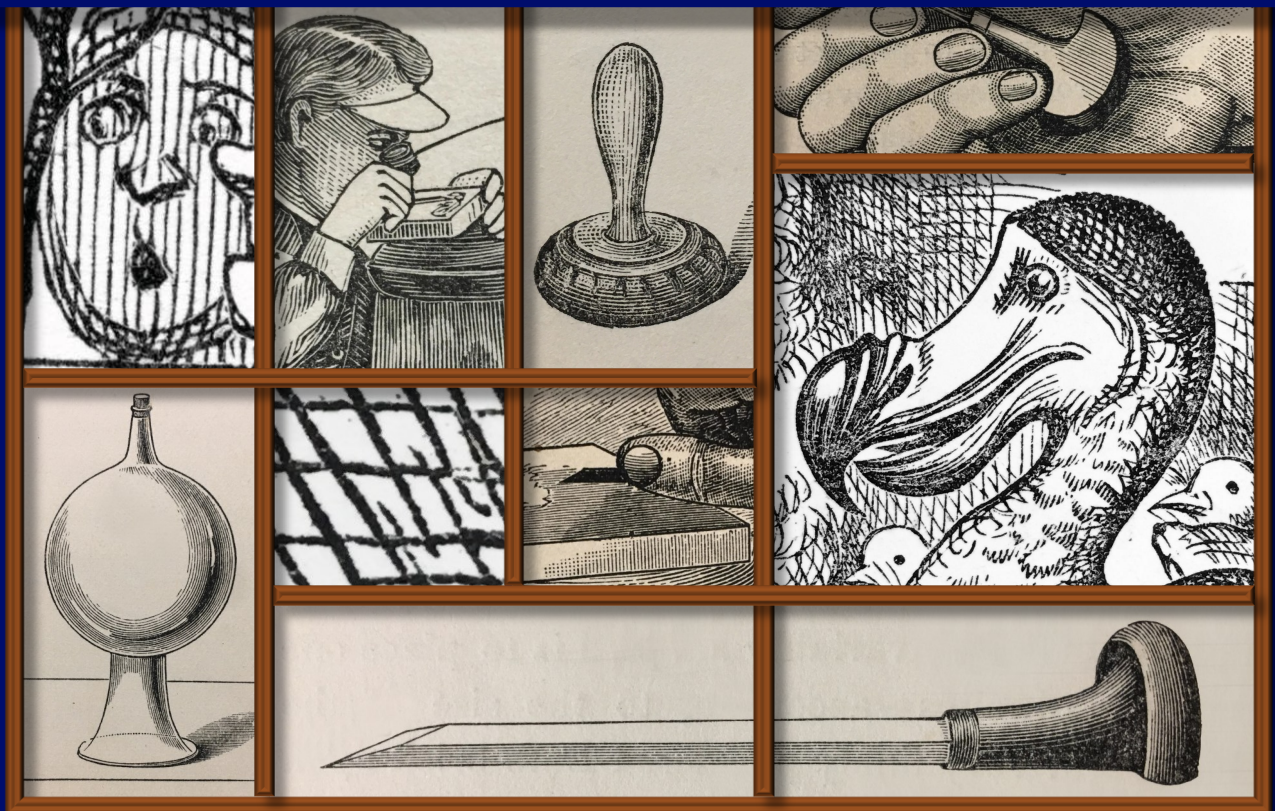




CUT—PROOF—PRINT

From Tenniel's Hands to Carroll's Eyes



MATT DEMAKOS

Cut—Proof—Print

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Matt Demakos

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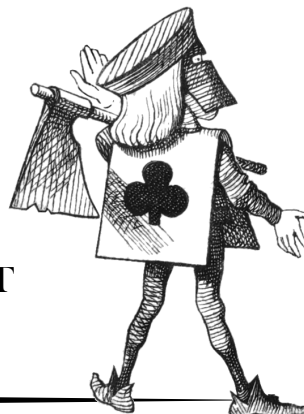
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“That’s right, Five! Always lay the blame on others!”
—Seven of Spades

PREFACE

And I will lay the blame on Stephanie Lovett. In June 2016, Stephanie, then the president of the Lewis Carroll Society of North America, received a query from a curious Frenchman. He wondered if there was an edition of Alice that combined Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures Under Ground* and *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. Since I had written an article on the differences between the two, Stephanie forwarded the query to me. I answered that I had such a manuscript, one that clearly marked the additions and deletions that turned the first version of the tale into the second; however, it was unpresentable and unpublishable. When we met in Paris to discuss my article, which was covered with penciled annotations, he was quite insistent that my manuscript be spruced up and published. Somehow, weeks later—as if in some sort of transe française—I found myself working on a sample chapter for *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland: The Lost Manuscript Reconstructed*. But as I was writing the annotations, which focused on the creative process, I realized that I might as well do the same with the illustrations. If I was detailing how the words developed, why not detail how the pictures developed. To my dismay, the deeper I dug into John Tenniel’s process, the more bewildering it all became—confusion, conflict, controversy—a *con* job. No joke, there were forgeries to consider. I not only fell down but dug my own proverbial rabbit-hole.

My first article on Tenniel was “Once I Was a Real Turtle: Tenniel’s Post-Publication Drawings and Tracings in the Berg Collection,” published in *Knight Letter* Spring and Fall 2018. It proves—and with *forensic* evidence—that these finished drawings, and similar ones in other collections, were indeed post-publication. Some were created just days after the publication of the book and others as many as three decades later. They were not, as has been suggested, practice drawings before drawing on the wood or drawings given to the engravers. In this, I am agreeing with Justin Schiller.

My second article was “Sketch—Trace—Draw: From Tenniel’s Hands to Carroll’s Eyes,” published in *Knight Letter* Spring and Fall 2020, in time for Tenniel’s bicentennial. It is the first half of my investigation into Tenniel’s working process for the illustrations in *Wonderland* and its sequel, *Through the Looking-Glass*.

I assumed, as many before me, that Tenniel worked on his Alice illustrations using the same method as that for his weekly *Punch* illustrations, which he created every week for over fifty years. “Well, I get my subject on Wednesday night,” he once told an interviewer, “I think it out carefully on Thursday, and make my rough sketch. On Friday morning I begin, and stick to it all day, with my nose well down on the block. By means of tracing-paper—on which I make such alterations of composition and action I may consider necessary—I transfer my design to the wood and draw on that.”

But in “Sketch,” the first section of the first part, I showed that it was reasonable to conclude that Tenniel normally drew not one, as he stated for *Punch*, but two or more sketches for each illustration in the Alice books. The section also included the first publication of several sketches, some previously unknown. One sketch even showed that Tenniel once contemplated a depiction of Alice’s sister reading not only at the end of the book when she awakes but also at the beginning when she falls asleep. In “Trace,” I reasoned that some tracings for *Looking-Glass*, unlike Tenniel’s *Punch* tracings, were created *before* the sketches and were indeed never used to transfer the design onto the wood, as once assumed. And in the last section, “Draw,” I showed that Tenniel, unlike most of his peers, drew on the bare wood with the end grain exposed. This likely caused the engraver Swain to grumble about the difficulty in engraving Tenniel’s *Punch* blocks. His complaint was probably the cause, I argue, for the pervasive, and demonstrably untrue rumor that Tenniel drew too lightly on the wood, so lightly it could be blown away. But in truth Swain couldn’t see his drawings because the end grain got mixed with the pencil sometimes.

Cut—Proof—Print: From Tenniel’s Hands to Carroll’s Eyes—what you have before you—completes my investigation into Tenniel’s process. In “Cut,” with Tenniel’s finished drawing on the wood before him, we investigate how the engraver went about his business. We question those scholars who misattribute some of the artistic attributes of the illustration to the engravers. (I apologize in advance for my harshness in this section and will defend myself only by confessing that I am perhaps too fond of my subject’s artistic qualities to allow such insults.) In “Proof,” we explain how the first impression of the engraved block is made and discuss Tenniel’s usual habits in making *touches* (improvements) to his design. We also show that he was no different than his colleagues with his insensitive criticisms of the engravers. In the final section, “Print,” we see how the block is sent to the printer and turned into an electrotpe before he places it into his press. We learn that the nuances found in the cutting and proofing stage become almost meaningless once the printer gets his hands on the block. As Tenniel said himself, “of course everything will depend on the printing.”

“You ought to return thanks in a neat speech.”

—Red Queen

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ahem! I would like to thank those members of the societies (in North America and the United Kingdom) who have helped me obtain images, texts, contacts, or even ideas: Mark Burstein, Clare and August Imholtz, Stephanie Lovett, Christopher Morgan, Andrew Ogus, Catherine and Mark Richards, the pioneer Justin Schiller, Alan Tannenbaum, and Edward Wakeling.

I would like to thank the many librarians, and their institutions, who have done more than just pull rarities from their shelves: from The Grolier Club, Meghan R. Constantinou, Sophia Dahab and Scott Ellwood; from Harvard University, Mary Haegert and Emily Walhout; from The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Clara Goldman; from The Morgan Library & Museum, María Isabel Molestina; from The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Patrick Murphy; from The New York Public Library, Lyndsi Barnes, Mary Catherine Kinniburgh, and Carolyn Vega; from New York University, Charlotte Priddle; and from The Rosenbach Museum and Library, Jobi Zink and the phenomenal Elizabeth Fuller.

I would also like to thank Hannah Callahan, Marta Rudolph, Sarah Montagu, and those who wish to be nameless.

After exploring their online catalogues, I contacted over 350 special collections librarians across the country in an attempt to find “lost” Tenniel artwork. These emails were more often than not personally written with questions about particular holdings. It is impossible to name these many librarians, many of whom sent me images of Tenniel’s sketches and tracings in their collections, sent either free or with a very reasonable fee. The search located several Tenniel letters, individual sketches or tracings, and even some rare books bound by Riviere with multiple sketches and tracings (non-Alice) that were important in my understanding of his process. The search also found over one hundred Lewis Carroll rarities, including letters, inscribed edi-

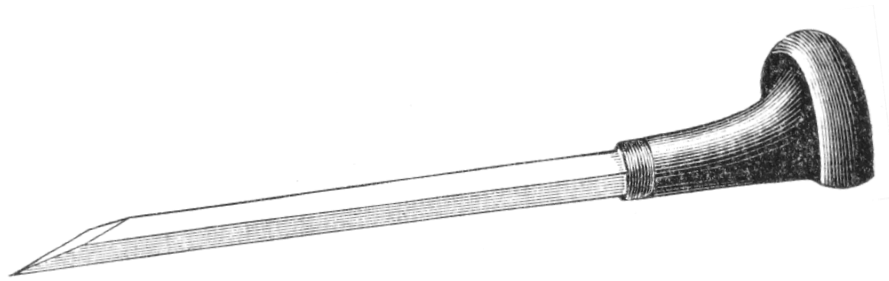
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tions, and even a few photographs, unknown to Edward Wakeling, who now has their details safely stored in his databases for future researchers.

Lastly, I would like to thank Wilfred Naar. Despite his Anglo-Saxon name, he is that curious and most persistent Frenchman. I've tried to appease him with a sample chapter ("The Queen's Croquet-Ground") of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland: The Lost Manuscript Reconstructed*. But, Wilfred, as for the finished work, as you *do not* say in French: ne tenez pas vos chevaux.

