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First Bouquets, Big Heads and Obstinate Horses: Illustrating the Victorian Pantomime

This paper explores the ways in which different illustrated periodicals mediated the English Christmas pantomime to their readers from the 1860s-1890s. It analyses the styles and genres of illustration associated with certain periodicals and certain artists, using as its starting point Charles Green's watercolour 'Her First Bouquet,' an engraving of which was one of the earliest illustrations to appear in the Graphic. Illustrations of scenes from pantomimes and of preparations for the pantomime, as well as the use of pantomime for political satires, are discussed. A stylistic change in the way pantomimes were depicted at the turn of the century is also noted. Jim Davis is Professor of Theatre Studies at the University of Warwick and has published extensively on Victorian theatre. His latest work is the edited collection of critical essays, Victorian Pantomime, published by Palgrave Macmillan (2010).

Konworde: Pantomimo ongravinge poriodical illustrations Charles Croon

Keywords: Pantomime, engravings, periodical illustrations, Charles Green, Frederick Barnard, D. H. Friston, masks (Big Heads), audiences, rehearsals.

In 1869 the *Graphic* published in its first Christmas number an engraving of Charles Green's *Her First Bouquet*, based on an 1868 watercolour on board, which is now privately owned.¹ (Fig 1) A pastel version of the scene also survives in the theatre collection at Bristol University (Fig 2), as well as a coloured clipping of the *Graphic* engraving. This is a depiction of life behind the scenes, in the wings of a theatre, allegedly the Britannia, Hoxton, during a performance of the pantomime. A child performer has just received her first bouquet. A young woman and a clown lean over her, perhaps admiring the bouquet; a figure in a top hat has turned to observe the moment, breaking off from a conversation with a Pantaloon; an older girl and a young boy are also looking at the child. In the background two other men in top hats talk respectively to a ballet girl and to an actor dressed as a demon or devil, some fairies converse and another actor is holding a pantomime big head in his hand.

On our left an unmasked Harlequin and possibly a scene-shifter are also observing the occasion of the first bouquet. The audience can be glimpsed to the left of a green curtain, while a woman stands on stage on a raised platform, the limelight man directing a beam directly onto her. However, she is not directing her gaze towards the audience but towards the backstage events that are the focus of this painting.



Figure 1. Charles Green, Her First Bouquet (Private Collection)

A search for information—or quite possibly misinformation—on this picture yields surprising results. George Lupino has been identified as the Clown in the picture, but the painting significantly predates the involvement of any members of the Lupino family with the Britannia Theatre. The Clown in both the 1867-68 and 1868-9 pantomime was Jean Louis and, if this is indeed a representation of the Britannia Theatre, then it most likely is Jean Louis who is depicted here. The top-hatted figure has been identified by the Bristol Collection's website as Frederick Wilton, the Britannia stage manager, but on what grounds remains a mystery, since no extant like-nesses of Wilton exist.² If this is the Britannia, then this man might just as easily be the Britannia's manager, Sam Lane, although stage managers are conventionally depicted in top hats and frock coats in this period. The woman bending over the child has been identified as Sara Lane, the Britannia's leading actress and future manager, although she could just as easily be the child's mother or another actress. Gavin Weightman, who uses the picture as an illustration for a book *Bright Lights, Big* City, a spin off from a TV series on popular entertainment in the 19th century, is quite certain that the picture shows Sam and Sara Lane with some of their performers.³ Yet, since Sara Lane was always one of the main attractions in the Britannia pantomime it is surprising that she is not shown in costume. And

neither the woman in black nor the top-hatted man look particularly like extant images of Sam and Sara Lane.

The painting, formerly owned by Osborne Robinson, was exhibited at the Christopher Wood Gallery in 1981 prior to its sale to a private collection in America. The *Burlington Magazine's* review of the 1981 exhibition concludes that the degree of finish and large size of the watercolour (54.5 cm x 79 cm) suggests that Charles Green intended the painting for exhibition. The reviewer adds that



Figure 2. Charles Green, Her First Bouquet (Bristol University Theatre Collection)

'Green's stippled brushwork and generous use of white body-colour owes much to the example of William Henry Hunt,' a major influence on water colourists of this period. In fact the painting was first exhibited at the British Institution in 1868 in the 34th annual exhibition of watercolour paintings.⁴ While some journal

reviews of the exhibition fail to acknowledge Green's painting at all, the *Art Journal* was scathing, regretting that Green 'should have surrendered himself to the frivolity, if not something worse, of "The First Bouquet," a vulgar scene among the sideslips of the stage.' According to this reviewer, 'The painter seems on the sly to pander to passion. Thus the artist almost inevitably sacrifices the art which might otherwise have been within his reach.' What the dating tells us, however, is that, if the Britannia is the theatre depicted, we are most likely back stage at the 1867-68 pantomime, *Don Quixote, or Sancho Panza and His Wife Teresa*, the first pantomime at the Britannia incidentally to be reviewed by *The Times*. The versions in the Bristol Collection, the pastel sketch and a coloured



Figure 3. Mason Brown, 'Engaging Children for the Drury Lane Christmas Pantomime," Illustrated London News (7 December 1867), 612.

version of the *Graphic* engraving, significantly differ from the watercolour version in much of the incidental detail.

