early as January, Williams and his men had produced, to Clemens' critical pleasure,

> about 200 rattling pictures for it [Sawyer] some of them very dainty. Poor devil, what a genius he has, & how he does murder it with rum. He takes a book of mine & without suggestions from anybody builds no end of pictures just from his reading it. 15

Bliss, keeping to his normal routine, had

> Gone through the manuscript marking out the spots at which Williams' illustrations were to be placed, and on April 3 Twain made his inegmatic and critical pronouncement that the illustrations were considerably above the American average, in conception and execution. 16

Mark Twain, it should be remembered, had his eye squarely on royalties from the English market. Just as Bliss was ready to start production, Clemens decided to kill two birds with one stone. He would delay the American edition, insuring that Chatto's would come out first, by accepting Conway's suggestion on changing size of his book. Conway had convinced Clemens that the American size was known but only in connection with "'toybooks' or 2nd class things like Cassell's."[17]

Frank Bliss, who was by this time handling many of the production angles for his father, complained bitterly to Clemens:

> Father says that he had an estimate all ready for the "electros of 'Tom Sawyer'" but as you changed the size and it involves making a new estimate all through, & he is fearful that reducing the size so much, of many of the cuts, will interfere with their printing nicely, he is making inquiries about it however will report the result in about two days. 18

April was chaotic. Clemens tried to get a cost estimate for plates to be sent to England. Bliss, at this juncture, had lost much of his enthusiasm for the book and put Clemens off. Chatto and Windus, having set the type for the print sections of the book, were anxiously

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Chatto had first intended to issue a cheap edition and then an expensive illustrated one. After some thought they reversed their ideas, rationalizing that the cheap book would undercut sales of the expensive one. Conway wrote daily to Clemens expressing the need for "full page illustrations, not the letterpress plates."[19]

Bliss, on the other hand, was stalling. In June, Clemens realized that his book had been sadly neglected and couldn't possibly be issued until July or later.

> Bliss made a failure in the matter of getting Tom Sawyer ready on time--the engravers assisting, as usual . . . the man [Bliss] had not even put a canvasser on or issued an advertisement yet--in fact the electrotypes would not be done for a month. 20

Clemens' elaborate plan for the English edition had failed. When he admitted that the delay would go well into fall--he had decided to have Bliss issue in the fall and make a Boy's Holiday book of it--he told Conway to have Chatto go back to their original plan and publish the cheap edition. "The English edition is unillustrated and was published June 9, 1876, about six months before the American issue."[21] Sales were poor, but there was a more bitter pill to swallow from this whole affair.

Bliss had worked against impossible odds yet he tried valiantly to make Tom Sawyer palatable to the public. It was doomed from the start. The book in no way met the usual subscription book standards. It was a novel, with a very short text and crudely done engravings. Bliss pulled every editor's trick he knew. He tried to disguise the bulk by the addition of extra pages and heavier paper: "Copies have been noted with the fly leaves of calendared paper . . . with two, three, and four fly

leaves present."[22]

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> The book was first printed on a good quality of calendared paper and during the first year of publication the publisher changed to a much heavier paper to increase the thickness of the book. [23]

Padding was a feeble attempt at extending the scant 275 pages, less than half the usual subscription length. Most agents complained that they were having difficulty selling "so small a volume to . . . customers and that they were universally dissatisfied with the book for that reason."[24]

Bliss added a notice as an endpiece to the book entitled "To the Public" explaining:

> It has been claimed that books sold by Agents are higher in price than those of equal value sold at bookstores. This belief often prevents persons from buying of an Agent. So far as our books are concerned, there is no foundation for such a claim. Please consider the following statements.
>
> First. Most of our books are fully illustrated, not only with full-page but with text engravings. These illustrations must be printed on something better than ordinary book paper, and to be well executed it requires the whole book to be on fine, heavy paper suitable for the cuts, costing very high. Again, the printing of the text with cuts costs more than twice the price of plain printing. Hence, few books are printed with text engravings. . . .
>
> Second. We claim that we sell you books with from two hundred to three hundred engravings, finely printed, on extra fine paper, and most firmly bound, as low as you can buy any book equal in weight, size, and popularity. [25]

Bliss's carefully worded remarks about the quality of illustration in subscription books could hardly be considered valid when using as examples Williams' drawings for Tom Sawyer. They were inconsistent in character, inaccurate due to careless reading of text, had a bit of whimsical humor but not the humor of the spirit of the work, and, as usual, had "borrowed" engravings from other books.

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The rapscallion Tom Sawyer, introduced to the reader in the frontispiece, was a bit too young--Mark Twain had declared "Tom Sawyer (. . . 15 years old), "26--and he was certainly not the mischievous imp found in the pages of Mark Twain's story.



Figure 39. TOM SAWYER

This lad is primly Victorian, with his velvet jacket and checkered trousers, an upper-class boy, more acceptable to an English than an American audience. The only visible concession made to Clemens' Tom is the bare feet and the incidental fishing pole.

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Figure 40. HUCK FINN

He is aptly attired:

> Always dressed in the cast-off clothes of full-grown men. . . . His hat was a vast ruin with a wide crescent lopped out of its brim; his coat, when he wore one, hung nearly to his heels. 27

But his age was deceiving (Clemens had thought of him as 12). Both boys would visually change shape and age throughout the novel.



TOM TOM AND HUCK HUCK

Figure 41

But it is the

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But it is the mystery of Aunt Polly that is most intriguing. True Williams drew most of the cuts featuring Aunt Polly in the text. But a full-page portrait found almost at the end of the book created confusion.



WILLIAMS' AUNT POLLY



51. Imitator of Walcott. "Aunt Polly." *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, 1876. (Item 1291)

WALCOTT'S AUNT POLLY

Figure 42

Aunt Polly is another tangled tale of "borrowing" but this one cannot be exclusively laid at Bliss's or the illustrators' door.

> When Clemens, in Tom Sawyer, portrayed the amusing Aunt Polly, he drew one quite reminiscent of Shillaber's Mrs. Partington. There is a physical resemblance. One who looks at a picture of Shillaber's heroine is immediately struck by the fact that she looks exactly like Aunt Polly. The fact must have been noted by someone in 1876, for, inexplicably, labeled "Contentment" and presumably representing Tom's aunt, the pleasing illustration which had revealed the dame in The Life and Sayings of Mrs. Partington (1854) turned up in the first edition of Tom Sawyer on page 274. 28

Mark Twain had, indeed, verbally copied his Aunt Polly from Shillaber's Ruth Partington. The portrait, however has a longer history:

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> The unsigned frontispiece of the book is a copy of Wolcott's drawing in No. 13 of the Carpet-Bag. For the book it was redrawn (possibly by Coffin who made many of the other illustrations for the book), because minor differences are apparent. . . . But the general design and, in particular, Mrs. Partington's "linaments" are substantially the same, and Coffin, in other illustrations in the book depicting Mrs. Partington, has made her conform to Wolcott's portrait of her; so to Wolcott must be given the credit.
>
> The portrait of Aunt Polly at p. 274 of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer . . . is an exact reproduction of the frontispiece in The Life and Sayings of Mrs. Partington. Either the original block was used or a photo-mechanical reproduction was made. Samuel Clemens in his youth must have been a reader of Carpet-Bag, for his first known contribution (he was then only 17 years old) appeared in the number for May 1, 1852. Clemens, consciously or unconsciously, fashioned his Aunt Polly after Mrs. Partington . . . . It is not surprising, therefore, that Wolcott's drawing of Mrs. Partington should have been used for Aunt Polly. 29

The explanation for Aunt Polly's character in the text of the story is quite simple; Mark Twain read Shillaber and copied the character. The more mechanical problem of copying the portrait cannot be as easily explained. Shillaber's book had not been published by the American Publishing Company so it would be impossible for Bliss to blithely use the plate as he had other "borrowed" prints. He could have had the portrait duplicated by photo process, but who would have decided to do this?

What must be deduced is that Mark Twain, more probably than a now disinterested Bliss, had suggested the Wolcott image (and probably produced the book) to Bliss or Williams to use as the visual example for his Aunt Polly. Williams' other sketches of Aunt Polly in Tom Sawyer adhere to the Wolcott image quite consistently, especially as to "linaments," glasses, cap, dress, apron, etc. The illustrating process duplicates Coffin's copying from Wolcott's Carpet-Bag. The final portrait of Aunt Polly may then have been an exclamation point by a smiling

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Clemens who was obviously becoming more tolerant of "borrowed" images.



Figure 43. AUNT POLLY

Bliss and Clemens were far from the lone culprits found "'doubling in brass' . . . the illustration of Peter, the cat, at p. 112 . . . appeared originally in Roughing It, p. 442, as Dick Baker's cat Tom Quartz."[30]



PETER



TOM QUARTZ

Figure 44

This addition was probably a whimsy of True Williams since the print is clearly marked with his T.W.

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Williams had his own wry sense of humor. In the Muff Potter graveyard scene he put his own name on the tombstone, "sacred to the memory of T.W. Williams."[31]



INJUN JOE'S TWO VICTIMS.

Figure 45

True Williams' light hearted or inebriated condition, however, caused him to be very casual as to the accuracy of other drawings. In what has become the most famous episode in Tom Sawyer, the whitewashing scheme

> it is evident that Williams did not always take care in reading the text. As the first man to do the whitewashing scene, he carelessly used a rail fence instead of a board fence which is described. For pictorial reasons, he might have cut down the dimensions of the "thirty yards of board fence, nine feet high," but his measly rail fence is not suited to shielding Tom's actions from Aunt Polly in the ensuing scene. [32]

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Figure 46. WHITEWASHING THE FENCE

The spirit that pervades the drawings in Tom Sawyer corresponds directly to the haphazard, uninterested attitude of Williams toward Roughing It and Sketches. It is also possible that, like those in the former books, the original drawings suffered in being engraved.

> Those illustrations which are handled tonally are engraved in a most mechanical and matter-of-fact way.
>
> The negro boy, Jim, looks like something off a cut-plug tobacco label. Negro boys must have been rare around Williams' home town. As the book is leafed through, the illustrations seem to lack the humor that pervades the text. 33



Figure 47

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With or without good illustration, Tom Sawyer was destined to fail. The unillustrated English edition did not sell but it made possible a pirated seventy-five cent Canadian edition. Clemens exploded to Conway:

> Belford Bros., Canadian thieves, are flooding America with a cheap pirated edition of Tom Sawyer. I have just telegraphed Chatto to assign Canadian copyright to me, but I suppose it is too late to do any good. We cannot issue for 6 weeks yet, and by that time Belford will have sold 100,000 over the frontier and killed my book dead. This piracy will cost me $10,000. 34

Clemens, understandably livid at having his book sold right under his nose without receiving any of the royalty, tried legal measures in both Canada and England. To no avail. By the end of the year, Clemens admitted that "Belford has taken the profits all out of Tom Sawyer. We find our copyright law here to be nearly worthless."[35]

Clemens' maneuverings with the engravings, which delayed the publication of the American edition, had cost Mark Twain more than money. Though all the problems with the book could hardly be blamed on Elisha Bliss, Mark Twain refused to see any other scapegoat.

The reviews were of little help. Most had come out too early, Howells' a full six months before the book was published, as had the English reviews. The New York Times, reviewing in January, 1877, praised the characterization of Tom, Aunt Polly, and particularly Huck Finn, but censored "an ugly murder in the book, over-minutely described and too fully illustrated . . . With less, then, of Injun Joe and 'revenge', and 'slitting women's ears' and the shadow of the gallows . . . we should have liked Tom Sawyer better."[36]

The die was cast. Tom Sawyer sounded the death knell for relations between Elisha Bliss and Mark Twain.

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A Tramp Abroad

Though Mark Twain put the failure of Tom Sawyer squarely at Elisha Bliss's door, he must have realized that the book itself had a lot to do with the poor sales. Producing and publishing materials counter to the subscription formula was financially dangerous.

Mark Twain's next work, therefore, came full circle, back to the ideal of subscription publication, Innocents Abroad. Clemens' contract stipulated that A Tramp Abroad would have "Manuscript of original matter in quantity sufficient to make a volume when published of size suitable to sell by agents as a subscription book."[1] The author also went back to a European travel format, this time ostensibly "the tour of Europe on foot."[2] Clemens made his tour of the continent, though seldom by foot, and in the company of Rev. Joe Twichell who became the Harris of Clemens' narrative.

Returning home in the fall of 1878, the author told reporters that he had finished almost all of the book, had revised half, and "A Tramp Abroad was to be issued by the same company that brought out my other book."[3] Much had happened during that year to persuade Mark Twain to return to the American Publishing Company.

Clemens had been trying to get out of the clutches of Elisha Bliss for some time. With the failure of Tom Sawyer he felt justified in making the change. At this time Frank Bliss, Elisha's son, had decided to organize his own subscription publishing firm. Clemens, knowing Frank and confident in his ability, made a secret contract with him before he left for Europe.

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The choice was a wise one. Frank had been well trained by his father. He had been treasurer of American and had worked as printer, and in illustration, editing and sales. He had, in fact, played a small part in the illustrating of Roughing It and The Gilded Age.

Though Frank's training was right his timing was wrong. He hadn't collected enough capital in order to float a first year in a money-eating operation like the publishing business. When his father became ill, he gave up the idea of his own firm and went back to the American Publishing Company to run it. He brought the contract for A Tramp Abroad with him with Clemens' approval.

With Frank at the helm, the business of producing the book began. Mark Twain proposed a number of possibilities for illustration of the book. First, he decided to sketch some of the drawings himself. Second, because he had become interested in a young art student in France, he determined the book should be illustrated by this European-trained artist. Third, since the author, illustrator, and manuscript would be in Europe, Clemens reasoned it would save time to have the plates processed there. Finally, after he had failed to convince Frank that the European processing scheme was practical, Clemens suggested using Dan Slote's new mechanical engraving process, the Kaolatype machine.

By the end of 1878, arrangements for European processing and the Slote machine work on Tramp had been discarded because of poor quality and high costs. Mark Twain and his youthful art student were accepted, with reservations, by Frank Bliss.

At first Mark Twain was hesitant about his own drawings for illustration. He sampled the opinions of some of his friends. Writing with cautious bravado to Joe Twichell he announced:

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> I shall make from 10 to 20 illustrations for my book with my own (almighty rude and crude) pencil, and shall say in the title page that some of the pictures in the book are from original drawings by the author. I have already made two or three which suit me. It gives me the belly-ache to look at them. 4

Clemens obviously thought of the idea as a promotional tool, a lure to attract the attention of the subscription book buyer. He could make the drawings so ridiculous, no one would look for technical expertise. His amateur status as an illustrator, however, still worried him. In a letter to Howells he elaborated on his idea and rationalized a way of handling the poor quality of his art work:

> I have a notion to put a few hideous pen and ink sketches of my own in my book, and explain their merits and defects in the technical language of art. But I shall not put many in--better artists shall do nineteen-twentieths of the illustrating. 5

Clemens calculated to turn his crude technique to advantage. He would write an incident about art in a straightforward manner, then accompany it with a ridiculous sketch from his own pen. He would then comment on the incident and the drawing in a tongue-in-cheek style. What better way to reveal the pompous attitudes and the superfluous jargon of the art world?

Eventually, Mark Twain produced fourteen of his own designs for the book. Most were based on his original idea of throwing a spotlight on pompous art, its more pompous followers, and pedantic pedogogy. A few other drawings he used to characterize people and satirize situations. The drawings, however, became more than mere promotional gimmicks. Their major intention, admittedly, was comedy. But they also allowed Mark Twain to incorporate two art forms to guarantee an amused response from his readers. The drawings, therefore, functioned as integral with the book itself.

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In two of the sketches Mark Twain poked fun at the bric-a-brac hunting tourist. The author, using himself as prototype, related his adventure in ferreting out authentic Keramics:

> Among these was my Etruscan tear jug. I have made a little sketch of it here; that thing creeping up the side is not a bug, it is a hole. I bought this tear-jug of a dealer in antiquities for four hundred and fifty dollars. It is very rare. 6

The accompanying drawing emphasized the rare qualities of Clemens' prize.



Figure 48

A similar story dealt with the buying of an unusual Henri II plate. Here Clemens had fun with artistic terms in commenting on his drawings:

> See sketch from my pencil; it is in the main correct, though I think I have foreshortened one end of it too much. . . . Of course the main preciousness of this piece lies in its color; it is that old sensuous, pervading, ramifying, interpolating, transboreal blue which is the despair of modern art. 7

Clemens "foreshortening" is evident in his drawing.

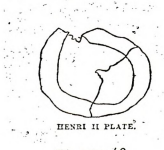

Figure 49

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In one full-page print, Mark Twain combined illustration and text, producing a wry visual comment on the incomprehensibility of Chinese art.

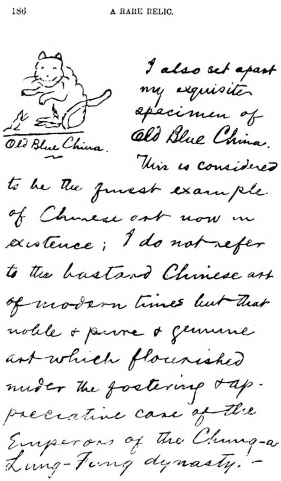

Figure 50. A RARE RELIC

Clemens made greater use of artistic jargon in a passage accompanying three other drawings in which he described travel difficulties he and his friends encountered on their tours. In one instance, Clemens called attention, visually and verbally, to the size of a tower in Wimpfen, stressing words like "study," and "point of view," and the methodology of beginning art students:

> I made a sketch of it [Tower]. I kept a copy, but gave the original to the Burgomaster. I think the original was better than the copy . . . the grass stood up better . . . I composed the grass myself, from studies I made in a field by Heidelberg in

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> Hammerling's time. The man on top, looking at the view, is apparently too large, but I found he could not be made smaller, conveniently. . . . I composed this picture from two points of view; the spectator is to observe the man from about where the flag is, and he must observe the tower itself from the ground. This harmonizes the seeming discrepancy. 8

The whole thing sounds like the rationalizing of an over-educated young artist trying to explain away the stupidity of his incompetent work of art. Exactly when Clemens had in mind in writing the section. Clemens' sketch fulfilled all expectations.



Figure 51

A similar spoof of language and attitudes involved a Heidelberg carriage ride taken by Joe Twichell and Mark Twain. The author-illustrator gave his visual version of the ride and added these critical comments:



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I made a sketch of the turn-out. It is not a Work, it is only what artists call a "study" --a thing to make a finished picture from. This sketch has several blemishes in it; for instance, the wagon is not traveling as fast as the horse is. This is wrong. Again, the person trying to get out of the way is too small; he is out of perspective, as we say. The two upper lines are not the horse's back, they are the reins'--there seems to be a wheel missing--this would be corrected in the finished Work, of course. The thing flying out behind is not a flag, it is a curtain. That other thing up there is the sun, but I didn't get enough distance on it. I do not remember, now, what that thing is in the front of the man who is running, but I think it is a haystack or a woman. This study was exhibited in the Paris Salon of 1879, but it did not take any medal; they do not give medals for studies. 9

Figure 52. THE TURN-OUT

The play on "Work," "Study," and "perspective," with the marvelous avoidance of reality, made pedantry more ridiculous than it could appear in pure narrative. The graphic relevation of these points was a necessity. The added vertical touch--it was printed this vertical way in the text--causing a reader to crane his neck while reading Clemens' description, pushed humor a bit farther.

Another Clemens drawing, playing with these same absurdities, was sketched for the section on "Rafting of the Neckar." Again, as with the "Chinese Cat" drawing, the illustration served a dual purpose. The crude design illuminated Clemens' text--which awkwardly occured some fourteen pages earlier-- and also used the parenthetical remarks as a burlesque of usual practices of an illustrator or editor when critically appraising a rough draft. This full-page print does not work to full

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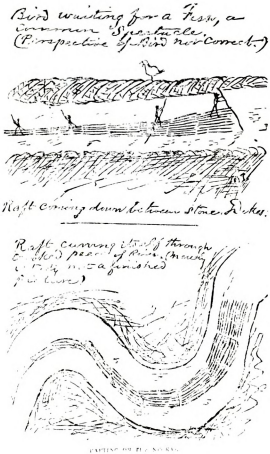

Figure 53. RAFTING ON THE NECKAR

advantage because of its placement and the design is too crude to support the parenthetical comments alone. The print was probably inserted during the binding of the signature merely because it had been drawn and engraved by the author.

In two other instances, Clemens' drawings left the field of art criticism and centered on characterization, or vilification, of real and mythological persons in his story.

In "An ancient Legend of the Rhine," a tale carefully quoted directly from the original text, Clemens' described The Lorelei as an "enchanting picture of the beautiful Lore."[10] On the same page was an

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Figure 54

Clemens' retelling of this legend of undying love took rather ribald liberties with the classic version, but in case a reader might be lulled into taking his version seriously, the portrait of the nymph clearly clarified Clemens' comic intent.

Another unfortunate feminine creature to feel the sting of Mark Twain's pen was a bathing clerk at Baden-Baden. This aggressive female had cheated Clemens out of a shilling for the baths. Clemens' last remark in the sequence was "She was victor to the last, you see."[11] (Italics mine).



Figure 55

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Clemens' instructions to his reader here functioned much like his remarks regarding Senator Stewart's picture in Roughing It (My revenge will be found in the accompanying portrait). Though there had not been sufficient revenge in Senator Stewart's features in Roughing It, Mark Twain made sure of his point with the cheating clerk. The composite picture, body and background by Walter Brown, was finished off with a grotesque head, a Clemens masterpiece. The drawing proved who was the final victor.

Frank Bliss approved heartily of these Clemens drawings as well as the many caricatures of the author himself that had been sprinkled from title page to back cover in the book. His pleased response:

> One of the charms of "Innocents" pictures was that people could see how MT looked in a awkward situation & acted. I take it the subject of these pictures are people that you have seen & have a few of your own mishaps depicted to make variety. 12

One of the most curious Clemens drawings appeared as a composite print entitled "My Picture of the Matterhorn."



MY PICTURE OF THE MATTERHORN.

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Clemens' lyrical description of "that wonderful upright wedge, the Matterhorn,"[13] in this section is as stirring to the reader as Clemens' own experience obviously had been. The crude illustration inserted at this point in the text, however, seriously disturbed the mood set by the text. Apparently Clemens had anticipated that his description of the magnificent mountain would be thought humorous. To try and hold the beauty of the passage yet allow the humor of the picture, Clemens' remarks about his drawing were put into a note at the bottom of the page:

> Note--I had the very unusual luck to catch one little momentary glimpse of the Matterhorn wholly unencumbered by clouds. I leveled my photographic apparatus at it without the loss of an instant, and should have got an elegant picture if my donkey had not interfered. It was my purpose to draw this photograph all by myself for my book, but was obliged to put the mountain part of it into the hands of the professional artist because I found I could not do landscape well. 14

It is difficult to understand why Clemens wanted to confuse matters at this point, especially since two other fine prints of the mountain were available to satisfy the demands of Clemens' armchair travelers. He seems to have wanted it both ways--a typical Clemens trait.

