

An investigation into Nineteenth Century Book Illustration
with reference to the movement towards total collaboration
in the works of Charles Dickens and
his major Illustrators

by

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P A R T I

SECTION A

It is necessary to state clearly at the outset of this essay that the field comprising Book Illustration is extremely complex. This is not difficult to appreciate when one considers that the term "Book Illustration" covers both the highly developed art forms such as are found for example in the Book of Kells; and at the same time such cheap and shallow examples as are found in magazines and books that are churned out for the million.

Therefore it becomes necessary to draw a sharp distinction between what could be called "inferior" and "superior" quality of Book Illustration. ^(a) I see this dividing line being drawn between two fundamentally divergent attitudes: the one involves a purely external and decorative approach which lacks real artistic value; ^(b) and the other, which is the result of the dynamic collaboration between an author and an artist to produce work founded on deep and rich artistic principles. ^(c)

For the sake of clarity I wish to take this idea of a division a step further, and to suggest that within the "superior" bracket there is also a continuing scale of improvement and bettering, which culminates in an idealised state which could be called "TOTAL COLLABORATION" between an author and an artist. ^(d) The whole area can be diagramised as follows:

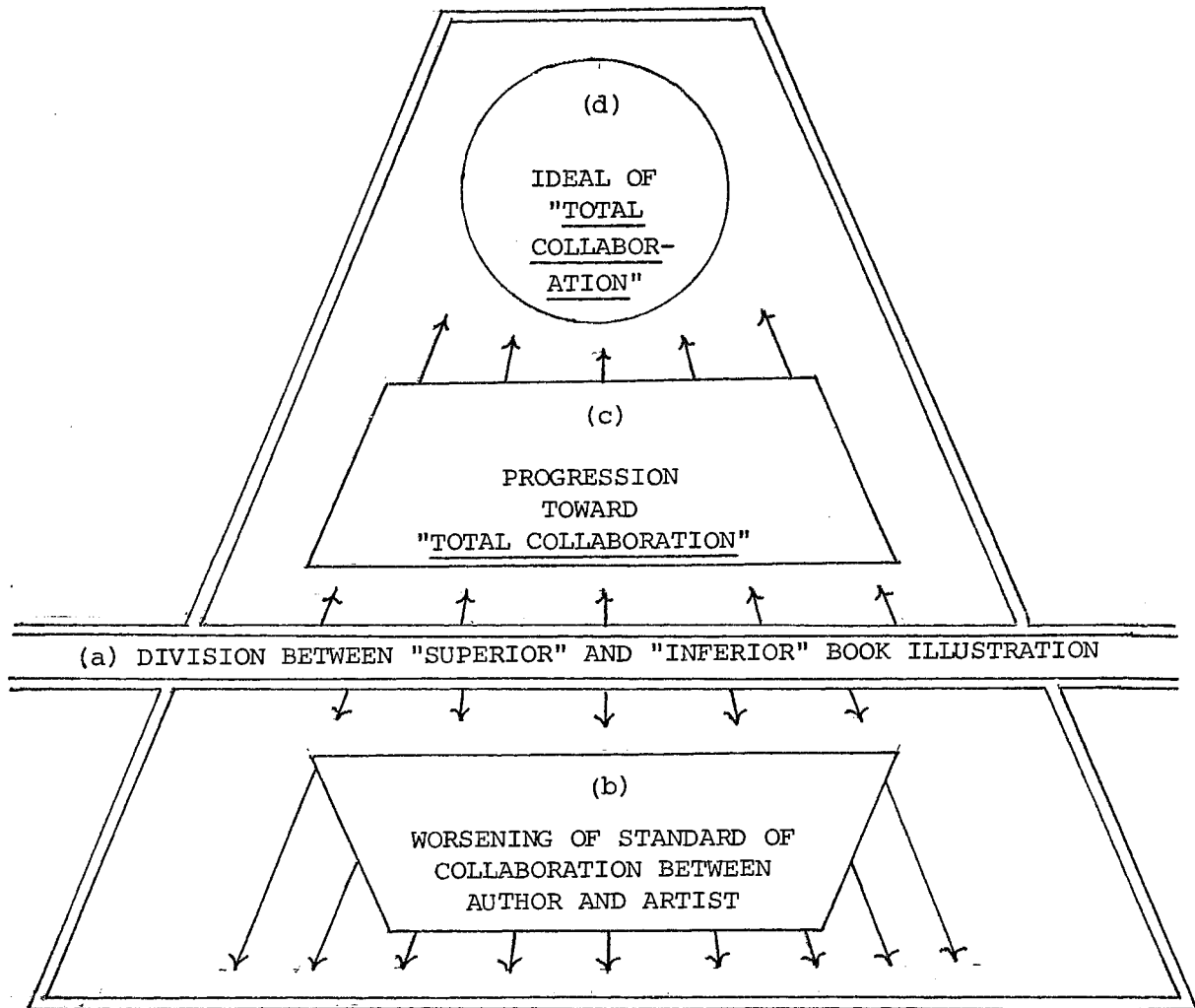


Fig. 1: The different types of collaboration
between author and artist

It is obviously not possible to state categorically exactly what is perfect Book Illustration, and I do not intend to do so. My purpose, however, is to use an ideal to clarify the fact that in certain historical situations, people have produced work which approaches this ideal. In actual fact, there are many different ways in which total collaboration has been approached, as I will attempt to show later.

Now, I wish to formulate a strategy for the essay. Having explained the central concept in Section A, I want to widen its implications with an investigation into the subconscious world which lies underneath Book Illustration, in Section B. In Section C I will put Dickens and his

illustrators into their historical context, examining the reasons underlying their sudden appearance and their just as sudden disappearance and its aftermath. Having done this we will be able to move into the main discussion of Dickens and his Illustrators which I will try to shoot through with the concept of total collaboration and its many different levels of implication and meaning, to constitute Part II.

SECTION B

An understanding of Book Illustration leads one into a study of the basic principles involved at the very beginning of the development of written and pictorial forms, in fact to the dawn of man's development.

We are taken back to primitive man's wish to express and communicate his needs and thoughts. From this basic root there developed the very elementary forms of word and picture:

"Drawing and writing have developed...from a common origin. Even today we use the word 'illustration' indiscriminately of a graphic or of a verbal description. Each began as a means of communication and by degrees alphabets were built up of certain images. The process may be studied in the Paleolithic picture where the artist, wishing to show a herd of reindeer would draw only the first and last animal, indicating the rest by a few lines. So stylisation came and so the ideogram." ¹

This example of a herd of reindeer points to the duality at its very beginnings. It came naturally to the Paleolithic man to draw a reindeer and then to use a symbol to represent the other reindeer. This is how written forms began their development; and once an accepted set of symbols emerged the hieroglyphic alphabets were established.

Elementary forms of word and picture are thus combined to produce a means of communication.

With the progress of time the two branches (word and picture) developed and began to emerge as highly developed entities. However, they are always combined together to fulfil the basic need to communicate. By the time of the Renaissance writing and art had both reached very sophisticated levels, but the primitive need for them to be used together to produce a complete means of communication was still present:

"And you who wish to represent by words the form of man and all his membrification, relinquish the idea. For the more minutely you describe the more you will confine the mind of the reader, and the more you will keep him from the knowledge of the thing described. And so it is necessary to draw and to describe." (Leonardo DaVinci).²

Still later we see the same basic truth emerging in a still more developed form - in the words of Goethe: "The artist must think out to the end the poet's ideas."³ Again, in the words of Lynton Lamb: "Illustrations can only be justified if they add to a book something that literature cannot encompass."⁴ Thus we see that the co-working of pen and pencil are not only mutually complementary, but also absolutely necessary.

With the advent of the Victorian era we see a heightening of intensity in graphic art. William Hogarth was aware of the primeval unity between word and picture and Charles Lamb expresses just this: "His (Hogarth's) graphic representations are indeed books; they have the teeming, fruitful suggestive meaning of words, other pictures we look at - his prints we read!"⁵ Hogarth is expressing the self-same truth when he says: "I have endeavoured to treat my subjects as a dramatic writer."⁶ Finally, we see in Charles Dickens the part that visual things played in his writing: "...he (Charles Dickens) thought naturally in pictorial terms..."⁷

We have observed the way in which word and picture have developed from a common root and have been closely related in man's consciousness

from ancient to modern times. I wish now to investigate the psychological forces within man that have caused this two-fold phenomenon.

Firstly, we have observed that man naturally uses the duality of word and picture to express himself. This basic fact is fundamental to man's thinking, and it has been convincingly shown to be a primary archetype, which has been named the "Doppelganger" or "Double Archetype". To use a very relevant example of this psychic phenomenon, we see that Charles Dickens expressed this duality in his own life and creative writing:

"This sense of doubleness reflects the divided nature of Dickens himself - the destructive conflict between his immature emotional needs and his awareness of adult responsibilities, between his sense of life and his sense of death."⁸

This bifurcation is observable not only within man's psychological make-up but also in the external material world. Obvious examples are: male/female; heat/cold; dark/light; and so on ad infinitum.