From its commencement, Charles Green (1840-98) was associated with the *Graphic*, which was to revolutionise the quality of wood-engraving in illustrated journals and consequently attracted a number of leading illustrators and painters to display their work in its pages, practically forming, in Martin Meisel's words, 'a school of black and white realists who perhaps, like Ruskin, found colour inappropriate for painful subjects.' Green contributed an illustration of 'Irish Emigrants' to the first volume (which also contained an engraving of Luke Fildes' 'Homeless and Hungry,' later turned into the well-known painting 'Applicants for Admission to a Casual Ward') as well as the theatrical picture we have been discussing for its first Christmas number. He also

contributed illustrations to a wide range of periodicals, including *Once a Week, London Society*, the *Illustrated London News, Sunday at Home* and the *Churchman's Family Magazine*. He was a leading book illustrator, particularly of period novels, and he contributed 39 illustrations to the Household edition of Dickens' *The Old Curiosity Shop* in 1871. This series deliberately aimed to supplant the original Dickens illustrations with new realisations of characters and episodes from the novels. Green's work for the *Graphic* was much admired by Van Gogh, especially his social realist portrayals of street life and factory workers. Forrest Reid in his study of 1860s illustrators claims:

Had Charles Green given us many such designs as his 'Christmas Eve' in *Cassell's Christmas Annual* (1865), or his 'Amateur Performance' in *The Graphic* (1871), we should feel inclined to place him among the greatest illustrators of the sixties, for such work falls little below the best.⁷

Reid feels Green was to some extent stifled by bad commissions and is even disappointed in his 'Old Curiosity Shop' illustrations. Green turned some of his Dickens illustrations into watercolours, although most of the watercolour paintings he exhibited were genre subjects, often drawing attention to matters of social concern. Interestingly, there is no hint in 'Her First Bouquet' of the ambiguities of child employment in the annual pantomime: this is a conventionally sentimental painting that in no way indicates Green's interest in social issues, in contrast to Mason Brown's well known 'Engaging Children for the Drury Lane Christmas pantomime' (Fig 3), published in the *Illustrated London News* in December 1867 and thus probably depicting the same pantomime season that is represented in Green's watercolour.

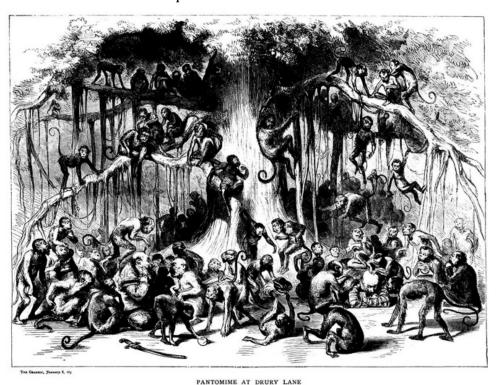


Figure 4. 'Pantomime at Drury Lane,' The Graphic (8 January 1870), Issue 6.

As noted previously, Charles Green was responsible for another theatrical illustration in the Graphic, 'The Amateur Performance: Wait Half a Minute' in December 1871, although this time the illustration has nothing specifically to do with Christmas, but captures a moment of semi-chaos prior, perhaps, to the beginning of an amateur performance of a historical drama. The Graphic itself states that it is based on that 'unpleasantly anxious half-minute when the curtain draws up.'8 Nevertheless, the Graphic sporadically published illustrations of pantomime scenes or generic pictures of pantomime audiences. In January 1870 scenes from both the Covent Garden and Drury Lane pantomimes were published. The scene illustrated above is from the 'Opening' of Beauty and the Beast or Harlequin and Old Mother Bunch at Drury Lane, showing the 'Forest of the Apes' just after the merchant, Ali, and his companion have been set upon by thieves. According to the *Era*, 'At first the stage is almost wholly unoccupied but gradually the trees with their branches growing into the earth literally swarm with monkeys...The apes are led by a superior animal, a baboon presented with great spirit by Mr Michenson. A more diverting scene than this we do not remember to have seen in any of the preceding pantomimes at Drury Lane.' 9 (Fig 4) In February 1871 The Children's Pantomime Party at Covent Garden by F. W. or Wilfred Lawson, a popular and prolific illustrator also known for his work for Cornhill's Magazine, appeared. (Fig 5) The Graphic's focus on these respectable west end theatres tells us something about its assumed readership and makes it all the more surprising that the Britannia Theatre should be the subject of its earlier engraving. In 1874 it provides a fairly conventional backstage sketch entitled 'The Pantomime: Above, Below and Behind the Curtain,' the components of which show us the Band Room, preparations for an ascension, the 'last call' in the Green Room, members of the company, the wings, the flies and dressing rooms. In December 1873 another conventional genre of pantomime illustration shows a scene painter preparing for Christmas at the Haymarket Theatre, again a respectable west end theatre. (Fig 6)