Matthew Demakos

July 2020



CUT

“Lovely day for taking the road,” Tenniel remarked to his riding companions who waited, mounted and ready, outside his house. “Miss Brown will be delighted,” he added, as he adjusted his saddle. Francis Burnand was taken aback—he understood that this was simply going to be a bachelor trio. Who was this Miss Brown? Linley Sambourne, being in on the joke, chuckled and admired how Tenniel belabored the wordplay for a time. “My dear chap! We can’t go without her,” Tenniel finally explained, slapping his horse. “Here she is!—let me introduce you to my ‘Miss Brown.’” With that, the men rode off to Chingford, their valises sent ahead, to spend the night in an old Elizabethan inn.¹

And such is how Tenniel spent his time cutting his blocks, the fourth stage of his process. In other words, in the facsimile process of wood engraving, the artist and the engraver were two different individuals. His trip on Miss Brown also comes at a convenient time; it allows him to avoid the unpleasant discussion of how his illustrations—which include those for Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*—were created using a controversial artform, one even compared to slavery.

There were two basic types of wood engraving in the eighteen hundreds (figure 2). The first was called *white line* and was popularized by Thomas Bewick. It allowed the engraver, sometimes the artist himself, to *interpret* the varying gray washes that were applied to the wood. It eschewed cross-hatching and instead employed simple hatching, a series of parallel or concentric lines and other forms of texturing. “Tints are washed in with a brush,” as the engraver William James Linton described the method, “a more rapid and more effective and more painter-like method; and the en-



Figure 2. White Line Vs Facsimile. Harry H. Peckham engraved the designs on the left for Scott's *British Field Sports* (1818). The Dalziels engraved Tenniel's designs on the right for Carroll's *Looking-Glass* (1872). Though white line engravers cut around lines (top left) like facsimile engravers, they also interpreted gray washes applied to the wood by the artists. They would often "draw" white with gravers (bottom left) and eschewed time-consuming, pen-and-ink style cross-hatching, a common characteristic of facsimile (right).

graver has to supply the lines: that is to say, he has to draw with his graver such lines as shall represent color, texture, and form."² As a result, the artist and the engraver were equal partners in the creation of the illustration.

The second type of wood engraving, what Tenniel practiced, was called *facsimile*. It separated the artist from the engraver and imitated pen and ink drawing. It welcomed cross-hatching, often glorifying in it, and eschewed, for the most part, gray washes or ambiguous applications. As the word facsimile implies (it derives from the Latin to "make alike"), the engraver painstakingly carved out each line, curve, twist, or loopity-doo the artist rendered. "The engraver cuts all this in facsimile," as George du Maurier explained. "[I]t is more than his place is worth to add a line of his own, or leave out one of the artist's."³ In other words, it was not the engraver's job, nor his

Figure 1. Engraver, from William Norman Brown, *A Practical Manual of Wood Engraving*.

want, to criticize, change, or improve the design. As a result, the engraver was not equal to the artist in the creation of the illustration.

Some Victorians had issues with the facsimile process of wood engraving, such as Henry Holiday, John Ruskin (two of Carroll's friends), and William James Linton (figure 3). This trio—an artist, a critic and an engraver—will be pitted against another trio at the end of this discussion.

Ruskin, perhaps the era's most well-known art critic, had trouble calling the engraver an artist when he was simply a machine. "Now calculate," he lectured Oxford students in the year Carroll published *Looking-Glass*, "how many men are night and day cutting 1050 square holes to the square inch, as the occupation of their manly life." Those holes were John Tenniel's too! Ruskin found it an unworthy art form that had one participant acting as the uncaring master of another. "I demand two hundred and fifty exquisitely precise touches from my engraver, to render ten careless ones of mine," he said, imagining himself as the artist. "And Mrs. Beecher Stowe and the North Americans fancy they have abolished slavery!" (As insensitive as this comment may be to us today, it does relate to how we react to the beauty of a hand-woven Indian rug, and how that beauty dissipates when we are informed that it was woven by a child in hostile working conditions.) Ruskin didn't even allow the engravers to take pride in their work because it was "not really difficult,—only tedious."⁴

Linton, an engraver himself, was perhaps even more severe than Ruskin. He thought "any apprentice could engrave such lines" as those drawn by Tenniel and that

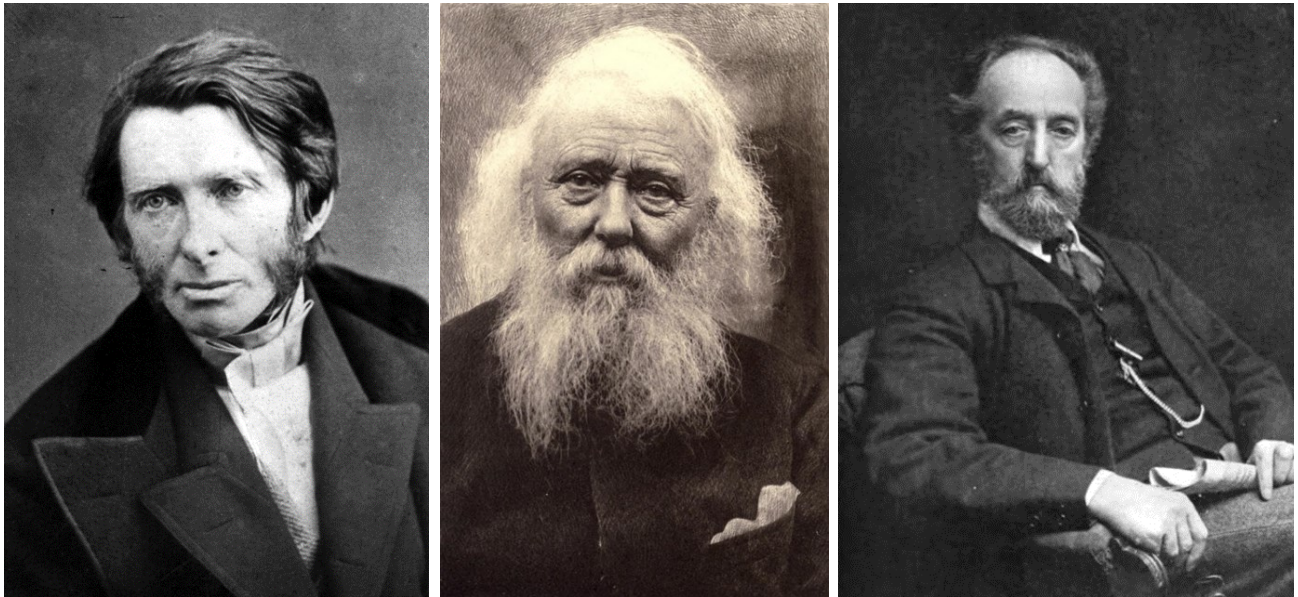


Figure 3. The Three Critics. John Ruskin, William James Linton, and Henry Holiday were critical of facsimile wood engraving as an artform. Ruskin mocked the engraver for cutting out countless square holes "as the occupation of their manly life," Linton compared them to "gnawing rats," and Holiday thought the overuse of cross-hatching (probably thinking of Tenniel) only showed that "everything in nature consisted of fishing-nets and cobwebs."

his drawings and his *Punch* colleague's John Leech's "did not depend upon the engraver for popularity." He referred to engravers as "two-legged, cheap machines... scarcely mechanics, mere machines, badly geared and ineffective" who "ruin their eyes and waste their ill-paid lives." He even compared engravers to rodents, writing that they hardly knew what they were carving, be it tea-cup or rattle: "these poor engravers cutting (as rats might gnaw) portions of something not understood by them,—patches of hair, or flesh, or brick, what mattered not to the cutters, their business only to stick exactly to the lines."⁵ As a case in point, one thoughtless engraver accidentally carved out a "P. 137"—the intended page for the illustration!⁶

Holiday believed the wood engraver "left his true self uncultivated and unexpressed." He did not conceive facsimile wood engraving as an art, "for art it cannot be called while mechanical accuracy is the *only* quality displayed." He believed the engravers created only an "unnatural imitation of scratchy cross-hatching." That is, it is fair enough on paper, but on wood, when each hole needs to be painstakingly excised, it is only "imitating the work of another art" (pen and ink drawing). Admittedly, he seems to have it out for cross-hatching itself when he notes its ubiquity "as though everything in nature consisted of fishing-nets and cobwebs."⁷ Holiday did illustrate Carroll's *The Hunting of the Snark* in the facsimile process. But this was not his first choice. "When I made the 'Snark' drawings, I had no Bewick to cut them and had to content myself with" the facsimile process. He described the white line style in part as "avoiding cross-hatching and similar modes of execution," which he, upon close examination, certainly carried out in his *Snark* illustrations.⁸

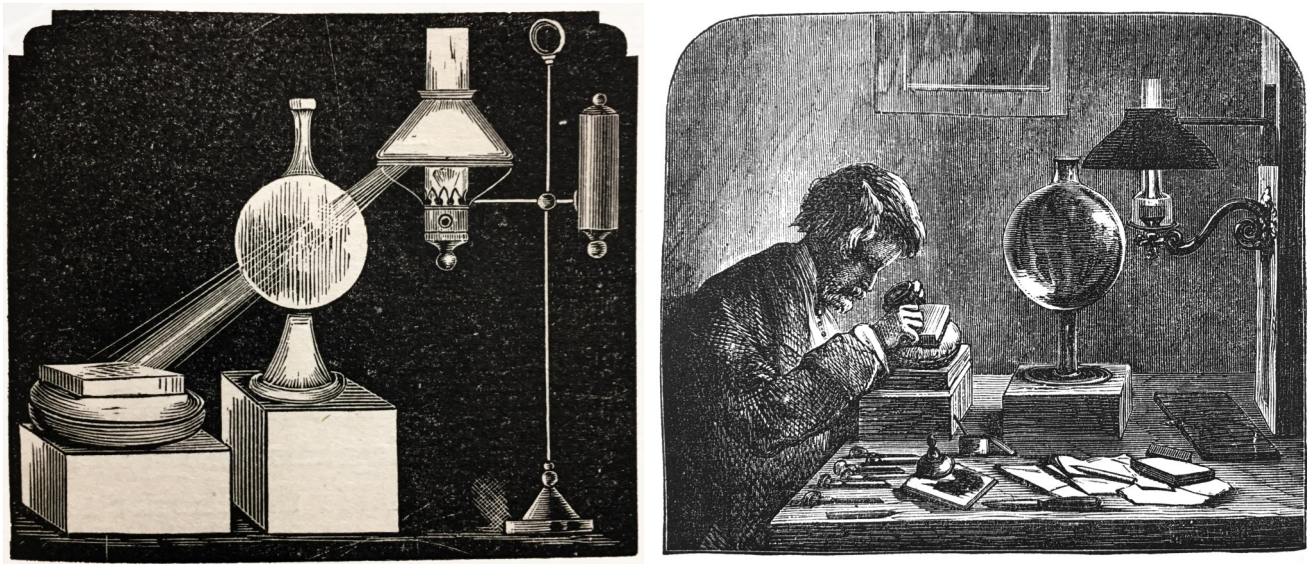


Figure 4. The Water Globe, from *Hand-book of Wood Engraving* by William A. Emerson, 1884 (left), and from *The Boy's Book of Industrial Information* by Elisha Noyce, 1859 (right). The water globe worked as a magnifying glass, concentrating the light onto the block. Engraver's were often portrayed with the water globe, making it a symbol of the trade. The engraver on the right is shown with a smooth plate, a dauber, inkwell and burnisher for making proofs.