Jung has investigated the whole area of archetypes and also man's unity with nature at the deepest and most fundamental level. He explains in his Contributions to Analytical Psychology the nature of archetypes and man's unity with exterior cosmic forces:

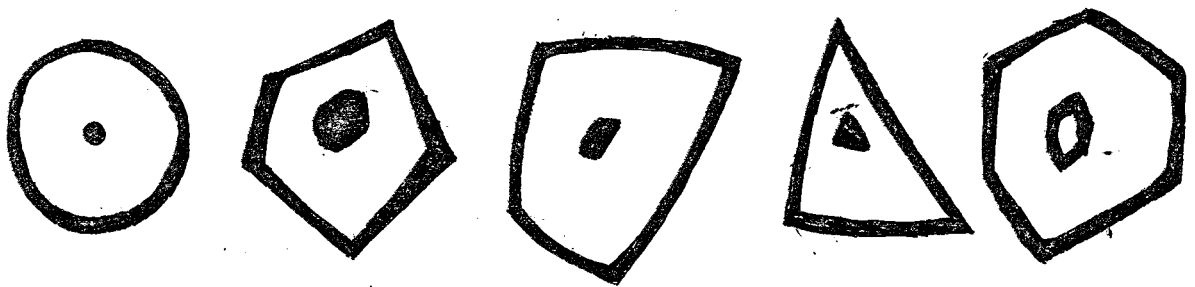
"Archetypes may be considered to be the fundamental elements of the conscious mind, hidden in the depths of the psyche, or, to use another comparison, they are the roots of the mind, sunk not only in the earth in the narrower sense, but in the world in general... They are essentially that portion (of the mind) through which it is linked to nature."⁹

Archetypes have a dynamic rôle to play in the field of book illustration, because they were the initial forces that man found within his subconscious mind to express himself, and these archetypes take on visual forms which he saw with his inner eye. "Archetypes exist in the subconscious as undifferentiated symbols appearing to the individual as a kind of dream reality..."¹⁰

Although archetypes have a basically permanent existence, they develop like any living organism. Thus whereas the early drawings are simple symbolic forms, they later became highly developed artistic expressions. However, in this advanced state the general structure of the composition came to reflect a simple archetypal pattern. The actual forms and details of the design have been observed from lived experience and have been internalised and used in conjunction with the primeval archetypal inspiration to produce Art.

The other way that archetypes are used for communication is in terms of archetypal thought patterns; in this way forming the driving force behind speech. Archetypal visual forms are used to give a simple graphic symbol a meaning, and thus alphabets developed. Our alphabets have, however, lost most of their contact with internally observed archetypal symbols and have become accepted shapes.

A simple and basic archetype is the "mandala". I have depicted a few simple "mandala" symbols below as examples:



The "mandala" shape is generally expressed as a circular line around a dot. Thus, an artist might create a work out of these forms themselves or might use the basic centrifugal shape as the compositional structure of a work of art, whereas a person interested in words might use such simple shapes to create alphabets. Thus the archetypal thought patterns derive from the pure archetypal meaning.

Man, however, often uses both pictures and writing without being conscious of these sources and thus drifts into meaninglessness. This breakdown can be observed in much highly realistic art, which has become nothing more than a sophisticated trade. Writing has also fallen into the same trap and is often a superficial play with words lacking depth and true meaning. Obviously the same goes for illustrated writings, which drift into mere "hack-work" and futile decorative effects when divorced from where they originally developed - the roots of the mind.

Charles Dickens is putting his finger on exactly the same truth when he writes:

"It is of no use disguising the fact that what we know to be wanting in the men is wanting in their works - character, fire, purpose, and the power of using the vehicle and the model as mere means to an end... Don't think it is a part of my despondency about public affairs, and my fear that our National glory is on the decline, when I say that mere form and conventionalities usurp, in English art as in English government, and social relations, the place of living force and truth."¹¹

It is simple, therefore, to see how the whole area of Book Illustration can be divided into two camps: the one described as "inferior"; the other as "superior".

SECTION C

We can trace in history various trends and movements in the field of Book Illustration. I want to leave out the others and concentrate on the period leading up to the advent of Charles Dickens and his illustrators; and then to trace its decline and aftermath. I will try to penetrate the reasons underlying the uprising, flourishing and declining of this particular movement.

In the eighteenth century, books were not generally illustrated. It has been remarked that Fielding and Smollett would have been illustrated wonderfully well by Hogarth - but it never came to pass, and for sound reasons. There was not the vitality and depth of consciousness present in these writings to call for a dynamic combination of author and artist. They were great writers on their limited levels, but did not possess the requisite depth of genius.

Most novelists of the eighteenth century did not have the conviction of a purposeful spiritual, moral, or social awareness as major features in their work. In fact, this age is characterised by corruption and a breakdown of moral fibre and ethics. As K.J. Fielding says, when discussing one of Dickens' characters:

"She came as a pleasant relief from Sterne's leer, Smollett's chamber pots and Fielding's fornication. Little Nell and her grandfather resting in the churchyard were a refreshing change to a generation brought up on Tom Jones, with Molly Seagrim and Goody Brown stripped to the waist and battling with thigh-bones in the burial-ground."¹²

A reaction to the low and corrupt level of life set in towards the beginning of the nineteenth century. The change was radical, as we well know, and instead of creativity being used for low entertainment, it was used for edifying purposes. John Forster brings this out when he, in discussing "The Old Curiosity Shop", writes:

"I am not acquainted with any story in the language more adapted to strengthen in the heart what most needs help and encouragement to sustain kindly and innocent impulses, to awaken everywhere the sleeping germs of good."¹³

A Gothic revival began to take place with the renewed concern with meditation and the living of a pure life. Whenever people turn inwards they discover the roots of their consciousness; and the whole archetypal world begins to take a meaningful place in their lives. Typical Gothic forms like the "Gothic arch" have for their initial inspiration a basic

"rebirth" archetype. The unity with nature and the cosmic forces is also awakened. "His (Dickens') work is acknowledged as springing, in its most important aspects...from the Gothic tradition...as it developed in the nineteenth century..."¹⁴

William Hogarth was one of the beginners of this process of reaction. He rose up as a stern moralist; and gained fame for his prints, having for their themes the progress of good lives to success and bad lives to dishonour and ruin. (The Rake's Progress, The Harlot's Progress etc.) This outlook, typical of reformers, is in many ways oversimplified and narrow-minded.

The great political satirist, James Gillray raised the art of political caricature from the squabbles of party politics to artistic heights that it had seldom known. He was imbued with lofty principles and was known to possess a wide knowledge of literature, his works having "innumerable allusions to Shakespeare and Milton."¹⁵ His prints have led critics to see in his work "a breadth and emancipation of spirit."¹⁶

These men represent the beginning stages of the movement that established itself in the early eighteen hundreds. Charles Dickens emerged as the leading light, and came to express a wideness and depth of vision that outstripped his predecessors.

There was an explosion of life and colour in English Graphic Art: many new techniques were developed such as lithography, mezzotint, aquatint, and wood-engraving was re-established by Thomas Bewick. Turner and Constable achieved great success when their water-colours were reproduced in the new medium of steel engraving.

This movement in Graphic Art grew to a point of maturity and then, as suddenly as it had appeared - disappeared. A reaction set in from the younger generation who rebelled against the values of their fathers. In Book Illustration there was a decline and a concern with external

appearances and a developed skill of draughtsmanship.

The generally accepted date for this change is 1855. Millais emerged as the new leader among Book Illustrators. In 1855 Allingham's "Music Master" appeared with illustrations by Millais, Rosetti and Arthur Hughes; and in 1857 it was reinforced by Moxon's "Tennyson", which had fifty-four illustrations, of which no less than thirty came from the pencils of Millais, Rosetti and Holman Hunt. The new movement was completely dominant by 1860 and used as its vehicles such lavishly illustrated periodicals as "Once a week" and "Good Words". The new generation came to believe that the eighteen-sixties was the "Golden Age" of English Book Illustration.

The generally accepted view among these Book Illustrators concerning their predecessors was expressed thus by Joseph Pennel in 1895:

"I suppose that among artists and people of any artistic appreciation, it is generally admitted by this time that the greatest bulk of the works by "Phiz", Cruikshank, Doyle and even many of Leech's designs are simply rubbish."¹⁷

Gleeson White went a step further and gave the reasoning behind their claims:

"for certain qualities which are not remotely connected with art belong to them; but the beauty of truth, the knowledge born of academic accomplishment or the literal imitation of nature, were alike beyond their sympathy."¹⁸

After 1900 the reaction against Dickens and his Illustrators was renewed, owing mainly to the activities of the Dickens circle. The general anti-Victorian rejections of the 1920's worsened the position, together with the "growth of realistic techniques and the movement towards naturalism."¹⁹ However, a definite movement away from realism took place in the 1930's and 1940's and thus paved the way for a reappraisal of both Dickens and his Illustrators. By the time of the centenary of Dickens' death (1970), the occasion was marked with enthusiastic celebrations and publications. It is the re-evaluation of these artists in

our time that has led me to choose my subject of study.

I wish now to move onto an in-depth study of Dickens' major Book Illustrators and to show the depth and richness in their work which has been lying unappreciated for so long.