Figure 5. F. W. Lawson, 'The Christmas Pantomime Party at Covent Garden Theatre,'
The Graphic (11 February 1871), Issue 63.

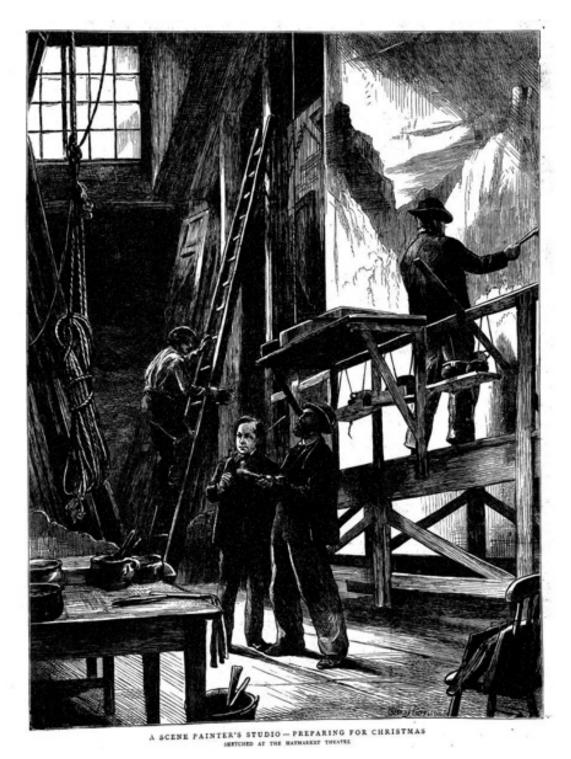


Figure 6. 'A Scene Painter's Studio – Preparing for Christmas – Sketched at the Haymarket Theatre,' The Graphic (27 December 1873), Issue 213.

While the *Graphic* introduced innovative and controversial engraving techniques, its engagement with theatre was uneven, unlike the *Illustrated London News*, which is a major source throughout the Victorian period for illustrations of all sorts of theatrical scenes, including pantomime. One of its most significant theatrical illustrators was David Henry Friston, who also painted genre subjects. He exhibited fourteen times at the Royal Academy between 1853-69, his titles including 'The Peep Show' and 'Varnished and Dated, in

commemoration of his 100th Birthday,' and six times at the British Institute. In common with other illustrators he contributed to a wide range of publications, illustrating Sheridan Le Fanu stories for *Dark Blue*, for instance, and he was also the first illustrator to depict Sherlock Holmes for Conan Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet*, the first Sherlock Holmes story. In the late 1860s and 1870s he contributed theatrical illustrations to the *Illustrated London News*, depicting scenes from a number of plays and comic operas by W. S. Gilbert, as well as pantomimes. Many of Friston's illustrations are already familiar, at least to connoisseurs of Victorian pantomime. These include his depiction of child performers, playing Harlequin, Columbine, Pantaloon and Clown (Columbine and Clown respectively played by two favourites of Lewis Carroll, Carrie and Bertie Coote) in *Little Goody Two Shoes* at the Adelphi in 1877 (Fig 7) and of a scene from *Jack in the Box* at Drury Lane in 1874, where Jack's leap into the air (Jack was played by Fred Evans) is observed by 'big head' or masked performers impersonating Disraeli and Gladstone. (Fig 8)



SCENE FROM THE CHILDREN'S PANTOMIME AT THE ADELPHI.

Figure 7. 'Scene from the Children's Pantomime at the Adelphi,' Illustrated London News (20 January 1877), 60.



Figure 8. D. H. Friston, 'Scene from "Jack in the Box" at the Drury Lane Theatre,' Illustrated London News (10 January 1874), 28.