On receiving this drawing, Frank Bliss, perhaps too amiable to oppose the dictates of his author, commented only on the technical flaws and offered Clemens his assistance. "I'll go over that donkey you sent and make the lines black so he'll take. As you used 'mauve' ink--India is the stuff."[15] Frank Bliss, an unexpected expert in the field of illustration, would become much more critical of other artist's designs for A Tramp Abroad.

Mark Twain made one other strange artistic contribution for his book.

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TITIAN'S MOSES.

Figure 57

The "Titian Moses," printed in the first press run with the caption "Moses,"[17] featured Clemens' emblematic frog was inserted as a curious frontispiece for Clemens' traveling narrative.

Obviously, Mark Twain enjoyed his adventure into the world of illustration. He whimisically assured Frank Bliss that, "I think I won't charge you anything."[18] The drawings had given him license to prove his humorous yet cynical attitudes toward art in an appealing manner. He

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had taken full swipe at the pretensions of "experts" and at the same time entertained his audience. Without the visual designs, however, his ridicule would have lacked sufficient point. In fact, when these prints were left out of later editions, the narrative was merely tedious.

A Tramp Abroad accounted for Clemens' first major move into illustration since his "villanous cuts" produced for Orion's Hannibal newspaper in 1852 and his reverse-image "Map of Paris" in 1870.

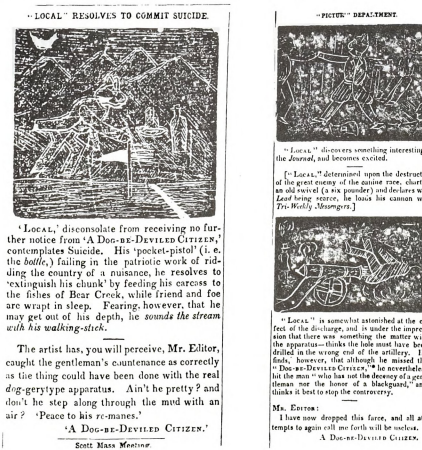

Figure 58. CLEMENS' "VILLANOUS CUTS"

Many years later Mark Twain carried his illustrating ideas into an article called "Instructions in Art," self-illustrating a piece, featuring portraiture--Joe Jefferson and W.D. Howells--for the Metropolitan magazine in 1903. His artistic techniques had not improved by that late

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date but the humor was still contagious.



My first work was a map of Paris. I made it during the Franco-Prussian war.

Figure 59. MAP OF PARIS

The author's appreciation, if not his execution, of the graphic arts had grown from his first sketches to his work for Tramp. Clemens was convinced of a picture's ability to attract an audience's attention, to make them laugh and thereby persuade them to buy. He was, as yet, less alert to the techniques that turned humorous doodling into art. In his bouts with Frank Bliss over the merits of drawings and processes for A Tramp Abroad, Clemens learned much more about illustration.

Clemens' original idea about his drawings having sales appeal proved accurate. A.B. Paine, writing about this first edition, agreed with Clemens: "Those drawings by Clemens himself had a value of their own. The book would have profited had there been more of what the author calls his "works of art."[19]

Frank Bliss exploited Clemens' unique addition to the book in his advertisements and on the title page of the book and prospectus:

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> Fully illustrated by the author himself on the spot, in his own peculiar and inimitable style and by that of other renowned and eminent artists in Europe. 20

The prospectus gave most of the credit to Clemens and foreign artists, while the title page for the first edition gave a less florid estimation of Clemens' talents and more specific credits to the true artists.

> Illustrated by W. Fr. Brown, True Williams, B. Day, and other Artists--with also three or four pictures made by the Author of this book, without outside help; in all THREE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS. 21

Clemens' illustrating task had been relatively simple and enjoyable. The real problems for A Tramp Abroad came from other quarters, both European and American.

Clemens and Frank Bliss were in a quandary about choosing a major illustrator before Mark Twain had left on his second junket to Europe. Both had agreed that their model for design would be Innocents Abroad. The title had confirmed that tie. Both men had also run out of patience with Fay and Cox and True Williams. Clemens wanted to take the illustrating work out of Hartford altogether. Frank wanted it to remain in the city but in other hands.

In March, 1879, Clemens suggested a scheme to Mrs. Fairbanks, one partly of her origination, that involved her son, Charles, who was a budding art student. In fact, Clemens had written a letter of recommendation for him to Thomas Nast and the boy had spent some time with the famous illustrator. Clemens, on Mrs. Fairbanks prompting, wrote:

> I wish Charley could appear as one of the illustrators of my book; but he would be in New York & the Ms could not be sent there. PRIVATE: The illustrating will be done by some exceedingly cheap artists, I suppose, who will roost in Hartford where they can have access to the Ms. But there is that article you speak of--"The Recent French Duel"--why shouldn't

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> Charley illustrate that; in competition with Bliss's artist, & send the pictures to E. Bliss, Jr. American Pub. Co., 284 Asylum St., Hartford. I think Bliss would have wit enough to use Charley's pictures if they were better looking than other artists'. 22

In spite of having given explicit instructions to Mrs. Fairbanks on where to send Charley's drawings, Clemens forgot his letter and the idea for Charley's competitive illustrations. Clemens left for Europe and was arguing in correspondence about other production matters, when the Fairbanks matter exploded:

> By George, now I know what stirred up that hornet's nest in Hartford! It was Charley's pictures--PRIVATELY: (it must not be mentioned to anybody--not even to Charley or his father. I'm in the midst of a quarrel with the American Publishing Company & Charley's sending those pictures there was an awful mistake. It never occurred to me to remark that they should be sent here--to me, drawn on paper, not on wood. That was an important omission on my part. Consound it, I do get into more trouble than any ass that ever lived.) 23

Charles Fairbanks never had a chance in the illustrating competition for any of Clemens' work. By this time Clemens had another candidate in mind for A Tramp Abroad.

The Clemenses had been in Europe a good deal during the last months of 1878 and the first part of 1879. While there, Clemens had become personally interested in a young, European-trained artist:

> I've got an artist here, to my mind,--young Walter F. Brown; you have seen pictures of his occasionally in St. Nicholas and Harper's Weekly. He is a pupil of the painter Gerome, here, and has greatly improved, of late. 24

On the surface young Brown seemed a fine choice. He had close contact with Clemens in Europe. He had some limited experience in illustration and the added stature of training under a famous painter in France. Moreover, he was "willing to make the pictures for my book

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about as cheaply as the photo-people here will put them on the plates." He would "submit all pictures to me [Clemens] and re-draw them till I approve;" and would supervise the printing of the plates in Paris."[25] Walter Brown, in some ways, would become the European forerunner of Clemens' nephew, Charles Webster, years later.

Frank Bliss, however, was not as intrigued as the author with Brown. He did agree that, since they both wanted the format to follow Innocents, having on-the-spot drawings of actual people and places would add to the appeal of the book. But he disliked the notion of both author and illustrator working thousands of miles from his publishing house. It meant, literally, turning all decisions over to Clemens and Brown. Frank would become a mere compiler and pressman. He held out for a compromise: "How would it do to leave room for a few cuts to be drawn here, as I come to set the book up places may appear when a cut would help the story and which you may overlook."[26]

When Clemens agreed, Frank Bliss immediately acquired three additional illustrators: Williams, Waud, and Day.

Alfred Waud had been a Civil War combat artist and a staff illustrator for Harper's Weekly. He also had done an impressive job on cuts for Bryant's Picturesque America, 1872. "He was reportorial in style but capable of doing work of real merit."[27] Waud completed two and possibly more unsigned illustrations for A Tramp Abroad.

Of significantly more importance were the drawings by Ben Day. Day was an artist, illustrator, and inventor. He had worked as an apprentice in his father's publishing firm in New York and was knowledgeable in all phases of illustration. He had also worked for a number of years as illustrator for Vanity Fair. His twenty-two contributions to

the book were r

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the book were representational of his Vanity Fair style: delicate, fashionable, full of detail, and with an appealing charm.

The workhorse, True Williams, however, supplied the major portion of the "extra drawings." "Thirty-six bear the name or initials of Williams,"[28] who curiously had changed his identifying signature to a script "Williams" or "Wms." A critical review of these cuts done by Williams signalled an improvement in his style, at least, "drawings by True Williams are better--better in Paine's [A.B. Paine] estimation than Brown's."[29]

On the European side, Clemens supplied his own fourteen drawings and three sketches by Harris, in reality, his traveling companion, Joe Twichell. Of the three hundred and twentiy-eight illustrations, subtracting all other known illustrators, two hundred and fifty-three seem to be Brown's. However, like the curious prints in Roughing It, a good percentage are not signed and many have unusual markings: three are signed W.W.D.; two, C.H.J.B.; one Alex de Bar; one Whymper; one "self-portrait," one P. Sheldon; one S.R., and a tailpiece clearly marked "Beard."[30] There are two obvious engraving-company markings: Photo Eng. Co. N.Y. and O.F. and Co.

The "borrowing" practice was still the usual procedure at the American Publishing Company and Frank Bliss was certainly not reluctant to use it. In fact, for the only book produced by Frank's short-lived publishing company, Buffalo Bill's Autobiography, he borrowed plates from Roughing It, Tom Sawyer, and The Big Bonanza.[31]

The illustrators chosen, Frank Bliss and Mark Twain started their long-winded dialogue about the printing processes. Clemens, with Brown's help, had come up with what he considered an acceptable bid for the processing of all prints in Paris. He passed it on to Bliss for

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> I remember your father telling me the artist's and engraver's work for The Innocents Abroad cost $7000. Of course we can knock down a deal of that expense, now, by using the new photo-processes. . . . There are two or three of the processes suitable to different styles of work . . . . Brown has been to the process men and got their figures, and the result is this:
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> | | | | |
> |---|---|---|---|
> | 10 full-page plates | @ | $18. . . . | $180.00 |
> | 25 half-page do | @ | 9. . . . | 225.00 |
> | 75 quarter-page do | @ | 4.50 . . | 337.50 |
> | 100 sixth-page do | @ | 3. . . . | 300.00 |
> | 210 drawings . . . . . | | Totals | 1,042.50 |
>
> 32

Frank Bliss, a man experienced in paying production costs, immediately countered with his own set of figures. He explained, "I think the production of the plates can be done better here and at less price. It can be done here for about 5 to 6 dollars for a full page."[33]

Frank was appealing to Clemens' basically frugal nature. Obviously Clemens' full page cuts would run $12. a page higher. Add to that the charges for freight and duty--by Clemens' own estimation, $125 to $150--and the closer figure would be $1350 for the plates. Bliss also realized that that figure would escalate with additional engraving and processing costs.

Surprisingly, Clemens had also estimated the bulk space for pictures. He had sent his layout design to Frank:

> 10 full-page -- -- -- -- 10 pages
> 25 1/2 " -- -- -- -- 12-1/2 pages
> 75 1/4 " -- -- -- -- 19 "
> 100 1/6 " -- -- -- -- 17 "
> 58 1/2 pages.
>
> That is the general idea of the size of the pictures. I may use only 6 or 7 full page pictures, and split up the other 3 or 4 into smaller ones; I may use some 1/3-page ones, and a fewer 1/4 page. 34

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Frank, wiser in the practice of putting a subscription volume together again quarreled with Clemens' figures. While Clemens' processing costs were high, his estimate of needed cuts was low. If they were to adhere to Innocents standards, they were low on total cuts: 234 to 210. The low estimate of full-page prints especially bothered Frank: "There should be either 8 or 16--should think the latter preferable. Anyway, they want to go by eighths on % of printing."[35]

Clemens' estimations were a calculated guess. Frank's came from precise formulas worked out for the subscription volume. Though Frank showed himself more experienced, Mark Twain's working out of costs and layout mark a much higher level of sophistication concerning design than his naive questioning, "Whether it should have any pictures or not" for Innocents a little over ten years before. Both costs and numbering debates were won by Bliss.

Another point of contention between Clemens and Bliss concerned the quality of the work done in Paris. Clemens had sent to Hartford admittedly rough

> proofs of plates made for this book by the processes, so that you [Frank Bliss] can judge of their merit and of Brown's drawing. We meant the Matterhorn accident for a full-pager, but had to guess as the size. The proofs I sent are in the rough. They have not been cleaned up. They are not on clean white paper, either. 36

Frank's reply was less than enthusiastic.

> It doesn't seem to me that I like the sky of the Matterhorn picture exactly,seems as if it was too flat & dark for the rest of the picture. I wonder how it will print on a printing press. It appears to me as if that stipple wash would be likely to fill up with ink & make a bad mess of the thing. . . . You see the white spaces in the process work is (sic) apt to be rather shallow and where the black lines or dots are very close together there is a danger of their filling up. 37

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One stipple-wash process print produced for the edition proves conclusively Bliss's point about the quality of the process.

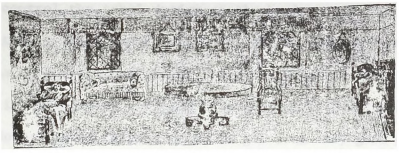

Figure 60

The technical argument had persuaded even the stubborn Mark Twain.

> I don't like those stipple processes half as well as I thought I should and am glad the plates are not to be made here. Pen and ink on plain paper looks much cleaner and stronger. 38

Clemens' agreement on this point, however, was not the end of the argument. Clemens felt it necessary to confuse things just a bit more by suggesting they use the Kaolatype machine for some of the engraving. The machine had been brought over from Germany and developed in the United States by Clemens' old cabin mate, Dan Slote. Clemens had become financially interested in the machine through his friendship with Slote. In a letter to Frank, Clemens tentatively broached the possibility of using Kaolatype:

> Dan Slote has the best process in the world but I suppose we can't use that, because on his process the pictures are not transferred, but drawn on a hard mud surface. It looks like an excellent wood engraving whereas all these other processes are miserably weak and shammy. How clean and strong the Innocents' pictures are. 39

The Kaolatype process was slow and expensive now that photo-engraving was available. It would, however, continue to intrigue and plague Clemens and his editors for a number of years.

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Frank Bliss paid no heed to Clemens' suggestion. He had made his point. The printing would all be done in the United States where he could control the total design of the book.

At long range Frank continued to make suggestions to Brown through Clemens on how the quality of Brown's work could be improved. Frank's hints included using a "ruled tinted sheet instead of a tint made of fine dots;" using Chinese white to get some very good effects; using only jet black ink for fine definition of line; shading a print by gradation of lines from thin to coarse, rather than by the use of wash. He also advocated using background detail to relieve the starkness of some prints, and to vary the designs by using circles and oblong inserts instead of a repetition of normal rectangular cuts. He completed one of his many pages of suggestions with this somewhat plaintive remarks:

> I've had so much to do with these pen drawings for the past four or five years that if I was over there I might give Brown some hints that he would be glad to get. Still he may know all the points himself now. 40

Frank Bliss was conducting a correspondence school of graphic design for both Clemens and Brown. And young Brown needed all of his expert advice, for he found himself having to pass the critical tests of Frank Bliss, Clemens, and even a bedridden Elisha Bliss. When a batch of Brown's latest drawings arrived at the American offices, Frank took them to his father for critique:

> I've just been talking with father about the drawings & looking them over again. (He) suggests that I call your attention to one point . . . in the A.P. Co. we always tried to avoid, in the illustrations, the making of a funny picture by a monstrosity. . . . Max Adelar, Billings & those writers you know get deformaties for funny pictures. I like to avoid them don't you? 41

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Frank and his father had been examining one specific picture, a cat singing an operatic solo. They wanted a "respectable cat. . . a good looking puss."[42] The cat did not debut in Clemens' book but a good many other Brown monstrosities did.

One other Brown drawing disturbed even Clemens. "I think I wouldn't use the picture which represents me lying on my back drinking from a bottle. It is not very well done and there is no reference in the Ms. to that."[43]



Figure 61

Perhaps Clemens was becoming cautious or prudish, not wanting his readers to see him imbibing. A less prudish Frank Bliss kept the cut and captioned it, "Take It Easy."

Brown asked Clemens if he could have special treatment for one full page print over which he had worked particularly hard," doing the best I possibly can, the figure of the girl singing at the mouth of the cave which you so kindly consented to allow me to have engraved in Paris."[44] The engraving was superb; however, Clemens can be grateful that Frank Bliss advised him to have the work done in the United States. According to Brown's ledger, this engraving cost $44. to be cut on the plate. Clemens' "Titial Moses" was engraved by the same man, Pannemaker. With two plates costing $88. just for processing, the

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Figure 62

production figures would have been constantly in the red no matter how many Tramps were sold.

Brown's work, amateurish in the main, had cost Clemens $1063 by the end of July and there was still a month's work ahead. There are no extant figures for Brown's work beyond this date.

Unfortunately, Clemens was not getting his money's worth. A.B. Paine commented much later on the design of A Tramp Abroad and particularly Brown's contribution:

> It was the same general size and outward character as the Innocents, numerously illustrated, and was regarded by its publishers as a satisfactory book.
>
> It bore no striking resemblence to the Innocents on close examination. Its pictures--drawn for the most part by a young art student named Brown whom Clemens had met in Paris--were extraordinarily bad, while the crude engraving process by which they had been reproduced, tended to bring them still further into disrepute. 45

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Frank Bliss, in Hartford, had proceeded right on schedule. Only one problem arose that caused the slightest delay in the plans. Someone, either Frank or Mark Twain, decided at the last minute to include a steel engraving of the author as a full-plate insert facing the frontispiece. The plate was made but "the original plate showed 'spots' during the course of printing and it became necessary to re-engrave it."[46] The re-engraving took only a few days and the publishing date was not postponed.



Figure 63

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Mark Twain duly signed the plate with his distinctive signature and the edition was official. For the first time in history of Mark Twain's publications, the illustrators had not held up a publishing date.

Frank had more than lived up to his part of the bargain. The ads and the prospectuses were out early and touted the "superb steel engraving of the Author being the only one in existence."[47] The prospectus also carried copies of advance reviews which played up Clemens' drawings as well as the other illustrations: "The illustrations are full of quaint humor, and without reading a line of the text these alone will secure the sale of the book."[48] Mark Twain,himself, was pleased with the results:

> I like the book exceedingly well; it is handsomely gotten up (barring the old type), & I believe it is going to take. . . . I imagine the Canadians have been working us heavy harm. [49]

Harm from the Canadians was slight. A Tramp Abroad had 48,000 advance orders before Frank Bliss started the presses.[50] Admittedly, their publishing in March, before the English edition, imperiled the British copyright but would not do the harm that had been done with Tom Sawyer, not with almost 50,000 advance orders.

Sticking as close as possible to a subscription book formula, the Tramp couldn't help but sell. Clemens and Bliss had sufficient pages, 639; more illustrations than ever before, 328, an engraved portrait, 34 full page plates, and numerous author's drawings. Everything that could be done was tried.

And the book did sell: "According to the first annual report of sales . . . the book sold 62,000 copies."[51] With Frank Bliss's judicious handling of production, Mark Twain made a profit of $32,000 the

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Mark Twain owed much of his fortune and success to the Bliss family, father and son. Their publishing house had sold 337,902 of Mark Twain's books between July 20, 1869 and December 31, 1879.[52] Still, antagonisms had grown and Clemens, the burgeoning businessman, was frustrated with the policies of the Bliss firm.

With the publication of A Tramp Abroad everything changed. Elisha Bliss died on September 28, 1880. Mark Twain was free. It would be fourteen years before a Mark Twain book would again bear the American Publishing Company's banner.

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With the death of Elisha Bliss, Mark Twain was at last liberated. Though Frank Bliss had proved himself completely competent in issuing A Tramp Abroad, Clemens said he was worried about the younger Bliss's ability to run the large subscription house singlehandedly. He expressed his sentiments in a letter to Orion: "I shall probably go to a new publisher. . . for I am afraid that Frank, with his poor health, will lack push and drive."[1] It was more probable that Clemens felt too controlled by Frank Bliss in their dealings with A Tramp Abroad. Moreover, Clemens had wanted to get out from under the aegis of the American Publishing Company for a long time. With a new alliance, Clemens felt he might be able to accomplish many of the things he had dreamed about in the production of his books.

James R. Osgood was the logical choice for a new partner. Clemens and Osgood had contemplated working together on a book for years: Sketches New and Old in 1872 and Tom Sawyer in 1875. Their plans had always been subverted by Elisha Bliss. At the end of 1880, however, the time was perfect. Osgood had just gotten out of his partnership with Field, Osgood and Company and Mark was now a free agent.

James Osgood allowed himself to be talked into a rather bizarre contract for Mark Twain's new book, The Prince and the Pauper:

> Upon receipt of said manuscript said Osgood & Co. shall proceed to have suitable illustrations drawn and engraved therefore, subject to said Clemens' approval, and to have said work and illustrations therefore electrotyped in a style to be mutually agreed upon, and shall cause to be manufactured such edition or editions as may be deemed expedient by said Clemens. And in such preparation and manufacture said Osgood & Co. shall use their knowledge, experience, and facilities to procure the best

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> results at the most reasonable prices. All bills for said work shall be rendered by said Osgood & Co. to said Clemens, accompanied with proper vouchers when desired, and shall be paid by said Clemens within one month after being rendered. . . . Said Clemens shall own all illustrations, plates and stock belonging to said work. [2]

A new era was beginning. Clemens was now writer, manufacturer, and salesman. Osgood would become not the editor-publisher but the intermediary.

Clemens had for years wanted this kind of arrangement and the control over production that it would bring. He had originally negotiated the same plan with Chatto and Windus for Tom Sawyer but backed out when Livy had complained that the financial risk was too great. Now there seemed little financial danger. Clemens had spelled out the details, minutely, even to owning the final plates. Osgood had a smoothly functioning publishing house with all the best workmen. With this kind of organization behind him, Clemens felt he could produce both a book of highest quality and one that would sell. Reversing the usual contract arrangements, he would avoid being cheated, control all costs, and reap the major share of the profits.

Though the choice of Osgood seemed logical and practical, it was not to prove good business. As a publisher Osgood had spent his whole life in trade, not subscription sales. Clemens, for obvious financial reasons, had persuaded Osgood to switch to the subscription side of the market. Osgood, however, "knew nothing about the mechanics of subscription publication. It was necessary for him to rely heavily on Twain's advice and commands."[3] And this was exactly what Clemens wanted. He was confident that he had learned the subscription business from production to sales. He would take the reins where Elisha Bliss

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Making a subscription book pay dividends, however, took a particular kind of expertise, a knowledgeable crew of production men, and a network of good sales agents. Clemens had the experience, Osgood had the workmen, but they lacked the men in the field. Osgood hoped to overcome this deficit by going directly to Frank Bliss for help. He wrote of his plan to Clemens:

> This letter suggests the question whether you could obtain from Bliss and furnish to us the name of the principal agents, the territory they cover, the terms on which they buy, and any other particulars for the good of the book. If he would give me access to these facts I would come down there and take memoranda. Do you think he would? If not, could you get them either as a personal matter, or in your functional relation as director of the Co.? Of course we can pick up all these points, but it would save trouble to get them in this way. 4

How naive Osgood was and how gullible in believing that Frank would hand over the whole sales machinery of his company! Mark Twain seemed equally innocent when he went along with Osgood's plan. If Clemens thought Frank would comply honestly, it proved again that he was far from a shrewd businessman.