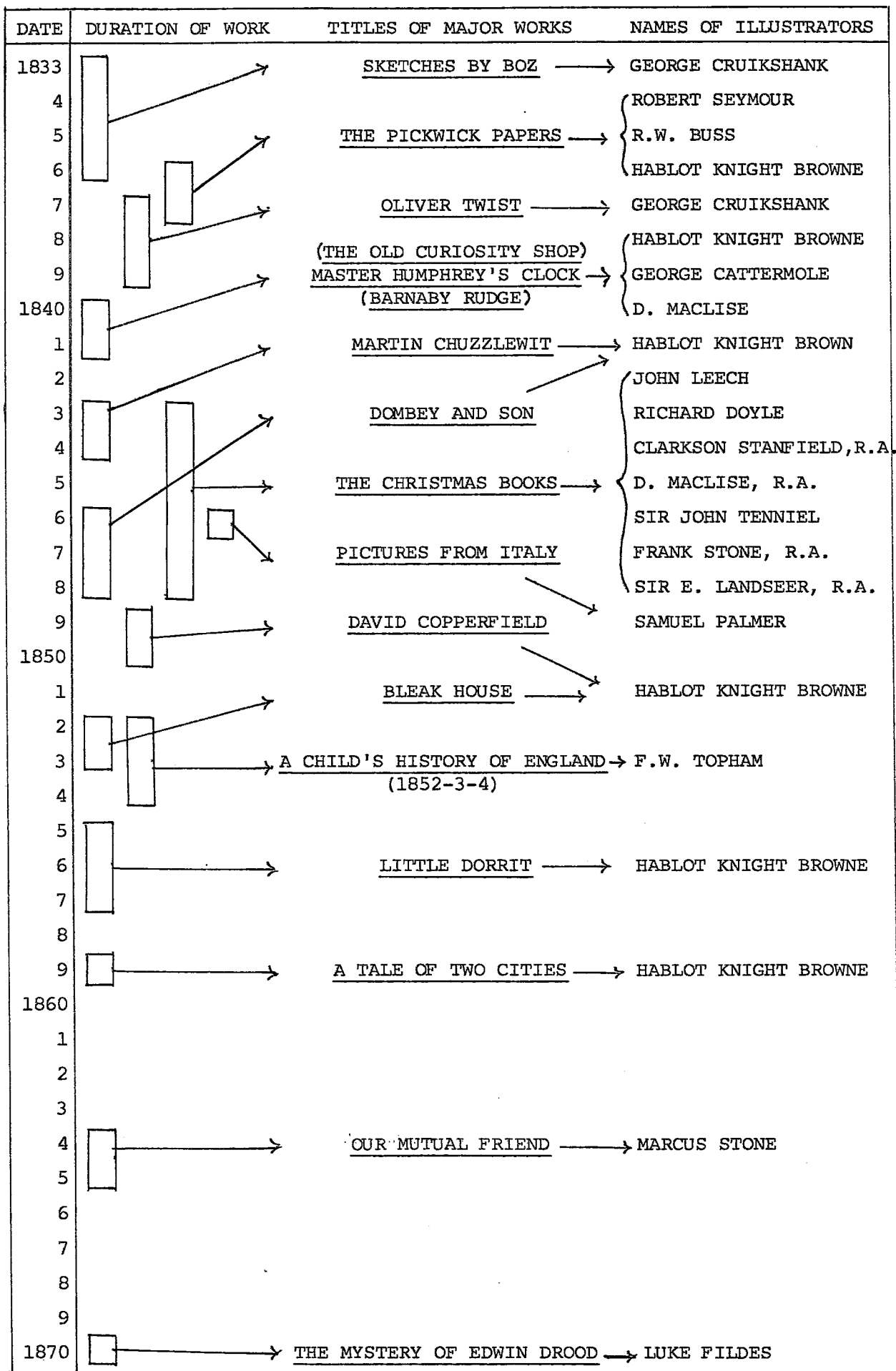


Fig. 2: Time chart showing the major works of Charles Dickens and the artists who illustrated them.

P A R T I I

George Cruikshank comes first on the "long and imposing list" of Dickens' Illustrators.²⁰ So well established was the artist that nearly a decade before Cruikshank had met the novelist, he had been dubbed the "Prince of Caricaturists".²¹ He was included in Frazer's "Gallery of Illustrious Literary Characters" in 1833. Sterling later called him the "Raphael of Cockneydom".²²

Jane Cohen has described Cruikshank's fame thus: "Cruikshank's preeminence in the field of book illustration in the 1830's was so unchallenged that the presence of his name on a title-page alone guaranteed a large sale."²³

In terms of the reactionary movement that was gathering momentum at the beginning of the nineteenth century, this artist has an interesting place. He was very much part of the times in which he lived in that in early life he represented the gay, abandoned lifestyle, and in later life came to propagate a narrow and fanatical philosophy. In the latter attitude he had much in common with William Hogarth; both men reacting to the degenerate way of life. They represent the new order, and it is understandable that they held such strong opinions; because if they did not have something dramatic to say they would not have been heard.

Dickens, however, represented the maturing of the new movement; and herein lies one of the main reasons for their fitful and stormy relationship. It is easy to disparage Cruikshank in his continual claims to the senior position in any relationship. However, one must understand that he had achieved his great fame long before Dickens had

appeared on the scene: "Long before Boz was heard of, George Cruikshank had captured a snug niche in the Temple of Fame."²⁴

Furthermore, Cruikshank had grown up in a tradition of caricaturists who had a unique position of independence and authority. The acclaimed leader of this tradition had been Hogarth, and early in Cruikshank's life he had been compared with the famous man. Hogarth had founded English graphic satire; and Gillray and Rowlandson had been influenced by him, even though their work had diminished his scope. However, Cruikshank achieved a similar level, and in his maturity was widely acclaimed as "the modern Hogarth".²⁵ He received much praise for "that story-teller's power which was so much Hogarth's and his own."²⁶

Professor Wilson had said in 1823: "Here lies genius; but let him do himself justice - let him persevere and rise in his own path...Let him, in one word, proceed - and, as he proceeds, let him think of HOGARTH."²⁷

With such praise it is understandable that he saw himself in a similar light to Hogarth and developed the same ambition as Hogarth, which was to "exert the influence of an authoritative moralist on the mass of unregenerate mankind."²⁸

It is for this reason that his techniques often lacked the fineness of traditional works of art, and were adapted to the needs of a crusader: "The Bottle was executed in a very coarse style - in order that it might be sold cheaply, to the million."²⁹ Hogarth had expressed similar sentiments with regard to Beer Street and Gin Lane.³⁰

With his attitude of independence and authority he naturally thought that he would retain this position as a Book Illustrator. At first the authors readily conceded, his aid being considered in the

light of a condescension. When Dickens wrote the Preface to "Sketches by Boz", he was expressing a commonly held opinion:

"...the author was naturally desirous to secure the assistance and companionship of some well-known individual, who had frequently contributed to the success, though his well-earned reputation rendered it impossible for him ever to have shared the hazard of similar undertakings. To whom, as possessing this requisite to an imminent degree, could he apply but to GEORGE CRUIKSHANK?"³¹

Sketches by Boz (1833-1836), originally published under the title Everyday Life and Everyday People, appeared in the Monthly Magazine, the Evening Chronicle and the Morning Chronicle, Bell's Life of London, and The Library of Fiction, and like most of Dickens' other writings, only appeared in a collected form later, under its more well-known title.

In 1836 Dickens sold the copyright to John Macrone, who published a selection in two duo decimo volumes; each volume containing eight illustrations by George Cruikshank. Frederick Kitton expresses a general opinion in saying, "it may be said of these little vignettes that they are among the artist's most successful efforts with the needle."³² With the added impetus of the illustrations the book received even greater acclaim.

In 1837 Macrone published a second volume containing ten etchings by Cruikshank. At this time Dickens repurchased the copyright and entered into an agreement with Chapman and Hall for a complete edition, to be issued in shilling monthly numbers and beginning in November 1837. This work contained all Cruikshank's designs (except "Free and Easy") plus fourteen new ones. He also produced a design for the wrapper.

Cruikshank first met Dickens on 17 November 1835, and although they were separated in age by a score years they had much in common: "both began their careers as journalists; both remained recorders of the London scene... Neither brought any formal training...but rather an unrelenting moral and social consciousness. The two men loved the



Top: Horatio Sparkins (from Sketches by Box.)

Bottom: Mr. John Dounce at the Shop; from same.

theatre... Both even shared an interest in animal magnetism..."³³ In their first interview Dickens was satisfied with the artist's pledge that: "as far as he is concerned, the book shall be out by Christmas without fail."³⁴

However, misunderstandings and delays arose, and Cruikshank complained to Macrone that he was being pressed for illustrations before seeing the manuscript, and regretted the "unpleasant turn in the state of affairs."³⁵ When the book did not appear by Christmas the author became angry and complained at the "seemed offhandedness" of the artist,³⁶ and said that he required "the spur."³⁷ The artist retorted by saying that each plate contained four subjects, and Dickens backed down but continued to be irritated by Cruikshank's lack of haste.

When the next edition came out in the following year it was Dickens' turn to be slow. With his sudden fame and his recent marriage, he did not think that he could supply enough text by Christmas. "In one year the Inimitable Boz had become ever busier than the Illustrious George."³⁸

Cruikshank complained to Macrone, saying that he would have liked to see the text to suggest alterations,³⁹ and ended by threatening to stop working if he did not get good subjects.⁴⁰ When Dickens was informed he reported himself not to be surprised; and that he had "long believed Cruikshank to be mad."⁴¹

Having thus seen the negative side of their relationship, we will move on to the positive; and try to pin down their mutual achievements. Firstly, we are aware that one of the most productive areas of their collaboration was in their similar depth of understanding and inner knowledge. Their work fits together so well, because of an interpenetrating sympathy in the basic areas of inspiration and artistic feeling.

They both worked from rich archetypal sources. Cruikshank's compositions are generally based on the "mandala" type of structure:



Top: Mr. Minns and His Cousin (from Sketches by Box.).

Bottom: The Dancing Academy; from same.

"Almost all the illustrations for the Sketches by Boz have strongly centred, centripetal compositions. They spiral inwards towards a point."⁴²

They may be contrasted, for example, with Gillray's compositions which are "explosive, centrifugal, with objects or figures which seem about to fall off the edge of the page."⁴³

In Cruikshank's plates there is generally a form at the centre around which everything else is arranged - sometimes a vertical form, sometimes an enclosed area. A good example is the etching "Horatio Spartins" which has for its central area the hat of the lady in the middle; another is in the one entitled "Mr. Minns and his cousin", which is centred on the urn in the middle of the table; also in "The Boarding House", which is arranged around the candle flame and on the face of the organ from which the lines in the woodwork radiate outwards; yet a further example is to be found in "The Dancing Academy", in which attention is focused on the little boy dancing alone in the centre; and finally, in "Mr. John Dounce at the Shop", the portly figure of Dounce himself constitutes the central form.

Some of Cruikshank's compositions are based on two circular forms, one a little behind the other, as in, for example, "Theodosius Introduced to the New Pupil". These compositions are based on the Double Archetype, which has already been discussed.

Dickens' writings are also based on archetypal patterns, albeit very simple ones at this stage, and therefore we have an agreement so fundamentally workable. This is why the total effect of their combined work is so unified in feeling and atmosphere. It is because of this fundamental agreement and sympathy that, in spite of bad relations, we find Dickens saying: "no one appreciates Cruikshank's talents as highly as myself."⁴⁴

Not only did they share this rich inner heritage, but owing to their



Top: The Last Cab-Driver (from Sketches by Box.)

Bottom: Seven Dials; from the same.

common roots, their externalised understandings developed in a similar way. Cruikshank developed a profound and orderly understanding of London's life and people. The inner world thus penetrated the outer world, and the outer world in turn enlivened and enriched the inner world with lived experience. Thus each played a mutually complementary rôle in a dualistic system. Cruikshank's art is a delicate balance between archetypal systems and the very real knowledge of everyday London life.