Despite this trio's description of engravers, they tended to hold a place in society higher than composers and other jobs in the printing trade, even wearing "tall silk hats"... "symbols of petit-bourgeois status."⁹ At work, however, the standard image of the engraver was a man in a paper visor with a watchmaker's eyeglass sitting at a bench with a large glass globe filled with water (figures 4 and 7). The eyeglass was often supported by a stand and the globe was used to direct light onto their work.

Both the illustrators William Heath Robinson and Walter Crane reminisced about their younger days spent in engraving shops. Recalling his father's shop, Robinson wrote: "They were all bent low over their work. Glass globes filled with water increased the light that came from the green shaded lamps. Each engraver wore a protruding eyeglass like a watchmaker's glass fixed to one eye. This he brought as close as possible to the wood block... poised on round leather pads like buns. After each cut was made... the graver was brought up to the lips or moustache to clear..." Crane, who worked in Linton's shop as a young man, recalled, "A row of engravers at work at a fixed bench covered with green baize running the length of the room," or a circle of engravers, for night work around another "circle of large clear glass globes filled with water to magnify the light."¹⁰

The tools before these men included gravers (or Lozenges), scaupers (or scorpers or gouges), tint tools, spitstickers (an elliptical tint tool), and chisels, all in various sizes. The gravers were the main tools and, as is often pointed out, a single graver could be used for the whole of the cutting (figure 5). The scaupers were used to carve out large areas, white spaces. The tint tools were used for creating very small grooves, closely spaced, allowing shades from light to dark gray to be produced.¹¹ This was not Tenniel's style, however, and they were only used in his very early work.¹²

With the block safely couched in a leather sandbag, the engravers—imagine their paper visors, eyeglasses and water globes—began their work. They covered the drawing with a piece of smooth paper to protect it, adhering it to the side with string, glue,

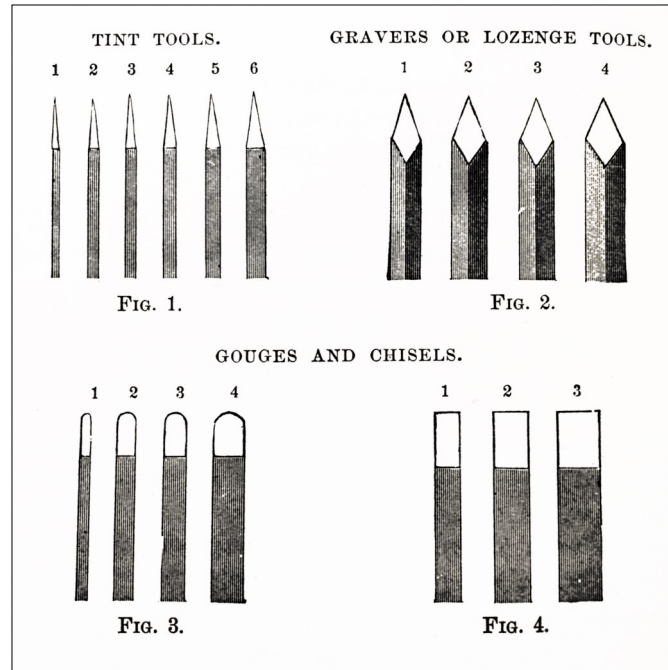


Figure 5. Engraving Tools, from *Manual of Wood Engraving for the Amateur*, Arthur Hope, 1882. The diagram shows only a portion of the many tools available to the engraver. It is often said that a whole engraver can be done with only one graver.



Figure 6. The Engraver's Hands and His First Cuts, from *Manual of Wood Engraving for the Amateur*, Arthur Hope, 1882. The illustrations show how the engraver holds the tool in his palm (top left) and how, for support, the thumb rested on the wood while cutting. The engraver given an image on the wood (top right) would begin by cutting around each line (bottom right).

or beeswax. After ripping off a section of the paper, perhaps starting at the top left, as suggested in one manual, they would begin by making a thin cut around each line. It is important to note that they would not deeply gorge out the side of one line first as that would weaken the wood when cutting the opposite side. After outlining the area it was safe to begin clearing out the wood. The more sizable the white space, the deeper they had to cut. This acted as a guard against the printing paper touching the bottom of the block and getting unintentionally inked. Once the area was outlined and cleared, they would rip out another area, and repeat the process until the whole block was fully outlined and cleared. Engravers could outline the whole of the block before clearing, though this seems a less usual practice for single engravers.

When making the cuts, the engraver pushed his tool forward with his thumb “either resting against the side or on the top,” of the block (figure 6). This “act[ed] as a lever and a check” against making a “slip,” (the trade’s word for a boo-boo). They would, if possible, leave a border around the image to protect the block from damage. The border also helped the proof-taker from over-inking the edges of the design.

Some firms divided the cutting into stages amongst several engravers (figure 7). In one firm, the first engraver would outline the drawing (the outliner), the second would

cut the close parallel lines seen in skies or floorboards, for example (the tinhand), the third would cut the cross-hatching (the finisher), and the last would gorge out the large white areas (the scorper). How the Dalziels ran their shop is unknown. Tenniel's *Punch* blocks, which consisted of several pieces of wood, were perhaps engraved, after being taken apart, by several engravers—time being of the essence.¹³

Tenniel's reputation has often been *insulted* by the notion that engravers contributed significant details to the design by completing backgrounds, creating textures, or even moving a duck from one place to another. It is possible, however, to prove the *accuracy* and the *faithfulness* the engravers had to the original design. In February 1891 Tenniel abandoned the practice of drawing directly onto the wood for his weekly *Punch* cartoons. Instead, as some of his colleagues had been doing for decades, he created a pen and ink drawing on paper, which in turn was photographed onto the wood. One of these pen and ink drawings, "My Egyptian Pet," for November 21, 1891, is found in the Victoria & Albert Museum (figure 8).¹⁴ When it is overlapped

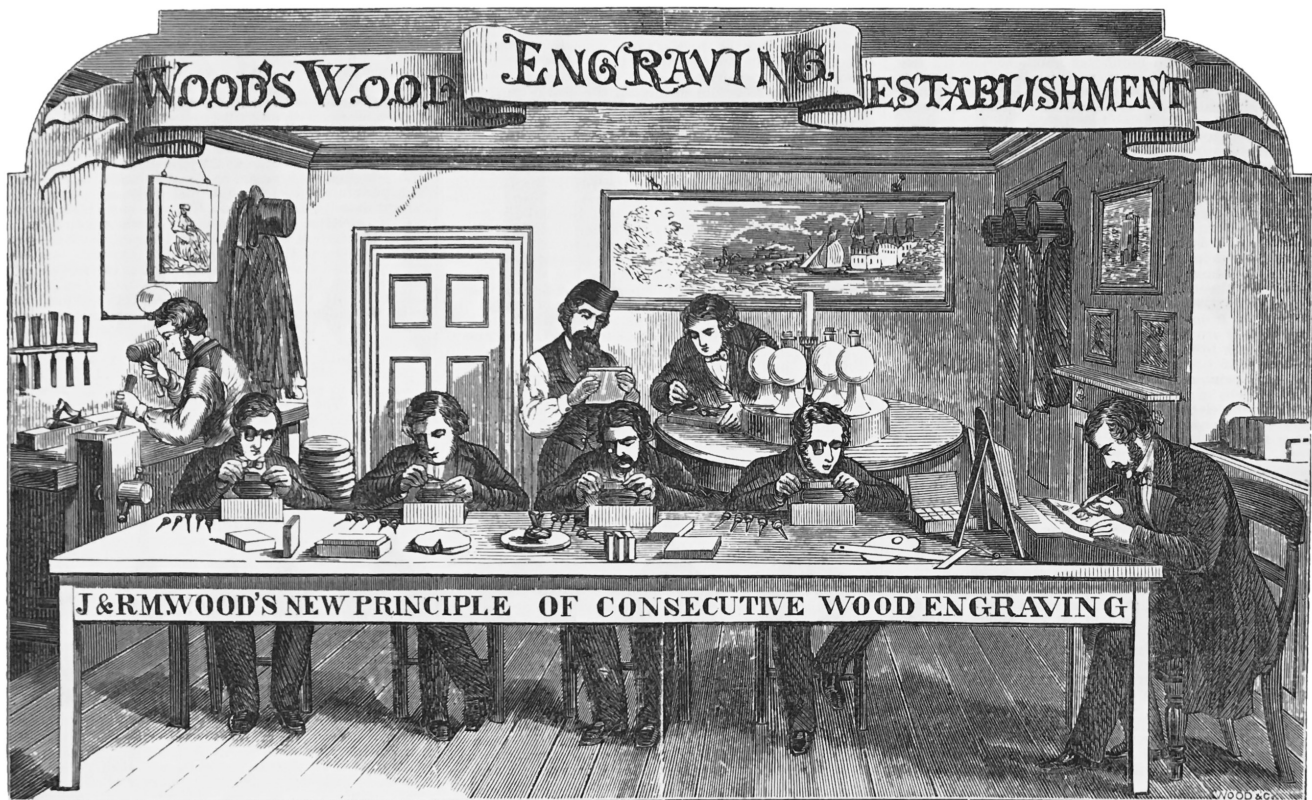
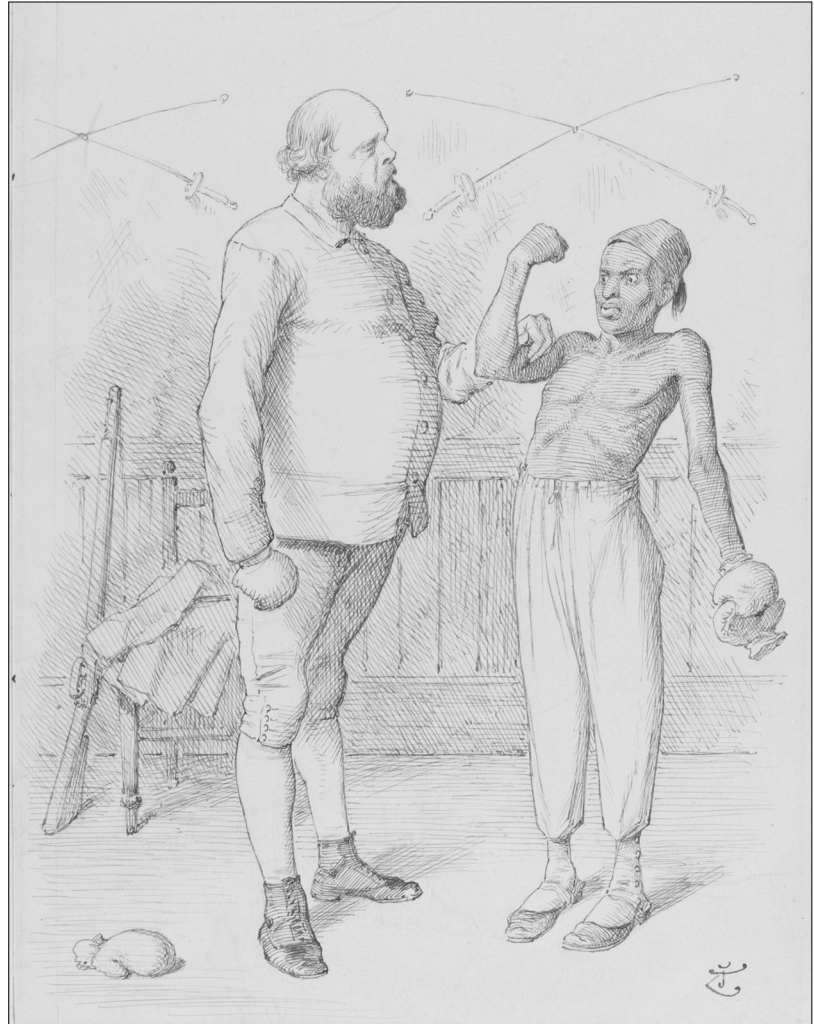


Figure 7. Wood Engravers, from *J. & R. M. Wood's Typographic Advertiser*, March 1, 1863, p. 77, courtesy of The Grolier Club of New York. The caption accompanying the illustration claims the "engraving is an exact representation" of the shop, "and the figures are all correct likenesses of the *employees*." The men are arranged on the "consecutive principle." Starting from the right at the fore table, there is the artist, outliner, tint-hand, finisher, scorper, and carpenter; and in the back, the foreman (with Glengarry cap), and improver (proof-taker) beside him.