The last laugh, of course, came from Frank Bliss. He allowed Osgood to come to Hartford and pick up all the techniques Bliss felt free to drop. He gave him, however, only the names of the poorest agents and false information on costs. Meanwhile, Frank Bliss was flooding the market with cheap reprints of Clemens' books held by his firm, which undercut the market for Clemens' new work.

Nevertheless, the author and his publisher started their collaboration in high spirits. "Osgood would come down to Hartford and spend days discussing plans and playing billiards, which to Mark Twain's mind

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was the proper way to conduct business."[5] The leisurely pace, the false canvassing information, and poor budgeting were to cost Clemens dearly.

Clemens made foolish decisions all along the line. He decided to produce The Prince and the Pauper in an expensive format. He complicated the smooth functioning of Osgood's team by insisting on "new" processes, and even remained indecisive until near publishing time about which firm should print the book.

The most costly decision involved the total design of the book. According to Clemens it was Livy who decided that The Prince was to come out in a deluxe edition.

> Livy says . . . [The Prince] is going to be elegantly gotten up, even if the elegance of it eats up the publisher's profits and mine too. I anticipate that publisher's melancholy surprise when he calls here Tuesday. However, let him suffer; it is his own fault. People who fix up agreements with me without first finding out what Livy's plans are take fate into their own hands. 6

Clemens had declared that he had written The Prince "simply for the love of it,"[7] but publishing it in the same manner made no sense if he wanted to reap profits.

Livy's initial decision added to overhead costs almost immediately. "High-priced artists & engravers are already at work on my new book (which I am going to issue at my sole & heavy expense & take all the profit myself--if any.)"[8] Clemens seemed determined to fail with his first book out of Osgood and Co.

The expensive artists and engravers to whom Clemens referred were the trained men from Osgood's firm. The master engraver, in charge of arranging for artists, handling layout, selecting subject matter for illustration, and responsible for proofreading final copy was A.V.S. Anthony.

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Anthony was a most capable engraver and had done some illustrating of his own as well as running the printroom for Osgood. He had spent most of his life in the business, was respected by all in trade publication, and had a close business and personal relation with James Osgood.

As illustration supervisor, Anthony distributed the work for the Prince between three artists: L.S. Quensh (illegible), John J. Harley, and Frank T. Merrill. "Quensh" worked on "the half-titles."[9] They were beautifully emblematic, filled with detail, and held all the clues to the content of the chapters to follow them. They were printed as full page plates and inserted separately into the text.



Figure 64

"Harley did the bulk of the figure work,"[10] while Frank Merrill created most of the features and the costumes of the two young heroes, Tom Canty and the Prince. This division of the figure drawing between Harley and Merrill led to interesting inconsistencies in the book.

Though no artist was given credits on the title page, Merrill was considered the principal illustrator. He had gone to art school and spent all of his life in Boston. He was thirty-two years old and had done his major illustrating work for Loring and Company, publishers.

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He was best known for his illustrations for Louisa May Alcott's Moods, 1870. He was not yet a recognized figure, for "the bulk of his work as an illustrator, and his most important work belongs to the period after 1880,"[11] after his drawings for The Prince. He couldn't have promoted his career under better conditions than working with Anthony on a Mark Twain book.

Anthony's job was not an easy one. Clemens had, by this time, become thoroughly embroiled in one of his get-rich-quick investment schemes, the Kaolatype press. He spent many hours trying to convince Anthony of its merits. It was a new machine

> for engraving--the kaolatype or "chalk-plate process" --which was going to revolutionize the world of illustration. . . . It was an ingenious process: a sheet of perfectly smooth steel was coated with a preparation of Kaolin (or china clay), and a picture was engraved through the coating down to the steel surface. This formed the matrix into which the molten metal was poured to make the stereotype plate, or die, for printing . . . the process was doomed . . . It was barely established before the photoetching processes were developed. [12]

Clemens' interest in the machine was understandable. It had been promoted by his friend, Dan Slote; Clemens was fascinated with any kind of mechanical contrivance; and he had had too many frustrating experiences with illustrators to pass up an offer to take the illustrating job out of human hands. Clemens felt the same about the Kaolatype as he did later about the Paige typesetter: "This typesetter does not get drunk. He does not join the printer's union. A woman can operate him."[13]

Clemens was rushing Dan Slote to produce plates so that he could prove the quality of the process and persuade Anthony and Osgood to use it on The Prince. By March a set of plates arrived and Clemens

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gleefully wrote, "Those handsome impressions came just in the nick of time." The next line of the letter signalled the trouble: "Old Kaolatype is a bit expensive."[14]

The Kaolatype Company had been losing money at a great rate. Clemens was the president, but as usual the financial problems were everyone else's fault. Despite considerable losses, Clemens was convinced that with the right promotion and handling the process could make a million. It just had to produce one superior quality book design and it was set.

He brought his nephew, Charles Webster, in from Fredonia to manage the Kaolatype operation. Charley would eventually be involved in all Clemens' business affairs, but for the time being he was set to hustling Kaolatype cuts for The Prince and the Pauper.

Clemens was experimenting with the cover design for The Prince as his classic model for the process. His plan was to have Charley hand carry the original design to Providence to have it cast in brass and then take it to New York to show Osgood. All had to be carefully timed because

> it is of vast importance that no time be lost--for it might delay the issue of my canvassers' copies, & cost me several thousand dollars. Consequently, I would a good deal rather hurt your K business a hundred dollars or so by your absence. 15

As it turned out the cost was time:

> Everything went wrong, of course. The design did not reach our artist until some time on Tuesday; the Thanksgiving or Prayer-holiday stopped the work on it yesterday, no doubt; and now comes a telegram to say it won't be ready for the brass founder till Monday. . . . If our work should be inferior, and unsatisfactory to you, you can fire away and have the plate cut, by the die sinkers. . . . I shall be sorry if it turns out that I have caused you a week's delay, but hellandamnation I wasn't dreaming of such a thing. 16

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It was, of course, Mark Twain's bull-headedness that was wasting time. This was mid-September and Anthony was anxious to get the art work to the engravers so that the prospectus could be sent out to agents so the book could be issued by the end of the year. In late October, Clemens was still fooling around with the cover design, which he admitted wasn't working out as well as he had predicted:

> I had to order new Prince & Pauper stamps from the die-sinkers. The fault was not in the casting, but in the crudeness of the original pattern; the lines are not perfect in shape, the lettering was not shapely. The cutting was too hurriedly done, I suppose. 17

The resulting cover designs are an interesting puzzle. The book was issued in two separate binding states made from "two separate and almost identical sets of brasses . . . the prospectus was stamped from yet a third set of brasses which, while almost identical . . . lacks the delicate detail of both [the book states]."[18] Which of the three brasses was the Kaolatype brass cannot be proven. It is possible that since Clemens admitted to Webster his cover design hadn't cast well, the prospectus with its "lack of delicate detail" remains as the sole product of the Kaolatype machine. Hamlin Hill, however, believes that "The only enduring monument to Kaolatype is the binding of the first American edition of The Prince and the Pauper, on which Twain persuaded Osgood to use his engraving process."[19] And it was, indeed, a handsome binding.

Never one to give up easily, Clemens pushed the Kaolatype process again for the engraving of The Stolen White Elephant. He had a parcel of drawings and reproductions from the process sent to Osgood in New York for critique. By this time Osgood and Anthony were having none of it. Anthony wrote a long and detailed letter to Clemens carefully

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explaining the flaws in the process: loss of color, thickening of lines, blurring of character features, and all of these technical failings at a cost almost double the usual expense. Moreover, Harley, the engraver, refused to allow his name to be used if the cuts were processed by Clemens' infernal machine. Anthony ended his letter to Clemens by saying,

> the Kaolatype misses the original about the same as would the recital of the "Jumping Frog" by a Baptist minister from memory--the bald facts might possibly be preserved, but the style, the go, the handling, would undoubtedly be lost. 20

Anthony's sharp and lengthy criticism brought an end to any thought of using the Kaolatype machine.

Despite the short conflict over the engraving process, Clemens was very enthusiastic over the results of the final designs:

> As to the pictures, they clear surpass my highest expectations. They are dainty and rich as etchings. I would like to have you print twelve or fifteen full sets of them for me, each picture in the centre of a sheet of fine India paper . . . and bind each set simply and neatly in boards. Can this be done at a reasonable expense? 21

The India paper sets were originally intended just to please a few of Clemens' friends. The idea grew like the guest list for a cocktail party, until an entirely separate edition was printed by a prestigious printing company. Again, it was Clemens who proposed the edition and damned the cost.

> The more I examine the pictures, the more I am enchanted with them. If it is going to be too extravagantly costly to make 20 books of them on India paper--a large item of the expense is mounting, doubtless--maybe we can print them on a heavy tinted paper and survive the outlay. 22

The Franklin press edition was finally cut to fourteen from twenty and a description of the finely bound book explains Clemens' qualms about

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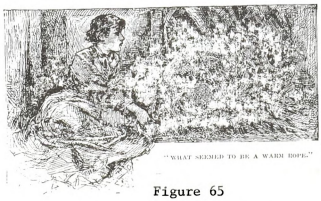
> China paper . . . Size of leaf 8-3/4" x 6-13/16". Bound in white linen, stamped in gold, inner hinges of blue linen, white end papers grained in imitation wood, top edges gilt. 23

The recipients of this special edition were Clemens' own daughters, Susie and Clara, to whom the book is dedicated, and the daughters of some of Clemens' friends: Edward House's Japanese daughter Koto and W.D. Howells' daughter Winifred. In a thank-you note to the author, Winifred related how sensitive the young people were to the thoughtless combination of illustration and text:

> I have not finished it [The Prince] yet, but I think the loveliest place I have read is where the Prince finds the calf in the barn and is so glad to cuddle up to something warm and alive. After his horror at first feeling something beside him it was such a relief to find what it really was that I was almost angry with the picture for letting me know too soon. 24



"WHAT SEEMED TO BE A WARM HOPE."

Figure 65

Clemens had written a suspenseful paragraph on the Prince's fright:

> He groped a little further, and his hand lightly swept against something soft and warm. This petrified him, nearly, with fright--his mind was in such a state that he could imagine the thing to be nothing else than a corpse, newly dead and still warm. 25

Placing the picture at this juncture, revealing the "warm thing" as a calf, not a corpse, ruined the uncertainty that makes children's literature work. The drawing gave away the secret before the line could be read. Clemens could have used Winifred as critic in the function of

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The Merrill drawings however, deserved all the praise that Clemens showered upon them. They were well defined, detailed, and historically accurate. Frank Merrill's contributions were superior to the work of the other artists and Clemens was appropriately thankful.

> Merrill probably thinks he originated his exquisite boys himself, but I was ahead of him there'--in these pictures they look and dress exactly as I used to see them in my mind two years ago. It is a vast pleasure to see them cast in the flesh, so to speak--they were of but perishable dream-stuff before. 26

One of Clemens' special delights in Merrill's work was the authenticity of the costumes. Clemens had done his own historical homework on the novel and especially the dress of the times. He even took the trouble to add information in a note appended to the book:

> Note 1.--Page 50. "Christ's Hospital Costume." It is most reasonable to regard the dress as copied from the costume of the citizens of London of that period, when long blue coats were the common habit of apprentices and servingmen, and yellow stockings were generally worn; the coat fits closely to the body, but has loose sleeves, and beneath is worn a sleeveless yellow under-coat; around the waist is a red leathern girdle; a clerical band around the neck, and a small flat black cap, about the size of a saucer, completes the costume--"'Timbs' 'Curiosities of of London.'" 27

Merrill's drawing shows the costume down to the last detail. A pity there was no color to complete the picture.



Figure 66

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All of the costumes in The Prince, peasant and royal, were worked out with the same eye for exactness. Clemens was so elated he instructed Osgood to use the drawings as promotional material:

> I'll suggest one point for the circular--to-wit: that you don't forget to glorify the illustrations; and also that you call attention to the historical accuracy of the costumes. 28

Clemens' first excursion into historical fiction and illustration was a beneficial lesson when he again entered the field with A Connecticut Yankee and contracted with Dan Beard to do the heavy research for costuming in that book.

Clemens was adamant about authenticity. In most instances he had the illustrators work from reproductions of the originals to make sure of their accuracy.

One example was a manuscript facsimile of a letter from

> Hugh Latimer, "Bishop of Worcester, to" Lord Cromwell, "on the birth of the" Prince of Wales (afterward Edward VI). From the National Manuscripts Preserved by the British Government. 29

which appeared on page two with a transcript of the almost illegible script on page three. The manuscript handwriting, obviously, flawlessly copied by the illustrator.

The frontispiece also had a perfect replica of Henry VIII's curious but distinctive signature, with "Henry's genuine H . . . made without lifting the pen."[30]



Signatures of Henry VIII. Cotton MS. Vespasian, F. 13.

Figure 67. SIGNATURES OF HENRY VIII

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The accurate but nearly unreadable handwriting brings back memories of the Horace Greeley letter in Roughing It, but here it was factual rather than farcical.

Over the signature in the frontispiece was an exact copy of Henry VIII's "Great Seal," accurate down to the royal inscription, "Honi Soi Qui Mal Y Pense," a motto which Clemens would order parodied in illustration for A Connecticut Yankee.



Figure 68. THE GREAT SEAL

For reasons only to be conjectured, Clemens objected to the Great Seal being used in the book. In a letter to an editor at Osgood's the author cautioned: "The Great Seal wasn't to be engraved--ole Brer Osgood forgot that I reckon. I'm afraid to put it in."[31]

The Seal, central to the action of the story, would seem a natural for illustration. Perhaps Clemens feared censure from the English, especially if printed in the English edition, for using the seal as mere decoration for a book by an American. Clemens' fears must have been mollified since both seal and signature appeared on page four of the English and American issues.

Authenticity was not required only for documents and emblems of sovereignty. Royalty itself was carefully portrayed, Henry VIII for

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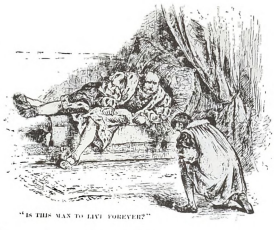

Figure 69

And Clemens' episodes, adapted from such famous sources as Hume's History of England, Timbs' "Curiosities of London," and Dr. J. Hammond Trumbull's "Blue Laws, True and False," were accompanied by drawings from the same kind of reliable graphic sources. The famous "Burning of Anne Askew" had an accompanying drawing which recreated the rooflines from a very famous old engraving by Fox.

With such fastidious attention to historical detail, it is curious that larger inconsistencies were allowed to remain in the illustrating work for The Prince.

Anthony alerted Mark Twain about a possible conflict when he shipped him two drawings for approval:

> I sent you today two drawings, "Offal Court," and "Canty and the Priest." Tom is a little younger, perhaps, in the drawing, but I take it that when he was learning his Latin and getting his head full of the possible splendors of life, he might have been, say 10 or 11 years of age. 32

Anthony implied here that this version of Tom was younger because Tom was younger in this section of the book. The discrepancy appears when



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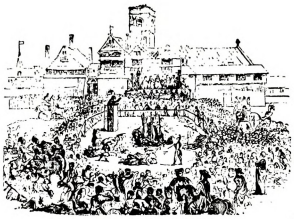

Burning of Anne Askew and others. From Foxe.

Figure 70. THE BURNING OF ANNE ASKEW

the Prince appears in the same image (see Figure 66) on page 50 of the book, while before, on page 43, the boys had met and exchanged ages, a factual fifteen.



"HE OFTEN READ THE PRIEST'S BOOKS."



"HOW OLD BE THESE?"

Figure 71. TOM CANTY

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The problem stemmed from the two artists' different conceptions of the boys heroes. Harley's drawing depicts the boys as near ten or eleven, while all the drawings by Merrill have Tom and the Prince nearer fifteen.

Of the one hundred and ninety-two illustrations, sixty were signed Merrill, and eleven Harley. There were thirty-five half-titles, presumably worked by "Quensh."

It was universally agreed that the illustrations for The Prince and the Pauper were the finest work for any of Clemens' books to date, barring perhaps The Innocents Abroad. It was little wonder that Clemens would again call for Frank Merrill when he wanted an illustrator for A Connecticut Yankee.

Remembrances of the piracy of Tom Sawyer caused both Osgood and Clemens many a sleepless night as the publishing deadline neared. They had planned to forestall this possibility by printing in Canada, but late in October, Clemens thought better of the plan:

> In setting up and printing in Canada, we run one risk--that the sheet may be bought or stolen, and a pirated edition brought out ahead of us. How would it do to leave out a signature . . . here and there, until a few days of the Canadian publishing date. 33

Osgood accepted the advice, as he usually did from Clemens. The sheets minus a signature, were shipped to Montreal. Miraculously, the American the Canadian, and the English editions came out, intact, within days of each other, December 1881.

The reviewers celebrated the publication with words such as "pure," "lovely," "subdued," "delicate," "refined," and even the English reviewers were "surprisingly complimentary."[34] One review called the

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illustrations "spirited, florid old style. These will amuse the children."[35]

But Clemens himself was the most delighted. He exclaimed in a letter to the Atlantic reviewer, H. H. Boysen, explaining

> I went for the bulk of the profits, and so published the volume at my own expense, opening with an edition of 25,000 copies, for the manufacture of which I paid $17,500. . . . I find myself a fine success, as a publisher; and literally the new departure is a great deal better received than I had any right to hope for. [36]

The bloom of the publishing day would soon fade. The sales for the book were slow beyond the first printing. Clemens secretly blamed Osgood "for doing not great things with [the sale of] The Prince and the Pauper."[37] While publicly he acknowledged that "too brief a precanvass, and the subsequent performances of the Bliss gang of general agents, were the main troubles, I guess."[38] The American Publishing Company agents had remained faithful to American and seldom pushed Clemens' new book.

Times were still poor in Spring of 1882 and Clemens considered pushing The Prince into the trade bookstores to bypass Bliss's general agents. Clemens had learned the game well from Elisha Bliss. Osgood, however, persuaded Clemens to wait. They revamped their sales organization in preparation for the next major publication, Life on the Mississippi. Charley Webster would take over as head of the general agents. Clemens whispering a fervent hope "We will see if we can't improve on The Prince & Pauper's luck.[39]

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Mark Twain had entered into the publication of The Prince and the Pauper proclaiming it an "unusual experiment." His deviation from the lucrative subscription book format had won him critical acclaim but no financial gain. The risks of poor canvassing practices, high production costs, and Clemens' new departure in writing, had not proved fruitful enough for him to try the combination again.

For his next major publication, Mark Twain made several changes. He put Charles Webster in "full charge of the matter of running the book"[1] sales through a reorganization of general sales agents, both east and west. Though Osgood and Anthony would again control the manufacture of the book, as they had so expertly done for The Prince, Clemens would not insist on a deluxe edition. The normal subscription standards in design would be sufficient. Mark Twain's text would again hark back to the tried and true, a travel-adventure story, this time on the Mississippi.

The new work should have been smooth sailing for both author and publisher. It was to be an extension of seven previously published articles done for the Atlantic. Osgood had for a number of years tried to persuade Clemens to take another trip down the river to collect more material to help turn the articles into book form. Plans for the trip were finally made in the Spring of 1882. Though he hadn't planned to, Osgood travelled with Clemens and tried to make the trip and the writing an occasion of pleasure by hiring a secretary, Roswell Phelps, to take Clemens' transcriptions.

The trip itself was delightful. Starting at New Orleans the

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troupe covered eight hundred miles of the river up to St. Paul, Minnesota. By the time Clemens returned to Hartford, however, he was in no mood to "set down with Phelps' notes and write pages and pages for Osgood to use in the projected book."[2]

Back in Boston, however, Osgood was ready and eager to begin work on the Mississippi adventure. He assigned

> the job of illustrating the book to his staff of artists. A beginning could be made by them by consulting the seven articles in the Atlantic Monthly. E.H. Garret was given the job of doing landscapes and street scenes. A man named Harley was assigned the amusing sketches and caricatures of river folk. 3

Harley, as it turned out, became the major illustrator. He had done the figure work for The Prince, along with Frank Merrill. Merrill was now much in demand and was too expensive for this book. E.H. Garret was a thirty-year old painter-illustrator who had "studied at Academie Julien, Paris; pupil of Jean Paul Laurens."[4] When the job proved too large for these two artists, Osgood "employed a third artist, one A.B. Shute, to draw various landscapes, portraits, and wharf scenes."[5]

The artists were put to work on the Atlantic articles but by September the copy had run out and everything was at a standstill. Osgood, sounding remarkably like Elisha Bliss during Roughing It, pleaded with Clemens for new manuscript:

> Now we must go to work at once on the prospectus-books. For this purpose we need the title and a selection of pages including type and cuts. Also, your preface, or such introduction or explanatory matter as you choose to prefix. We particularly need the title at once, that we may have the cover stamp prepared. Anthony tells me that there are about 100 cuts ready, or nearly so (about one-third of the whole number proposed) and that he will soon be needing more copy to go on with. Let me hear from you as soon as possible

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> on these points, as we can make no progress until they are settled. 6

Clemens, as he had with Roughing It, remained unmoved. He wrote to Howells, "The printers must wait, the artists, the canvassers, and all the rest. I have got everything at a dead standstill, and that is where it ought to be."[7]

Clemens explained the reasons for his testiness:

> I have never had such a fight over a book in my life before. And the foolishest part of the whole business is, that I started Osgood to editing it before I had finished writing it. As a consequence, large areas of it are condemned here and there and yonder, and I have the burden of these unfilled gaps harrassing me. 8

What Clemens said was true, Osgood was cutting liberally. About "fifteen thousand words were eventually excised from the manuscript before Osgood finally put it into print."[9]

By January, however, the manuscript was finished and into proof. As usual, Mark Twain had demanded authenticity and he got it in the drawings for Life. The characters in the book gave the illustrators little trouble. Horace Bixby's figure in uniform commanded a full page print.



HORACE BIXBY IN 1907.



CAPTAIN

Figure 72

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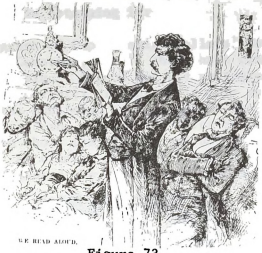
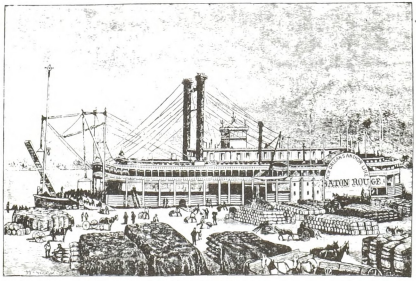
Clemens was also most attractively sketched in many of the cuts.