"Cruikshank knew London and London life better than the majority of Sunday-school children know their catechism."⁴⁵ His etchings have gained importance as historical records because of their truthfulness and accuracy. In "The Last Cab-Driver", he has depicted an obsolete form of cabriolet, the driver being seated over the right wheel; also in "The Parish Engine", we have a record of the type of public fire extinguisher that was then in use, and an example of the typical beadle of the period. Mr. Bumble, who featured in Oliver Twist is the same "type" as this beadle. Cruikshank was accustomed to develop "types" of people and to use them in his work (e.g. Fagin, Bill Sikes). They stem from his archetypal world - in fact, everything that Cruikshank delineates from the outer world has its counterpart in the inner world.

The Architecture that appears in Cruikshank's etchings also originates from his inner resources; and thus his buildings are more than faithful copies of existing examples. He has an intuitive understanding of stone and metal; and displays a personal involvement in Georgian architecture which alone have made him famous:

"An excellent example of Cruikshank's eye for picturesque line and texture in some of the commonest objects that met him in his walks: the brickwork of the houses, for instance, prettily indicated, the woodwork of the outside shutters, and the window, on which various lights are pleasantly broken. I know no artist so alive as Cruikshank to the pretty sedateness of Georgian architecture."⁴⁶



Top: Hackney Coach Stands (from Sketches by Box.)

Bottom: The Streets - Morning; from the same.

A good example of such architectural drawing can be found in "Hackney coach stands", from Sketches by Boz.

Cruikshank never used a sketchbook - his secret lay in a dialogue which existed between outside things and his rich inner artistic ability.

Of all his etchings for the "Sketches", the one entitled "The Streets, Morning" has generally been singled out for special praise. It comes closest, perhaps, of them all to "total collaboration" between Cruikshank and Dickens. It has drawn praise from men like Professor Ruskin and Frederick Wedmore.⁴⁷

In terms of the archetypal structure underlying Cruikshank's compositions we have observed the centripetal organisation of forces. This inward pressure is "reinforced by the fact that Cruikshank's plates are not only usually dark but are also overshadowed by ponderous architectural overhangings - arches, pediments, or heavy ceilings - or by sombre heavy curtains."⁴⁸

These devices are typical of those used by artists who see with their inner eye. Charles Baudelaire, himself a member of this school, has put his finger on the pulse of Cruikshank's etchings:

"Le mérite spéciale de George Cruikshank...est une abondance inépuissable et inévitablement de la pointe de Cruikshank, comme les rimes riches de la plume des poètes naturels. Le grotesque est son habitude."⁴⁹

He talks about the grotesque and then goes on to ask what creates this grotesqueness:

"Ce qui constitue surtout le grotesque de Cruikshank, c'est la violence extravagante du geste et du mouvement, et l'explosion dans l'expression. Tous ses petits personnages miment avec fureur et turbulence comme des acteurs de pantomime."⁵⁰

He thus describes the inward centripetal pressure, driven inwards by heavy forces onto a host of small figures. This causes a grotesque comedy in which tiny figures, each of whom "se culbute, s'agite et se mêle avec

une pétulance indictible" in his "monde miniscule."⁵¹

Another characteristic of the inner artistic vision is the curiously frozen nature of these strong forces and movements. Dickens shares this in his writings, describing whole scenes as if they had suddenly stood still.⁵²

From the foregoing passages it can be deduced that The Sketches by Boz cannot be taken at face value. There are different levels at which Cruikshank and Dickens collaborate. On the surface they can be read as quite ordinary descriptions of everyday life. Dickens "leaves the surface action and the doings of his characters so clear that his novels may be read without suspicion of concealed meanings."⁵³

Professor Reid has attempted to classify these different levels into coherent groupings. Except for the part played by the child's view of reality, these levels apply equally well to Cruikshank as to Dickens.

"1: the narrative proper, incorporating details of contemporary life, habits and scenes, 2: the social comment and satire, 3: the child's view of reality, 4: the projections in the Novel of Dickens' own fears, anxieties and aspirations, 5: a set of symbols and poetic devices extending the significance of the novel beyond its social context and, 6: archetypal images."⁵⁴

On the surface level Dickens is described as a "gifted drawing-room entertainer" of "the middle class family circle."⁵⁵ Cruikshank was appreciated in much the same way: "An evening with the caricatures was an institution in the English home in Dickens' childhood."⁵⁶ In spite of this, they both embody depths that are not easily understood by "the man in the street".

Perhaps an even better example of this multi-levelled structure is to be found in Oliver Twist (1837-1839), which is Dickens' next work to be illustrated by Cruikshank. It was written in the form of a serial tale and organised as a unified whole, therefore giving Cruikshank greater

opportunity to become involved in the developments of the plot.

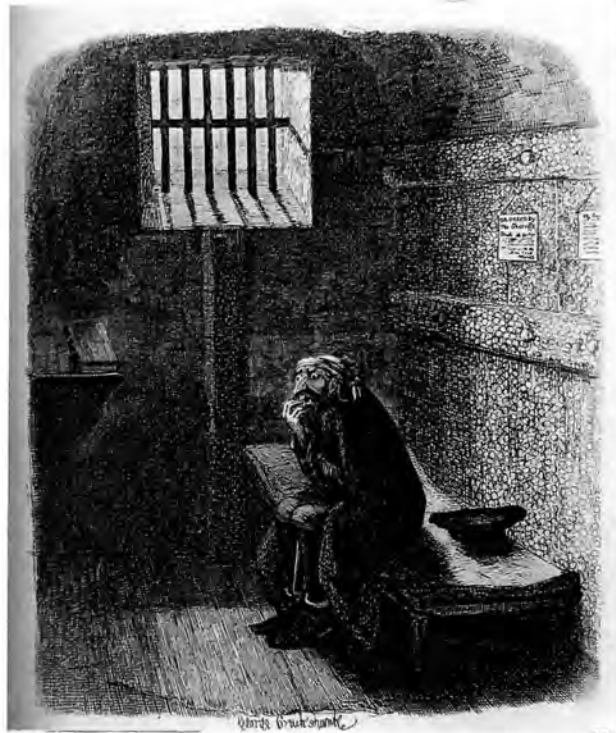
On 22 August 1836 Dickens entered into an agreement with R. Bentley to edit a new monthly which was to be called Bentley's Miscellany, and to furnish it with a serial tale, George Cruikshank's services being retained as illustrator. The first issue appeared in January 1837, and the first edition of the tale came out with the February issue under the title Oliver Twist or the Parish Boy's Progress. The story was issued monthly until March 1839 and Cruikshank remained sole illustrator throughout. In October 1838 Chapman and Hall issued an edition in three volumes post octavo but the illustrations are to be seen at their best in Bentley's Miscellany.

Of all the different levels in Oliver Twist the deepest is the archetype. However, archetypes in their pure forms are not as predominant as their derived forms - fairy-tales and myths. The relationship between archetypes and fairy-tales has been expressed thus:

"All that is necessary for my purpose is a recognition of the existence of archetypes, primary images that feature in the myths and stories of a very wide variety of cultures and at all periods of history, and of their significance as figuring in the deepest, and most primitive impulses of mankind. It is sufficient...to say that, in fairy-tales, we have the infantile form of those myths and legends in which the archetypes are more maturely realised."⁵⁷

Furthermore, in Dickens' books there are many examples of typical "fairy-tale" figures.⁵⁸ An example is the "Fairy-Godfather figure who acts as a substitute father for the orphan hero, protecting him from the evils of the world and bringing him at last to happiness and the reward of perseverance."⁵⁹ Oliver Twist is based on this fairy-tale stereotype, in that Mr. Brownlow, who befriends Oliver, is a typical fairy-godfather figure.

Cruikshank, in working from the same sources, provided the powerful artistic force to co-ordinate with the text. The primeval unity between



Top: Fagin in the Condemned Cell (from Oliver Twist.).

Bottom: The Last Chance; from the same.

word and picture is again manifest.

In representing the small boy Oliver, Cruikshank went to great pains to satisfy himself that he had expressed him correctly. In the first few issues he is represented as a rather ordinary boy but in later issues he appears as a handsome child, radiating a spiritual and uplifted presence. Both author and artist were working from the "child-hero" archetype which is an accepted Jungian symbol of the emergence of self in the process of individuation:

"Oliver Twist...coming forth into new life from the darkness of the London slums and Fagin's den has affinities with all those child-heroes of myth whose story represents the regression of libido energy and the emergence of self."⁶⁰

We now move on to the most striking instance of dynamic collaboration between author and artist in Oliver Twist - that of Fagin the Jew. The "devil archetype" is identified with Fagin and is described by Dickens as such:

"The hideous old man seemed like some loathsome reptile, engendered in the slime and darkness through which he moved: crawling forth, by night, in search of some human offal for a meal."⁶¹

Often he is actually called the Devil. Further, the red beard was a sign of the devil in mediaeval drama. We first see him crouching over the fire with a toasting fork and Dickens leaves us in little doubt as to Fagin's origin.⁶² The devil had appeared before in Cruikshank's work and he delineated him with rarely superceded power in this book. Perhaps the most powerful example, is the illustration entitled "Fagin in the condemned cell."

Thackeray has written of it thus: "Of the Jew - the dreadful Jew - that Cruikshank drew, let us say nothing of it, - what can we say to describe it?"⁶³ It is in this etching that author and artist came nearest to "total collaboration".



Top: Oliver Asks For More (from Oliver Twist.)

Bottom: Master Bates Explains a Professional Technicality; from the same.

In Oliver Twist, author and artist together selected the subjects when time permitted; thus they selected the subject matter for "Oliver asks for more", which Dickens perceived would "bring Cruikshank out",⁶⁴ and "Master Bates explains a professional technicality", with which the author was "delighted".⁶⁵ Only once did Dickens allow Cruikshank to select a subject for illustration alone, and this because the October 1838 issue was "not so productive of subjects for illustration."⁶⁶ In contrast to Sketches by Boz, Dickens chose the subjects and reviewed his drawings. For many of these subjects he supplied a detailed précis.