Figure 8. My Egyptian Pet, John Tenniel, pen and ink drawing, Victoria and Albert Museum, Prints & Drawings (right, reduced); and My Egyptian Pet, John Tenniel, engraved by Swain, *Punch*, November 21, 1891, p. 247 (following page, left, reduced); with contrast-enhanced details of the drawing (a–d) and matching details from the print (e–h).

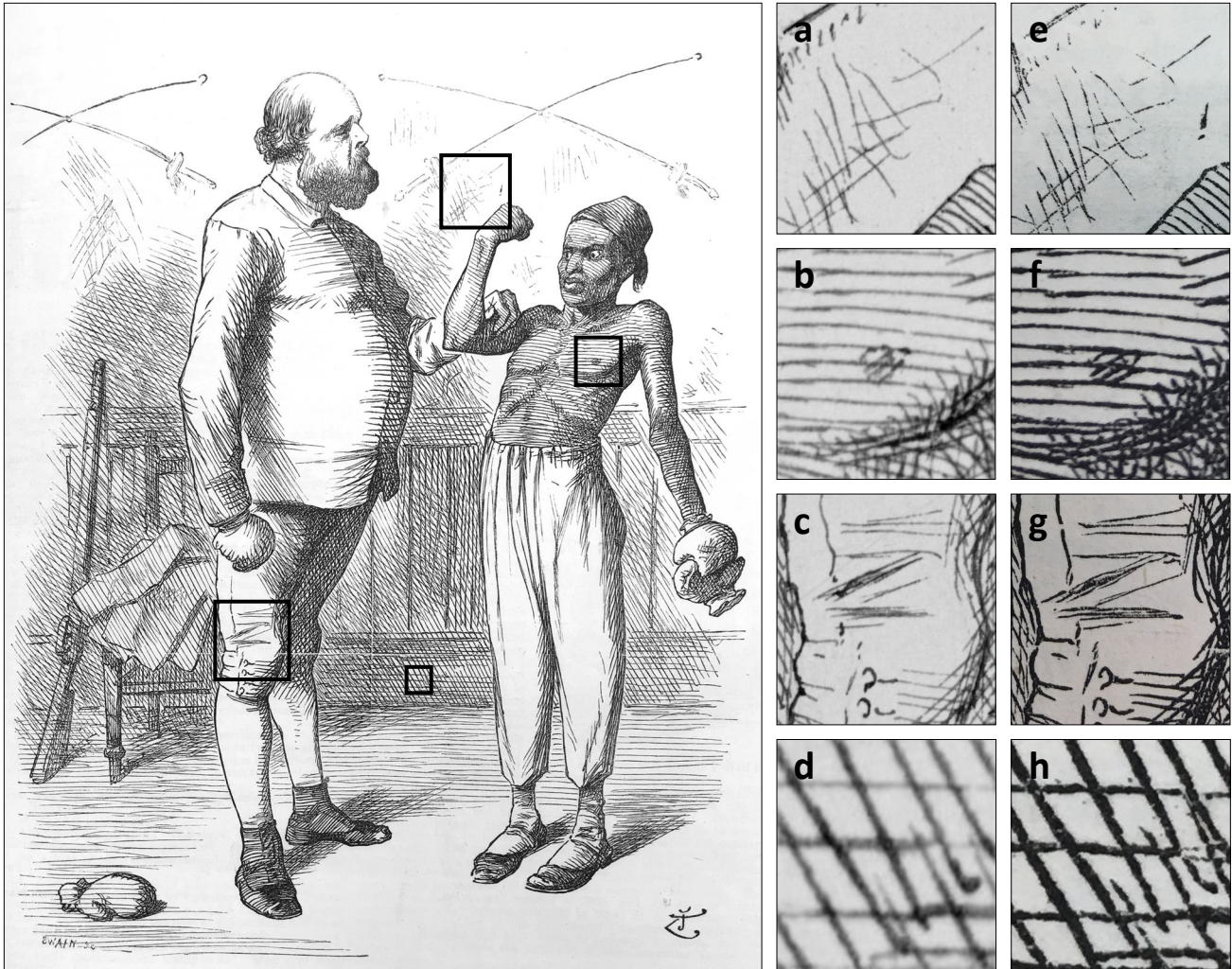
The cartoon was drawn on paper and photographed onto the wood, allowing it to be compared to the printed version. As can be seen in the enlarged details, the engraver cut the insignificant wall textures (a and e), the pet's skin tone and the scribbling shadows beneath his breastplate (b and f), the wrinkles on Gladstone's right knee (c and g), and even the artist's famed cross-hatching (d and h) all in near-exact facsimile. Note how even the lines that protrude half way through the quadrangles in the cross-hatching were faithfully cut and not simply excised! In other words, if the engraver is cutting these insignificant elements with such fidelity, he must have cut—and did cut—the more significant details with the same or even greater care.

There are some differences but they are due to either the photographic transfer, the printing process (specifically, overlaying), or the minuscule scale in which the graver was working.



with the print version and flicked back and forth, one can see intense similarities and only negligible differences.

Let us take three concepts of “My Egyptian Pet” to exemplify the fidelity the engraver shows to the photographed drawing: the cross-hatching, the free texturing, and the main features. The cross-hatching is copied for the most part as hatched from Tenniel's pen. The engraver shows no sign of evening out the lines or changing their texture or quality. In fact, when a quad (a rhombus shaped area) contains a little *blip* of a protruding line stopping somewhere midway through the quad, it is carved out as well. The engraver does not shiftily look left, shiftily look right, and then swiftly cut the quad with four swift strokes, excising the *blip*. No, he perhaps quadruples the number of strokes to render that stupid, insipid blip in tedious *facsimile*. His manly life!



The engraver does make some changes, however. He seems to lessen the spillage from Tenniel's pen from time to time. That is, when beginning or ending a stroke, pens do tend to create globules. Also, as cross-hatching is often background, the engraver occasionally adds a bit of white space (unnoticeable with the naked eye) between the cross-hatching and a forward figure where Tenniel's pen allows the two to touch.

The free texturing, the scribbling around a drawing that indicates the presence of walls, etc., is copied verbatim as well. Take, for example, the meaningless scribbles to the left of the pet's face or the scribbling above the pet's fist. Both areas are carved out by the engraver precisely as Tenniel drew them in pen and ink. There are some differences, like the diagonal lines below the swords on the left. But they are minor and, of course, add nothing to the artistry of the image. (In fact, the perceived differ-

ences may owe to the imperfection of the photography or the printer's handling of the block.)

If these two concepts, both created with arbitrary lines, are engraved in relatively tight facsimile, naturally the more important features of the drawing are as well, namely, Gladstone and his "Egyptian Pet." The Prime Minister's nose, his beard, his belly and his eye are scrupulously cut. The pet's nose, bare chin, and eyes are scrupulously cut. The engraver shows no attempt to improve the drawing, to add to the drawing, or to be a creative force behind the drawing.¹⁵

In truth, the devotion engravers had to every squiggle of the artists abounds. The Hartley Collection in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, contains many photographs of drawings on the wood blocks, created by numerous artists, *before* they were cut. The Harcourt Amory Collection in Harvard has fourteen such photographs, once owned by Carroll himself, of Harry Furniss's pen and ink drawings for *Sylvie and Bruno*. The collection also has several of A. B. Frost's pen and ink drawings for Carroll's *Rhyme? and Reason?* and *A Tangled Tale*, likely from Carroll's own collection as well, which were known to be photographed onto the wood. And Bryn Mawr College has Henry Holiday's pen and ink drawings on paper for *The Hunting of the Snark*, which, owing to the amazing similarity to the final print, were obviously photographed onto the wood, though this fact is unrecorded.¹⁶ All these photographs and drawings—and many more that, no doubt, exist in other institutions—testify to the engravers' respect of the artists' original lines.

Despite this evidence, and more to come, several writers have directly or indirectly misrepresented Tenniel's contribution to his own illustrations, thus insulting his talent. We will limit ourselves to three, our second trio: Rodney Engen, Bethan Stevens, and Simon Cooke. Engen was a biographer of Tenniel's, Stevens is a lecturer at Sussex

University, and Cooke is an author of several Victorian themed publications, specializing in illustration.

Engen believed that "Tenniel... provided short-hand drawings which, according to the series now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, suggest how little he needed to send to Swain to be sure of clear interpretations of his original idea" (figure 10). He believed that Tenniel "learned to adapt his preliminary sketches to the spare outline style and even lines of Swain's graver." Engen is simply misinterpreting preliminary sketches Ten-

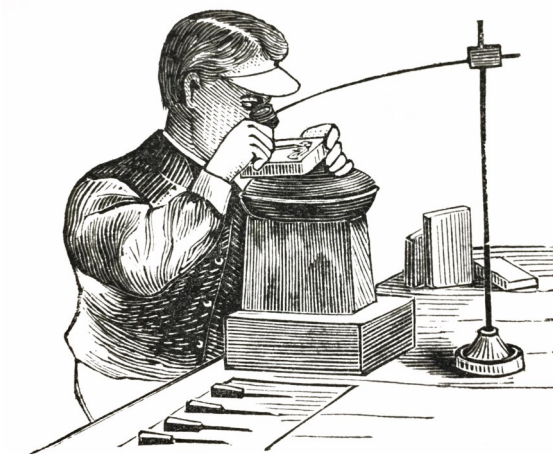


Figure 9. Engraver with Visor and Eye-Glass Stand, from *Hand-Book of Wood Engraving* by William A. Emerson.