HE READ ALOUD.

Figure 73

But the topography, from New Orleans to St. Paul, took up most of the authentically drawn plates. Thirty-eight finely drawn locations were the work of E.H. Garrett and judging from the detailing, he probably copied from photographs brought by Clemens and Osgood from their trip. Prominent as the frontispiece was the cruise ship, the "Baton Rouge," exactly reproduced, possibly from an original Time Table that had featured the likeness.



THE "BATON ROUGE."

Figure 74

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One illustration was of particular importance to Mark Twain. He asked Osgood's help in obtaining it:

> A photograph of Capt. Isaiah Sellers' Monument in Bellefontaine Cemetery. . . . "I shall have considerable to say about him." Osgood got the photograph, and the artist's [Garrett] drawing of it duly appears on page 498 of the published book. Sellers was the man, now many years dead, who used to write brief notes of information about the Mississippi and sign them "Mark Twain." As Clemens needlessly explains in Chapter 50, he "confiscated the ancient mariner's nom de guerre." 10



SELLERS'S MONUMENT.

Figure 75

By January, the manuscript was finished and put into proof. Prematurely, Mark Twain ordered Osgood to print a number of copies while also warning him of more possible stumbling blocks:

> Yes, make two sets of plates and dies, and print 50,000 copies of the book. . . . In proofreading I shall cause you no delay--but I do not answer for Mrs. Clemens, who has not edited the book yet, and will of course not let a line of the proof go from here till she has read it and possibly damned it. 11

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Clemens' predictions came true. Livy did damn some text and illustrations, Osgood inserted a number of questionable cuts, and Mark Twain had misgivings about certain drawings.

One incident that neither Clemens or Joe Twichell wanted printed was an anecdote that had been told to Clemens by Twichell. The type, according to Clemens' order, had already been set and so Clemens decided the text could stay but the accompanying drawing had to be changed.

> I telegraphed you about that scene in church because I wanted to make sure to rectify the thing before you get to printing it. You can fill up that space with any kind of cut you please, provided it does not refer in any way to any part of the text, and is utterly without humorous suggestion. I care nothing about what the subject of the cut is so long as it bears no hint of the text, and is not funny. A landscape is a good thing, and can be called, scene in the Adirondacks, or Palestine, or somewhere. The reader can put in such idle time as he may have in trying to arrive at a connection between picture and reading matter. This will give him pleasant occupation for an idle week and will cost us nothing. 12

The scene was never fully identified but may have been in the section dealing with Louisiana burial practices, a theme which Twichell would shy from seeing in print. Clemens' comments about the drawing, however, show how fully aware he had become in understanding the "reader's connections." His fears over combining religious matter and any sort of humor would surface again in Huckleberry Finn.

Clemens protested against another cut which showed a river boat and possible danger. "Be sure to make the correction. The idea of using the electric light in a fog is too, too. We should lose the respect of the river men."[13]

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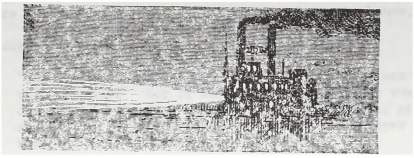


RUNNING IN A FOG.

Figure 76

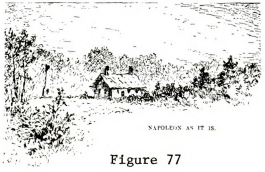
Clemens' reasoning here is foggy itself. He may have forgotten he had written about the diminished dangers of riverpiloting on the preceding page of his text:

> But all that is changed now,--you flash out your electric light, transform night into day in the twinkling of an eye, and your perils and anxieties are at an end. 14

Why, then, Mark Twain would not want the drawing is a mystery.

Osgood got Clemens' message but the trouble of cutting the insert out of the page or preparing a whole new plate seemed too much for such a trifle. The drawing and caption remained.

One other illustrating discrepancy was never corrected to Clemens' satisfaction. Clemens had described the demise of the once prominent town of Napoleon in his text with "nothing left but a fragment of a shanty and a crumbling brick chimney."[15]



NAPOLEON AS IT IS.

Figure 77

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A.B. Shute apparently did too creditable a job on the house, for Mark Twain's comments on the margins of the drawings read:

> "This house is too sound--can't it be turned into a ruin somehow?" But it was too late to destroy even one of the offending chimneys, and so this last of the shanties of Napoleon must ever remain in the eyes of the reader a trim and prosperous structure. 16

Clemens had no extreme feelings about either of these drawings. Even he realized he had made it difficult to revise cuts when 50,000 prints had been run. He let Osgood off the hook by saying, "If convenient--not otherwise. It ain't any matter about the 50,000 already printed."[17]

Livy's remarks about two other drawings were much more vehement. The last drawing in the section dealing with Karl Ritter and "The Dying Man's Confession," featured an old man in a shroud.



Figure 78

Livy, while proofreading, felt the whole chapter too lurid, and with the addition of the corpse, she balked. Clemens wrote to Osgood on the proof plate, "Dear Osgood--knock this picture out. The madam's orders are peremptory. She says the chapter is plenty dreadful enough without it."[18] But, again, the cut was inserted in the edition.

One last cut, however, even Osgood felt obliged to try and excise from the edition:

This picture, which originally appeared on page 441, showed a head in profile (an unmistakable likeness of the author) being consumed in flames; a presage of possible future punishment which Mrs. Clemens did not relish, and which she insisted must be omitted. This illustration followed the writer's reflections upon cremation, where he remarks: "As for me, I hope to be cremated." 19



Figure 79

It was useless for the publishers to protest that almost the entire edition had been printed; Mrs. Clemens remained firm in her decision that her husband's profile should not be thus burned in effigy for the edification of posterity, and her husband obediently insisted that the "cut should be cut out."

This edict, which brought consternation to the publisher, proved a bonanza in the book-collector's world, for though the cut was cancelled in practically the whole edition, it was too late to prevent the escape of a few copies which had already been bound up, and had gone forth. 20

The plate for this insert remained in Osgood's possession. Later, it was turned over to Charles Webster when he became editor-errand boy for Clemens in the Webster Publishing Company. Strangely, in 1871, Webster "issued the plate with other pages"[21] from a lost chapter for Life "with their own title page and substituted their [Webster Pub. Co.] name for Osgood."[22] One wonders if Livy ever found out about this

surreptitious publication.

Life on the Mississippi was finally issued in May, 1883. It had been nearly a year since Clemens and Osgood had stepped off the "Baton Rouge." It was considered "'a handsome book of its kind,' a heavy volume of 624 pages (sixty chapters and four appendices) 'with more than three hundred illustrations.'"[23]

Most reviews were favorable though they did harp on the fact that too much of the book was "old material." The New Orleans Times-Democrat complimented Clemens on his return to his old style:

> Life on the Mississippi--Mark Twain's new production, is a large volume . . . much resembling in form the famous Innocents Abroad, and Roughing It. Like those highly successful books, Life on the Mississippi has been illustrated with humorous engravings, the spirit of which will be appreciated by all familiar with the picturesque feature of American river-life. [24]

Chatto's London edition drew less praise for its design:

> Mr. Clemens' new book is a disappointment. To begin with, it has a vulgar red cover, it is cumbered with a quantity of illustrations of the cheapest and least suggestive American type, its lines are ungraceful . . . it appears at once anomalous and offensive, and prejudices its readers against it as a book even before they get seriously to work on it as literature. [25]

The English edition had been published five days before the American and differed in size and color: "In London the book was a red cloth 12mo with 561 pages of text."[26]

Despite the good reviews, Life did not sell well. Clemens was beginning to grumble. He had entered into his usual upside-down contract with Osgood: "Clemens would supply him [Osgood] with all the money he would need for making the book and to pay him [Osgood] a 7-1/4% royalty."[27] Clemens had paid out a considerable sum for manufacture and sales were slow.

By Spring of 1884, Clemens was reconstructing the costs for the manufacture of Life. The figures were not reassuring. It must be noted, however, that Clemens was charting real versus his ideal figures:

50,000 books at 50 cents apiece is $25,000.
At 60 they are $30,000.
--(These cost 60.)
At 45¢ (what they were to cost.) -- $22,500.

Paper	11,581.67
Engraving Plates	868.79
Sundry Engraving	89.90
Dies	133.20
Drawings	2,437.00
Electros & Compo	1,766.69
Press Work	3,900.00
Binding	13,803.34
	34,580.59
Commission	4,878.19
	39,458.78

There is possibly an overcharge on paper of $356.50.
If my memory serves me, it was to cost 8 cents.

By the above showing, these books have cost 60 cents a copy, (instead of 45 or 47) -- this excluding all items except paper, presswork & binding. Now we are willing to pay 45 for cloth, & no more; the other $7000 to be paid 35 per vol extra--say $2000 altogether; so the 39,000 ought to have cost $24,000 instead of $29,284.

Possible overcharge on paper	$356.50
310 reams unaccounted.	1,500.00
Electros paid by Chatto.	500.00
Anthony's bill	500.00
	$2,856.50
Excess over 45¢ in cost of 50,000 books--	4,500.00
	$7,356.50

Told me in May, on way to Montreal books w^{d} cost 45¢ & maybe less--showing a skeleton copy. 28

Strangely enough it was Anthony's bill which proved the sorest point:

To approve and "place" 300 pictures, & contract for the drawing & processing of them is not a long or heavy job, I take it. If Anthony was hired to run through Ms. & suggest things for illustration that seems kind of

> unnecessary, for the artist could have done that himself. But find out what length of time Anthony put on his work & what the system of charging is. 29

In the end of their publishing partnership, Mark Twain revered James Osgood as a friend but had little good to say for him as a publisher:

> Osgood was one of the dearest and sweetest and loveliest human beings to be found on the planet . . . but he knew nothing about subscription publishing and he made a mighty botch of it. He was a sociable creature and we played much billiards and daily and nightly had a good time. And in the meantime his clerks ran our business for us and I think that neither of us inquired into their methods or knew what they were doing. 30

Clemens had been backed into a corner. Two books that had been published through Osgood's firm had proved failures, Clemens had to rethink his association with his friend:

> I am peculiarly situated. The Prince and the Pauper and the Mississippi are the only books of mine which have ever failed. The first failure was not unbearable--but this second one is so nearly so that it is not a calming subject for me to talk upon . . . . There were things about the publishing of my books which you did not understand. You understand them now, but it is I who have paid the costs of the apprenticeship. 31

Clemens the writer, now businessman, would take the final step and become his own publisher for his most famous book, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.

Mark Twain's long apprenticeship in the subscription publishing business was ended. By 1884 he had resolved "to be my own publisher now and let young Webster do the work."[1]

In starting his own publishing house, Clemens prudently chose Charley Webster as his business partner. Clemens' estimation of his nephew's editorial qualifications was not particularly high:

> I have secured something entirely new to history in Webster. And also believe that a young backwoodsman who was starting life in New York without equipment of any kind, without proved value of any kind, without prospective value of any kind, yet able without blinking an eye to propose to learn a trade at another man's expense and charge for this benefaction. . . must surely be worth securing--and instantly--lest he get away. [2]

But Webster was no backwoodsman. He had been an office boy for Clemens, negotiated with the American Publishing Company in Clemens' behalf, tried to unsnarl the Kaolatype misadventure, supervised the setting up of general agents when Clemens persuaded Osgood to enter the subscription business, and been an all around handyman. Clemens' comments about Charley were, however, more cynical than critical. Clemens wanted to head the company. "I [Clemens] am Webster & Company myself, substantially."[3] Charley would handle all the menial positions, a cheaply paid, glorified errand boy.

Mark Twain had learned his publishing lessons well. He had had good teachers in Elisha and Frank Bliss, A.V.S. Anthony, and even J.R. Osgood. Clemens felt more than qualified to make the many practical decisions relevant to running a subscription firm. Webster and Company could confidently begin its business life with the publishing of Mark Twain's Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.

One of Mark Twain's first decisions, as early as March, 1884, concerned the selection of an illustrator. The author-now-publisher was vitally interested in who would do the illustrations for his new book. Importantly, this would be the first time Clemens would have complete authority over the selection of his artist and the possibility of editorial control over all matters pertaining to illustration. "Clemens decided to have the Huckleberry Finn book illustrated after his own ideas. He looked through various comic papers to see if he could find the work of some new man that appealed to his fancy."[4]

Three interesting points concerning Clemens' illustrating concepts are evident in this Clemens' statement. First, he insisted on drawings "after his own ideas," which meant that he, as author, had some preconceived images about the characters and incidents in the book that he wanted visually conveyed to his readers. Second, since Clemens searched through various "comic" papers, obviously he viewed comedy and humor as vital elements in the book and the designs. Finally, in opting for a "new man" Clemens was shrewdly combining two important factors. Dissatisfied with the work of most of his former illustrators, he wanted to start fresh. But he also was well aware of the fact that a new, unknown artist would work more cheaply than an established illustrator. Money was as usual a prime motivator in choices.

This prudent searching led Mark Twain to write to Webster in New York, strongly suggesting an artist that Twain vaguely remembered from the pages of Life magazine:

> Is that artist's name Kemble?--I cannot recall that man's name. Is that it? There is a Kemble on "Life", but is he the man who illustrated the applying of electrical hurriers to mesengers, waiters, etc., 4 or 5 weeks ago? That is the man I want to try. 5

Webster's pursuit of the Life artist brought out two possible candidates:

> I have picked up an artist here by the name of Hooper, who has done some work on Life, and on the Graphic.
>
> He is a very cheap man. I have given him one or two of the first chapters to make a trial on so that we can see what he can do.
>
> I have also seen Kemble, he will do the work for $1200.
>
> Shall I bring the drawings on Monday of Tuesday so that we can decide who will have to do the work. 6

A financially cautious but time-concerned Webster realized his uncle's worry over the artist's commission but he also was aware of the need to make a decision early. A prolifically illustrated volume took months to be carefully done. Webster and Company were already aiming at late November or early December in order to catch the Christmas trade. Webster contacted his uncle again two days later:

> His [Kemble's] price is a little lower, or about the same as we have paid before, but much higher than the other man's. It is also much better. This is rather of an important subject and ought to be grinding so I thought it wise to ask if you wanted me to run up with the specimens about Tuesday? 7

Despite the higher costs, Mark Twain decided on Kemble. He realized, after his many bouts with illustrators, that a competent artist was a major factor in the creation of a totally saleable book. The subscription book reader bought both pictures and print. The more of both the better. And since so much of his former work had been delayed through illustrating problems, an early decision was imperative. By mid-April, Kemble had signed his contract and was at work on the most famous drawings of his career.

Edward Windsor Kemble was, essentially, a self-taught artist. He had spent a few weeks at the Art School League of New York in the

winter of 1880-1 but left because "No one ever looked at what I drew."[8]

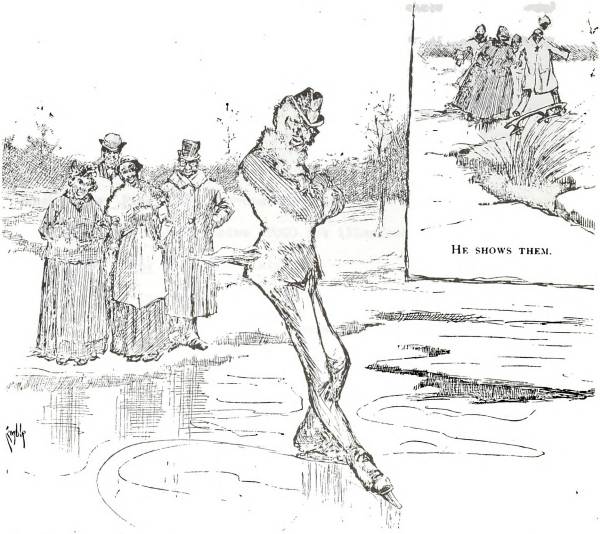
His first paid job of illustrating had been on The Daily Graphic, an illustrated paper published in New York. Kemble admitted he was just a fledgling artist during the Graphic years, handling only logos and small ads while running copy and coffee for the leading cartoonist, C.V. Taylor.

Though Kemble learned from Taylor he soon tired of his copy-boy status and moved over to Life magazine in 1883. In these offices Kemble became friends with Henry Guy Carleton, the stammering assistant art director of Life. These were the days in journalism when everyone did everything. Fortunately for Kemble, Carleton, along with his art duties, wrote a series of articles on Negro city life called "The Thompson Street Poker Club." Kemble was assigned to draw the illustrations.

Tooter Williams, Cyanide Whiffles, and Brer Thankful became American houseguests much like Amos and Andy of later radio fame. The antics, features, and costumes of these city negroes would become variations of the Missouri negroes and Nigger Jim in Huckleberry Finn.

Kemble's recollections, written forty years later in the Colophon, on how and why he was commissioned to illustrate the Mark Twain classic conflicts with most accepted versions of the story. It does, however, give some insight into the problems that lay ahead for both author and illustrator:





The Thompson St. Coterie, by particular request, visits the Park.

Figure 80. THE THOMPSON STREET GANG

Casting about for an illustrator, Mark Twain happened to see this picture of a little boy being stung by a bee. It had action and expression, and bore a strong resemblance to his mental conception of Huck Finn. I was sent for and immediately got in touch with Webster. The manuscript was handed me and the fee asked for--two thousand dollars--was graciously allowed. I had been drawing professionally two years

> before this date, and was now at the ripe old age of twenty-three. 9

The first discrepancy concerns Huck. No bee-stung little boy had appeared in Life during this year. Therefore, there was no visual image of Huck in the mind of either the author or artist. Clemens' only documented concern was with a man who designed electric hurriers. The stated fee, of course, was incorrect. Asking for $2000 might, in fact, have spelled the end for Kemble as Clemens' illustrator and left the incompetent Hooper to fill in the features of the now famous Huckleberry Finn. The fee-confusion in Kemble's mind is easily explained. Kemble did receive $2000 for illustrating Mark Twain's Library of Humor four years later.

The most important distortion of fact in this Kemble reminiscence had to do with his receiving the manuscript. Despite the rush to meet an end-of-the-year deadline, the only existing manuscript of Huck Finn in April was in the hands of W.D. Howells for editing. Helpfully, Howells' secretary typed two copies of the newly edited manuscript but the copies were useless since Howells' editing was poorly done. Mark Twain had to re-edit the complete script in Elmira.

When finally, by April 12th, the manuscript had been mailed to Webster, Clemens added a note requesting, "Let Kemble rush--time is already growing short."[10] Webster received the package on April 18th and was pleased to report that "part of it [the manuscript] is in the hands of the artist."[11]

"Part of it" is the key phrase. Kemble never saw a complete manuscript. He drew his sketches in batches from mailed sections of the book brought to him by Webster. From April through mid-August, this

confusing delivery service--rushing portions of text to Kemble in Mott Haven, returning sketches through Webster to Clemens in Elmira, and, if approved, mailing them back again to Webster who was busy compiling the drawings and text for the electrotypers--continued to cause problems.

The complex, time-consuming system caused Mark Twain to grudgingly approve of many sketches that he obviously wanted re-done. For Kemble the lack of chronological material and his previously finished sketches caused him to be inconsistent in representing the characters and, at times, to make stupid errors in details for the drawings. Finally, the lack of contact with either complete text or the author caused confusion for Kemble on just what role he was to play as illustrator: realist, moralist, or impressionist.

Webster, however, was working as systematically as possible given the chaotic conditions. He, logically, started Kemble on the cover:

> Kemble is getting up a very pretty design, which I will send you [Clemens] when finished. The cover is one of the most important things about a book, and often decides its selling qualities as you know. What I want to know is this: what color shall we have it? 12

Nephew Charley was certainly earning his salary and learning to tend to the details of running a subscription publishing house. He had gone back through previous publications and come up with certain reactions against the first edition of Tom Sawyer: "Tom Sawyer is blue (the cover) and there is a growing dislike to that color. We are continually getting orders . . . 'Any Color but blue.'"[13] Even the seemingly minor detail of the color of a book's cover obviously was crucial to sales.

After much debate, Clemens suggested they give a choice of colors, and Webster responded with the costly impracticability of that scheme and gave a number of alternatives to blue. The final decision was to make the cheapest book, a $3.50 cloth-bound edition in dull olive green with gilt and black lettering. The usually more expensive models would be in leather and morocco for $4.00 and $5.50 respectively.

Kemble finished his design for the cover by May 5th and it was mailed to Clemens for approval. The author responded quickly: "I returned the book-back (cover design). All right and good, and will answer; although the boy's mouth is a trifle more Irishy than necessary."[14]

Clemens' hesitant approval does not mention Huck's unusual attire which had been so well copied by True Williams. The cleaned-up version of Huck obviously did not bother Clemens even though it was inconsistent with his own version in the novel. One wonders at a reader's reaction if Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn had been canvassed together as Clemens originally desired. Kembler's Huck is a near dandy compared to the True Williams version in Tom's adventure.

Mark Twain was well aware of the dilemma of authors writing contemporary local-color fiction. He had written about it in Life on the Mississippi: "The Southern writer still clings to it (the past and regional forms)--clings to it and has a restricted market for his wares, as a consequence."[15] Mark Twain was a friend of many of these authors and had been contemplating a lecture tour with one of them at the end of the year, George Washington Cable. Regional authors like Cable had fallen into the trap of restricting their subject matter of small ethnic groups and particular geographical locations. The result was a



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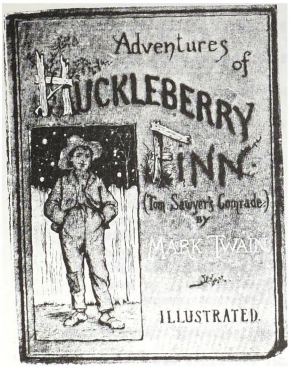



HUCKLEBERRY FINN.

Figure 81. TWO HUCKLEBERRY FINNS

limited audience and therefore small profits for their work.

Mark Twain as head of Webster and Company, like all other subscription publishing houses, had to aim for the widest possible audience. It would be foolish to cater to an increasing but highly unpopular Irish community. Huck Finn had limitless reader appeal. But the "Irish Finn" with an Irish face displayed prominently on a green cover ran the risk of turning away subscribers outside the New York area or west of St. Louis. Clemens' acceptance of Kemble's cover was more a time saving expedient than a lack of concern over ethnic detail. Days, possibly weeks, could be wasted if the cover was to be redrawn. And time was the important factor. Huck's Irish mouth was accepted and sent to the printers.

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With the cover complete and approved by Clemens, Kemble gained added confidence in his method of working on his new commission. With this, his first big job and his first collaboration with a famous though taciturn author, Kemble decided to act the role of a professional. He hired a model to pose for his sketching. Years later he described his model and his rather eccentric working habits:

> The story called for a variety of characters, old and young, male and female. In the neighborhood I came across a youngster, Cort Morris by name, who tallied with my idea of Huck. He was a bit tall for the ideal boy, but I could jam him down a few pegs in my drawings and use him for the other characters . . . . I used my young model for every character in the story--man, woman, and child. 16

Cort Morris, "grinning, and one side of his cheek well padded with a sour ball,"[17] had posed for the cover design--a reason for the strange Irish mouth? At the time of his famous modelling assignment he was sixteen. Small wonder he seemed a "bit tall" for the ideal boy and certainly overgrown for Huck Finn, whom Clemens admitted being nearer twelve at the time of these adventures.