However, in spite of these restrictions the standard of work was very high - and they achieved a sense of absolute integration between word and text which has some of the sterling ingredients of "total collaboration".

In terms of individual achievement, Thackeray states that the plate "Mr. Bumble and Mrs. Corney taking tea", was "even better in Cruikshank's version than in Boz's exquisite account of the interview."⁶⁷ He drew unbounded praise from Ruskin,⁶⁸ and Baudelaire found his use of the grotesque his "mérite special."⁶⁹

During 1838-1839, the busiest years of their professional association, they still found time to collaborate on two minor works: on 23 February the two-volume Memoirs of Joseph Grimaldi appeared with Cruikshank's illustrations,⁷⁰ and sold well; and in 1839 The loving ballad of Lord Bateman appeared. Dickens said of the illustrations in the latter: "You never did anything like those etchings, never."⁷¹

It is a great pity that Cruikshank did not illustrate more of Dickens' work - but this became impossible owing to their increasingly bad personal relations. His claims became more and more unreasonable, which had led many people to believe that his mind had become unbalanced. His view of himself became completely unrealistic:

"Cruikshank habitually exaggerated the effect of his own productions. He always maintained that his Bank Note had stopped the hanging of forgers and that his Bartholomew Fair had caused the suppression of such gatherings. He would attribute nearly all the advances in the temperance cause to his own efforts. He was similarly prone to overestimate his rôle in any literary collaboration."⁷²

The novelist Ainsworth, some of whose works Cruikshank has illustrated, was continually being worried by the artist's claims to having originated the plot and most of the ideas in his books. There is evidence that a certain amount of truth exists in these claims, especially in his novel The Tower of London.⁷³ However, he made similar claims to Oliver Twist, in which there can be found very little substantiating evidence. It was Cruikshank's fixed and narrow way of thinking that led him to see his ideas reflected in other peoples' work. For example, in Oliver Twist he claimed that his idea of a simple industry/idleness opposition was used as the plot. On the contrary, the plot shows a whole new and finer way of thinking that Dickens had developed and that far outstripped the older idea of the "progresses".

Cruikshank's lack of a mature and developed outlook shows itself in his attitude to alcohol. In his set of eight engravings entitled The Bottle he shows how an innocent glass of wine at Christmas leads to murder and the gallows. "Overnight the onetime climber of lamp-posts and wallower in gutters became a fanatical teetotaler, adding the force of personal example to his pencil and platform preaching."⁷⁴ This simplistic attitude has many similarities to Hogarth; but which has outgrown its age, and is superseded by more enlightened thought. Dickens felt that he had to contradict these ideas, and he did so in a firm but not unkind manner:

"(Drinking) is a vice in England, but wretchedness and dirt are greater. (If) temperance societies would suggest an antidote against hunger, filth, and foul air, or could establish dispensaries for the gratuitous distribution of bottles of Lethe-water, gin palaces would be numbered among the things that were."⁷⁵

The author found the drawing good but the philosophy erroneous. Sadly, Cruikshank took such criticism personally. In 1853 Cruikshank published a series of fairy-tales that were given themes similar to temperance tracts. Dickens' formal protest entitled "Frauds on the Fairies" appeared in Household Words.⁷⁶

Thus their relationship dwindled away and it is truly tragic to record that Cruikshank's hatred for Dickens had grown to such an extent that when Pailthorpe met Cruikshank on the day after the great author's death and expressed the sentiment, "Isn't this a frightful calamity.", Cruikshank answered triumphantly, "What! about Dickens? one of our greatest enemies gone!"⁷⁷

George Cruikshank was not suited to filling the position of Dickens' permanent illustrator - so the search continued. The man who eventually came to fulfil this rôle was Hablôt Knight Browne, who was to illustrate no less than ten of the author's fourteen major works.

At the outset of this discussion on Browne it must be said that in spite of the very real agreement on fundamental issues which he and Cruikshank shared, their differences could not have been more marked; and it is interesting that it is in these very differences that a large part of the understanding of Dickens and his Illustrators lies.

There had been a struggle for power between Cruikshank and Dickens, and this because of the former's age, his established reputation and expectation for recognition as an independent and autonomous agent - however this was not so with the new illustrator. Browne brought virtually no reputation with him and was barely eighteen years old when their partnership began. Added to this, Browne was not of a domineering disposition - in fact, he was unassertive and inclined to be a recluse. He thus came to play second fiddle in a partnership that was to prove long and productive.

These differences aside, Browne shared Cruikshank's belief that it was unnecessary to draw "from the life", and likewise, never kept a sketchbook. He stored the information in his visual memory.

"Seymour, Cruikshank, Browne and Leech had the technical skill of etching at their fingertips, and if their drawing did not have hours in the studio behind it, it did have hours of concentrated observation, and a special and strenuous training of the visual memory. This latter power was a positive pride to them. Browne 'owned that he never carried a sketch-book, and never made a memorandum from nature in his life.'"⁷⁸

Browne lacked the sheer artistic power of Constable and Turner - his gifts lay in another direction. He was primarily a Book Illustrator, and exhibited the capacity to work in unison with an author and to absorb and adapt the ethos of a written work. Therefore, an author would bring him to life; and this is exactly what Dickens did. Browne found himself with this author, and that self was a "peculiarly Dickensian self".⁷⁹ The fundamental agreement between them was the archetypal unity that exists between word and picture.

~~Browne developed very much as Dickens developed—they worked very~~ much as a team. The illustrator's powers were awakened by the author. As Dickens broke new ground and discovered new truths in the field of creative writing, so Hablôt Browne displayed a capacity for expressing the ethos and atmosphere of these new phases. Browne has expressed visually all of Dickens' major phases. In this way "total collaboration" was approached in many different ways in their mammoth partnership.

The Pickwick Papers was the first main work on which Dickens and Browne co-operated; however, Browne comes third on the list of illustrators who worked on the book. The first two did not last for very great lengths of time for various reasons which I will go into now.

Robert Seymour (born 1798) is the first to have illustrated for the Pickwick. In 1833 he had designed twelve lithographic plates for a new edition of Maxims and Hints for an Angler, which exposes the humorous

side of the piscatorial art. He also brought out a number of similar designs of cockney-sportsmen which were published as Sketches by Seymour and achieved great popularity.

In February 1836 Chapman and Hall visited him in connection with work he had done for them, and Seymour mentioned a scheme that he had in mind of illustrating a work which was centred around the idea of a Club of Cockney Sportsmen. The firm thought favourably of the idea and they planned to bring it out in shilling monthly numbers. They then looked for someone to fill in the requisite text; they approached Leigh Hunt, Theodore Hook and others who declined, and so Seymour thought of the author of Sketches by Boz which he had just finished reading. The idea was propounded to Dickens, who readily agreed, but on very different conditions to those which were suggested to him. Dickens was not prepared to write up to a set of etchings - he made it clear that if he was to do the job "the plates" would "arise naturally out of the text", and that he should "take (his) own way, with a freer range of English scenes and people, and was afraid that (he) should ultimately do so in any case, whatever course (he) might prescribe to (himself) at starting."⁸⁰

The first monthly part of The Pickwick Papers appeared in April 1836, with four etchings by Seymour. The plot was centred on an Antiquarian Club headed by a wealthy retired gentleman of a singularly gullible disposition.

The results were good, but a tragic event took place "before the second number...was published",⁸¹ when Seymour committed suicide. It can only be supposed that "the excessive strain resulting from overwork seriously began to affect his health."⁸²

Thus a vacancy arose, and as the third number was almost due for the printers, an illustrator was anxiously sought. At this point

Chapman and Hall decided to increase the text from 24 to 32 pages and to reduce the number of etchings from four to two. They were advised to contact R.W. Buss as regards an illustrator, which they did, and he agreed "after much persuasion and at great personal inconvenience."⁸³

The venture was doomed to fail, because as Buss himself said: "I told him (Mr. Hall) I had never in the whole of my life held an etching-needle in my hand, and that I was entirely ignorant of the process of etching."⁸⁴

Thus the results of the next issue were poor, and he received notice that his services were no longer required. A second vacancy for the post had arisen within the space of two weeks. There were many applicants for this post, among them the youthful Thackeray, but the honour was reserved for Browne. Chapman and Hall had seen a large etching entitled "John Gilpin's Ride", for which Browne had won a silver medal in a Society of Arts competition in about his eighteenth year. After doing an illustration for a pamphlet entitled Sunday Under Three Heads (by Charles Dickens) in June 1836, Browne was asked if he would like to illustrate the Pickwick.

All told, Browne produced thirty-four etchings for Pickwick, with Seymour accounting for seven and Buss for two. After the third issue the sale boomed from several hundreds to a few thousands, and this can mainly be attributed to the appearance of Mr. Samuel Weller, who became an immediate favourite with the public.

Quite understandably Browne's first etchings betray a certain indecisiveness; but very quickly he comes to display an impressive confidence and ability. This change is particularly noticeable in the second versions because the initial plates quickly wore out and new ones had to be etched. It is in a comparison between newer and older versions that reveals the marked improvement.



Top: Mrs. Bardell faints in Mr. Pickwick's Arms, 1st. Version (from Pickwick Papers.).
Bottom: Mrs. Bardell...etc..., 2nd. Version; from same.

A good example is the plate "Mrs. Bardell faints in Mr. Pickwick's Arms". In the first version the young Bardell is represented as a hesitant, cramped knot of scratched lines, whereas in the later version he is clearly defined in a vivid and solidly constructed drawing. Pickwick's three friends are monotonously similar in the first etching, whereas the second depicts them as humorously characterised individuals. The same may be said for Mrs. Bardell who appears as somewhat like a doll tipped against Pickwick in the first plate, whereas in the second, she is a big woman voluptuously sagging against him.

Furthermore, the interior of the room is carefully delineated in the second etching, giving us a foretaste of the beautiful Victorian interiors that he later drew, whereas the first is exceedingly ill-defined and badly drawn.

If we can divide Browne's development into three main phases - the Pickwick etchings fall very much into the first, and can be broadly categorised as owning a light and easy treatment and a certain light charm. The second phase is developed in Master Humphrey's Clock, and the third with the development of pure archetypes in the so-called "dark plates". One can trace other categories, but I am using these three for the purpose of clarity.