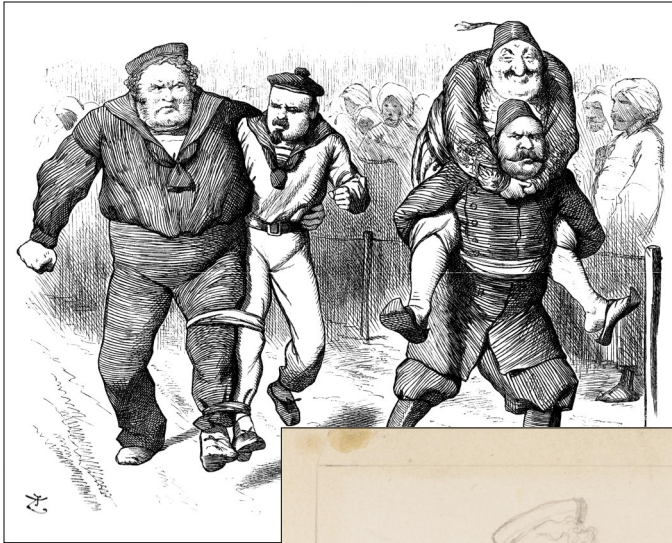


Figure 10. John Tenniel, “Egyptian Bonds,” sketch, from The Victoria and Albert Museum (right), and print, from *Punch*, July 8, 1882 (above). “On Friday morning I begin, and stick to it all day,” Tenniel stated, “with my nose well down on the block.” It was Tenniel’s job every week to create his “finished drawing” for *Punch* on the wood—not the engravers’ job as has been claimed! Tenniel gave the smaller sailor a hat. Tenniel gave the larger sailor a dark suit. Tenniel added the background figures. Tenniel created every squiggle.



niel created for his illustrations before drawing a *brilliant* and *complete* finished drawing on the wood. Engen also misinterprets a tracing he finds, believing Tenniel, somewhat pathetically, traced his old designs in his old age. The figure in the tracing has *three* hands, obviously showing development, and the tracing differs in other details when compared to the illustration, screaming it was created before not after the print.¹⁷

Bethan Stevens writes, “I see the wood engraver as an artistic equivalent of the ghostwriter, whose story is not his or her own, but who is responsible for the entire

texture and fabric of the text we read.” In her analogy, Tenniel isn’t even the ghost-writer, the talented party, but plays the part of the pretender, the untalented party, the athlete, for example, who is more adept at hitting a three-run home run than hitting upon a fluidly poetic three-word phrase. “Even the straightest [lines] have distinct qualities when magnified,” she claims, “This amounts to a whole different look, which is visible to the casual observer.”¹⁸ If the engraver is responsible for “the entire texture and fabric” and for “a whole different look,” and if it is readily apparent, then these transformations could have been exemplified in several side-by-side figures. But they are not. Her figures are captioned, however, in a rather contentious (or provoking) form: “Figure 3. Dalziel after John Tenniel, ‘Jabberwocky’....” Placing the engravers’ name first (in this case a corporation) and removing the usual descriptions “Engraved by” and “with Designs by” before the respective parties draws undue attention to the engraver and marginalizes the artist.

Simon Cooke writes in the same vein as Stevens. He claims engraving “was often a matter of imaginative interpretation, of improving, changing and, enhancing aspects of the original work.”¹⁹ Unlike Stevens, he does, at least, try to prove his case to the readers.

In the introduction to the book, Cooke constructs his most elaborate proof for the engravers’ “imaginative interpretation.” He shows two figures, one of Frederick Sandys’ drawing for “Amor Mundi” (a poem by Christina Rossetti) and the other of the same after it was engraved. He states that the drawing was photographed onto the wood.²⁰ Sadly, seemingly unbeknownst to Cooke, the Hartley Collection has a photograph of the block before it was cut.²¹ Indeed, the drawing was never photographed onto the wood: the artist instead drew a more developed drawing directly on the block. Thus, all the brilliant differences between the two—that Cooke claims were the engraver’s doing—were actually accomplished *solely* by the artist.

In a chapter that deals with the relationship between the artist and the engraver, he continues this dubious methodology—comparing a sketch never seen by the engraver with the final image—and assigns the differences to the engravers’ superior knowledge of graphic art. With such practices, Cooke is only bound to insult all the artists of the day: “Put simply, the master engravers often ‘improved’ their source material, converting non-viable designs into effective prints.”²² Surely, a case can be made for the engravers’ craft. But it would be a more nuanced discussion than put forth here.

If this second trio is correct (the biographer, the lecturer, and the author), then the first trio (the artist, the critic, and the engraver) must have been rattling off Mad-Hatter nonsense. The two worlds cannot be reconciled. Ruskin was nobody’s fool! Linton was an engraver! And Holiday tried to find an engraver to interpret his work, but failed! Their essays, all of which defined engravers as mere copyists, all of which downgraded and insulted them, may have used sensational imagery, hyperbole, but they did not misrepresent them. Our righteous trio fail to contend with their writings, their first-hand observations, their knowledge. They fail to properly deal with the evi-

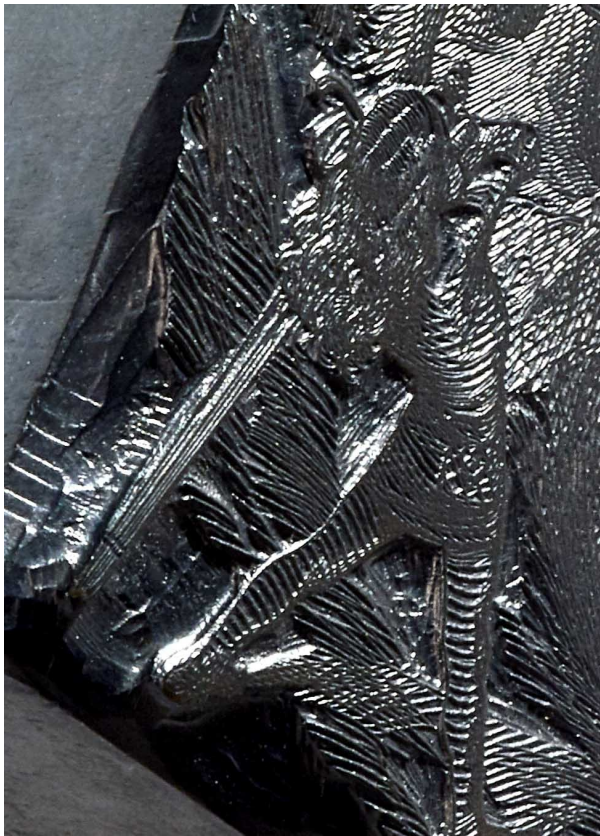


Figure 11. The Jabberblock, John Tenniel, engraved by the Dalziel Brothers, woodblock, from the British Library, reproduced by the permission of the Executors of the C. L. Dodgson Estate. The blocks show that small white spaces like those in cross-hatching or simple hatching, as in the beast's wings or the trees behind them (above), can be cut surprisingly shallow. Larger white spaces, however, such as the space between the boy's leg and sword (left), need to be cut deeper. This prevents the paper from drooping down into a valley, when pressure is applied to the area during printing, and getting accidentally inked.

dence found in photographic transfers, block photography, engraving manuals, uncut woodblocks, simultaneous block cutting, the meaning of the word “facsimile,” and the fact that the engravers did not scrutinize the manuscripts. And as we will see in the next section, they also fail to realistically contend with the comments artists scribbled on proofs.

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1. The story was told by Burnand (only very slightly adapted here) and appears in Richard Renton, *John Forster and His Friendships* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1913), pp. 71–2.
 2. William James Linton, “Art in Engraving on Wood” in *The Atlantic Monthly* 53 (June 1879), no. 260: p. 713.
 3. George du Maurier, “The Illustrating of Books: From the Serious Artist’s Point of View” in *The Magazine of Art* 13 (1890): p. 352.
 4. John Ruskin, *Ariadne Florentina: Six Lectures on Wood and Metal Engraving* (1876), “Lecture III: The Technics of Wood Engraving” in *The Complete Works of John Ruskin*, vol. 22, edited by E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, *Lectures on Landscape, Michael Angelo & Tintoret, The Eagle’s Nest, Ariadne Florentina* (London: George Allen, 1906), pp. 356 and 359–60. The lectures were given in 1872 but published in 1876. Ruskin claimed it took an average of ten strokes per interstice to engrave cross-hatching. But Brown (p. 60) states the engraver inserted his tool “twice at opposite angles,” presumably meaning four cuts in total (see footnote 13).
 5. Linton, “Art in Engraving on Wood,” pp. 707–8.
 6. This was noticed by Bethan Stevens. See figure 14 in her article cited below.
 7. Henry Holiday in *The Magazine of Art* 2 (1878–9): part 1, p. 28; part 2, page 86; part 3, p. 108; part 4, p. 179; and part 5, p. 287.
 8. Henry Holiday, *Reminiscences of my Life* (London: Heinemann, 1914), p. 258. Interestingly, he seems to be unaware of Ruskin’s earlier lecture and publication (see p. 257). It is odd that Holiday simply chose to eschew cross-hatching. Many artists of the time employed a more painterly style of wood engraving, with heavy use of the tint tool, including those who drew for books on Arctic exploration, making such use of the technique all too fitting for *The Hunting of the Snark*.
 9. “The Wood Engraving Profession,” from the National Museums Scotland [Website], <https://www.nms.ac.uk/collections>, accessed April 29, 2019; De Freitas, Leo, *Commercial Engraving on Wood in England, 1700-1880*, PhD Thesis, Royal College of Art (London, 1986). I was unable to find prima facie evidence for this concept.
 10. James Hamilton, *Wood Engraving & the Woodcut in Britain: c. 1890–1990* (London, Barrie & Jenkins, 1994), pp. 30 and 32.
 11. From a combination of the many manuals cited above and below, but perhaps mainly from C. M. Jenckes, “Lessons in Wood-Engraving” in *The Art Amateur* (November 1884): p. 124.

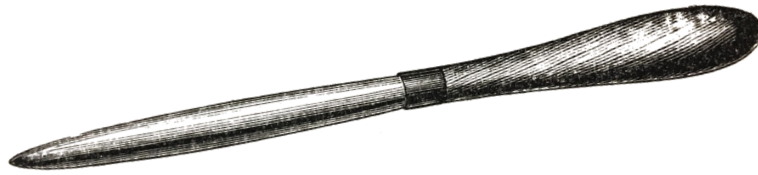
12. Frankie Morris, *Artist of Wonderland: The Life, Political Cartoons, and Illustrations of Tenniel* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005), p. 108.
13. William Norman Brown, *A Practical Manual of Wood Engraving* (London: Crosby Lockwood, 1886), pp. 42–5; Jenckes, “Lessons in Wood-Engraving” in *The Art Amateur* (December 1884): p. 11; “Wood Engraving” in *Cassell’s Household Guide: Being a Complete Encyclopedia of Domestic and Social Economy IV* (London: Cassell, Petter, and Galpin, 1869), p. 304; and Arthur Hope, *Manual of Wood Engraving for the Amateur* (Chicago: The Colegrove Book Company, 1882), 17–9. The Metropolitan Museum of Art has several proofs that show a printed protective border. See their proof books cited in the next chapter.
14. John Tenniel, “My Egyptian Pet,” pen and ink drawing [from *Punch*, November 21, 1891, p. 247], Victoria and Albert Museum, SD.1032, Prints & Drawings Study Room, level D, case 87, shelf SC, box 36. At least by January 1892, Tenniel began using pencil again but on paper coated with white wash or china white. They are found in the Victorian and Albert Museum and in the Hartley Collection in The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

For a more detailed history and a more visual experience regarding the discussion in this section, see the author’s video “The Blip: The Engraver’s Role in Tenniel’s Process” on YouTube, also available from the Lewis Carroll Society of North America’s website.