A particularly striking example of Friston's work is his illustration of scenes from the Grecian Theatre's 1877 pantomime *Harleguin Roley Poley* which show the versatility of George Conquest in pantomime. (Fig 9) Conquest plays Roley Poley, a sprite released after eighteen years in captivity, trapped inside a roley poley pudding. Roley Poley spends much of the pantomime in pursuit of an enchanted umbrella, ownership of which will enable him to marry a beautiful princess. In the Hanging Garden of Cloudland, Roley Poley takes the place of its guardian, a parrot, so that he can overhear what has become of the umbrella. Here Conquest, whose ability to impersonate any creature from an octopus (also depicted in another illustration by Friston) or a crab to a spider was renowned, was able to add (in the words of the Era) 'another to that list of clever embodiments which we suppose will only be considered complete when the catalogue of odd things in the kingdom of animal nature is exhausted.' Mr Conquest 'in this instance, looks like a parrot, talks like a parrot, screeches like a parrot, and altogether comes out as a "very knowing bird" indeed.'10 The figure in the chimney pot hat is a Ghost, played by Herbert Campbell, who uses his telescope in a comic scene to observe and take stock of what is currently going on in England. In another scene, set in the City of Flowers, Roley Poley engages in the "Firebrand's Revel," during which he appears as "a Dwarf with a head of abnormal proportions, with eyes that wink knowingly [and] with lips that lick and like nothing better than a goblet of flame." Unfortunately, in this scene Roley Poley gets drunk, reveals his true identity and is decapitated, at which point he fortunately resumes his former shape. The *Era* was struck by Conquest's acrobatic versatility noting that:

Roley Poley has to roll; and when he is not rolling, he is...flying through space; or thrusting his anatomy into the carcass of a parrot; or screwing himself down to the proportions of a dwarf.¹¹



Figure 9. D. H. Friston, 'Scenes from "Harlequin Roley Poley," at the Grecian Theatre,' unidentified clipping dated January 1878.

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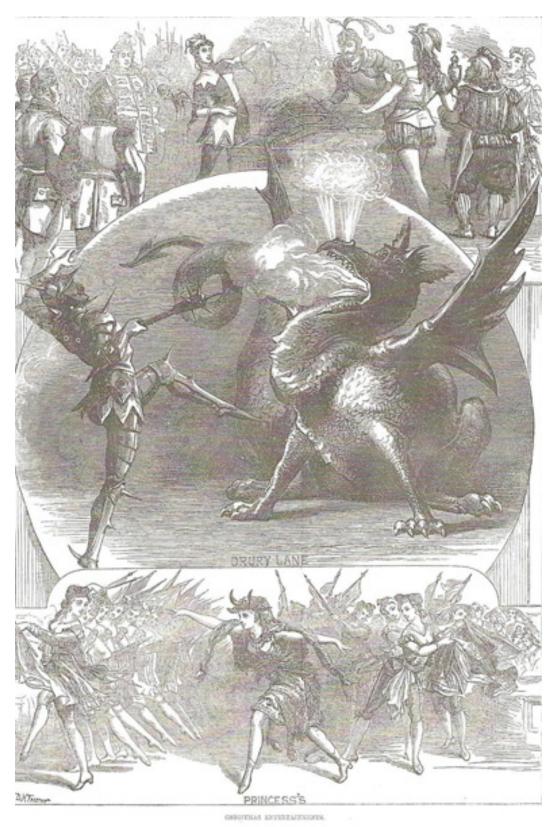


Figure 10. D. H. Friston, 'Christmas Entertainments,' Illustrated London News (31 December 1876), 688.

D. H. Friston's work is usually identifiable by its style and by his signature. The illustration from the *Illustrated London News* (December 1876) shows a scene from the Drury Lane pantomime in which the dragon is killed in *The*

Dragon of Wantley; or Harlequin and Old Mother Shipton and below a scene from Little Gils Blas and how he played the Spanish D(j)euce at the Princess's Theatre. (Fig 10) The January 1876 illustration from the Illustrated London News shows the Vokes family in E. L. Blanchard's Drury Lane pantomime Whittington and his Cat. Frederick Vokes as Master Fitzwarren is being annoyed by the cat, Tommy (played by Walter Vokes), while Victoria and Rosina Vokes play respectively Alice Fitzwarren and Dick Whittington. In the background Fairy Bluebell renders supernatural aid. (Fig 11)



Figure 11. D. H. Friston, 'The Pantomime at Drury Lane: "Whittington and his Cat," Illustrated London News (8 January 1876), 23.