Nicholas Nickleby (1838-1839) also falls quite clearly into the first category. This book is much more serious than the Pickwick, but a general unforced and casually humorous type of illustration prevails. However, there are signs of a more all-embracing collaboration between pen and pencil. Browne's capacity for getting into Dickens' state of mind begins to assert itself. This is seen in the drawings of Nicholas as the hero of righteous principles and noble values. Browne expresses admirably this idea of the courageous and defiant gentleman, which is central to the Victorian spirit.

Nicholas Nickelby is one of the books which are constructed in terms of simile, and is full of fairy-tale stereotypes. It is only later that the "purer archetypes grow with the more conscious development of symbolic patterns."⁸⁵ Browne's development is strikingly parallel and the purer archetypes only appear much later. In Nicholas Nickelby, The Chimes and Martin Chuzzlewit we still have a more superficial collaboration with the text which takes the form of accepted modes and conventional norms of representation.

The fairy-godfather figure is identified with the Cheeryble Brothers who are Nicholas Nickelby's benefactors. Added to this "fairy" influence is the part played by melodrama. The Ralph Nickelby and Sir Mulberry Hawk episodes are concerned with theatrical violence. This theatrical influence is carried through into the etchings which have this more superficial and supertheatrical humorousness.

An important archetype is "The Progress", which was used in a simplistic form in Hogarth and Cruikshank. This form developed in Dickens into a rich and creative part of his writings. In Nicholas Nickelby the progress form is used within a fairy-tale stereotype: the youthful Nickelby and his family get into dire financial straits; Nicholas works with all his might and eventually appears as the hero in saving his family from disgrace. Browne penetrated the nature of this plot and paralleled it in a sympathetic manner. All told, he executed thirty-nine plates (not the forty that were advertised because Daniel Maclise added a portrait of Dickens as a frontispiece). They are pervaded throughout by a light, sunny treatment.

Besides these more simplistic elements we see the Browne/Dickens collaboration growing and expanding. People are human beings - not the mere "types" which Hogarth was often guilty of creating. We see Dickens and Browne making a journey to meet the original model of the Cruel

Yorkshire schoolmaster, who appears in the book. They met, among others, one William Shaw, who is supposed to be the man they chose; and Browne was there to experience the living example. This quotation from Dickens' private diary reinforces their concern with real issues:

"Mem. - Shaw, the Schoolmaster we saw to-day, is the man in whose school several boys went blind some time since from gross neglect. The case was tried and the verdict went against him. It must have been between 1823 and 1826. Look this out in the newspapers."86

This concern with living issues was not carried into slavish imitation as was to characterise the illustrators who appeared after 1855. Neither did they become blinded by narrow-minded and fixed ideas like their predecessors. The outgoing search was the result of a healthy interest in finding new information to revitalise their inner resources. Dickens and Browne were always thinking of new ways to try to get nearer to "total collaboration". It was at about this time that they thought about changing the format of the books altogether. They thought that if the illustrations were dropped into the text, instead of being on separate pages, a greater degree of unity and co-ordination would be achieved between word and picture.

It was in the planning stages of Master Humphrey's Clock (1840-1841), that this decision was taken; and this brings us into the second main phase of development. It was realised that a new dimension in collaboration could be achieved if word and picture were wedded in this way. A new closeness would emerge and would add new possibilities for the archetypal unity between pen and pencil.

Another innovation which is part of this second phase was the use of wood-engraving instead of etching for the illustrations. Yet another change was the introduction of a new illustrator to work alongside Browne: the architectural subjects would be given to the historical artist George

Cattermole; and the figure-pieces to Phiz. Out of the total 194 woodcuts, 61 fell to Browne's hand and the remainder to Cattermole. This use of more than one artist proved very successful because Cattermole emerged as a genius in the realm of ancient buildings and furniture - an area in which Browne generally fell down. His buildings are an after-thought. The only comparable area in which Browne showed his form was in interiors. However, Browne's main part was in the delineation of figure-pieces.

In terms of the development of archetypes we again see the less mature fairy-tale forms being central to the book:

"No book Dickens wrote is crammed so full of fairy-tale and folklore material as is this one...the basic fable...the pursuit of the youthful Princess (Nell) through the dark forests of England by the Robber Baron (Quilp) and her pathetic death before she can be rescued by the Fairy Godfather (Mr. Trent's brother), the noble Knight (Kit) and the Clown (Dick Swiveller)..."⁸⁷

This fairy-tale foundation, which is conceived at some remove from the deeper archetypes, quite naturally calls for a change in collaboration between author and illustrator - namely the closeness and intimacy of the two forms. A greater integration was thus achieved, with Dickens leading the reader into the illustration and then the illustration in turn leading back into text. J.R. Harvey has expressed it thus:

"The illustrations are often treated as paragraphs of the narrative. The writing leads into the illustration, which then does certain work for the writing, before directing the reader back to the text."⁸⁸

A prime example can be found in the illustrations showing Kit Nubbles embracing his pony, Whisker, on his release from prison. Dickens concludes the paragraph thus: "It is a striking example of his earnest heartfelt reception, and Kit fairly puts his arms around Whisker's neck and hugs him."⁸⁹ At this climax point the prose does not continue and dwell upon the scene but hands the reader over to an illustration. The illustration brings across the reunion in a way that prose could not -

and goes a step further. In looking at Phiz's little engraving the reader will soon notice a figure not previously mentioned, i.e. that of Barbara. Then Dickens continues the prose, posing the question which must be on the reader's mind: "But how comes Barbara to trip in there?"

This represents a truly masterly combination of word and picture. The two forms are interrelated so that they enhance one another. This development marks a high point in the relationship between Dickens and Browne, and also in Book Illustration generally.

I have taken another example from the second story in Master Humphrey's Clock, namely, Barnaby Rudge, which comes at the end of Chapter LXVIII where the "spectacle" that appals Barnaby is described in broad general terms and ends with a general comment by Dickens. The illustration of the scene shows the actual individuals seen by Barnaby, and enables Dickens to begin the next paragraph thus: "With all he saw in this last glance fixed indelibly upon his mind, Barnaby hurried from the city..."⁹⁰ The illustration is used to reinforce the impression upon the reader: "The picture assists us to see through Barnaby's eyes, and helps fix the scene on our minds too."⁹¹

We now move on to perhaps the most striking use of text and illustration combining in a dynamic interrelationship. The engraving in question is the work of Daniel Maclise, a close friend of Dickens, who did very little illustrating but when he did he exhibited an amazing ability to fit into the plot and mood of the book. Indeed, this engraving comes close, in its own way, to "total collaboration" - it is a classic.

This tendency on the part of temporary illustrators to attain a high standard is observable not infrequently in Dickens. It must be borne in mind that the hard work over long periods made such successful short-phase illustration possible. It was the background struggle of trial and error, and deep inthinking between Dickens and his permanent Book

"A black and dreadful place!" exclaimed the child.
"Look in," said the old man, pointing downward with his finger.
The child complied, and gazed down into the pit.



"It looks like a grave, itself," said the old man.

"It does," replied the child.

"I have often had the fancy," said the sexton, "that it might have been dug at first to make the old place more gloomy, and the old monks more religious. It's to be closed up, and built over."

The child still stood, looking thoughtfully into the vault.

"We shall see," said the sexton, "on what gay heads other earth will have closed, when the light is shut out from here. God knows! They'll close it up, next spring."

"The birds sing again in spring," thought the child, as she leant at her casement window, and gazed at the declining sun. "Spring! a beautiful and happy time!"

Illustrators that created opportunities for men like Maclise, Cattermole, Samuel Palmer etc. to step in with such immediate success.

A noticeable factor in these books is the great importance attached to the last page of a number. In this way maximum power is afforded to the collaboration of author and artist. Thus we notice that the illustration by Daniel Maclise is not only on the last page of Chapter IV, but also on the last page of the weekly issue, Number 35, and the end of the eighth monthly part. It is obvious therefore that this page is to carry some weight and import.

The text describes how the sexton is showing Nell around the church, and at the point when they come to the well, and Nell lifts off the well-cover the reader turns the page to find that most of the final page is taken up by a large and dramatic engraving. It comes at a precise moment in the dialogue:

"'A black and dreadful place!' exclaimed the child.

'Look in,' said the old man, pointing downward with his finger. The child complied, and gazed down into the pit."

The illustration follows and one notices immediately that all the attention is drawn in a downward direction into the well, thus forming a fine combination between the wording which emphasises the same aspect. The return to text is also very well done, the next words being:

"'It looks like a grave itself,' said the old man."⁹²

The picture is well placed, creating a powerful impression on the reader. Dickens was well aware of the power that word and picture could have when combined, and it is a unity conceived at a deep level: "The picture gives the episode its force, author and artist having collaborated with an intimate understanding of each other's art."⁹³

Maclise showed an independence and ability to use all the possibilities of the artist's half of the partnership. Dickens knew this and although his original intention was "a little design, embodying the bells



Top: The Maypole, (Barnaby Rudge.).
Bottom: Kit Embracing Whisker, (The Old Curiosity Shop.).

above and the well below, and the old sexton and the child,"⁹⁴ he offered to write or rewrite the passage to suit the illustration:

"...if you like to put any more people in, young or old, do so at your own discretion, and I'll take care to account for 'em. When you have done it, will you let me have it, that I may take care the text and it agree?"⁹⁵

The two men show a degree of maturity and mutual trust in this way. The result is truly great - and it works on different levels: we have the conscious and literal co-working in terms of the words paralleling the downward movement in the picture, and we also have unity at the deeper, archetypal level. The reader experiences the powerful effect of the episode because deep chords within him are being touched. We are dealing here with true book illustration and we could even say with true genius.⁹⁶

The majority of the illustrations were tackled by the two resident illustrators, and the text is divided into two different modes which gave each man an area that best suited his talents:

"The one, dominated by Quilp is boisterous, comic and fantastical, while the other, dominated by Nell is subdued, solemn and pathetic; the first becomes Browne's province, while the second is reserved for Cattermole."⁹⁷

Browne was involved in Chapters LVI to LXIX and with the return to Nell in Chapter LXX; Cattermole then takes over and Browne is not seen again in the book. The differences in style between the two modes could not be more extreme.