15. The same exercise can be carried out with another pen and ink drawing, see John Tenniel, *Punch* Vol CII [Cover, 1892], British Museum, British Roy PVII, 1967,1014.146.
16. In his wonderfully exhaustive essay on Holiday’s *Snark* drawings, Charles Mitchell concluded that Holiday’s pen and ink drawings were not photographed onto the wood. He bases this on a single document, a letter written by Macmillan. However, that comment was about the blocks for the covers of the book, not necessarily about the very different illustrations within. A close look at the drawings and the proofs, supplied with his essay, shows they were photographed onto the wood. It would have been impossible for Holiday to copy every line in every board in the deck, every curl in the Bellman’s beard, etc., as exactly as he did from the pen and ink drawing onto the woodblock even if he were to have traced them. Also, many of his drawings are larger than the blocks, a sure sign photography was being used. See “The Designs for the Snark” by Charles Mitchell in *Lewis Carroll’s The Hunting of the Snark*, edited by James Tanis and John Dooley (Los Altos, William Kaufmann, 1981), pp. 88, 108 and 113.
17. Rodney Engen, *Sir John Tenniel: Alice’s White Knight* (Aldershot, England: Scolar Press, 1991), pp. 102–3, 154.
18. Bethan Stevens, “Wood Engraving as Ghostwriting: The Dalziel Brothers, Losing One’s Name, and Other Hazards of the Trade” (2017), Textural Practice, DOI: 10.1080/0950236X.2017.1365756, pp. 5–6 and 11.
19. Simon Cooke, *Illustrated Periodicals of the 1860s: Context & Collaborations* (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2010), pp. 43. “Placed in a position of extraordinary power,”

Cooke later writes, engravers “were responsible for converting the illustrators’ work from its original form (as a drawing on paper) into a graphic representation” (p. 166). It should also be realized that if Cooke’s and Steven’s claims were true, then each of the hundreds of engravers that lived in the period had the uncanny ability to draw and engrave in the style of each of the hundreds of artists.

20. Ibid.
21. Frederick Sandys, “Amor Mundi” (photograph of drawing on wood), Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Hartley Collection, 55.3001. Photographs of woodblocks are often of poor quality and do not show every detail as drawn. It would be erroneous to assign all differences to the engraver.
22. Ibid. p. 186. For comparing sketches to engravings, see figures 95–96 (George du Maurier), 99–100 (Frederic Leighton), and 105–106 (Holman Hunt). He also writes of comparing a Arthur Boyd Houghton drawing with the engraving, neither shown (p.188). Oddly enough, figures 97–98 compare a legitimate photograph of a drawing on the wood with a finished engraving. Yet Cooke remains silent when it comes to the intense similarities between the two.



PROOF

Robinson Duckworth moved the plates and glasses aside himself, too eager to wait for Brooks, the scout, to return. He accepted the dinner invitation, sent by letter, not only for the pleasant company but for the fine dessert—a fresh batch of proofs for what his host was now calling Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland. Duckworth was always impressed with the illustrator’s characterizations. They were nothing like the dull, commonplace types he imagined when first hearing the story extemporized on a boat trip just a few years before.

“This is the Hatter running from the trial,” his host explained, pointing to one of the new characters, unfamiliar to his guest. “The King of Hearts made him so nervous he took a bite out of his teacup instead of his bread and butter.”

“But where is the bite mark?”

“Hmph!”

“Do you know who made the proofs, how?”

“—the bite mark?”¹

They were made by the proof taker, to answer Duckworth’s question (for Carroll could not),² a specialized role in larger engraving businesses. To make a proof, he would, standing at his bench, first spread ink on a smooth surface (marble, plate, or glass). To transfer this ink onto the woodblock, he would either use a roller or a dauber bag, also called a dabber bag or ink-ball (figure 2). The bags were made with wool on the inside and silk on the outside. After sufficiently daubing the block, the proof taker would wipe ink from the more delicate lines, such as the lines around the edges, to help him achieve a fine, gradual fade. (It was possible to daub a never-before inked block so as to bring out the lines only, allowing the “art” to be *drawn* out from the uninked valleys, a contrast that allowed the block to be checked for lapses in the cutting

before the proofer continued with the rest of his process.) If the block contained an uncut protective border, this would have to be covered with waste paper. Next, he would place a piece of India proof paper atop the block, and atop that a thin card. The procedure would end with the proof taker rubbing the top with a paper folder (a flat wooden tool) or a burnisher (figure 1, previous page).³ The card prevents the action of the rubbing from forcing the paper into the valleys, and perchance, accidentally inking the white areas.

The proof-taker (also known as a “prover” or “improver”) had many advantages over the printer. He could peek in the corners, lifting the two pieces of paper, in order to inspect his progress. He used a special type of ink and often India paper, both being high quality and impractical for printing costs. The improver could also afford to take more time with a proof, as much as thirty minutes, according to one source,

though perhaps less time for duplicates. By comparison, the printer, after spending a costly amount of time in the make-ready stage of his process, only spent mere seconds on every copy.⁴

There are several different types of proofs. *State proofs* are the first proofs taken from the initial cutting. *Touched proofs* (also called *hand-corrected proofs*) are proofs with corrections by the artists in white or red china ink and with, more often than not, handwritten instructions from the artist to the engraver for a recutting. Both of these proofs are rather collectable, the former for being uniquely different from the known published proof, and the latter for showing the artistic process in motion. Partial proofs are proofs of only one area of the block. To save the burnisher time, Tenniel often asked for only one section to be burnished after a recut. “Will you be so good as to send me a proof of the *head only* of the little cut,

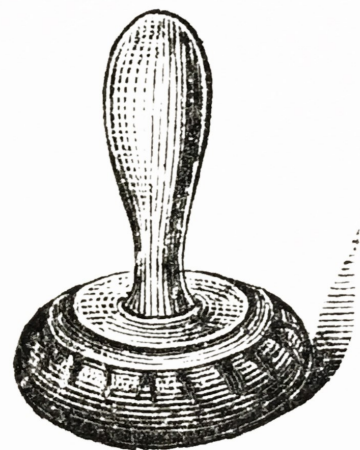


Figure 2. Dauber Bag, from Brown, *A Practical Manual of Wood Engraving*.

‘Hatter in Prison,’” Tenniel once had written to the Dalziels. “In the impression sent the right eye is wrong, or else it has not printed.”⁵ Proofs may be designated *first state* and *second state* if an illustration is totally or partially re-imagined (the first state and second state of the White Rabbit as a herald, for example). *Flat proofs* are proofs taken on a hand press without manipulating it for improvements, allowing its faults to be exposed, and serving as a guide to the *re-engraver*. Lastly, proofs may be referred to as being a *final proof* or a *signed proof*, terms which are self-explanatory.

Figure 1. Burnisher, from William Norman Brown, *A Practical Manual of Wood Engraving*.

The interest, of course, lies in touched proofs. Engravers often disappointed artists, as can be seen in numerous proofs held in *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*. “Edge of coat...looks like white bread,” “light and dark parts too sudden” (Robert Barnes), “He grunts now / the face is ruined” (J. M. L. Ralston), “Sky + sea very bad” (Edward T. Reed), “the colour in the horse has been lost,” “this is coarse engraving,” “this hand is roughly engraved,” “The left shoulder of man looks as if engraved with a garden rake” (William Small). Less occasionally are positive declarations made: “Upon the whole I like the faces they appear to have been engraved by a good man” (Ralson), “Very good engraving,” “good engraving” (Small), “I like the engraving very much” (Helen Allingham). Occasionally, artists suggest to deviate from what appears: “Make the snow flakes a little larger,” or admit to their own wrong-doing, “I find I have drawn the handle of the fiddle wrong” (Small).⁶

It should be stressed that the comments made by the artists, when taken in their totality, do not show the engravers to be equal partners in the creation of the design. The constant references back to the drawings (the ones destroyed or photographed onto the wood) support the idea that the designs were the artists’ own and that “imaginative interpretation” did not occur (figure 3).⁷ The artists’ comments also show no signs of allowing the engravers to take part in the improvement of the design during the proofing stage. Gilbert Dalziel certainly comes off as an engraver’s son

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The figure was quite <i>gray</i> in the drawing ◆ Every bit of the <i>colour</i> has been cut out of the shadows + darker portions of the drawing!!! <p style="text-align: right;">—John Tenniel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Also please look at the original I think the light on it is more like this ◆ The lines in this face were not so thin as they are now ◆ There was more colour here ◆ Upon the whole I like the faces + they appear to have been engraved by a good man—the rest looks drab. For instance the young man’s coat had much more colour on the front 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Please look over faces of these two, specially about mouths. Compare with original <p style="text-align: right;">—J. M. L. Ralston</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The variety of colour in the horse has been lost—it has become flat ◆ The tint between the figure of man and young woman is not my drawing’s ◆ <i>also a bit of this drawing cut out on man’s left shoulder—see drawing</i> <p style="text-align: right;">—William Small</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Girl’s dress in shadow does not leave in effect as it was drawn <p style="text-align: right;">—Robert Barnes</p>
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Figure 3. The Original Drawing. The above comments, written on proofs, are examples of the artist referring back to the original drawing. If these many artists lived in the world painted by our modern-day scholars (that the engravers were responsible for an engraving’s “entire texture”) then it would be extremely odd that *all* artists of the period, as if in some grand conspiracy, pretended to live in another world when proofing. Certainly, such references back to the original would have been phrased differently if “imaginative interpretation” were commonplace. (The excerpts are from the extra-illustrated copy of *Looking-Glass* at the Morgan, and the scrapbooks at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)



Figure 4. Hatta in Prison, John Tenniel, touched proof, from Harvard University, The Harcourt Amory Collection, 21472.28.72.2*. The signature on this proof is unusual. It does not seem to be an indication that the process of proofing is to be completed after the corrections are made.

The proof is found in an extra-illustrated copy of *Looking-Glass* with one drawing, eight tracings, nine touched proofs, eight untouched proofs and three letters from Tenniel to Dalziel, inter alia.

A fourth letter is from Edward Dalziel to Ernest Brown, an art dealer, about the method Tenniel used to touch his proofs and the possibly obtaining more such proofs. Papers at Harvard suggest that Brown, who assembled the book with the binder Riviere, at first sold it to B. F. Stevens.

when he writes: “In the case of the Pinwell, please note the ‘touchings’ in Chinese-White; these are Pinwell’s *own* suggestions for ‘improvements’ to be carried out by the Engraver.”⁸ Amusingly, he calls the artist’s demands mere “suggestions” and, to boot, degrades them by putting the word “improvements” in quotation marks, as if they are only “so-called improvements.” An engraver’s son, no doubt.

Tenniel did not have time to proof his weekly *Punch* drawings. Instead, he opened each issue only to receive his weekly “pang,” as he stated. That is, he was usually greatly disappointed. What is less unknown, however, is that he actually did proof many of them. He simply did so *after* the fact. In a copy of Marion Spielmann’s *History of “Punch”* at the British Library there is a penciled annotation, perhaps written by Arthur Calkin, Tenniel’s nephew and a man who sold off much of Tenniel’s artwork. “But Tenniel received a proof pull of his drawings always on Monday Morning,” it reads. “I have his set of nearly 2000 of these on many of which are his pencilled criticism—always unfavourable—or directions for some minute alterations.”⁹ He did, however, have the opportunity to proof illustrations for *Punch Almanac*, *Punch Supplement*, and *Punch Pocketbooks*.