The young model Morris, after he had grown to be a man, related his impressions of his days spent as Kemble's helper. His story corroborates most of the details of Kemble's recollection:

> One day in the early spring of 1884 I met him [Kemble] in front of our house. He was all aglow with excitement and asked me how I would like to be Huckleberry Finn, and I told him I had never heard of him. Well, he said, there is $4.00 a week in it for you. That was enough. I grabbed the chance and very soon thereafter found myself reading the manuscript and investigating Huckleberry Finn at his studio from day to day, posing and collaborating on the illustrative work of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" by Mark Twain with whom Mr. Kemble had made a contract of the illustrating work. Being a nimrod and a fisherman just like Huck landed me the job which lasted from May 1st to October 1st, 1884. . . . All the illustrations in

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> the Kemble edition are with myself as the subject of many illustrations. 18

It is doubtful that the sixteen-year-old Cort was involved in reading carefully the non-existent manuscript or that he posed for Kemble in any consistent fashion for six months. Kemble's sketches for Huck Finn were completed by September. Besides, a four dollar a week drain on Kemble's slim earnings--he was being paid in amounts of one hundred and twenty-five to three hundred dollars per month by Webster--would have eaten up much of his commission.

Also, Kemble's studio location was moved in mid-May. He had, probably for prudence' sake, established himself in a make shift studio in his parents' attic, just down the street from the Morris house. But Kemble's father was forced to move. An untimely relocation for Kemble, for Webster was pushing him, at Clemens' suggestion, for faster work and better designs. The pressures were related in a letter to Webster:

> I cannot have many of the illustrations finished until the latter part of the week (May 12), as we all have the moving craze & are experiencing such little delights as eating our meals from off the mantel piece, bathing in a coal scuttle behind a fire screen &c &c. I have tried to work but cannot make it go. 19

Kemble added a hurried sketch of his present predicament to the back of the Webster letter. The box-carrying negro, looking over Kemble's shoulder, was probably neighbor Morris dressed for his role as Nigger Jim in the early drawings.

With all this hectic moving, mailing, and uncertainty, it was no surprise that Clemens did not approve of the first batch of drawings mailed to him in Hartford. Webster was told by Clemens to waste another week and "persuade the artist to rework many illustrations."[20]



Figure 82. KEMBLE AT WORK

The re-worked group, seventeen in number, contained the now famous frontispiece. Webster thought Kemble had done a fine job but the drawing drew harsh comments from Mark Twain: "The frontispiece has the usual blemish--an ugly, ill-drawn face. Huck Finn is an exceedingly good-hearted boy, and should carry a good and good looking face."[21]



Figure 83. HUCKLEBERRY FINN

Could this freckle-faced grin be called ugly? How handsome did Huck appear in Mark Twain's eye? As before, the author's critical comments on his boy hero form an expanded basis for understanding what Mark Twain meant by his "own ideas" in illustration.

The first person narrative form of Mark Twain's novel prevented the author from adequately describing his hero except for his clothing and habits. The right image, created by the illustrator, was a way of creating the character of Huck for the reader. In fact, it was the only way of establishing a definite physical appearance. Clemens had not forgotten his verbal description of Huck nor the novel's passages describing his sometimes disreputable antics. What was needed, however, was a way of persuading a reader that Huck was the typical, good-hearted lad from down the street, despite his printed description or the violence in his nature. Clemens was also still vacillating between

establishing Huck as a boy's book, at Howells' constant insistence, or as an adult novel, Clemens' own but wavering preference. The nineteenth century genteel audience, boy or adult, would wince at an unsmiling, ragged hoodlum but take to their hearts an impish neighborhood boy. This same audience would be repelled by the violent action involving Huck and his friends but forgive and forget when faced with pictures of normal, good-looking boys. Kemble's version of the straw-hatted, smiling young hunter, complete with white shirt and shoes, would make all readers of the novel comfortable. It would do; again, grudgingly. Though incorrect and ill-conceived by Clemens' standards, it became the classic drawing of nineteenth century American literature and indelibly, Huckleberry Finn.

Problems in consistency, as had happened in Tom Sawyer and The Prince, developed for Kemble in trying to visualize Nigger Jim. Jim's physical appearance, in picture form, changed drastically from the beginning to the end of the novel. In the early chapters he was depicted as a grown man, dressed in clothes similar to Huck's (the limitations of one model and few clothes changes?) By the end Jim was a young boy.

Kemble's confusion was caused by a number of factors: his past Life Magazine ideas of Negro characters, his current model, and the complex shuffling of manuscript from artist to editor to author to printer.

The early versions of Jim were reminiscent of Life's Thompson Street Poker Gang. Tooter Williams and his city prototypes appear often as drawings in the beginning of the novel.



Figure 84. JIM

These sketches, when finished, were mailed to Clemens in "batches of half dozen or more"[22] and if approved were sent back to Webster and finally the electrotyper. Kemble never saw nor had a chance to refer to them again.

Months later, having read further portions of Mark Twain's novel and realizing it was primarily a boy's story, Kemble revised his ideas for Jim. Again using Cort Morris as a model, Kemble sketched what was posed and described in the text. Cort, according to Kemble, liked to pose as Nigger Jim best. "He would jam his little black wool cap over his head, shoot out his lips and mumble coon talk all the while he was posing."[23]

This was the version of Nigger Jim seen in the last chapters of Huckleberry Finn: a tall boy dressed in much the same attire, but with the face of a smiling young Negro. The young white model, however, could not faithfully represent Clemens' southern black. Protruding lips

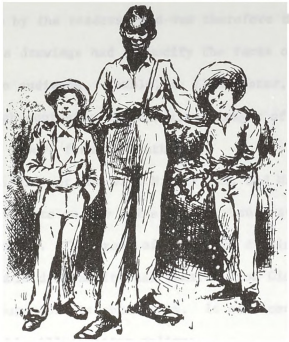

Figure 85. TOM, JIM, AND HUCK

and happy black face were not all Mark Twain wrote about Jim's appearance. Where were the legendary "hairy arms and breast"[24] which Jim proudly insisted prophesied his eventual wealth?

Jim's lack of hair can be rationalized in a number of ways: Kemble's oversight in reading the novel, his lack of a good hairy model, or his consistent pattern of clothing for Jim, which made things simple by covering up all of Jim but his head and hands. It is strange, however, that Clemens did not insist on a more accurate drawing that would be somewhat consistent with the text.

But literalness, as will be learned later, was not a factor in illustration for Mark Twain. In fact, Nigger Jim's naked arms and chest would probably have been rejected by Twain in any portion of the novel. For example, throughout the raft episode the literal description of the two boys is, "always naked, day and night."[25] yet Huck and Jim are always pictured as fully clothed. Anything else would have

been frowned on by the readers, and was therefore rejected by Mark Twain. Kemble's drawings had to modify the facts of the story for fear of offending the audience. Kemble, as illustrator, provided socially acceptable though confusing chronological images of Nigger Jim. But there was never a word from the author.

Distortions did not end with Nigger Jim, and Mark Twain's emerging editorial comments on how illustration should avoid being factual added to the problem. The group of seventeen drawings which had been re-worked by Kemble drew additional remarks from Clemens on the features and attributes of his characters. It also contained enlightening comments on his illustrating policy:

> The faces are generally ugly, & wrenched into over-expression amounting sometimes to distortion. As a rule (though not always) the people in the pictures are forbidding and repulsive. Reduction will modify them, no doubt, but it can hardly make them pleasant folk to look at. An artist shouldn't follow a book too literally, perhaps--if this is the necesary result. 26

A too literal depiction of Mark Twain's novel would have involved such pleasant people as the drunkard pap with his long and greasy hair and his fish-belly white skin; the perpetually inebriated murderers, Bill and Jake Packard; the nigger-hunting cowards in the small pox episode; two seedy con men, the Duke and the Dauphin; and the delightful plug-chewing inhabitants of Brickville.

Obviously, Mark Twain realized it would be disastrous to present his readers with these visual images. Though they were forbidding and repulsive in the story, Mark Twain wanted the Kemble illustrations to modify their features and personalities. Pleasant drawings might convince the reader that these were pleasant folk.

It wasn't until years later that Kemble talked about the problems of an illsutrator in complying with the wishes of an author. Kemble had his first opportunity to meet Mark Twain twenty years after he had done the illustrations of Huckleberry Finn. Kemble commented:

> The thing most authors neglected . . .[was] a clear, concise description of the characters. They left the artist in the dark. "Then why in the name of Sam Hill don't they come to the author and get him to unburden himself and tell them whether Amos has a receding chin and works his Adam's apple when he talks or has a full face adorned with normal or abnormal attachments?"
>
> "Yes," he continued, "the artist should go to the author and submit his sketches before he makes the completed picture. It would save the gnashing of teeth, the tearing of hair, the deep sepulchral groan--
> "Here he paused abruptly. . . . You never came to me before you did Huck Finn, did you?"
>
> I had not come to him; in fact, I had never met him until after I illustrated the book. 27

Clemens, in these late years, had forgotten the chaos surrounding the publication of Huckleberry Finn. Though he obviously had ideas about the ideal collaboration in illustration, he never in his entire publishing career had attempted such an idealized relationship between author and illustrator.

For Kemble, back in 1884, this lack of contact with either writer or manuscript continued to cause consternation. Working from edited, unedited, and sometimes no text at all, Kemble felt justifiably insecure in his work. He pleaded with Webster to "send me the manuscript from XIII Chapter . . . as there are illustrations here which are described minutely and I'm afraid to touch them without the reading matter to refer to."[28] His fear had a sound basis.

The unavailable text had caused him to misinterpret the word "texas." A city boy, Kemble believed Mark Twain must be referring to

the name of the boat and he drew in the name of the pilothouse of the steamboat. This error did not escape the watchful eye of riverboatman Clemens. The "texas" is, of course, a deckhouse for the accommodation of officers aboard a steamboat. It was found on the texas deck, so named because it was the most spacious space on the boat. Kemble's error was understandable. He had no text to refer to and he was ignorant of steamboat terminology. Clemens ,however, harshly censored Kemble, saying, "That word (Texas) had better be removed from that pilothouse--that is where a boat's name is put, and that particular boat's name was, Walter Scott."[29]

After making the needed corrections, most of the reworked drawings were approved and sent to be electrotyped. Webster, however, promised Clemens that "in regard to Kemble's pictures, I think they will come out all right. . . . However, I shall not relax my efforts to get better work out of Kemble."[30]

Much of the critical haggling between Clemens and Kemble ceased after this group of drawings was accepted. The drawings of the characters in the story became universally pleasing and Mark Twain's comments on them are full of "rattling good" and "they please me exceedingly."[31] Kemble finally understood his function as Clemens' illustrator.

Some of Mark Twain's story, however, even the author realized could never be handled in illustration. One drawing, submitted by Kemble for Chapter 20, which describes "the lecherous old rascal kissing the girl at the campmeeting" was rejected in a letter where Mark Twain explained: "It is powerful good, but mustn't go in . . . . Let's not make any pictures of the campmeeting. The subject won't bear illustrating. It is a disgusting thing, and pictures are sure to tell

the truth about it too plainly."[32] Mark Twain's robust sense of humor was fighting with Clemens' prudence once again.

The episode termed disgusting by Clemens had Huck and the king working the people of Pokeville at their church picnic. When the preacher had worked the parishioners into a frenzy, the king took over the platform and played the part of a true repenter, confessing he had been a pirate but now had seen the light and would go forth and save all of his pirate brothers. While passing the hat for contributions, however, the king received a bonus, for

> every little while the prettiest kind of girls, with the tears running down their cheeks, would up and ask him would he let them kiss him for to remember him by; and he always done it; and some of them he hugged and kissed as many as five or six times--and he was invited to live in their houses. 33

Sex and religion, though they might co-exist in truth, could never be blatantly acknowledged in print. The answer for Mark Twain when a subject was too disgusting, or delicate, for illustration was to visually avoid the issue altogether. Of Kemble's drawings approved for this chapter, only one relates to an incident at the campmeeting, an innocent and bashful depiction of two young lovers "Courting on the Sly."



"COURTING ON THE SLY."
Figure 86

The other drawing included in the chapter was a marvelously funny rendition of the King as the imaginary pirate.



"A PIRATE FOR THIRTY YEARS."

Figure 87

(This drawing also was used by Webster on the advertising circulars for the book.) With this drawing Mark Twain de-emphasized all references in the text to the King as a lecherous old man and called attention to the ridiculous side of his character. How could a reader imagine immorality from this crazy old fool dressed as a bow-legged pirate?

Clemens' editorial good sense cautioned him to carefully control incidents involving sex, religion, and the church. The truth of the campmeeting situation, hardly religious, might slip by a casual reader but it seemed foolhardy to alert the genteel audience to the facts by adding a picture of the proceedings.

Sexuality in the King's escapades is, in fact, constantly played down both in Mark Twain's narrative and in Kemble's drawings. One episode, similar in tone to the campmeeting scene but without the troublesome church-religious connotations, occurs in the Royal Nonesuch performance. "The King came a-prancing out on all fours, naked, and he was painted all over, ring-streaked-and-striped, all sorts of colors, as splendid as a rainbow, and never mind the rest of his outfit"[34] shows Mark Twain's skill in handling a potentially explosive subject. By squeezing "naked" into the middle of a sentence with colors and dazzling rainbows and then flatly suppressing the further details, the reader is diverted from the unwholesome suggestion of unclothed. The result is ambiguity and imagination. Kemble's illustration for the situation uses a similar technique. Hilariously funny, the drawing ignores the nakedness and focuses on the ludicrous paint. Even the caption adds to the humor--"Tragedy" indeed. Though sexual connotations are implied by both writer and illustrator the "dirty picture" is left to the



Figure 88

reader's imagination.

Kemble's illustrations, under Clemens' guiding tutorial hand, worked therefore in a number of interesting ways. When referring to a delicate or disgusting subject the drawings would act as a screen to tone down the ugly and brutal aspects, making them appear pleasant and humorous. At other times, particularly with crude or offensive material, the drawings would avoid the real issue and substitute a comically harmless, irrelevant subject. These techniques, as noted by the correspondence, more Clemens' than Kemble's, were obviously used to make the novel more acceptable to a reader in the genteel tradition.

The same illustrative techniques were used with reference to handling the violence in the novel. In the letter suggesting that Webster tell Kemble not to draw pictures of the campmeeting, he also commented, "if he would only modify his violences and come down to careful,

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painstaking work."[35] Mark Twain's novel is full of drunkenness; deaths by murder, falls, feuds; mob lynchings, nigger-huntings, tar-and-featherings; and funeral services billed as "orgies." It seems ludicrous to cry "foul" when the novel's illustrations bear traces of violence. Yet Webster obviously carried Clemens' advice to Kemble. Of the 174 illustrations, none can be considered visually violent. Even in the drawings specifically involving murder the reader's attention is drawn away from the horror of the scene toward the analytical.

For example, the murder scene in the Sherburn-Boggs section of the book. The text has Colonel Sherburn, a well-dressed man of fifty-five, standing in the street with a pistol pointed at the sky, ready to shoot. Boggs comes reeling across the street, bareheaded, with a friend on either side holding his arms. Boggs' daughter is, at the same time, coming on the run:



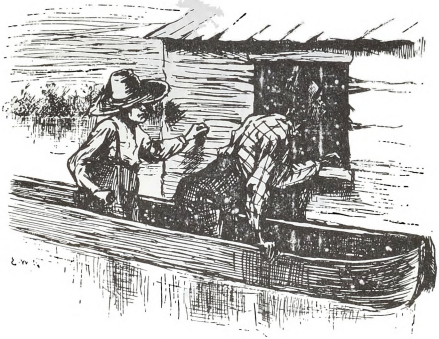
THE DEATH OF BOGGS.

Figure 89

> Boggs and the men turn around to see who called him, and when they see the pistol the men jump to one side, and the pistol barrel come down slow and steady to a level--both barrels cocked. Boggs throws up both of his hands and says, "O, Lord, don't shoot!" Bang! goes the first shot, and he staggers back, clawing at the air. 36

The drawing depicted the cold-blooded facts of the murder but softened the savage spirit by omission and a subjective point of view. A handsome young Sherburn is shown impassively taking aim at Boggs. There are no friends, no daughter, and only a hint of a crowd. Boggs is shown from the rear, this angle preventing a look at what must have been fear and terror in the old man's face. The body, forward in an almost crucifixion posture, appears strangely calm. The caption--though most captions for the drawings read directly from the text--reads simply, "The Death of Boggs."[37] The effect is atark, cold, unemotional, rather than terrifying or bloodthirsty. Mark Twain's directions to the illustrator to modify his violences have Kemble turn a merciless murder into a cold picture of death.

The other deaths in Huckleberry Finn-murders, accidental or natural deaths--are all depicted as comic incidents or they are de-emphasized by omitting reference to them in pictures. Avoidance or comedy seem to be the major visual ways of Clemens dealing with death. The drawing to accompany the grisly scene in the chapter "House of Death," where there is a naked dead man (who by the last chapters is revealed as Pap), shot in the back of the head on the floor of the houseboat, avoids the corpse. It only shows a picture of Jim peering into the dark window of the submerged house.



JIM SEES A DEAD MAN.

Figure 90

The only drawings of Hank Bunker, the drunkard who fell off "the shot tower and spread himself so he was a kind of layer"[38] on the ground, shows him alive and well, fearlessly looking over his left shoulder at the new moon--the reason given by Huck for his untimely death.



OLD HANK BUNKER.

Figure 91

There are two drawings of the attempted murder of Jim Turner aboard the steamboat Walter Scott: one of Jake and Bill tantalizing



Figure 92. THE CULPRITS

the helpless Jim and one of the two culprits arguing over the morality of killings.

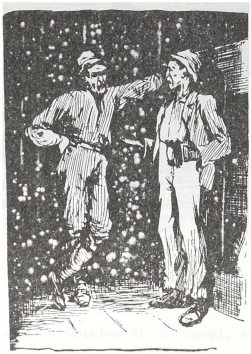
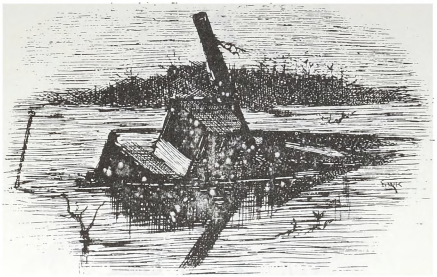


Figure 93. "IT AIN'T GOOD MORALS"

The final deaths of all three Jake, Bill and Jim (a sudden storm that prevented Huck from rescuing the beleaguered trio before the Walter Scott breaks up and they are presumably drowned) are pictured as ambiguously as the prose states: a shadowy drawing of a listing wreck devoid of life.



THE WRECK.

Figure 94

In the most violent portion of the novel, the Shepherdson-Grangerford feud, nothing of the yearly slaughter is shown, not even the final killing of Buck and his youthful cousin. Of the stacks of corpses--three from Huck's imagined family; poor, poetic Emmeline who pined away; the uncounted shootings due to the senseless feud; and finally the youthful Buck and his cousin--the only death illustrated is that of Stephen Dowling Bots. In this, the most viciously destructive section of Huck Finn, only a trivial, even comic, death is visualized. Clemens' editorial comments and intentions are apparent. If the language describing Emmeline's poetic practices does not give the reader sufficient clue to the overtones of pathetic humor in the poem and the scene, the accompanying illustration graphically describes Clemens' editorial policy:



"THEY GOT HIM OUT AND EMPTIED HIM."

Figure 95

Despite the many bodies strewn across the pages of Huck Finn, Kemble's drawings show no coffins, no graveyards, and only one funeral. And that ceremony for Peter Wilkes is truly, in the King's words, "an orgie." The drawing for the Wilkes funeral focuses not on the flowers or the bier, not on the minister's sermon or the grieving family, but on the comical antics of the undertaker and the sleeping congregation. "He had a Rat"[39] in prose and picture turns a possibly solemn, morbid occasion into another hilariously funny incident. A reader and viewer of Huck Finn have little chance for prolonged sympathy with either the living or the dead.



"HE HAD A RAT!"

Figure 96

While Kemble was busy working and reworking the illustrations, Webster was busy with the prospectus. He informed Clemens of his progress. "I have made the contract for the Prospectus and after a careful estimate I find they will cost me about 36 or 37 cents each."[40] This contract was for 1,000 advance copies for $370. They would eventually have 3000 printed at a cost of over $1,000. This was good bargaining by Webster, for the prospectus contained a number of full-page engravings--costly but necessary items.

The planning of the make-up of the prospectus followed through June and July. By the first part of August Webster was making up the pages for the "Table of Contents" and "List of Illustrations." But progress was stalled.

Mark Twain, in Elmira, had been sitting for a bust of himself done by his new-found prodigy, Karl Gerhardt. In mid-August it was

near completion and Clemens was so pleased with the result that he sent Webster a photograph suggesting:

> How would it do to heliotype it (reducing it to half the present size), & make a frontispiece for it for Huck Finn, with
>
> Mark Twain
> from the bust by Karl Gerhardt
>
> printed under it. 41

The problem for Webster was that Clemens wanted to "delay the canvassing copies and put it (the bust) in them? I suppose it would help sell the book."[42]

Poor Webster had hoped to "get the Prospectus finished this week [September 2]"[43] so that he could see the General Agents and mount a campaign for the book in the West. Clemens' new scheme meant that he had to postpone printing again and "go to Boston and give minute directions and draw a contract requiring delivery on the things."[44]

Dutifully, Webster complied with Clemens' wishes, admitting that the picture might help the sale but reminding the author that they already had a frontispiece: the picture of Huck Finn. Besides, Webster had already written the "List of Illustrations" and sent it to the printer. Charley recommended the heliotyped bust be inserted facing the frontispiece--in the same way the engraved portrait of Mark Twain had been inserted in A Tramp Abroad. All agreed. The heliotype, printed and inserted, would only run another .024 cents, still under budget for illustrations. However, if they were to add the picture they needed a better photograph. Clemens quickly sent on two negatives and the print was read to be processed.

Another added detail caused further delay. Clemens and Webster decided the print should be personally autographed. The readers

would particularly enjoy this authentic Mark Twain touch. This meant sending a special ink to Elmira, having Clemens sign two or three copies, and ship all back to New York for the press. As late as September 20th, the ink had still not arrived. Clemens was stewing. He had to leave for Philadelphia before completing the signing. Another week was lost.

Webster, with infinite patience, calmed Clemens by assuring him that the photo of the bust was the best likeness of his uncle he had ever seen and it would certainly aid in selling the book. He also sent along a bottle of heliotype ink and convinced Clemens that he had made all arrangements for inserting the picture in the Prospectus and the bound copies as soon as the printers had them completed.