George Cattermole (born 1800) was given the solemn subjects associated with Nell's death, in spite of his being mainly accustomed to architectural and historical subjects. He had been a pupil of the architectural draughtsman John Britton, and from 1821-1824 his drawings had appeared in Cathedral Antiquities of Great Britain. His first painting for a Royal Academy Exhibition was a view of Peterborough Cathedral. His antiquarianism was relevant to the original concept of Master Humphrey's Clock because Dickens makes a great play with furniture and architecture

in establishing the mood of sad, mellowed kindness which is focused in the "mis-shapen, deformed, old man", Master Humphrey, who has led "a lonely, solitary life."⁹⁸

It seems strange that an artist with Cattermole's background should achieve success with a novelist like Dickens, who is anything but a reporter of dry, historical facts. However, to get an idea of how pleased Dickens was with his work I have included this quotation from a letter:

"I cannot close this hasty note my dear fellow, without saying that I have deeply felt your hearty and most invaluable co-operation in the beautiful illustrations that you have made for the last story - that I look at them with a pleasure I cannot describe to you in words - and that it is impossible for me to say how sensible I am of your earnest and friendly aid. Believe me that this is the very first time any designs for what I have written have touched and moved me, and caused me to feel that they expressed the idea I had in my mind."⁹⁹

Nowhere has been found greater praise from Dickens to an Illustrator. The crucial point here is that Cattermole infused his pictures with a deeply spiritual atmosphere that raised them above the level of ordinary historical representations. They have a powerful artistic quality which struck a deep chord in Dickens. They achieved a classic partnership in terms of Book Illustration generally.

The Dictionary of National Biography praised Cattermole for the "religious sentiment of bygone times." The word "beauty"¹⁰⁰ had powerful religious overtones for Dickens. In old lamps for new ones, he identified the idea of beauty with "a power etherealising, and exalting to the very Heaven of Heavens, what was sublime and lovely in the expression of the human face divine on earth."¹⁰¹

Cattermole's experience with ecclesiastical subjects stood him in good stead, especially towards the end of the book where Nell settles in an old building attached to a church. "The ecclesiastical studies were agents in evoking the religious emotion with which Dickens wished to surround Nell's death."¹⁰²

The other main theme of Shop was developed by Browne. He again showed his characteristic ability in adapting to Dickens' rapidly changing phases. When we see the theme of grotesqueness and brutality, especially in the later pages of *Quilp*, we find it difficult to believe that they were done by "the mild and whimsical artist of *Pickwick*."¹⁰³

The sharp contrast between the two modes was Dickens' specific intention:

"...the main purpose is never put aside... It was out of the more hideous lumber and rottenness that surrounded the child in her grandfather's home, that *Quilp* and his filthy gang had taken life. It was the practical human realisation of that first still picture of her innocence in the midst of all strange and alien forms that took the shape of her after wanderings;..."¹⁰⁴

The contrast is further brought out by Thomas Hood: "...- it is like an Allegory of the peace and innocence of Childhood in the midst of Violence, Superstition, and all the hateful or hurtful Passions of the world."¹⁰⁵

The wood-engraving entitled "*Quilp at the Window*" is a good example of this grotesque and ugly treatment. The wild-eyed and ruthless leer of the villain *Quilp* is admirably captured by Phiz.

Barnaby Rudge, being an historical novel, offered a wealth of subject-matter for the historical artist. In a letter to Cattermole concerning the "Warren", Dickens wrote that it would make "a queer picturesque thing in your hands,"¹⁰⁶ and it is again in this area of the picturesque that Cattermole was predominantly involved. There were many old buildings to delineate: the locksmith's house; "The Boot"; "The Warren"; Westminster Hall; and of course, "The Maypole".

Dickens particularly liked a style of rambling architecture, and was thus attracted to the Tudor period. Therefore, although the story is set in the eighteenth century, the "Maypole" was said to have been "built in the days of King Henry the Eighth."¹⁰⁷

Dickens was delighted with the drawing for "The Maypole": "I saw the old Inn this morning. Words cannot say how good it is."¹⁰⁸

Cattermole was not required to change very much from The Old Curiosity Shop, whereas Browne developed an altogether new manner. Many of the drawings are remarkably realistic in approach, and this corresponds well to the novel which was written in a very level and restrained manner. Gissing has remarked that it is written in "good, plain, unimaginative English."¹⁰⁹ Among others, notable examples of this realistic treatment are those of Hugh dozing, Barnaby in prison, and those of the raven, Grip. Browne also developed his ability to depict riot and rampage, for which he had boundless opportunity in the scenes of the Gordon Riots.

With the end of "Barnaby Rudge", ended the possibility of word and picture working in such close proximity, because the illustrations were no longer dropped into the text. Dickens had found the weekly part issue increasingly irksome in that the climax had to be divided up into small parts. He was happy to return to the familiar monthly parts.

Having experimented with such success the illustrators returned to two etchings per month, and these appeared on pages separate from the text. This did not mean that the illustrations would now lose quality. On the contrary, this new format opened up other possibilities of having the etchings, as it were, alongside the chapter. They carried the experience of other systems into this independence and explored the new advantages. The artist was now able to express the more general ethos of the chapter which gave obvious possibilities to development of the purer archetypes, which were gradually emerging in both Dickens' and Browne's work.

The change from the plot based on fairy-tale and mythological stereotypes was taking place in the novels. The next book, Martin



Top: Mr. Pinch is Amazed by an Unexpected Apparition (from Martin Chuzzlewit.)

Bottom: The Dombey Family (from Dombey & Son.)

Chuzzlewit (1843-1844), although still basically within the fairy-tale form, showed many new developments. A new approach that contrasts directly with the simplistic and narrow-minded formulations of earlier artists (Hogarth, Cruikshank and Ainsworth especially).

Martin Chuzzlewit incorporates as a central theme the "Rebirth" archetype, thus Martin who starts out as a self-centred, arrogant young man, is reborn through the miseries that he creates for himself and emerges as a selfless, good-natured person.

Browne's etchings have profited from the interlude of wood engraving - they exhibit a freshness and clarity of line. The "working-drawings" also show this improvement, being executed in sharp clear lines, whereas in previous drawings the lead of the pencil appears to have become blunt. From a purely technical point of view the etching is of a high standard, the lines being fine and sharp and everything in the design clearly defined - nothing is left to chance. A good example is the etching entitled "Mr. Pinch is amazed by an unexpected apparition." It is an exceedingly strong, clean and fresh etching. The figures are clearly defined and the faces are drawn with an economy of line and a confidence which shows how mature Browne had become.

It has been suggested that this upsurge in Browne's illustration at this stage is to be attributed to the influence of Daumier, and a comparison of their work reveals that this is very likely. Thackeray has this to say of the two artists in the London and Westminster Review of 1839:

"...if we might venture to give a word of advice to another humorous designer, whose works are extensively circulated - the illustrator of 'Pickwick' and 'Nicholas Nickleby' - it would be to study well these caricatures of Monsieur Daumier; ..."¹¹⁰

Harvey has pointed out the similarities between Daumier's "Sick-Nurse" and Browne's Mrs. Gamp; and one cannot but coincide with his opinion that there are great similarities, both in treatment and in pose. Browne's own development was probably spurred on by Daumier's masterly drawings.

Dickens' attention to his illustrators can be seen to have grown. His instructions are lengthy and detailed, and we can see the development of his remarkable visual imagination as he came nearer to pure archetypal sources. In his instructions to Browne concerning "The Thriving City of Eden as it Appeared in Fact", the author goes into the finest details to achieve the high standard of collaboration that he desired. Browne's forty etchings for this book are remarkable for their technical improvements and close co-operation with the author in regard to details.

A great step in development was taken with Dombey and Son (1846-1848); and has afforded us with some of Dickens' and Browne's best efforts. There is a basic change in approach - a maturity that no longer relied on melodramatic props and externally contrived stereotypes. — Dombey and Son was conceived and written completely from within.

Pure archetypes begin to emerge. For example the "Rebirth Archetype" is manifest when "Walter Gay, given up for dead and drowned...returns from his long voyage, reborn as a man."¹¹¹

Other pure archetypes that appear are the River of Life and the Sea of Death. This development gives a new life to the illustrations. It is when Dickens organised his themes from within "that he makes his illustrations the expression of a coherent meaning."¹¹²

Dickens became increasingly sensitive concerning the illustrations because of the way in which his own unity with archetypes was heightened. To Dickens it was becoming almost painful to relate to an illustrator because he was expecting a visual counterpart to his own inner conceptions. There was no question of conforming to accepted forms of representation

any more - the artist was being called to collaborate with a mature and lofty inner vision. Dickens had "great expectations" of his illustrators.

In his own words, "The points for illustration, and the enormous care required make me excessively anxious." Or again, "The first subject which I am now going to give (for illustration) is very important to the book."¹¹³

These quotations are taken from a letter that Dickens wrote to Browne. The author's reaction to the completed illustrations was extreme: great pleasure with those that answered his vision; complete despair at those that did not. An example of Dickens' extreme care is to be observed in the case of Mr. Dombey. He had a definite image in mind which corresponded to a certain person known both to himself and to Browne. He gave his illustrator extensive instructions and got Browne to draw a series of faces before he was satisfied. The fact that he was writing in Lausanne, Switzerland and that Brown was in England made the collaboration even more difficult.

Browne etched ~~all the plates in duplicate on quarto plates.~~ He also used an oblong format, which was an innovation, and suited the designs which began to take on a wider panoramic scale to agree with the text. He began to use the "ruling-machine" with which he could achieve a set of fine parallel lines which, when used in conjunction with stopping-out varnish could give the effect of mezzotint. The first illustration that he attempted in this way was the one entitled "On the Dark Road".