The largest single collection of extant touched proofs for *Looking-Glass* appears in an extra-illustrated copy of the book in the Morgan Library. The volume—splendidly rebound by Riviere in brown morocco, complete with gilded letters and floral designs between the hubbed sections of the spine—is an enlarged version of an original first edition. All the original pages were inlaid into larger pages to allow the proofs to be inserted without being folded or cut down to size, which would have excised Tenniel’s marginal instructions to the engraver. The book includes twenty-seven touched

proofs, three letters and a sketch by Lance Calkin of Tenniel.¹⁰ Harvard holds an extra-illustrated copy of the book with eight touched proofs (figure 4).

In the Morgan's copy, the proofs that have negative comments, blaming the cutting, number about sixteen. "Eyes in flower seem to have been Fudged! Make them quite clear," "Eyebrows still too thick + dark. Inner corner of left eye" (Garden of Live Flowers), "Eyebrows still too thick + dark" (Alice and Fawn), "Shadow of Fawn's legs too wide + too black," "Face should have been darker," "Left leg + foot. Cut line too thick" (Alice in Sheep's Shop), "Child's face very bad—must be plugged" (Hatta Sipping Tea, figure 5), "Every bit of colour has been cut out of the shadows + darker portions of the drawing!!!" (Alice with Cake), "White Knight +



Figure 5. Hatta Sipping Tea, John Tenniel, touched proof, from the Morgan Library. Tenniel often laid down a plus sign where changes were made, usually adding words. Here he makes minor changes in china white and red. He is disappointed with Alice's face and indicates the need for a plug to be drilled.

Horse a great deal too dark. Split coarse black lines,” “The figure was quite gray in the drawing” (Battling Knights, figure 6), “Left leg thick + Clumsy” (White Knight Falling), “The lines of apron should not all have been cut away” (Alice and Kittens).

The proofs that have positive comments, that compliment the cutters, number exactly zero. But to be fair, Tenniel did praise the engravers from time to time, just not here and not too frequently. Also, an overwhelming majority of the comments made on each proof—which can number over ten—are neither criticisms nor compliments, but Tenniel’s own reconsiderations of his own decisions. Thus, the proofing stage is indeed part of his ongoing process of developing the illustration.

Though there are no extant proofs for *Wonderland*, they can be recreated. The British Museum houses several large scrapbooks once kept by the Dalziels of their work.¹¹ These books contain many of the known yet rare versions of Tenniel’s Alice illustrations, such as the first versions of the Hatter in prison, the White Rabbit dressed as a herald, and the five illustrations of Alice in her chess-piece dress. In other words, many of these illustrations are *state* proofs. At first glance, some may ap-



Figure 6. The Knights Battling, John Tenniel, touched proof, from The Morgan Library. Tenniel makes his deletions in both china white and china red. As is typical of his proofing, he highlights areas by deleting the hatching around them, such as Alice’s right arm, the Black Knight’s helm, and the spikes in his bludgeon, all done in china red. He also greatly simplified the upper left area by pruning branches away.

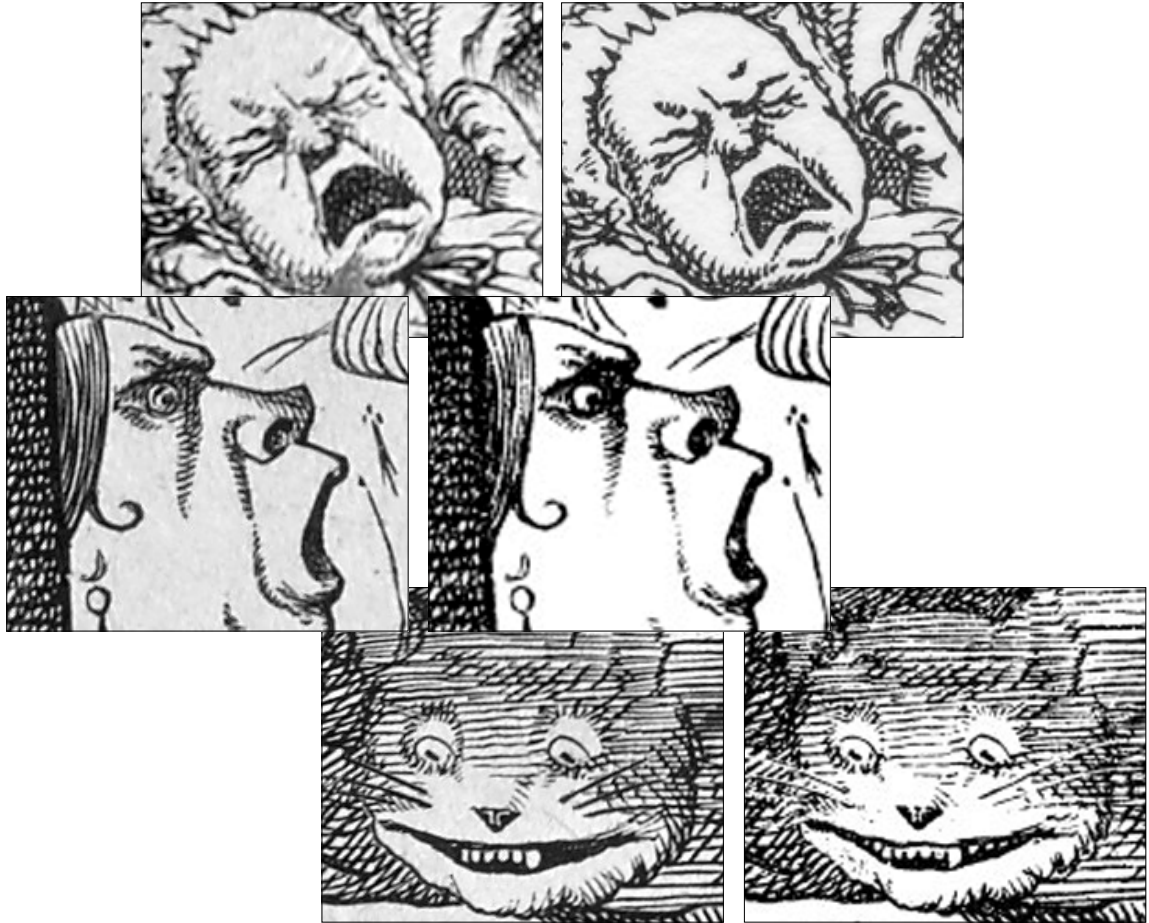


Figure 7. The Baby's Mouth, the Queen's Eye, and the Cat's Grin, John Tenniel, state proofs (left), from *Proofs of Wood-Engravings by The Brothers Dalziel*, British Museum, 1913,0415.181, Vol. XX, [1865]; and prints (right). The touched proofs for *Wonderland* are not extant, though they can be recreated by comparing the state proofs with the prints. On some lost proof, with china white or red in hand, Tenniel reduced the size of the baby's gaping mouth, increased the whiteness in the Queen's eye—making her pierce all the more—and added more teeth to the cat's disappearing grin.

pear to be exactly the same as the ubiquitous print. But when the printed version is quickly flicked back and forth with the album version, we can sometimes see several differences. Tenniel deletes a line in the Queen's eye, making it appear whiter, and her expression even madder when she points at Alice and screams "Off with her head!" He removed about ten shading lines beneath a cloud to the right of Father William's foot where he stands on his head. He makes the baby's all-black mouth smaller when being held by the Duchess and he adds teeth in the Cheshire Cat's mouth when he is disappearing (figure 7). This *adding* of teeth should astound astute readers. How can he add anything without plugging and redrawing? But in this case the original teeth were white on a black ground, allowing more to be carved in.



Figure 8. Alice with Pig and The Mock Turtle's Story, John Tenniel, state proofs, from *India-Proofs of Wood-Engravings* by The Brothers Dalziel, British Museum. Though no proofs of *Wonderland* exist, Tenniel's proofing is evident by the many state proofs in existence. When compared to the printed versions (not shown), Tenniel obviously removed the large fern around Alice when she holds the pig (left), and simplified the cloud around the Mock Turtle's head and the waves around his belly when he tells his story (right).

Some illustrations, however, have more significant changes, ones noticeable with the naked eye (figures 8 and 9). A large, overhanging fern is pruned away when Alice holds the pig. A cloud is stretched and simplified around the head of the Mock Turtle when he tells his story, and the waters around his shelly belly (if you will) are miraculously calmed by the removal of numerous waves. A large rock is excavated away before the characters dance the Lobster Quadrille. Lastly, a curling figure in the left side of the drape containing the King's shield is removed when he is holding the verses (the L-shaped illustration). If one looks closely enough, vestiges of the excavated rock and the pruned fern can be seen in the published versions of the illustrations.

There are two types of touches Tenniel commonly makes. The first concerns Alice's hair where he either adds highlights or creates sheen. In at least five proofs (still limiting ourselves to the Morgan's touched proofs), he adds highlights by removing strands, such as when she runs with the Red Queen or when she watches the battling knights. In at least five proofs, he gives Alice's hair sheen or more sheen, that is, he



Figure 9. Dancing the Lobster Quadrille and The King Holding Verses, John Tenniel, state proofs, from *India-Proofs of Wood-Engravings* by The Brothers Dalziel, British Museum. Tenniel removed the rock to the left of the Gryphon. Though the change is apropos for the artist, an example of him excising to bring out a character's form, one can't help but imagine Carroll complaining that the Gryphon appears to have three wings. Tenniel also removed the drapery to the left of the King during the proofing stage, despite the fact that it better squares off the drawing.

adds white or red china ink perpendicular to the strands. He does this on the proof where Alice meets the Tweedles or when she reaches up to shake Humpty's hand. She receives both treatments—the bargain for the day—in the proof where she stands before the door that refuses to answer questions (according to the Frog).¹²

The second most common touch Tenniel performs is the removal of elements around the characters. This accentuates their forms and helps to guide the readers' eyes toward them. He performs this action in at least eight illustrations. For example, he brings out sitting Humpty—and what a fine shape he is—by deleting some clouds behind the top of his head. (The touched proof does not exist, but it can be discerned from the Dalziel scrapbooks.) Alice herself is brought out in the illustration of her watching the battling knights (figure 6) and her form is brought out again when she later walks with the unsteady victor.¹³ And the excavated rock, as mentioned before, brings out the form of the Gryphon (figure 9).

With this realization of one of Tenniel's more common developmental techniques, let's take a special look at his illustration of the Jabberwock. In the proof in the Morgan's book, we can see that he chose to lighten the bark on the tree behind the creature's right foot (figure 10). He doesn't seem to be doing this to bring out the character, nor to make the time appear more like "brillig," four o'clock in the morning, than deep night (though it undoubtedly does). Instead, it seems to have been done to lift the character into the air, unground him, and ultimately intensify the threat he poses on the mere boy below. But note how the "color" of the wings of the creature matches the color of the trees behind them. Instead of highlighting these wings by removing some of the shadows, creating more white space, as he was so prone to do, Tenniel instead lets them blend in; he keeps them as is. This allows the drawing to retain some element of the surprise attack, suggested in the poem's fourth stanza. Engravers were often criticized by artists for not contrasting tones implied in their drawings. Here, it would not be surprising if Tenniel specifically informed the engravers that he blended the wings into the "tulgey wood" intentionally.