Figure 97

This reproduction of the bust appeared in the Prospectus, correctly signed and facing the famous frontispiece, however, it never was listed on the "List of Illustrations" page. It only appeared in the New York first edition. The lack of time and the trouble kept it out

of both the Montreal and the London copies. The Gerhardt bust, unfortunately, was not the only time-consuming problem that plagued Webster.

At about the same time Clemens suggested using the bust in the agent's copies, he also wrote to Webster:

> I miscalculated my fortitude. I can't read any more proof. I sent this batch to Howells without glancing at it--except to note that the proofreader had left it to me to mark turned letters under cuts! Howells will return it to you to read--in which case you may send it to me again, & I will get my profanity together & tackle it. 45

The addition of Howells to the round-robin of mailing copy saw an end to even Webster's patience. He declared that with Clemens sending proof and illustrations to Howells he had nothing to give the printers. Without the presses rolling the prospectus would never be finished--much less the book--and without the prospectus he couldn't go West to consult with the agents and set up canvassing.

To add to the dilemma, some of the galleys were lost. Clemens apologized: "The missing galleys are the ones I sent to Howells, no doubt."[46] That didn't help Webster.

Matters did not resolve themselves until late in September. Only then was Webster able to comment to Clemens:

> The General Agts. who have been to the office & who have seen specimens of the book are confident that it will sell better than any recent one of yours, and I hope it will prove true as it is a very interesting book to my way of thinking and equal to any not excepting Innocents.
> In outside appearance it will beat them all. 47

All the details had been handled. Webster breathed a premature sigh of relief. It was late September and he could finally begin his Western sales campaign. He confidently wrote Clemens that he had

successfully maneuvered through all the crucial decisions, and everything was proofed and ready to be printed in final form at J. J. Little's printing house. Webster's pleasure would soon turn to hysteria. With all the complex problems of inserting the bust portrait, the tripled but hasty proofreading, lost galleys, and Webster's hurry to get out West, one important facet had been neglected.

All the proofreaders--Clemens, Howells, Webster, etc.--had been correcting only the original page proofs, not the final press proofs. These were left to the printer. Clemens peacefully continued his lecture tour. Webster, as unknowing, left Chicago for his next stop in Denver. No one realized they had left a virtual time bomb in New York

> In order to properly embellish the book, the services of a leading metropolitan engraver were secured. . . . The engravings, after having been cut on the plates, were sent to the electrotyper. One of the plates represented a man with a downcast head, standing in the foreground of a particularly striking illustration. . . . The title of the cut was, "In a Dilema (sic); What Shall I Do?"
>
> When the plate was sent to the electrotyper, a wicked spirit must have possessed him. The title was suggestive. A mere stroke of the awl would suffice to give the cut an indecent character never intended by the author or the engraver. . . . The work of the engraver was successful. It passed the eye of the inspector and was approved. A proof was then taken and submitted. The work was ready for printing. 48

Thirty thousand bound copies, with this picture, were at J. J. Little's printing plant. Just under three thousand advance sales copies were in advance agents' hands throughout the country.



Figure 1*

*Figure 1 by permission of *American Book Collector*, 10 (June 1960), 31-34. Figures 2 through 19 by permission of the University of Michigan Rare Book Room Collection.

Figure 98. IN A DILEMMA

Because there are no extant letters concerning this episode from either Clemens or Webster, a number of accounts of the discovery of the controversial print and the ramifications of the incident have been offered by scholars through the years. On account credits a Chicago agent with the discovery and his writing to the printer to call attention to the cut.[49] Another scholar placed Charles Webster "in San Francisco. . .[Nov. 29, 1884] when his attention was called to the fact that one of the cuts had been tampered with improperly. He telegraphed to this city [New York] and had the publication stopped."[50]

Franklin Meine, the final scholar to deal with the problem, placed Webster back in New York. "Webster probably discovered the defacement on p. 283 . . . after he had toured the U.S. organizing the sales campaign."[51]

Wherever Webster was when he found out about the picture, he was back in New York immediately, trying to repair the damage as fast as possible. All agents were contacted and asked to ship back their copies. Back at the printers the page

> was excised and a new page pasted in . . . on the cancel (or stub). Later, or while this was being done the defaced plate was corrected . . . and the entire signature reprinted. [52]

Some copies

> somewhere out on the prairie, could not or would not be recalled. They would be allowed to go forward to San Francisco and an express shipment of the new material required would be forwarded at once. A San Francisco binder would do the work. [53]

The incident did not go unnoticed by the newspapers. On Thanksgiving Day, 1884, The New York World ran a headline, "Mark Twain in a Dilema (sic)--A Victim of a Joke He Thinks the Most Unkindest Cut of All." The headline was taken from the original caption which was changed with the inserting of the new page to "What Do You Reckon It Is?"

The newspaper related the entire story, commenting that:

> the cut when printed would add to the engraving a characteristic that would be repudiated not only by the author, but by all the respectable people of the country. [54]



"WHO DO YOU RECKON IT IS?"

Figure 99

Webster, as spokesman for the publishing company, could hardly remain silent. He granted an interview to the New York Herald the day after the World's story which read:

> Mr. Charles L. Webster, nephew of Mark Twain, yesterday offered a reward of $500 for the apprehension and conviction of the person who so altered an engraving in "Huckleberry Finn" as to make it obnoxious. Mr. Webster said yesterday: "The book was examined before the final printing by W.D. Howells, Mr. Clemens, the proofreader, and myself. Nothing improper was discovered. On page 283 was a small illustration with the subscription "Who Do You Reckon It Is?" By the punch of an awl or graver, the illustration became an immoral one. But 250 copies left the office, before the mistake was discovered. Had the first edition been run off our loss would have been $25,000. Had the mistake not been discovered, Mr. Clemens' credit for decency and morality would have been destroyed." 55

The quibble about the caption and how many damaged copies had left the printing house was only partially solved many years later. However, Webster's statement to the public exonerated the publishing company and the author. This was the most important factor for all parties involved, even though more newspapers continued to carry the incident as top news.

Possible disaster had been averted but the incident had other results. The returning of the agents' copies, the hand work of cutting out and tipping in the new page, the reissuing of the prospectus, and the printing of an entire new signature caused irreparable time loss. Webster was forced to postpone the publishing date until February, 1885. Consequently, the first issue of Huckleberry Finn appeared in Montreal. The first excerpted version published in the United States was in Century Magazine in December, 1884.

These episodes of Huckleberry Finn were published in Century in three portions in December, January and February. As early as October 10, 1884, Richard Watson Gilder had been negotiating with Clemens for publication of his new volume in serial form in the Century. In a letter from Gilder to Clemens, Gilder acknowledged the author's fear about delays in getting his new book out. "Huckleberries won't be ripe for a month or two;--make it a bit longer before the book comes out."[56] Gilder saw a unique opportunity. He proposed to Webster that he delay the book further and allow Century to print a sizable portion of it, with pictures, in the December, 1884 issue.

Gilder's rationale to Webster--he knew how skeptical Clemens was of issuing parts of his work before publication--was that the Century edition could be used as an announcement for the book. The magazine

would state that only a small portion was published here with twice as much to come out in book form later. Gilder solicited an estimate for the publication from Clemens and suggested that he "throw in any pictures which we might wish."[57]

Clemens sent Gilder a telegram with an affirmative "yes" to the idea and asked for "what you paid me last time."[58] A delighted Gilder suggested four serial parts: January, February, March, and April. Two days later Clemens cancelled the "serial" publication but did okay the printing of selected episodes. Gilder agreed and saved space in the December issue for the first excerpt, the Grangerford-Shepherdson feud. Gilder asked for five cuts to be printed with this section.

Much has been written about Gilder's editing of the Huckleberry Finn manuscript for publication in Century but nothing has been said about Gilder's handling of the illustrations. Gilder's explanation for the censoring of the text for the Century edition was the lack of space and a deletion of material that would be offensive to his readers. In an early letter Gilder admitted that he deleted "a few cuss words about the fog."[59] Further comments to Clemens before Huck Finn appeared in Century made Gilder's opinions on the matter very clear:

> A good deal would have to be omitted on acc. (sic) of space--and in omitting we might also have regard for our audience. But I have a pretty "robustuous taste" (for a pharisaical dude) and wouldn't mutilate your book you may be sure. [60]

The same rationale must have held for the illustrations. It is interesting, however, that even with the considerable problems of limited space, Gilder chose to include forty percent of the first-edition illustrations to accompany the episodes in Century.

In the first excerpt for the December issue--the Feud--Gilder

asked for five of the ten Kemble drawings. Of the five not used, one, the "Ode to Stephen Dowling Bots, Dec'd," Gilder had omitted the text from the Century issue. Three others, "The Picture of Buck," "The Spidery Woman," and "The House," Gilder evidently thought unnecessary for the progress of the story. The fourth drawing, however, probably was excised because it fell into that ticklish area of possible offensiveness. The drawing, captioned "And Asked Me If I Liked Her," referred to the scene where Miss Sophia waits for Huck, "and she took me in her room and shut the door very soft and asked me if I liked her."[61]



"AND ASKED ME IF I LIKED HER."

Figure 100

This drawing, with its caption, showing a much disconcerted Huck with his head averted to avoid being smothered in Sophia's breasts, heightened the suggestive humor of the incident but could add too much to the already rather explicit text. It was omitted.

The included illustrations: Saul Grangerford, Col. Grangerford in his white linen suit, Harney Shepherdson seated handsomely on his horse,

a beautiful Miss Charlotte, and the two boys, Huck and Buck, "Behind the Woodpile," satisfied the reader's curiosity as to the features of the leading persons. They were essential to the story since Clemens was less than specific in physical details of his characters.

The second excerpt published, titled "Jim's Investments, and King Sollermun," ran only two and a half pages in Century. Though clearly a filler item--located after the main body of the magazine--it still contained all three of the drawings from the episode. The only changes were the curious re-captioning of one of the pictures. The drawing of a peg-legged Negro in the first edition had the caption, "Mistro Bradish's Nigger." The Century labelled it "The President of the Bank." Gilder, obviously, was not adverse to adding his own little joke to the episode.

The third, longest, and most disputed excerpt in The Century--disputed by scholars as to Gilder's censoring--was called "Royalty on the Mississippi." The material was taken from Chapters XIX through XXVII. In the first edition this section contained forty-nine illustrations. But since more than one-fourth of the text was omitted by Gilder, the drawings for these portions would be irrelevant--twelve in all. Of the twenty-eight drawings that could have been used, Gilder reproduced almost half. His selections, again, were based on the criteria of space and the prudery of his readers.

Gilder, with editorial wisdom, cut all repetitious sketches, mostly of the Duke and the Dauphin, and merely descriptive pictures, "Looking Under the Bed," and "Taking the Money." He again chose the cuts that focused his audience's attention and helpfully identified the principal characters as well as added to the innocent humor of the

situation.

Gilder's rejection of the other illustrations suggests an interesting editorial theory. He seems to have intended to "soften the effect of the prose" for the "genteel" Century reader.

The first illustration not used concerns the campmeeting scene. Clemens had also been afraid of illustrating this episode--"The subject won't bear illustrating"[62] but had included two drawings: one of the King dressed as a short-skirted pirate and another of the two young lovers "Courting on the Sly."

Gilder undoubtedly concurred with Clemens on the delicacy of the subject matter and felt compelled to do further editing. He struck out all reference to the King's redundant kissing of the girls and even eliminated the drawing of courting lovers. As a result The Century's rendition of the campmeeting was even more cautious about readers' reaction to the goings-on at a church meeting.

Another drawing which Gilder omitted, of the same nature, but obviously not as troublesome because there was no religious content, featured the girls hugging and kissing the Duke after he returns the money to them. The cut was captioned "Going for Him." The sexual implications probably caused Gilder to steer clear of this cut also.

Humor as social comment, however, he allowed to be included: a comical look at two businessmen, the doctor and the undertaker. He printed the caricature of the doctor, Figure 101, and of the two available of the undertaker, chose the more humorous but irreverent "He Had A Rat."



Figure 101



Figure 102

Another significant suppression was of the Royal Nonesuch performance. Gilder omitted the last line on the poster advertising the performance, "Ladies and Children Not Admitted" and the Duke's comment, "If that line don't fetch them, I don't know Arkansaw."[63] Omitting these lines concealed the indecent nature of the show and most of the suggestive meaning in the passage. To further tone-down the incident, Gilder was again more cautious than Clemens. The first edition contains the marvelously funny picture of the king on stage, on all fours with his entire body painted in stripes (see Figure 88), but Gilder struck the picture and any reference in the text to "naked." Gilder's personal tastes might have been robust but he knew his readers too well to tempt their censure.

Gilder's attitudes toward the story and the illustrations were identical to Clemens' in many respects. They both enjoyed broad humor yet remained terribly aware of the sensitivity of their audiences.

Gilder knew he had challenged the moral standards of the magazine publishing industry of the time by even printing Huckleberry Finn. Yet

> Gilder certainly had nothing to gain by choosing the Royal Nonesuch episode for his excerpt instead of, for example, the final chapters of the novel about the freeing of Jim. His choice of the much more potentially dangerous Duke and King chapters over the innocuous Tom Sawyer section shows not only courage but also critical acumen. 64

However, Gilder was not about to push his readers by visually amplifying the suggestiveness of Clemens' prose. He realized how important illustrations were, and how they could inform, guide, amuse, and even offend a reader. His treatment of Clemens' text and Kemble's pictures clearly showed his editorial expertise in handling his "genteel" audience of the mid-1880's.

Clemens realized that Gilder was doing him a sizable favor by printing the excerpts of the book in his magazine, especially after the "defaced" cut episode postponed the publication. But pre-publication was also beneficial to Gilder. He commented in a letter to Clemens:

> We are not only indebted to you for a good chapter for our next number, but are profoundly indebted to you for unearthing a gem of an artist for us. As soon as we saw Kemble's pictures in your proofs, we recognized the fact that that was a find for us, & so we went for him & we've got him. He is going to New Orleans for us to illustrate a long article of Cable's. 65

Edward Windsor Kemble was the true beneficiary of the Century experiment. His version of the results of the Century illustrations varies from Gilder's--Kemble stated he did not go South for two years after finishing the Huck drawings though there are illustrations for a New Orleans article in 1885 of the magazine. In essence, what Kemble said is true.

Negro Jim, drawn from a white schoolboy, with face unblackened, started something in my artistic career. Several advance chapters of "Huckleberry Finn" were published in the Century Magazine, then under the able editorship of Richard Watson Gilder and a select staff of assistants. My picture caught the fancy of Mr. Gilder and W. Lewis Frazer, the art director. I was asked to call and exhibit my wares. I went to Life and borrowed a few originals, but not one contained a Negro type.

"We want to see some of your Negro drawings," Mr. Frazer said.

"I have none," I replied. "I've never made any until this one in Huck Finn."

The art director looked dubious. "I have several stories I would like to have you illustrate, but they are all of the South."

"Let me try," I urged, "and if they do not suit the text you need not use or pay for them."

I made the drawings. Mr. Frazer nodded his head as he looked at them.

"I guess they'll go. We'll strike off some proofs and send them to the authors and see whay they say."

The proofs were sent and soon came back with the stamp of approval. One author went so far as to declare: "At last you have an artist who knows the South." I had, up to that time, never been further south than Sandy Hook. My coons caught the public fancy. The Century then engaged me to work exclusively for their magazine. This continued for several years, and all the stories from those charming writers of the South, Thomas Nelson Page, James Lane Allen, Harry Stilwell Edwards, Richard Malcom Johnson, and George W. Cable, were placed in my hands for picture work. I was established as a delineator of the South, the Negro being my specialty, and, as I have mentioned, I had never been South at all. I didn't go for two years more. Then I told Mr. Gilder that it was high time for me to go and see what the real article looked like. He agreed with me. After visiting several plantations and noting the local color, a thing I had missed but not attempted to carry out to any extent in my pictures, I found that my types were, in most cases, the counterparts of those surrounding me. I had seen the Negro of the city but he was a different bird from the plantation product, both in carriage and dress. It all seems so strange to me now, that a single subject, a Negro, drawn from a pose given me by a lanky white schoolboy, should have started me on a career that has lasted for forty-five years, especially since I had no more desire to specialize in that subject than I had in the Chinaman or the Malay pirate.

A new world had opened for the illustrator of Huckleberry Finn. But the ordeal of the old world still had a few tangles to be worked out for Charles Webster and Mark Twain.

On Dec. 10 "10 copies of Huck . . . [were] ready for copyright purposes"[67] and Webster presented one of the ten to his father with the inscription:

> A Merry Christmas to Luther Webster. From his son, the publisher of the book. New York, Dec., 1884. This book is one of three cloth copies first bound, and at this date there are but ten copies of the book in the country, as the first edition of 30,000 volumes will not be issued until Feb. 16th next. Chas. L. Webster, Publisher." 68

Page 283, in Webster's gift to his father had been appropriately cut out and tipped in before the presentation.

There were "advance orders from agents by Sept. 2, 1884--9,000 copies"[69] and similar good news in December:

> On Dec. 13, 1884, he (Webster) was less specific but still optimistic: "Reports from agents show good sales and the book is doing all that could be expected in these hard times. 70

But Clemens by February, still on tour and testy because the "obscene illustration" incident had caused the book to miss the Christmas market, wrote pessimistically to Webster:

> I am not able to see that anything can save Huck Finn from being another defeat, unless you are expecting to do it by tumbling books into the trade (Webster did, but much later). . . . As to notices, I suggest this plan: Send immediately, copies (bound and unbound) to the Evening Post, Sun, World, & the Nation; the Hartford Courant, Post & Times; & the principal Boston dailies; Baltimore American. (Never send any to the N.Y. Graphic.)
>
> Keep a sharp lookout, & if the general tone of the resulting notices is favorable, then send out 300 press copies over the land, for that may possibly float another canvass and create a bookstore demand. No use to wait for the magazines--how in Hell we

> overlooked that unspeakably important detail, utterly beats my time. We have not even arranged to get English notices from Chatto & shove them into the papers ahead of our publication. 71

But Charley's optimism not Clemens' pessimism proved correct.

Unfortunately, however, reviews were slow in appearing. Howells, who had set the tone for most of Mark Twain's book reviews, was without a platform from which to review. The Century waited three months before publishing its review. When the reviews were published, they were for the most part favorable. And Brander Mathews, in one of the early reviews, cited Kemble's drawings particularly:

> Nor have we left ourselves room to do more than say a good word for the illustrations, which, although slight and unpretending, are far better than those to be found in most of Mark Twain's books. For one thing, they actually illustrate--and this is a rare quality in illustrations nowadays. They give the reader a distinct idea of the Duke and the King, of Jim and of Colonel Sherburn, of the Sheperdsons, and the Grangerfords. They are all by one artist, Mr. E.W. Kemble, hitherto known to us only as the illustrator of the Thompson Street Poker Club, an amusing romance of highly-coloured life in New York. 72

What late and apathetic reviews could not do for Huckleberry Finn an incident in Concord did. The Library Committee of Concord, Massachusetts made a public announcement banning Clemens' book from its shelves. With the stigma "banned" because it was coarse, rude, and inelegant, the sales began to climb. And Mark Twain's spirits lifted with the sales: Clemens wrote to Charley:

> The Committee of the Public Library of Concord, Mass. have given us a rattling tip-top puff which will go into every paper in the country. They have expelled Huck from their library as "trash and suitable only for the slums." That will sell 25,000 copies for us for sure. 73

Clemens was right. From defeat to success through the back door. Huck Finn sold "forty-two thousand copies by March 18, fifty-one thousand by May 6--and there was every indication that it would never stop.[74]

Webster and Company was a success and Huckleberry Finn would keep it stable for a number of years. But it would take almost five years for the company to publish another Mark Twain book, A Connecticut Yankee in 1889.

Charles Webster and Company were functioning on the brink of bankruptcy. Only Sheridan's Personal Memoirs kept the company solvent enough to continue operation. Mark Twain's vanity needed a scapegoat. His newphew, Charles Webster, was the likely candidate. With the help of Fred Hall, Mark Twain strategically backed Webster into a corner and persuaded him to sell his shares in the publishing company for a paltry $12,000.

By September, 1887, Fred Hall was the new editor and in complete charge of the operation of the company. Though some re-organization was instituted, both Fred Hall and Mark Twain remained committed to subscription publication:

> The average book-seller hardly ever orders more than 3 copies of a new book. . . . These go over the counter the first day, and he orders no more. He tells the customer he is "out" and proposes to take the customer's order. The customer doesn't care enough about it, and no sale is made. . . . We can sell 3 copies of any book where the trade can sell 1. Moreover, we always charge about a third or more for a book than the trade can venture to ask for it. . . . The author of The Innocents Abroad tried 2 books in the trade. One of them sold 6,000 copies, the other sold 10,000. Total 16,000. He has tried 10 books by subscription. Total sales, 618,000 copies. [1]

Continuing to publish by subscription meant once again dealing with the problems of a prospectus, early and heavy canvassing, extracts for magazine publication, strategically placed newspaper reviews, plus the always difficult decisions on illustrators and illustrations. Only once had Clemens thought seriously about bringing out a volume without illustration. "I beg you to put the Library of Humor in the works without waiting for pictures."[2] Fred Hall and Charles Webster responded vehemently against this request:

> The large public who read your books have become accustomed to seeing them characteristically illustrated. A book with "Mark Twain's" name attached to it, without illustrations, would be a disappointment and materially injure its sale. 3

Mark Twain had to agree. "Now as to the Library of Humor. It will sell 30,000 copies without illustrations and 50,000 with them; so Webster is right about the propriety of illustrating."[4]

In the meantime, Mark Twain was busily at work on his most ambitious project, "a possible 100 ton book"[5] on the exploits of a New England Yankee in the sixth-century court of England. Clemens was by this time aware of the devilish delays caused by a large book that needed prolific illustration. He wisely started searching for an appropriate illustrator two full months before the final copy of A Connecticut Yankee had been typed. On March 20th he directed Fred Hall to "locate F.T. Merrill, the illustrator"[6] who had done the drawings for The Prince and the Pauper. Through A.V.S. Anthony, the engraver who had also worked on the Prince, Hall secured Merrill's address.

Later, in July, Clemens proposed the name of Reginald Birch. "R. B. Birch is an artist who is capable of illustrating my book admirably . . . Suppose you make a note of his name."[7] Birch had made his reputation with his creation of the velvet-suited Little Lord Fauntleroy for Frances Hodgson Burnett's book of the same name.

Mark Twain found his ultimate choice later that July in going through an issue of Cosmopolitan. He had been attracted to designs for an exotic story, "Wu Chih Tien: A Celestial Princess." The pictures were by Daniel Carter Beard, the man who years later became known as a founder of the Boy Scouts of America.

Dan Beard was an illustrator from a well-known artistic family.

His father, James Henry Beard, was a famous animal painter specializing in dogs. All four sons, Harry, James, Frank, and Daniel tried art as a career at one time in their lives. Only one, Dan Beard, remained in the profession all through his lifetime.