The Vokes family are represented a year later by Friston in Blanchard's *The Forty Thieves* at Drury Lane, while immediately below, in the Covent Garden pantomime, *Robinson Crusoe*, Crusoe is depicted giving lessons to Friday and his father Saturday. The monkey sitting beside them was played by E. Lauri, whose agility apparently contributed to the comedy of this scene. Friday and Saturday were played by the Brothers Raynor, comic acrobats whose range included bell-ringing, somersaulting, singing opera, doing the double shuffle and singing comic songs and whose get up, according to the *Era*, was perfect.¹² (Fig 12)

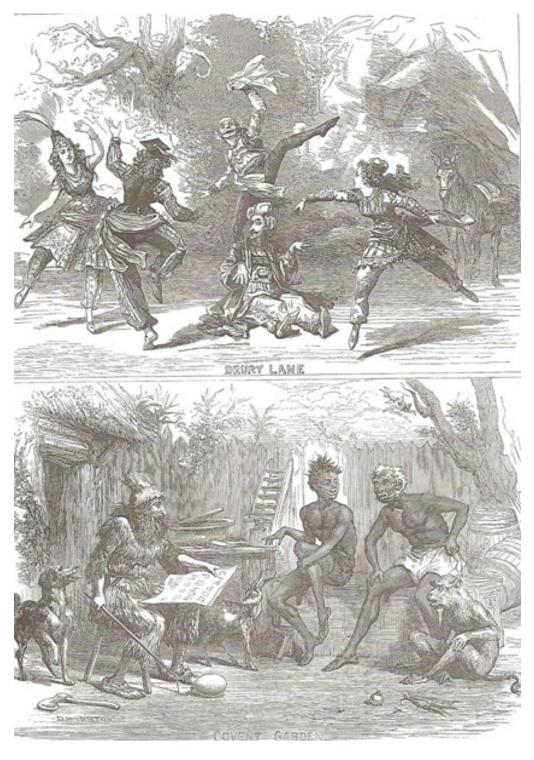


Figure 12. D. H. Friston, 'Christmas Pantomimes' Illustrated London News (13 January 1877), 29.

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Figure 13. D. H. Friston, 'The Pantomimes – No. 2' Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News (7 January 1882), 408.

Slightly cruder in style is an illustration by Friston for the *Illustrated Sporting* and *Dramatic News* in January 1882, showing Fanny Leslie as Robinson Crusoe at Drury Lane, recently shipwrecked on the sea shore of an uninhabited island where she has become possessor of a sharp-witted and very intelligent cockatoo. Above this Friston provides a scene from the Sadler's Wells *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, while below Herbert Campbell features amid the cast of *Happy Go*

Lucky True Love and Forget Me Not or The Jewel Elves of the Magic Dell and the Good Little Fairy Pastorelle at the Grecian Theatre. (Fig 13)

Friston is one of a number of artists who also contributes generic rehearsal or behind the scenes depictions of the pantomime. Particularly striking is his 'Preparing for the Pantomime' for the *Illustrated London News* (17 December 1870), which shows big heads, masks and helmets under preparation. (Fig 14) The *News's* commentary refers to the realistic character of the illustration stating that it:

represents what may be supposed to be an actual scene at this time of year in the artistic workshop attached to one of our London theatres, not a hundred miles from Drury Lane. It may be a true proverb that the 'cowl does not make the monk'; but the mask does make the monster, when a human performer acts the portentous part. The moulder or maker of grotesque masks should be gifted with imagination and humour in a high degree, as well as great knowledge of the effects produced at a certain distance, by particular combinations of shapes and strong colours, under a glaring artificial light. His memory should be fully stored with details of forcible physiognomy and antiquated or barbarian costume gathered from pictures of mankind in all nations of the world and in all ages of history and romance; his business is to see that these may be used in the queerest fresh combinations.¹³



Figure 14. D. H. Friston, Preparing for the Pantomime' Illustrated London News (17 December 1870), 625.

The author of this commentary is at pains to remind us that it is the artist who gives shape to the pantomime author's 'comparatively vague conceptions' and to distinguish between the artists whose creative imagination bring these concepts to fruition and 'the mere artificers whom we find here at their task in the studio.' Interestingly the big heads, more frequently referred to as masks, inspired a number of journal illustrations, sketches by W. S. Gilbert for the 'Bab Ballads' and also influenced, in some instances, children's book illustration. Thackeray's illustrations for The Rose and the Ring (Fig 15) and Tenniel's for Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass are arguably indebted, at least in part, to this sort of pantomime representation. Friston's pantomime scenes provide very good examples of this particular genre of illustration, but he is not an innovator insofar as his illustrations very much follow the patterns already established for the depiction of scenes from the pantomimes in illustrated journals and newspapers: full page illustrations of one or two scenes from the same or from different pantomimes, or a range of scenes often illustrating a range of pantomimes, or generic peeps behind the scenes or at rehearsals or at pantomime audiences.