A further development whereby archetypal agreement was emphasised, is that Browne began to deviate from the text. In "The Dombey Family", for example, Mr. Dombey is seen to be standing, whereas he is described as seated in the text. Browne had in fact drawn a seated Dombey but Dickens rightly felt that the standing Dombey expressed much better the cold, proud, cruel man that he had had in mind. Thus the major forces in the text are being visually expressed rather than the insignificant

details.

Another item is added to this particular etching - a large tear-shaped object hanging over Polly. This was mentioned a few pages earlier in another connection altogether, so we see that Browne has developed into a deeply sensitive artist, capable of setting a mood with powerful symbolic overtones. Dickens saw great value in this type of illustration, and expresses it thus in a letter to Forster:

"I should like each part to have a general illustration to it at the beginning, shadowing out its drift and bearing: much as Browne does at that kind of thing on *Dombey* covers..."¹¹⁴

As we move from Dombey to David Copperfield (1849-1850), one is struck with the singular impression of the visual character of the text. Here again we have Dickens writing from within - from his archetypal memory-centre. The inner vision was clearly the source of its two basic expressions: his literary talent and the visual image seen with the inner eye.

"...author and artist work together with one inspiration, the illustrations taking their cue from the particularly visual liveliness of Dickens' imagination."¹¹⁵

Dickens sees the scenes in detail, and one can sense the unity he feels with nature and material things. There is an almost primitive unity between Dickens and the things he describes, and the visualness thus manifests itself in his writings. Take for example the following extract from David Copperfield and note especially the direct reference to the draughtsman:

"She (Em'ly) started from my side, and ran along a jagged piece of timber which protruded from the place we stood upon, and overhung the deep water at some height, without the least defence. The incident is so impressed on my remembrance that if I were a draughtsman I could draw its form here, I dare say, accurately as it was that day, and little Em'ly springing forward to her destruction (as it appeared to me), with a look that I have never forgotten, directed out to sea."¹¹⁶

In the plate entitled "The River", we see the further development of the "dark plate" phase - this representing the third major stage in his



Top: Sunset in the Long Drawing-Room at Chesney Wold (Bleak House.).

Bottom: Shadow; from the same.

development. The "ruling-machine" is again in action here, which although it has not yet been perfected, gives us a glimpse of its mature form. One can see that in this etching text and picture are united in a common atmosphere and character.

The "ruling-machine" came to be used as a means of obtaining dark atmospheric moods, similar to effects achieved with pen and wash. In Dickens' next novel, Bleak House (1852-1853), the "dark plates" have a sombre and melancholy character. The emphasis has shifted from the foreground, where it generally was in Browne's earlier etchings, to the background. In other words, the archetypal and symbolic are now more important than the literal and conventional. The figures have become small and insignificant - it is the overall cosmic effect that predominates. Of the ten "dark plates" in the novel, the first four and last two have no figures at all.

The emphasis in Book Illustration has shifted from a close and literal relationship with the text to the achievement of the status of an independent and authoritative spokesman expressing the major movements in the novel. This new departure was primarily Browne's idea - and Dickens responded enthusiastically to the change. The appearance of the "dark plates" was sudden, and came with Part Twelve. After this we have many, and they express very well, "the oppressive gatherings of fog and darkness in human affairs so powerfully presented in the novel."¹¹⁷

The change in illustration marks a fundamental change in the novel:

"In books like Nicholas Nickleby, The Chimes and Martin Chuzzlewit, the fairy-story influence is strong; if these are compared with the greater poetic density and more profound resonance of Great Expectations, Little Dorrit and Bleak House, the change of emphasis is at once apparent. What happens, in fact, is that from thinking in terms of simile...Dickens comes to feel and see metaphorically and symbolically, and to tap the deeper reservoirs of the archetypes."¹¹⁸



Top: The Morning (Bleak House.)

Bottom: Floating Away (Little Dorrit.)

Browne exhibited his inborn gift as a Book Illustrator when he responded to Dickens' change - and began to conceive his illustrations from within. The change in his art was so marked and of such a high standard that he began to be known in his own right. Some critics even saw Browne as the more talented partner. The following quotation concerns the "dark plate" entitled "The Morning":

"Weirdness, horror and loneliness are the characteristics of the design, which is one of the best Hablôt Browne ever did. It goes a long step further than the description in the letterpress, excellent though it be, and does much more to realise the painful sentiments of the story."¹¹⁹

The forty illustrations for Bleak House are probably Browne's most successful. In these examples Dickens and Browne came the closest to total collaboration that they ever achieved. They attained a high standard for Book Illustration generally.

Browne also did forty etchings for Little Dorrit (1855-1857), which include both feeble and remarkable examples of the new approach to illustration. The use of the "ruling-machine" was now perfected and "he achieved a Rembrandt-like chiaroscuro in the prison scenes."¹²⁰

A Tale of Two Cities, followed in 1859 but was shut up at the eighth issue, with the result that only sixteen plates were executed. Again there is a mixture of good and bad, but one can notice that Browne is no longer producing his best works, which are to be found in Bleak House. Dickens realised that their collaboration had run its course and looked around for another illustrator.

The reactionary movement in English book illustration was now in motion, and Dickens, happening to know one of the young artists of this school, Marcus Stone, asked him if he would illustrate his latest book, Our Mutual Friend (1864-1865). Stone agreed and the first monthly part appeared in May 1864. For obvious reasons that have already been



Top: A New Meaning in the Roman (Bleak House.).

Bottom: The Ghosts Walk; from the same.

investigated in depth this partnership was hollow and could never have been successful. Dickens tried one of the newer school; "however, he expected him to produce illustrations in the manner of Browne, and when he found that artist incapable of doing so, he took little interest in his work, and little interest in illustration generally."¹²¹

Thus, after a short while, Dickens allowed Stone to choose whatever subjects he liked and did not even bother to review them before printing. They were merely superficial drawings with a doubtful relationship to the text. The dynamic relationship between word and picture, attempting to attain total collaboration, was dead. The author and artist are on completely different wavelengths, and do not even collaborate meaningfully on the shallowest levels.

Dickens came to believe that book illustration "was ceasing to express fancy and imagination and was becoming merely a sophisticated trade."¹²² His attitude became one of public silence and private disapproval as can be seen in this letter to his friend Forster:

"Of course this is between ourselves. Friendship is better than criticism, and I shall steadily hold my tongue."¹²³

The death of the appreciation of Dickens and his illustrators has already been fully investigated. Generally speaking, the relationship between word and picture culminating in total collaboration has been lost, and there is a need to recover it:

"...it matters to keep alive a full sense of the visual possibilities. In respect of illustration the modern novel has a withered limb...and one cannot say who might have used it with strength, suppleness and sensitivity."¹²⁴

The ideal of total collaboration is a hard one to attain. It is a steep hill to climb; and most have given up the struggle as too difficult, or merely enjoyed the bliss of ignorance. However, some have attempted the climb. In spite of all the difficulties involved, the differences of



The Mausoleum at Chesney Wold, (Bleak House.)

personality, the fear of investigating the unknown and all the host of adversities that beset them, Dickens and his artists achieved sterling success and made undoubted progress on the road to the ideal.

Author and artist share a deep bond which is based on a truth that is so deeply anchored within the fabric of our society that we quite naturally accept the fact that great works of literature are combined with great works of art. If this state of affairs is threatened we react because we sense that wrong is being done. This is just what has occurred in regard to Dickens and his illustrators. The bad light in which their works were seen had grown to such an extent that in 1945 it was confidently profounded by John N.B. Millican that Dickens' illustrators should be excluded from his books:

"A most pleasing post-war reform would be the complete elimination of the illustrations by Hablot K. Browne (and Cruikshank as well, for that matter) from new editions of Dickens's works"

and that

"...in a period like this, when the art of photography has made pictures of one form or another the most trivial of everyday sights, the bizarre illustration of fiction can hardly be said either to meet any need or add any colour to our lives."¹²⁵

Millican thus hoped to sound the final death-knell for Dickens' illustrations and for book illustration generally. However, the public outcry against him was enormous and bears witness to the depth at which the unity is held in the public mind and spirit, which he had tried to render asunder so brutally and so blindly:

"The correspondent whose letter of assault on George Cruikshank and 'Phiz' as illustrators of Dickens was published in The Times Literary Supplement of April 7 must have been astonished at the volume of sound caused by his bomb. In mere dimension it looked so innocent; yet the noise of its explosion has been ringing in his ears ever since.... He may remain unconvinced by arguments in protest from other correspondents; but he is surely now chastened by the discovery that long accepted institutions, in which both human affections and artistic

judgement are involved, are not to be removed by a personal and singular objection..."¹²⁶

The formal counter-attack came from D'A.P. Yarre in the Dickensian:

"He calls his suggestion a reform. It would be more than a reform, it would be a disastrous revolution. Let us have a new edition of Dickens by all means,...but not without the work of that talented artist and conscientious illustrator PHIZ. I, for one, decline to part with my tail just because Mr. Millican has (quite inadvertently, I sincerely hope) parted with his."

Mr Yarre, having thus refused to see Browne disparaged, went on to eulogise him:

"...especially observe the interior of Tulkinghorn's room in Bleak House.... No wonder that Dickens and Phiz worked hand-in-glove for more than twenty years without a wry word; their names are as inseparable as those of Boswell and Johnson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Besant and Rice, Gilbert and Sullivan."¹²⁷

Cruikshank was also praised in like manner in the fanfare of public outrage that refused to see these men denigrated:

"Only an artist of unusual strength of will and penetration could have combined with Dickens to impose a collaboration on over a century of English readers, collaboration so powerful that Mr. Millican's bare suggestion of a dissolution of partnership can produce a storm."¹²⁸

When basic truths are thus tampered with, we observe the general body of public opinion to be outraged, and in favour of the continued collaboration of Author and Artist. This is especially impressive when seen in the light of the times in which it took place - times of least popularity for the Early Victorians. The Public might not always know exactly why they react so strongly - but react they do; and although they might not fully understand or appreciate the deeper truths involved in the great achievements of Dickens and his illustrators in their attempts at "total collaboration", they know that a deeply rooted unity is being threatened. The truth is often elusive and hard to pin down, but the time-honoured adage still holds good, and in spite of opposition "the truth will out".

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