Beard started out as a civil engineer. In 1878, while visiting his brother Frank's art studio in New York, Beard was introduced to Mr. Drake, editor for Century Magazine. Beard showed Drake some casual sketches he had made while surveying in up-state New York, Drake "asked if he might publish one of my sketches and a few days after that I received a check for twenty-five dollars for a picture of a fish."[8] Surprised at this easy money, Beard decided, "If I can get paid like this for doing such work for fun why not make a business of it?"[9] He resigned his engineering post and opened a studio next to his brother's. Up to this time he had had no formal art training, seldom even entering his father's famous studio as a boy. Now, however, he entered the Art Students' League, studying nights and spending days on staff work for Cosmopolitan, Life, and Century. He was a capable but little known artist until Mark Twain spotted his work in Cosmopolitan.

At Clemens' request Fred Hall contacted Dan Beard for a sample drawing.

> Mr. Clemens would like to have you take the first thirty or forty pages of his new book read it over (sic) and make a drawing choosing just such portion of the text for illustration as you think best,--of course, we leave the character of the illustration (crossed out s) to you. [10]

The contacting of three separate artists, however, was taking time. By mid-July Fred Hall cautioned Mark Twain against further indecision. He warned "The first thing to be decided on is the illustrating."[11]

It seems incongruous that Mark Twain would vacillate between these three artists with such similar insipid styles. Merrill's forte was wandering waifs of Elizabethan England; Birch was well-known for lace-collared lads of Victorian times; and Beard's talents lay in fanciful princesses of far away lands. Yet, there were very practical reasons for Clemens wanting his Camelot illustrated in these terms. He revealed his motives to Beard shortly after he commissioned him to do the designs:

> I have aimed to put all the crudeness and vulgarity necessary in the book, and I depend upon you for that refinement and scintillating humor for which you are so famous. 12

Clemens was aware how crude and vulgar the Yankee could appear. He knew that this tendency would not be tolerated by his audience. He had learned through the publication of Huckleberry Finn that elements of a story could be softened and made acceptable through carefully worked out illustrations. He realized that again he needed the talents of an illustrator who could divert his reader's attention visually from the harsh realities of A Connecticut Yankee and thus subtly persuade his audience to accept the real message.

The time for indecision was past. Beard's sample drawing carried the vote. Fred Hall was instructed to ask Beard for an estimate on "one hundred pages of illustration with ten or twelve full pages and the rest divided pretty evenly into half, quarter, and eighth pages."[13] Mark Twain and Fred Hall had already determined that this volume was to be handsomely printed, "set up in the same style as The Prince and the Pauper",[14] a major investment considering what the Prince had cost. Now they waited uneasily for Beard to set his fee for illustration.

Two days later Hall reported Beard's terms:

> He wants $3000 for illustrating your book . . . in all some two hundred and fifty or sixty illustrations. This is for very careful work, and undoubtedly he will make the drawings at this price very fine. He can make a cheaper grade of drawings for less money, but we told him we would submit these figures to you. We paid Mr. Kemble (Library of Humor) $2000 for making two hundred and four drawings, those of course were off-hand sketches. 15

Beard justified his high fee by saying that this book would require much research into old costumes and armour and that the detail work had to be painstaking and accurate. He could do less for less but he was sure that Hall and Twain wanted quality work for their quality book. Beard couldn't have hit a more responsive chord.

Mark Twain's mania for authenticity had certainly proved itself in his other books, especially the historical novels such as The Prince and the Pauper. His answer supported Beard's theory of research and quality and also gave some insight into Twain's current evaluation of his former illustrator, E.W. Kemble.

> I prefer this time to contract for the very best an artist can do. This time I want pictures, not blackboard outlines and charcoal sketches. If Kemble's illustrations for my last book were handed to me today, I would understand how tiresome to me that sameness would get to be, when distributed through a whole book, and I would put them promptly in the fire. 16

Hall noted Mark Twain's desires for detailed, accurate drawings. Four days later he contacted Dan Beard and the contracts were signed.

A strange kind of mythology has been handed down through the years concerning supposed early meetings between Mark Twain and Dan Beard. Almost daily correspondence between Hall and Clemens for June and July places Mark Twain in Elmira during these months while Fred Hall directed all the practical matters (with Mark Twain's written approval) from the

company offices. No correspondence exists between Twain and Beard for these months. Everything concerning the illustrations was directed through Hall. Yet the stories of friendly meetings between author and illustrator persisted, perpetuated probably by Albert Bigelow Paine's account of an incident that must have taken place at a much later time:

> It was decided to spare no expense on the manufacture and that its illustrator be of a sort to illuminate and, indeed, to elaborate the text. Clemens had admired some pictures made by Daniel Carter ("Dan") Beard for a Chinese story in Cosmopolitan and made up his mind that Beard was the man for the Yankee. The manuscript was sent to Beard, who met Clemens a little later in the office of Webster & Co. to discuss the matter. Clemens said: "Mr. Beard, I do not want to subject you to any undue suffering, but I wish you would read the book before you make the pictures."
>
> Beard replied that he had already read it twice.
>
> "Very good," Clemens said, "but I wasn't led to suppose that that was the usual custom among illustrators, judging from some of the results I have seen." 17

An admittedly amusing recollection by Paine many years after the fact but inaccurate in many of the details. At this early date Clemens had no intention of "elaborating" the text of the Yankee. He merely wanted authentic quality work much like that of The Prince and the Pauper. That idea was to come much later and from Beard not Clemens. Since Hall's first note to Beard had allowed him freedom of choice in both subject matter and characterization, it was always Beard's prerogative on how the illustration would be worked out.

Paine's guess that Clemens was immediately persuaded Beard was the illustrator for his new book is also wrong. Even after Beard had been contacted, Mark Twain was still unsure and had Hall try to find Reginald Birch as an alternative choice. It was only after all other candidates were unavailable that Beard was selected and signed. This was hardly a positive chioce.

Another important inaccuracy in Paine's account has Beard familiar with the total manuscript of the Yankee before he signed the contract. The only portion of the book seen by Beard before the contracts were signed was the "thirty or forty pages" mailed to him with Hall's original note. It is unlikely that Beard had a chance to read the full manuscript until he was busy making the first batch of drawings, a practice as we have seen, usual for Mark Twain and his illustrators.

Clemens' remarks on the unprofessional practices of his former illustrators were customary and usual. No one pleased Clemens for long. To his illustrators' credit, most did a creditable job under trying circumstances when working with Mark Twain. Twain's theories of illustration were seldom consistent. While he may have cautioned Beard to read the book, he had earlier admonished Kemble saying, "An artist shouldn't follow a book too literally."[18] There was no one way to please Mark Twain.

Clemens was interested, admittedly, in several aspects of his book's illustration. His first documented ideas for the Yankee's designs came late in July, only days after Beard and his brother had started on the drawings. The message, as usual, was conveyed to Beard through Hall:

> About the quality of the pictures, that is, to have more or less humor in some of them, but not too much. [I, Hall] will try to give Mr. Beard the correct idea as to just what you wish. [19]

Humor was a major worry in Clemens' mind and one of his original and basic ideas on the method of illustration for his new book.

After a night's sleep, Clemens again wrote Hall, modifying his ideas on the humorous aspects of the drawings and giving Beard free rein on the subject.

> Upon reflection--thus: tell Beard to obey his own inspiration, and when he sees a picture in his mind put that picture on paper, be it humorous or be it serious. I want his genius to be wholly unhampered. I shan't have fears as to the result. They will be better pictures than if I mixed in and tried to give him points on his own trade. 20

Upon seeing Beard's sample drawings, and possibly a few other pieces forwarded to Clemens from Hall, Twain was apparently convinced that Beard's design concepts were more than adequate and that he had made the correct choice of an illustrator for Yankee.

Dan Beard's retelling of these early days, however, had an even more fanciful twist than Paine's:

> Mr. Fred Hall, Mark Twain's partner in the publishing business, came to my studio in the old Judge Building and told me that Mark Twain wanted to meet the man who made the illustrations for a Chinese story in the Cosmopolitan and he wanted that man to illustrate his new book, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court. The manuscript was sent to me to read. I read it through three times with great enjoyment. Then I met Mr. Clemens by appointment in his little office on fourteenth Street, not far from the corner of Fifth Avenue. . . . When I climbed to Mark Twain's office, if I was a little short of breath, it was not from exercise so much as the awe I felt in the presence of a man who stood so high in my esteem. I stood before this shaggy-headed man, first on one foot and then on the other, not knowing how to open the conversation. He did not rise but turned his head slowly toward me, drawling, "Sit down. In regard to the illustrations you are to make," he said, "I only want to say this. If a man comes to me and wants me to write a story, I will write one for him; but if he comes to me and wants me to write a story and then tells me what to write, I say, 'Damn you, go hire a typewriter,'" meaning a stenographer. 21

The business correspondence indicates a totally different set of arrangements for engaging Beard as illustrator. The retelling of stories of the past for both old men in their dotage was fanciful but unfactual.

All existing documents would seem to discount an early meeting

between Dan Beard and Mark Twain. They did meet and become friends and even neighbors, on completion of the illustrations for A Connecticut Yankee.

Lack of personal contact between author, editor, and illustrator, as usual, led to many delays in getting Clemens' book off the press. The frustrating geographical gap had Beard delivering sketches to Hall, Hall mailing them to Elmira to be proofed, and Twain mailing them back. Fred Hall related his concern about time in a letter to Mark Twain:

> The whole trouble is in the illustrating. It took Kemble, if I remember rightly, about two months to make two hundred drawings for your "Library of Humor," (this was all sketchy outline work which could be quickly done) but the drawings that Mr. Beard is to make are to be elaborate and full of detail work. Although he and his brother are going to devote all their time to them, even at that rate they say it would be impossible to have the thing completed before the first of November. 22

In the same letter Hall admitted that though the delay seemed long it was reasonable. It took any competent artist at least a day for a quarter of half-page drawing and three days for a full page. Hall also stated that Beard was willing to take on extra staff but he preferred not to. He would rather have personal responsibility for all of the designs. Mark Twain again agreed. Consistency in illustration certainly had its merits.

With the possibility that late delivery of illustration would push back the deadline date, as had happened so often before, Fred Hall proposed a novel printing schedule to make effective use of time. The artists would make the cover design first and then sketch designs for the book, chapter by chapter. This way the electrotypist could have the illustrations and related text by afternoon and make the plates by morning. The plates would go to the printers and be run off and sent

to be proofed. If satisfactory the sheets would go to the binders and be bound, signature by signature. With this routine, three-quarters of the book could be printed and bound, waiting for the final illustrations in the final signature to be put between the ready covers. The ingenious plan seemed the only way to get Clemens' book out for the Christmas market.

The main problem in this assembly-line process was the time needed to mail proof to Elmira and

> especially in sending drawings to you [Mark Twain] for approval before they are put in the engraver's hands. It will be necessary to have the drawings approved and returned as quickly as possible, and the proofs read and returned as soon as possible, as this at the very best will take some two or three days to send matter to Elmira and have it returned. 23

Hall's complicated printing plan was practical only if all parties kept to the tight schedule. Unfortunately, things began to go awry immediately.

Beard and his brother began to work at full speed, chapter by chapter on July 23rd. Even before this date Mark Twain, however, had complicated matters by deciding to supply Century Magazine with advance excerpts from the Yankee, complete with illustrations, for the November issue. Hall also created problems when he determined to wait for all the drawings before issuing a prospectus. And finally, the reviewers added their monkey wrench by wanting illustrations to go with the reviews.

In the summer of 1889, everything seemed possible. Mark Twain had full confidence in Fred Hall's managerial abilities, and stopped worrying about Beard as illustrator after seeing the frontispiece. Beard's drawing had proved to all that he could completely capture Clemens'

story ideas. Clemens had at one time stated that "The story isn't a satire peculiarly, it is more especially a contrast. It merely exhibits under high lights the daily life of the time and that of today."[24] Beard's drawing caught both this spirit of contrast and Clemens' high sense of comedy. His sketch balanced a medieval knight in armour with a fifteen-dollar slop-shop-suited Yankee. The corner detail added just the right touch: a knight's helmet with an open visor in a seeming smile. Clemens' commented, "The smile on that helmet is a source of perennial joy to me."[25]



Figure 103

Unfortunately the first defect in Hall's perfect plan appeared with Clemens' decision to place a piece of the Yankee in the Century. Clemens neglected to inform Hall.

In early August, Johnson, an editor of Century, inquired about the name of Clemens' illustrator. Clemens responded that it was Dan Beard. At the same time he assured Johnson that Beard would have the cuts available for the Century's November issue. Johnson had only to contact Fred Hall.

A very startled Hall, after speaking with Johnson, asked Clemens' advice on his dilemma. The Century editor wanted Beard's cuts immediately. All Hall had was the sample frontispiece and a few cuts. Moreover, Hall wasn't sure which sections were to be printed in the Century issue. He was confused as to what further instructions to give the artists.

Clemens proved of little help. He mailed Hall the Century article on August 8 and requested him to divert the illustrators from the present schedule and do the appropriate sketches for Century. Hall realized his plan was starting to crumble.

While Beard was dutifully working on the Century drawings, Mark Twain changed his mind again about placing the piece in the magazine. He was convinced of the promotional value of the excerpt. "It isn't a newspaper's review of a book that makes the book sell; it is the extracts copied from the book that does it."[26] It had worked well for Huck Finn. Richard Watson Gilder, however, wanted too much editorial license over Clemens' work. He wanted to change Clemens' title from "Scraps from an Unpublished Book," to the exact title with a sub-title explaining its forthcoming publication. Clemens balked and threatened to withdraw the whole piece.

Gilder sternly warned him of the foolishness of withdrawing his manuscript after contracts had been signed. Clemens accepted Gilder's

sage advice. The extract was printed with the exact title and a bracketed memo to alert the reader: "Here follow a few incidents from an impending book of mine which bears the above title."[27]

Strangely enough, Gilder's editorial policy on the textual material was never questioned by Clemens. The Century piece contained sections

> closer to Twain's original intentions than the book text. In fact, the text as given in The Century includes several phrases and descriptions that were deleted out of the book text because they were too "ungenteel." 28

Obviously, Gilder did not bother to edit the "crudities" as he had the excerpts printed for Century of Huckleberry Finn. And undoubtedly, Livy had had no opportunity to see the Clemens Century script.

The Century issue featured six Beard illustrations, over half of them drawings which depicted the final portions of the first edition. This was a first deviation from Hall's perfect schedule.

The next item in Hall's rush to meet the November deadline was the printing of an early prospectus. At first Hall thought it best to print the agents' copy from just the early portions of the book that had the completed Beard illustrations. He realized that that would present a lop-sided sample of the work but time was more important than content if they were to capture Christmas sales.

To save more time, and probably without grumbles from Mark Twain, Hall had personally taken over the make-up of the Prospectus. On August 10th he wrote to Clemens saying he had gone over the Yankee manuscript and selected material to be included.[29] In the same letter he also expressed enthusiasm for Beard's incoming pictures, calling them "magnificent."[30] He began to sense that it was a shame not to use

them to best advantage rather than stick to his original plan.

A look at this earliest prospectus will show some of its failings. Only one initial letter and one tailpiece were used: a standard bearing grinch and a row of Janus-faced helmets. Both were from Chapter One. Of the larger drawings, only ten full page, six half page, and one quarter page cuts were inserted.[31] Unhappily, none of the half or quarter page cuts were inserted into the letterpress to break up the print. All were centered on a blank full page with wide margins, looking sterile and unfinished. In layout, the pictures were scattered indiscriminately throughout the text, more to balance pictures and print than to show connections between the drawings and the story.[32]

Only one drawing had a hint of religious content, "It Was A Noble Effect." It featured a monk, kneeling in front of a "creation-gesturing" Yankee who was about to be burned at the stake.



Figure 104

The drawing was "suggestive" in composition but could hardly be called irreligious in the traditional sense.

Only nineteen of the final two hundred and fifty drawings were included, most from the early sections of the book. Far fewer in number and scope than the normal, well-designed salesman's sample.

Hall was well aware of the bare look and the insufficiency of the prospectus. He felt it so keenly that he included a publisher's word of explanation on the List of Illustrations page:

> When this Prospectus was made up the illustrations were not completed, so a list of them cannot be given at present. We will, however, say that there will be about 250 of them, all of the same high order as these samples shown, and that the work is in charge of the well-known artist, Mr. Dan Beard. 33

The early circulars and ads for A Connecticut Yankee were just as cautious and ambiguous about the illustrations, touting "a square Octavo of over 600 pages, printed on supercalendared paper and handsomely bound. About 300 Illustrations by Dan Beard."[34] Hall had taken a page out of Elisha Bliss's promotional handbook.

Hall's displeasure with the agent's sample persuaded him to push for Mark Twain's approval of producing a larger prospectus that would feature a separate signature of Beard's illustrations. This was a startling departure from the usual prospectus but Mark Twain agreed and the signature was prepared:

> Since you approve of it, we will take sixteen of Beard's best pictures and make a solid signature of pictures; under each one, in fine type, putting a short description of whatever the picture is intended to represent, as this will be a help to agents in selling the book. In selecting these pictures we left out anything that would apply directly to the church if that is strongly political, but whatever makes fun of royalty and nobility, and the idea of a government by an aristocratic class we have put in, as that will suit the

American public well. (Italics mine) 35

Since most of Beard's drawings had a strong tinge of religious or political intent, Hall had to soften his decision to eliminate them. He decided instead to turn the tables on the normal function of illustration. Instead of the pictures interpreting the text, he would add a text to interpret Beard's pictures. Hall wrote an introduction to the separate signature stating his intention:

> When we began this prospectus there were but few illustrations made, and, as the artist has entered thoroughly into the spirit of the book, the pictures will form a strong feature of the work, and for that reason we have decided to insert the following cuts, with a short description of each one as given.
>
> From the large number of what might be called "political economy" pictures, the agent will possibly get the idea that the book is a little dry and statistical in parts. This is not so. The Yankee's arguments against royalty and nobility and in favor of a form of government like that of the United States, are all brought out in a humorous way and in conversation with the king and his knights, and he makes his arguments plain by very funny illustrations.
>
> The pictures merely illustrate the ideas which he brings out, as they could not, of course, illustrate the way in which he presents these ideas. 36

Hall's personal interpretations of Mark Twain's story given in his "fine type" captions, stress a peculiar linguistic quality--probably in an effort to entice the many flag-waving subscribers.

For example, this is Hall's description of a Beard cut:

> This picture well illustrates a story told of Abraham Lincoln. An English nobleman said to him, in criticising America, that we have no gentlemen here. "Whom do you call gentlemen?" asked Mr. Lincoln. "Men who have plenty of leisure, who are not obliged to do anything for a living," was the answer. "Oh yes," replied Mr. Lincoln, "we have plenty of them, but in this country we call them tramps." In this picture we have two gentlemen of leisure sitting on either side of the scales, and you will notice that the scales balance; the stout figure representing aristocracy, doing nothing and living well off the people. On the other

side is a tramp, who also does nothing and lives off the people. 37

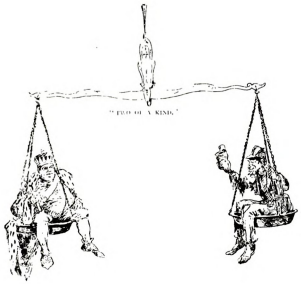


Figure 105

Hall's Lincoln quotations have nothing to do with the incident illustrated in A Connecticut Yankee. Mark Twain's text actually described every man's right to have a say in government.

> I was from Connecticut, whose Constitution declares "that all political power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority and instituted for their benefit; and they they have at all times an undeniable and indefensible right to alter their form of government in such a manner as they may think expedient. 38

The Yankee's remark correctly accounts for the King's nervousness and the happy toasting of Beard's beggar in the illustration. Fred Hall's free version of what the illustration represents smacks of pure promotion: good advertising but blatant distortion.

Of the eighteen drawings included eight have some direct relevance to Mark Twain's story while ten have little or no association with the book. Four drawings touch briefly on religious matters and more than

half are anti-royal or directly political. Yet none of the pictures contains specific characters or incidents in the novel.

By October 29th, not only were all the new prospectuses out but Hall jubilantly cried, "The Yankee is all in type."[39] Beard had finished his most famous commission and was paid the last installment for his work on November 2nd. He would later correctly declare that it took him ninety frantic working days to meet Hall's schedule.

With the Yankee ready for publication, the important issue of reviews had to be faced. Mark Twain had approached William Howells expecting a favorable review from him in Harpers: "If you should be moved to speak of my book in 'The Study' [Harpers] I shall be glad and proud."[40]

In the meantime, Sylvester Baxter, a reviewer for the Sunday Herald in Boston, had written to Clemens asking:

> If you can send me advance sheets of your new book I can give a good story about it in the Herald. Howells gives me an enthusiastic account of it. . . . When you run up to see Howells I want to know it. [41]

Coincidentally, Mark Twain had been, on that very day, a guest of Howells in Boston. Baxter's name was suggested by Howells as a possible reviewer and Clemens enthusiastically set down his name. Clemens' enthusiasm was probably helped by Baxter's statement about his political persuasion: "You know I am a strong 'Nationalist' and was not surprised to learn from Howells that you felt the same way."[42]

Mark Twain was thinking about delaying sending his manuscript to Baxter for about thirty days, fearing a conflict between Baxter's and Howells' reviews. On second thought, however, he decided two favorable reviews on the same day would do little harm and sent the sheets on to Baxter. He mailed Baxter a letter commenting on these matters:

> Of course it would help the book's canvass if your review should appear at this moment in the midst of canvass, but I think Howells could not approve that--I don't remember what he said about it, though I have an impression that we spoke of the matter. Will you speak to him and tell me. 43

The timing conflict with the Howells and Baxter reviews finally resolved itself. Harpers was unable to place Howells' article until January, a full month after A Connecticut Yankee's publication. Baxter, therefore, produced the only authorized review and the first one after publication.

Learning of Howells' predicament, Mark Twain had suggested Baxter "let fly," and in the same letter added a cautionary note about the content of the review: "Please don't let on that there are any slurs at the church or Protection in the book--I want to catch the reader unwarned and modify his views if I can."[44]

Baxter understood Clemens' qualms but was less persuaded about keeping the public uninformed on the content of the book. He suggested using several of Dan Beard's illustrations to accompany his review--an innovation in reviewing. Clemens was delighted:

> Pictures, a good idea. If it will save you any trouble I think we can send you costs of such pictures as you would like to use and I will write to Webster and Co. about it. 45

Baxter's choices for cuts were "The Fake Prophet Going to Meet the King," "The Iron Duke," "Some of the Boys Go Agrailing," "Sir Galahad Takes a Header," "Catcher of the Ulster Nine," and "The Slave Driver." Unfortunately, as it turned out, the first and the last fell into problem categories. Nevertheless, all were sent to Boston with the good wishes of Mark Twain and the Webster Publishing Company.