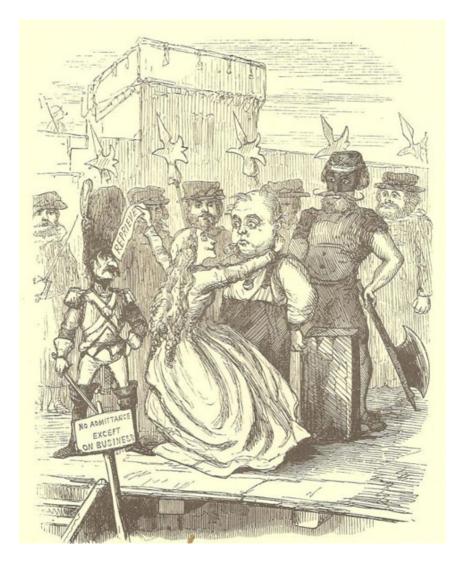


Figure 15. W. M. Thackeray, 'Angelica arrives just in time,' The Rose and the Ring (1854).

Punch, Judy, the Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News, the Illustrated Times, Black and White and many other journals all provide further examples in their different ways. Illustrations from the Illustrated Times of 1858 and the Illustrated London News of 1850 provide earlier examples of a somewhat coarser style of illustration. The Illustrated Times provides a broader range of scenes from the annual pantomimes, such as Frankenstein or the Model Man, the Christmas extravaganza put on by the Adelphi Theatre (Fig 16), while the News depicts scenes from Harlequin and the Dragon of Wantley at Sadler's Wells Theatre. (Fig 17)



Figure 16. 'Scene from the Extravaganza of "Frankenstein, or The Model Man," at the Adelphi Theatre' Illustrated London News (12 January 1856), 28.



Figure 17. 'Scene from the Pantomime of "Harlequin and the Dragon of Wantley," at Sadler's Wells Theatre' Illustrated London News (12 January 1856), 28.

An early illustrator for the *Illustrated London News* was Alfred Crowquill (the pseudonym of Alfred Henry Forrestier), who is represented here by a scene from G. H. Rodwell's *Harlequin and Good Queen* Bess, the 1849-50 Drury Lane pantomime. (Fig 18)



Figure 18. Alfred Crowquill, 'Harlequin and Good Queen Bess,' clipping Illustrated London News, dated 1849.

THE ONLY JONES.

I was talking the other day of our clowns, and praising Mr. HARRY PAYNE's natural and unaffected humour. Here is his portrait, and that



HARRY AND THE BOY.

of one of those Chiiky Street Boys, with whom, as a rule, he has such a deuce of a lark in the Christmas pantomime in which he plays. By the way, there are a lot of uncommonly clever clowns, drolls, or whatever they may call themselves, HENGLER'S Circus, where a very attractive entertainment is just now given. In another part of this page you may find the trait of Little SANDY, a great favourite with the public.

Thinking things over quietly, it seems to me there is not a very great deal to write about this

week, although the *embarras de richesses* during the next few days ahead will keep the conscientious critic busy. Being that way myself, the bees won't be in it with me, (h)I've a notion (Mr. Printer, please give this wit proper prominence), and several of the shows promise to be big ones.

Figure 19. 'The Only Jones," Judy, (27 December 1882), 302.

Judy often integrated visual material with commentary, particularly when printing reviews by 'The Only Jones' or 'The Call Boy.' (Fig 19)

In this example from *Judy* a benevolent lady asks a small girl why she is so upset: it transpires the girl has been cast as a toad rather than a fairy in the Christmas pantomime. (Fig 20)



Figure: 20. 'Cruelty to a Child' Judy (10 January 1877), 138.

In Figure 21 a father taking his children to the pantomime is pelted by a turnip in an illustration reminiscent of the mishaps Ally Sloper often endures at the theatre; Sloper had of course begun life in the pages of *Judy*, prior to his reappearance in the journal *Ally Sloper's Half Holiday*.



Figure 21. 'One Among Many Happy Evenings' Judy (3 January 1877), 118.

The excitement of preparing for and rehearsing the pantomime, the contrast between the glamorous world presented on stage and the reality of back stage life and activity, the pantomime audiences, whether children or adults, all generated generic types of illustration. Frederick Barnard (whose illustration of Sydney Carton on the scaffold was realised on stage by John Martin Harvey in *The Only Way* and in John Hassell's equally famous poster for the play) was another social realist artist admired by Van Gogh and one of the *Illustrated London News*'s most prolific illustrators. He contributed studies of audiences based on two oil paintings (Figs 22a and b) to the *Illustrated London News* on the 23 December 1876 in excellent engravings which are positioned side by side and are preceded by a first person narrative written by Dutton Cook: 14 a predictable childhood nostalgia for Grimaldi is in no way compensated for by the soporific experience of modern pantomime.

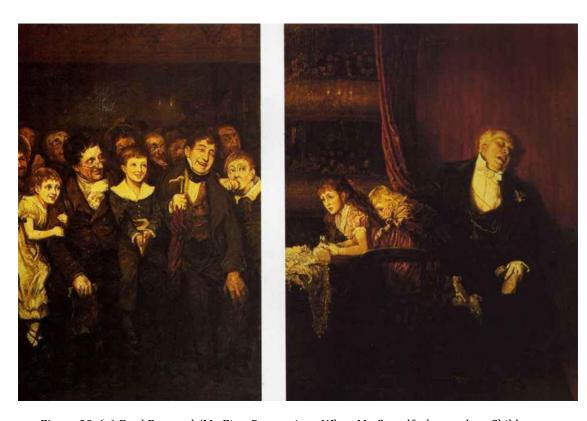


Figure 22. (a) Fred Barnard, 'My First Pantomime: When My Grandfather took us Children to Sadler's Wells,'(b) 'My Last Pantomime: When I took my grandchildren to Covent Garden,' (Oil paintings, privately owned, c.1876).

Arthur L. Hewlett's 'Boxing Night outside a Country Theatre' for the Christmas Eve number of *Black and White* for 1892 injects a further note of realism into the depiction of pantomime audiences. (Fig 23) These pictures are far removed from the more comic representations of the pantomime box, pit and gallery contributed by Phiz to the *Illustrated Times* and *Illustrated London News*, which I have written about elsewhere.¹⁵



Figure 23. Arthur H. Hewlett, 'Boxing Night Outside a Country Theatre' (24 December 1892),747.

Pictures of rehearsal preparations are legion, such as the example completed by Amedée Forestier (no connection with Crowquill), for the New Year's Eve edition of the *Illustrated London News* in 1881. (Fig 24) Forestier, who was probably of Belgian extraction and had just arrived in England, was about to be appointed Special Artist to the *News*, whose commentary on Forestier's illustration provides a useful summary of Victorian fascination with pantomime before and behind the scenes at this point in time. ¹⁶



Figure 24. Amedée Forestier, 'Rehearsing for the Pantomime' Illustrated London News (31 December 1881), 641.

Another vignette from *London Society* in 1867 brings us down to earth more directly by showing a fairy consuming a tankard of beer behind the Scenes (Fig 25).



Figure 25. Alfred Thompson, 'A Peep Behind the Scenes on Boxing Night,' London Society X11 (The Christmas number for 1867), 27.

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The *Illustrated London News* once again provides us with insights into preparationime preparations for the 1880-81 pantomime *Valentine and Orson* at Covent Garden, revealing a demon and a genii, a fairy, hugging bears, obstinate horses and noble Saracens in rehearsal. (Fig 26)

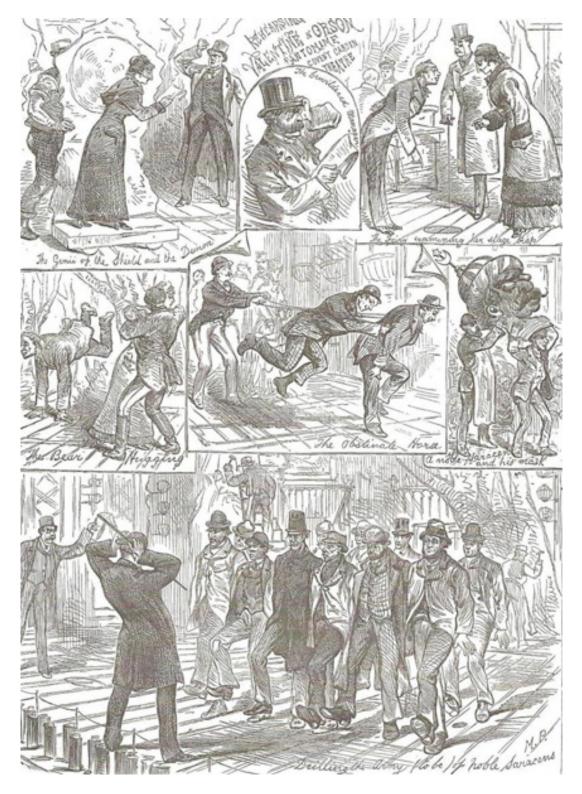


Figure 26. 'Preparing for the Pantomime' Illustrated London News (1 January 1881), 4.

By the late 1890s and early1900s conventions of illustrating the pantomimes had begun to change, as the examples of scenes from Drury Lane pantomimes *Mother Goose* (Fig 27) and *The Forty Thieves* (Fig 28), from the *Illustrated London News* and the *Graphic*, reveal. But so had pantomime itself. The Victorian period also witnessed the decline of the Harlequinade, which interestingly is far less frequently depicted in the illustrated journals than scenes from the Opening.