In the meantime, Clemens had again changed his reviewing policies:

> I have not made up my mind yet, but I think I will deliver the book broadcast to the press of the country on the 12th & let them misunderstand its purpose (as usual) & stomp on it if they want to.
>
> Heretofore it has been my policy to publish my books secretly, but this time I grow daily more inclined to turn the book loose & let it take all the chances. 46

A vacillating and worried Mark Twain wrote again to Baxter a few days later and told him to withhold his review until "December 12 or 15, that will make it safe."[47]

Many of Mark Twain's worries about the book and the reviews concerned the book's content and Beard's graphically reinforcing illustration. Clemens' first thought about the illustrations was to have them act as diversions, to soften the controversial topics through humor and detailed authentic pictures. However, this original idea changed drastically over the months as both Hall and Clemens became fascinated with how perfectly Beard's work fitted in and extended Clemens' messages. Author and editor had approved the day-by-day newly emerging concept of illustration. Yet when the edition was complete, Mark Twain momentarily worried about both visually and verbally broadcasting all of these hotly contested ideas to a Christian, "genteel", book-buying audience in advance of heavy orders. Clemens' qualms would prove too accurate.

One of the more interesting aspects of Dan Beard's drawings, and one that was known and accepted by Hall and Clemens, was his use of familiar contemporary people as models for the characters in A Connecticut Yankee. There had been universal agreement that this might be an imaginative promotional ploy, especially from Clemens whose advocacy of "originals" was well known. Yet it was to present problems that eventually backfired on the artist, Dan Beard. Some of the details of the method remain mysterious even today.

Beard used two techniques in creating his character drawings: live models and photographs of various interesting figures. Responding to queries about his methodology for illustrating A Connecticut Yankee many years later, Beard listed some of the celebrities who had become models for Clemens' novel:

> In illustrating "The Yankee in King Arthur's Court,"[48] I did what I was accustomed to do with all my work--look over a large collection of photographs to find the type of face to fit the character in the story, and use that . . . representing, as near as may be, the character the author described. Annie Russell was very proud because I used her. Sarah Bernhardt also knew I used her.[49]



Figure 106. ANNIE RUSSELL



Figure 107. SARAH BERNHARDT

Beard's list of models was long and wide-ranging: Annie Russell doubled as Sandy and Queen Guenever; the Yankee himself was George Morrison, an acquaintance of Beard's in the photography business; Merlin was Lord Tennyson; the baby daughter of Beard's next door neighbor became a foundling infant; Holbein's Henry VIII had a full page to himself; and King Edward of England, his late son, and Kaiser Wilhelm were portrayed as "Chuckleheads." (See Appendix B).

Few of these models, dead or alive, could cause difficulty for the publishers of Clemens' book. But one model, Jay Gould, whose face was indelibly placed on the head of "The Slave Driver" in A Connecticut Yankee's pages, could and probably did make trouble for some people.





Jay Gould at the summit of success.

Figure 108. JAY GOULD

Someone, obviously, had decided to represent Jay Gould as the slave driver for Clemens' novel. The mystery is, who made the choice?

Dan Beard was relatively new in the illustrating trade. He had never before consciously satirized a prominent figure in political cartoon fashion. Unlike Nast, his talent never had been and never would be for caricature. His remaining years in illustration focused on a rendering of boys' life and the out of doors.

Mark Twain's illustrations, however, had often used original people copied from photographs, and not always in a positive light. He had persuaded Augustus Hoppin to copy an exact likeness of Senator Pomeroy to be the visual equivalent of Senator Dillworthy. More importantly, he had ordered Jay Gould's likeness used as a political cartoon once before in his work.

When Sheldon and Company had accepted Clemens' Autobiography (Burlesque) for publication, Sheldon had hired H.L. Stephens to do the drawings. Sheldon and Stephens followed specific instructions from Clemens on how the cartoons were to be handled:

> Friend Clemens:
> I sent you by this mail proofs of all the cuts. If they are satisfactory to you please let me know at once. Please also send in "The House That Jack Built" just as you want it set up. I understand you were to make some changes in it to make it fit the case better. Please also indicate where each cut is to go. . . As soon as I hear from you the whole job will go into type. 50

Clemens instructed Sheldon to have Stephens include a portrait of Horace Greeley as the Cat and Dana of the Sun as the Dog in one illustration. In a "Wedding Scene" Boss Tweed served as the priest, while the rest of the wedding party included Jim Fisk, Jay Gould and Daniel Drew.



Figure 109. WEDDING SCENE

Fortunately, Twain escaped private, public, or professional censure for this escapade. But little imagination is needed to see him needling Fred Hall and Dan Beard into again making Jay Gould the rascal in a Mark Twain book.

On the other hand, throughout his long lifetime, Dan Beard never mentioned the name of Jay Gould as his model. He avoided the issue for many years, once stating, "I wanted a face, cold, brutally (sic) and cruel. I found such a face among my photographs of prominent people and used it."[51] In an annotated edition of A Connecticut Yankee he wrote: "I wanted a face which showed a high order of intelligence but was absolutely heartless, cold, brutally (sic) and cruel."[52] Interviewers as late as 1938 gave this account of Beard's reminiscences:

> Nobody recognized these drawings until the similarities were brought up by a reporter on the New York World, then at its height. A reporter came to Beard and wanted to know if that picture was supposed to resemble Mr. Gould. Beard said he did not know, but if Mr. Gould happened to look like that picture they could draw any inference they wished. 53

"Time and time again [we] urged Dan Beard, who is still hale and hearty, to disclose the man's identity, he will not do so."[54]

Whoever was in back of the scheme to use Jay Gould's portrait, it had been done and would soon be known by the public. Not only was there this one possibly troublesome picture but many more: caustic slurs at the church, persuasive propaganda for the Nationalist cause, and harsh, anti-royalist barbs at England.

Documenting the progessive development of these controversial drawings shows how author, editor, and illustrator were carried away by their radical zeal. Beard's first drawings, the frontispiece, the cover, and a few early cuts, had been personally approved by Mark Twain early in production:

> Grace, dignity, poetry, spirit, imagination, these enrich them [the illustrations] and make them charming and beautiful; and whenever humor appears it is high and fine, easy, unforced, kept under mastery, and is delicious. You have expressed the King as I wanted him expressed; both face and figure are noble and gracious and set forth the man's character with satisfying eloquence. . . . I like the Yankee every time, and you have got him down fine where he is naked in the dungeon. 55

This response to Beard's early work demonstrates Clemens' original enthusiasm for the illustrations. They were to soften the effects of his prose. Clemens was very conscious that he had created a fumbling, not an eloquent monarch. But he also understood his audience's need for a picture with their concept of royalty: A King must appear noble

and gracious. The Yankee, naked as a pair of tongs as stated in the text, would never do in pictorial form. Beard's swaddling of Sir Boss in a crude diaper made the reader overlook the offensive word "naked." These graphic inconsistencies with the text would easily pass and do no harm to Mark Twain's intended message.

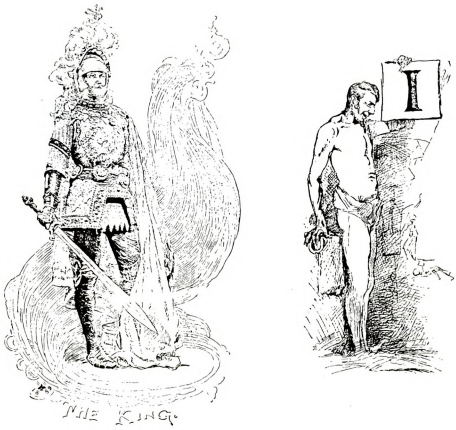


Figure 110. THE KING AND THE YANKEE

As the weeks progressed, however, the tone of Beard's drawings changed. More anti-religious and politically dangerous material was introduced.[56]



Figure 111. SUPERSTITION



Figure 112

In correspondence the shift in intent for the illustrations was very apparent. At first Dan Beard merely acknowledged his debt to the author and his pleasure that his work was satisfactory:

> How thoroughly I am in sympathy with the author and while I thank you for the many kind compliments I think that possibly the qualities you so much admire are only the reflection of the text. . . . It is a great pleasure for me that my pictures are admired by the author and a still greater pleasure to receive personal acknowledgment of his appreciation. 57

Over-awed at his commission and stimulated by Mark Twain's approval, Dan Beard was driven to extraordinary effort. By November at the near end of the illustrating job, Dan Beard was waxing more political than

artistic:

> Unless the signs mislead me, the time is ripe for Hank the "Boss" to make himself felt both here and with our cousins across the water, I would like to see a copy of your book in every palace house and hut in the United States, not because I had the honor of illustrating it but because I consider the story a great missionary work to bring Americans back to the safe honest and manly position, intended for them to occupy, by their ancestors when they signed the declaration of independence. 58

Beard's missionary zeal had taken over and Mark Twain continued to praise Beard's "extraordinarily sympathetic and interpretive pictures."[59] In a personal letter to Beard he awarded him the ultimate in appreciation:

> Hold me under permanent obligations, What luck it was to find you! There are a hundred artists who could illustrate any other book of mine, but there was only one who could illustrate this one. Yes, it was a fortunate hour that I went netting for lightning bugs and caught a meteor. Live forever! 60

Reginald Birch and Frank Merrill would have been only lightning bugs, but the meteor of Dan Beard lit more sparks than were really needed.

Mark Twain's ideas about caution in publicizing his novel had vanished over the four months of production. Since both Clemens and Beard had wielded "pens warmed up in hell," Clemens was ready to best the odds. Over-anxious to divulge the "secrets" of A Connecticut Yankee, he called a press interview with the New York Times the day of publication, December 10, 1889. In this exclusive interview he explained the controversial story of his latest book and gave special commendation to Daniel Carter Beard for the way "the artist had entered into the spirit of the book in executing the illustrations, and pointed especially to a fine portrait of Jay Gould in the capacity of 'the slave driver.'"[61]

This interview coincided with the Sylvester Baxter review in the Boston papers. The review read as Mark Twain had expected. It complimented Clemens for A Connecticut Yankee's abundant humor, revealed its connection to Bellamy's famous book and the Nationalist cause by calling it "an instructive sort of Looking Backward," and pointed to Beard's drawings as "instructive allegories" for Mark Twain's story. Baxter concluded his review by referring to "a strong and spirited picture of a celebrated American millionaire and stock gambler"[62] alongside Beard's drawing of Jay Gould as the "Slave Driver." Mark Twain was delighted and thanked Baxter for an "admirable notice . . . am so glad you said the appreciation for Beard's excellent pictures."[63] Twain's Times interview and Baxter's remarks, together with the reproduced drawing in the Boston Herald started a deluge of questions about the identity of the Yankee's Slave Driver.

A few days later, a New York World reported arrived in the Webster offices to ask if there was anything behind the use of a portrait of Jay Gould that was pictured in Connecticut Yankee. Hall was at a loss to answer. He wrote to Clemens, realizing that the World reporter's next stop would be Elmira, and told Clemens that Webster and Company's position was that they "did not know of any portrait of Gould in the 'Yankee' at all."[64] This same World reporter probably stopped next at the Judge Building to see Dan Beard. However, the World, as stated by Beard, was not the first to identify Gould. It was Mark Twain who revealed the association in the New York Times.

Meanwhile, things were becoming difficult. In response to another inquiry, Mark Twain avoided complicity and referred his inquisitor back to Dan Beard:

> I should not be able to tell you anything about the picture, as I did not make it or suggest it. You will have to apply to its author, Mr. Dan Beard, Judge Building, New York. He illustrated the book throughout without requiring or needing anybody's suggestions: and to **my mind the illustrations are better than the** book--**which is a good deal for me to say, I reckon. I merely approved of the pictures--and very heartily too, the slave driver along with the rest.** 65

This remark on Mark Twain's evaluation of the illustrations was an overly humble statement to come from Twain. Perhaps, with this continued questioning, he was becoming aware of the possible backlash of the book's publication and wanted to avoid involvement in at least this issue. By complimenting Beard he implicated him in the controversy and released himself from responsibility.

Unfortunately, other newspapers, at home and abroad, quickly picked-up on the relationship. The Edinburgh Scots Observer talked of "Wall Street chicanery."[66] The London Daily Telegraph asked the question, "Which, then is to be most admired--the supremacy of a knight or the success of a financier?. . . Will they (Americans) owe allegiance to King Arthur or Jay Gould?"[67] And Henry George's Standard laid special emphasis on the way Beard's illustrations reinforced Mark Twain's ideas in the book:

> The powers of the rich and the oppression of the poor, are subjects of frequent allusion in the text; and whatever of definiteness the text may lack in pointing out the fundamental cause and radical cure for wrong, is admirably supplied by Dan Beard and his illustrations. 68

Mark Twain's text and Dan Beard's drawings had challenged many lions. Their public investigation of accepted social, political, religious, and financial greats of the day alerted readers and drew censure from all sides: individual, church, and state.

Unfortunately, Clemens' carefully manipulated promotional campaign

for this first edition did not produce the desired rewards immediately. "A Connecticut Yankee had not sold well--23,000 copies in seven months."[69] Fred Hall pointed out to the author that those were hardly satisfactory figures.

But it was Dan Beard who paid the largest penalty. The illustrator "had worked so hard and steadily on the illustrations . . . that when the pictures were finished . . .[he] collapsed."[70] Beard had to undergo weeks of recovery before he regained his strength. Returning to his studio, he was amazed to find that he had been boycotted by all the major magazines in New York. Beard later tried to reconstruct the reasons for the boycott:

> I'm afraid they [the illustrations] showed Mark Twain's thought too much to please. You must realize that when Mark Twain treads upon any social, political, or ecclesiastical corns, the owners of those corns assumed his remarks were only meant to be funny; but they could not assume that when Mark Twain's thoughts were put into the form of cartoons and illustrations . . . . In making the illustrations for "The Yankee in King Arthur's Court" I grieviously (sic) offended powerful parties unknown, and was constantly boycotted for about ten years. It was undoubtedly the influence of vested interests, aided somewhat by extremists in the church machine. [71]

Dan Beard's missionary zeal in making the illustrations for Mark Twain's work had cost him dearly. His earning ability was sharply curtailed and "sad to say, the illustrations which so pleased Mark Twain and delighted people all over the world, greviously offended some big advertisers. The offending illustrations were removed from further editions."[72]

Despite these immediate troubles, Mark Twain and Dan Beard continued their literary partnership. Dan Beard went on to illustrate Clemens' The American Claimant, The Million-Dollar Bank Note, Tom Sawyer Abroad, Following the Equator (with other illustrators), several short stories,

and most of Clemens' syndicated newspaper work. They finally became close neighbors and personal friends, both living in Redding, Connecticut. It was Dan Beard who accompanied Mark Twain's coffin to New York in a kind of voluntary honor guard.

But all this was many years later. In the meantime, A Connecticut Yankee had begun to pick up in sales. And with the help of this controversial book, Webster and Company "stayed afloat in 1888, 1889, and 1890, 'clearing $50,000 a year for three consecutive years."[73]

But it was the end of an era. The subscription publishing business had fallen on hard times. Even Clemens' firm, under the management of Fred Hall, began to emphasize "trade" publications. "By the time of completion of Puddn'head Wilson, Charles Webster and Co. was to have no subscription apparatus with which to sell it."[74] The Hartford firm closed its doors in 1891.

Conclusion

Mark Twain had spent a grueling quarter of a century acquiring knowledge about the production of books for the subscription publishing market. During these years he moved from the innocent young writer concerned only with his own creative efforts to the position of the "expert" writer-editor-publisher involved in all the frustrations and rewards of publication.

The physical properties of Mark Twain's first book, The Celebrated Jumping Frog, simply gave him pleasure and promoted an interest in the design of his work in book form. Innocents Abroad involved him personally--almost despite himself--in the production of designs for the book through the use of his own photographs of people and places derived from his "Quaker City" voyage. Because the book was hugely successful it served as a model for most of Clemens' other typical subscription books.

With Roughing It, Clemens and his co-workers came close to failure. The author, foolishly, allowed control of all but the writing--and even the text was a careless patch-work creation--to fall into the hands of subordinates who were at times incompetent and more often uninterested. With The Gilded Age, Mark Twain tried innovation with some success. Thus Clemens book broke the confines of the subscription market because it was a novel instead of the usual travel or history book. The innovation in design, with the satirical implications of political cartoons, set a new trend for several of Mark Twain's other books.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer proved a publishing disaster. Clemens misunderstood or deliberately interferred with routine procedures in illustration. His decision to change the concept of the designs caused

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the delay that allowed a Canadian edition to supercede the American publication. With the American market flooded with cheaper imported editions, Tom Sawyer's profits were minimal.

Having learned this costly lesson, Mark Twain penitently returned to the tried and true formula for a subscription book: a travel narrative with voluminous text and prolific illustration. In A Tramp Abroad Clemens and his publishers added and even multiplied all the elements of the well-designed subscription book. The formula brought handsome profits, almost equal to those of the prototype, Innocents Abroad.

Despite this last success, Clemens was in the midst of an increasingly personal struggle between the quantity of his work and the quality of his efforts. This conflict manifested itself in his production of The Prince and the Pauper. Quality in a "deluxe" format and the unusual--for him-- historical narrative produced predictable results: good reviews from the critics but poor sales to the readers. Mark Twain would not again experience this conflict until his issuing of Joan of Arc.

With The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain took over control of a publishing company and with it control of all of the manufacturing elements of his newest book. The book was successfully designed--barring minor disasters--but only marginally profitable. Ultimately, however, it would prove to be the pinnacle of his literary career. And Huck with his "Irish grin" would become a symbol of nineteenth century American literature.

Mark Twain's anger with society produce A Connecticut Yankee. Though originally the book's design was meant to soften Clemens'

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treatment of the controversial issues of the story, the original plan misfired. Clemens' text was coupled with drawings of an over-zealous, politically motivated illustrator. The resulting book became a visual and verbal diatribe against the times rather than a volume that would live in literary history.

Mark Twain learned his greatest lessons as writer-editor-publisher during his tumultuous years in the subscription publishing world. Unfortunately, financial failure brought an end to his complete control over his work. Though he would live, lecture, and write for another twenty years, he would never again personally fight the battles or reap the rewards of a book with a title page reading:
"FULLY ILLUSTRATED BY EMINENT ARTS: SOLD BY SUBSCRIPTION ONLY."

ENDNOTES

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[58]Mark Twain Papers, Copyright 1976 by Thomas G. Chamberlain & Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company as Trustees under the will of Clara Clemens Samossoud.

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[60]Herbert Smith, Richard Watson Gilder (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1970), p. 130.

[61]The Century, December, 1884, p. 276.

[62]Businessman, p. 26.

[63]Huck Finn, p. 177.

[64]Smith, Gilder, p. 134.

[65]Businessman, p. 282.

[66]Colophon, n.p.

[67]Meine, p. 34.

[68]Businessman, p. 303-304.

[69]Walter Blair, Mark Twain and Huck Finn (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), p. 370.

[70]Businessman, p. 300.

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[71]Critical Heritage, p. 125.

[72]Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, p. 269.

[73]Ibid.

A Connecticut Yankee

[1]Hill, Publishers, pp. 233-234.

[2]Hill, Publishers, p. 221.

[3]Hill, Publishers, p. 225.

[4]Hill, Publishers, p. 223.

[5]Hill, Publishers, p. 228.

[6]Hill, Publishers, p. 253.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Dan Beard, Hardly A Man Is Now Alive: The Autobiography of Dan Beard (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1939), p. 337.

[9]Art Archives, Washington, D.C.

[10]Berg Collection, NYPL, Copyright 1976 by Mark Twain and Company. Excerpts from this chapter have been published: Beverly R. David, "The Unexpurgated A Connecticut Yankee," Prospects (December 1975), 99-117.

[11]Mark Twain Papers.

[12]Cyril Clemens, "Dan Beard and A Connecticut Yankee," Hobbies, October 1974, p. 134.

[13]Mark Twain Papers.

[14]Fairbanks, p. 32.

[15]Hill, Publishers, p. 254.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Paine, Biography, II, p. 887.

[18]Businessman, p. 255.

[19]Hill, Publishers, p. 254.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Dan Beard, Autobiography, pp. 336-337.

[22]Hill, Publishers, p. 254.

[23]Mark Twain Papers.

[24]Fairbanks, pp. 257-258.

[25]Dan Beard, Autobiography, p. 337.

[26]Hill, Publishers, p. 254.

[27]The Century, Vol. XXXIX (November, 1889), 74-83.

[28]Herbert F. Smith, Richard Watson Gilder, p. 135.

[29]Mark Twain Papers.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Prospectus, Mark Twain Papers.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Circular, Mark Twain Papers.

[35]Mark Twain Papers.

[36]Prospectus, Mark Twain Papers.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Mark Twain, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court (New York: Charles L. Webster & Company, 1889), p. 159.

[39]Hill, Publishers, p. 258.

[40]Twain-Howells' Letters, p. 610.

[41]Berg Collection, NYPL, Copyright 1975, by Mark Twain Company.

[42]Twain-Howells' Letters, p. 612.

[43]Berg Collection, NYPL, Copyright 1975, by Mark Twain Company.

[44]Ibid.

[45]Ibid.

[46]Ibid.

[47]Ibid.

[48]Hill, Publishers, p. 256. Dan Beard had sent a cover design to Fred Hall where he had "taken the liberty of leaving out the word 'Connecticut' in the title." Beard explained that this was not an unusual practice, "that too much lettering would not look well." The English edition retained this shortened name and Beard always refers to the book by this title in his correspondence.

[49]Daniel Carter Beard Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

[50]Mark Twain Papers.

[51]Beinecke Collection of American Literature, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Copyright 1975.

[52]Ibid.

[53]Beinecke Collection. Copyright 1975.

[54]Ibid.

[55]Berg Collection, NYPL, Copyright 1975, by Mark Twain Company.

[56]Dan Beard Papers. "Mark Twain especially liked the picture in the first edition of the stork with the long beak marked 'Capital,' and a little dog begging, and a container with a long nozzle, the content of which could only be reached by a long bill."

[57]Dan Beard Papers.

[58]Twain-Howells' Letters, p. 611.

[59]Ibid.

[60]Ibid.

[61]Henry Nash Smith, Mark Twain's Fable of Progress (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1964), p. 79.

[62]Critical Heritage, p. 151.

[63]Twain-Howells' Letters, p. 624.

[64]Mark Twain Papers.

[65]Twainian, October, 1974.

[66]Critical Heritage, p. 165.

[67]Critical Heritage, p. 163.

[68]The Standard, VII, No. I (January 1890), p. 3. The Standard also produced a number of Beard illustrations: "Evolution," "Discrepancies in Noses Makes Quite a Difference," "The Coming Eclipse," "Starving Eh!" and "Pah For Protection."

[69]Hill, Publishers, p. 262.

[70]Dan Beard, Autobiography, p. 338.

[71]Dan Beard Papers.

[72]Ibid.

[73]Hill, Publishers, p. 245.

[74]Hill, Publishers, p. 244.

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