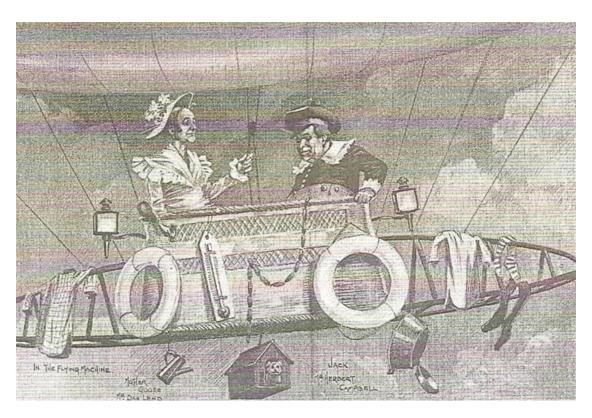


Figure 27. Ralph Cleaver, 'The Drury Lane Pantomime Scenes and Incidents from "Mother Goose" Illustrated London News (1 January 1903), 21.



Figure 28. Oliver Paque, "The Forty Thieves" at Drury Lane, The Interior of the Cave' The Graphic (31 December 1898), 849.

Yet it was still possible to acquire toy theatre sheets of Harlequinade characters throughout the century (Fig 29) and in Green's 1868 painting Clown, Harlequin and Pantaloon are clearly depicted back stage. Moreover, building on a long tradition established in the 18th century,



Figure 29. 'Pollock's Pantomime Characters,' published by B. Pollock, Hoxton, undated.

Harlequinade characters are just as likely to be found in political cartoons, with well-known politicians grotesquely assuming the traditional roles of Clown and Pantaloon. *Punch* is particularly prone to use pantomime images in this way, as in this comment on Anglo-American relationships (Fig 30).



Figure 30. 'Boxing Day' Punch (4 January 1862).

Or in this transformation by Linley Sambourne of Joseph Chamberlain into Harlequin. (Fig 31)



Figure 31. Linley Sambourne, 'A Pantomime Rehearsal' Punch (24 December, 1898), 290.

Visual representations of Victorian pantomime took many forms and it is impossible to do justice to the subject in a short paper. The illustrated pantomime libretti, scenic designs, the poster art that advertised the pantomimes and photography, an important means in its own right of visually representing mid and late Victorian pantomime, are all deserving of further attention, as are occasional sketches. Nevertheless, I would certainly argue that the illustrated journals and periodicals through annually publishing illustrations of pantomime scenes and a series of generic representations of rehearsal preparations and pantomime audiences, ranging from broad caricature to social realism, from first bouquets to obstinate horses, certainly contributed not only to the ways in which Victorian audiences perceived the genre but also to the ways in which we attempt to understand and reconstitute this most visual of theatrical forms today.

¹ The whereabouts of this painting is currently unknown.

² See Jim Davis, ed., *The Britannia Diaries 1863-75: Selections from the Diaries of Frederick C. Wilton* (London: Society for Theatre Research, 1992).

³ Gavin Weightman, *Bright Lights, Big City: London Entertained 1830-1950* (London: Collins and Brown Ltd., 1992), 26.

⁴ Burlington Magazine 123:939 (June 1981): 377.

⁵ Art Journal VII (June 1868): 111.

- ⁶ Martin Meisel, *Realizations: Narrative, Pictorial, And Theatrical Arts in Nineteenth-Century England* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1983), 396.
- ⁷ Forrest Reid, *Illustrators of the Eighteen Sixties: An Illustrated Survey of the Work of 58 British Artists* (New York: Dover Publications Inc., reprinted 1975), 258.
- ⁸ Graphic, 23 December 1871, Issue 108.
- ⁹ Era, 2 January 1870, 10.
- ¹⁰ *Era*, 25 December 1877, 5.
- ¹¹ *Ibid*.
- ¹² Era, 31 December, 1876.
- ¹³ Illustrated London News, 17 December 1870, 626.
- 14 Edward Dutton Cook (1829-1883) wrote extensively about the stage and was the principal critic for the *Pall Mall Gazette* from 1875 as well as the *World*.
- ¹⁵ Jim Davis, 'Boxing Day,' in Tracy C. Davis and Peter Holland, eds., *The Performing Century: Nineteenth Century Theatre's History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 24-7.
- ¹⁶ See Raymond Mander & Joe Mitchenson, *Pantomime A Story in Pictures* (London: Peter Davies, 1973), Plate 111 for a full transcript.