In many cases, it was impossible for Tenniel to correct or alter the proof to his satisfaction with china white or red ink, making him resort to words alone. When Alice encounters the Red Queen for the first time, for example, Tenniel declares the Queen's "Figure *too black*," leaving it up to the engraver to trim the lines as he sees fit, a task much too involved, if not impossible, for his china white ink. Likewise, on the proof of the White Knight falling off his horse, he writes "Knight should be *lighter* generally." Sometimes he gives *fuzzy* directions. On the proof of the transformed black kitten, he writes that on Alice's wrists "Two different sorts of shading have been used. Try + blend the two together." In the illustration of Alice walking through the garden, for example, he writes, "Eyes in flower seem to have been *fudged*! Make them *quite clear*." Lastly, though he adds "eyes of flame" to the Jabberwock using china white ink himself, he tells the engraver, "Light from eyes increased—but must be done very delicately—little more than *scratched*." In all of these comments, and many more, he puts trust in the engraver to *translate* his words into actions. But as stated earlier, this should not be over-exemplified as if the engraver is *equal* partners with artists. In all cases, it is the artist instructing the engraver and never the engraver acting alone, which would be unprecedented.

We may conclude that Tenniel likes to simplify his illustrations, that he second guesses his creations, and often declares them too busy. But the truth of the matter is that the artform of drawing on wood only allows artists to *subtract* black and never to *add* black. The only means of creating new peaks on a raised piece of wood is through a painstaking process known as plugging. To plug an illustration, the engraver drilled a hole about three-quarters of the way through the block directly over the offending areas, taking care to disrupt mostly white areas. "A round tapering plug is then formed, a trifle larger than the hole," according to one engraving manual, "so that when driven like a wedge it will fit closely all around and is ready to be levelled and smoothed. This is done by sawing off the plug with a small watch spring saw, having



Figure 10. The Jabberwock, John Tenniel, state proof (left), from the British Library, and touched proof (right), from the Morgan Library. The state proof shows calmer eyes of flame, black lower teeth, and a textured tree trunk behind the beast's right foot. The touched proof shows whitened lower teeth, a lightened tree trunk, perhaps to lift the beast off the ground, and intensified "eyes of flame," which Tenniel directs the cutter to do "a little more than scratched"

first placed a piece of writing paper on the block to protect the work; this being done, the plug is shaved down even with the surface, by the use of a very sharp wide chisel, care being taken not to shave it lower than the surface, as it would then be necessary to replug the block.”¹⁴

At least fifteen of the Alice blocks were plugged. This includes two for the Hatter’s tea-cup, five to replace Alice’s chess-piece dress with her regular dress, and one to replace Alice’s hand on the looking-glass (figure 11). Tenniel seemed to want the tips only on the glass, a delicate touch, but the index, middle and pinky fingers were cut too straight and shapeless, appearing as if Alice had splayed her whole hand, indelicately, on the mirror.

The other seven plugs all concern Alice’s face in *Looking-Glass*—one of which was ordered by Carroll. Of these, six have partial proofs in The Victoria and Albert Museum (implying that it was usual for Tenniel to receive a partial proof after a block was plugged and recut). Her mouth is oddly missing in two proofs, when she sits in the armchair and when she watches Tweedledum attempt to weed the hair from his

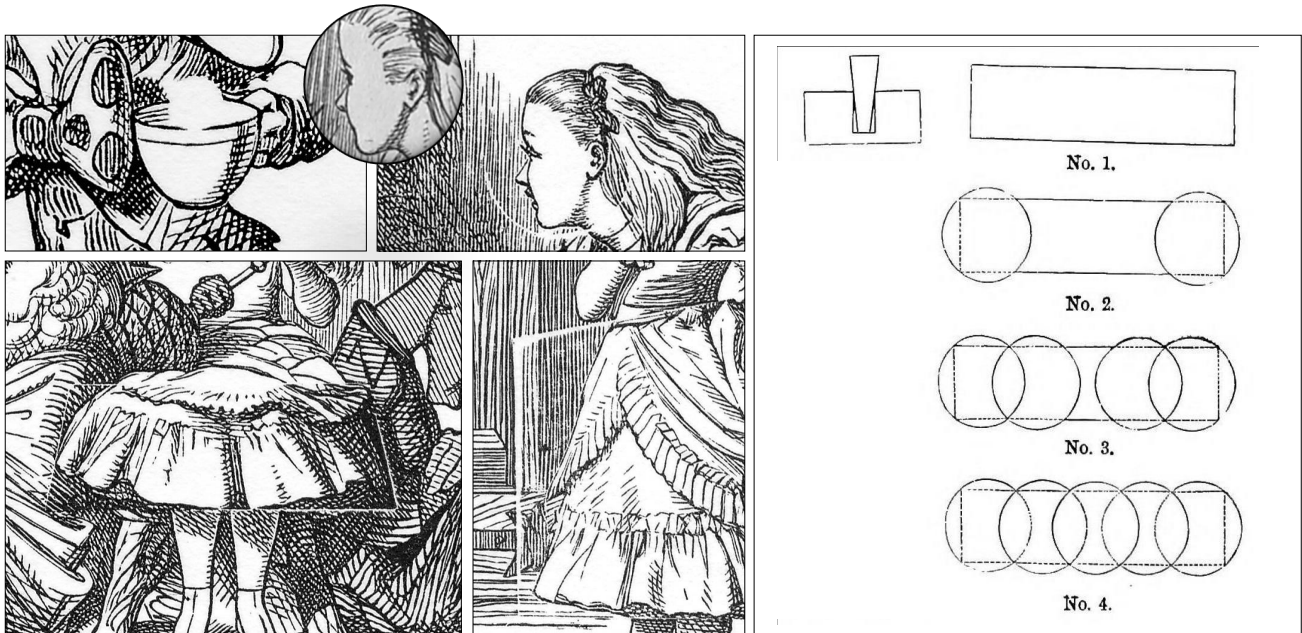


Figure 11. Plugging. The unnumbered figure in the diagram (from Chatto, *A Treatise on Wood Engraving*) shows how a wood block was plugged by drilling three-quarters of the way through and filling the hole with a dowel. This method was used when Tenniel corrected the Hatter’s bite-less teacup (top left) and when he fixed Alice’s mouthless face when Tweedledum pulls his hair (top right and round inset), for example. The illustrations come from the Rocket Press’s proofs pulled from the original woodblocks in 1988 and show how the plugs have not stood the test of time very well.

The numbered figures in the diagram show how a rectangular area is plugged. First, the outer holes are drilled, plugged and glued, once dry, the second-most inner circles are drilled, plugged and glued, and so on. The white lines that appear on the Rocket Press’s pulls of the Queens falling asleep (bottom left) and of Alice knocking on the door (bottom right) not only show that the plugs haven’t stood the test of time very well, but also show that Dalziel had a different method.



Figure 12. Alice's Ear and the Horse's Tail. The pencil line on the proof (left), to indicate where the block was to be severed, may have been drawn by Tenniel. If so, his remark in the margin was excised when the proof was pasted into the scrapbook kept by the Dalziels. He likely expressed his befuddlement to find Alice's ear as well as the horse's tail missing, both do appear on the drawing and the tracing. The engraver may have confused the woodgrain and the tail, both having similar appearances. It is virtually impossible to see any vestige of the plug from the first printing (left) to the 1893 edition. The plug did become visible, however, when the blocks were restruck into electrotypes for the revised 1897 edition.

head. In the former, which happens to be the one ordered by Carroll, the engraver was likely confused with the surrounding cross-hatching.¹⁵ Her hairband seemed to have been an issue with the very first illustration (figure 12) and the very last. In the former, one wonders where, in relation to the headband, her foremost ear belongs, though presumably somewhere under her hair.¹⁶ The re-cutting clarified the situation for potentially concerned readers.

Several illustrations have more than one touched proof. Even if an illustration has only one known touched proof, a previous or future proof can either be discerned from what Tenniel writes or from examining it with the state proof or final print. It seems that the usual cut-proof cycle in Tenniel's process went through at least two proofing stages. There does not seem to be any official method used for Tenniel to "sign off" on the proof, ending the cycle. He likely simply wrote it in a letter. Yet somehow the process ended and the block was given a nice new suit and sent off to the printer.

1. Duckworth mentions seeing “drawings” after dinners with Carroll but likely means “proofs.” The fiction derives from his memories: see Stuart D. Collingwood, *The Lewis Carroll Picture Book* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1899), p. 360. Edward Wakeling supplied the scout’s job and name in private emails (July 20–1, 2019).
2. Carroll’s ignorance is shown in a letter written a couple of years later: “Dalziel called the process ‘rubbing off by hand.’ I don’t know what that means exactly.” See Lewis Carroll to George Craik, June 24, 1867, Rosenbach, EMS 1176/22 Dodgson MSS, Macmillan Correspondence. See also Carroll’s letter of June 18, 1867.
3. Most of the description derives from C. M. Jenckes, “Lessons in Wood-Engraving,” in *The Art Amateur* 12 (November 1884); for using a roller, see Norman Brown, *A Practical Manual of Wood Engraving* (London: Crosby Lockwood, 1886), p. 31; for wiping delicate sections, see Frederick Wilson, *Typographic Printing Machines and Machine Printing: A Practical Guide to the Selection of Bookwork, Two-Colour, Jobbing, and Rotary Machines* (London, Wyman & Sons, [1879]), p. 28; and Frederick J. F. Wilson and Douglas Grey, *A Practical Treatise Upon Modern Printing Machinery and Letterpress Printing* (London: Cassell, 1888), pp. 338–9.
4. Theo. L. De Vinne, “Woodcuts: Concerning the Taking of Proofs and Prints, *The Publisher’s Weekly*, no. 367–9, January 25, February 1 and 8, 1879: pp. 81; for being able to peek in, see William Savage, *A Dictionary of the Art of Printing* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1841), p. 214. Though De Vinne may be exaggerating when he states a proof takes thirty minutes, the mere existence of partial proofs does suggest that the endeavor was time consuming. Savage says “When only a few proofs are wanted from an engraving, good impressions may be obtained with little trouble...” (p. 213).
5. John Tenniel to Dalziel, n.d., in Lewis Carroll, *Though the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There* [Extra-illustrated] (London: Macmillan, 1872), Morgan Library, PML 77537.
6. British Illustration Albums, A–E, F–G, H–L, M–P, R–S, and T–Z, Department of Drawings and Prints, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. The books are uncatalogued and have labels on the spine that read “British / Book Illustration,” followed by the alphabetical range. See prints, in order of being cited: 0720, 0722 (Barnes); 0634 (Ralston); 0635 (Reed); 0641, 0648, 065, 0650 (Small); Ralston 0619; 0657, 0669 (Small); 0683 (Allingham); and 0662, 0668 (Small). “Tenniel” receives an album to himself. Though there are no touched proofs, there are many uncut and unfolded double spreads for his two-page *Punch* illustrations which were delightful to see. Several Harry Furniss proofs for the *Sylvie and Bruno* books are state proofs, showing deleted elements. One set shows how Furniss gave the characters a more ghostlike appearance through the proofing stage.
7. As can be seen in the figure and other quotations, artists often referred to the “Colour” of their drawings or their proofs. It was a debatable term in engraving, but it can be defined as variety of tone within an object or amongst objects. In many contexts, however, it simply meant the darkness of a gray. Artists often complained of the lack of “colour” in an object, meaning it had become lighter than the original intended. Since the medium did not allow for darkening, artists were particularly frustrated when aspects were lightened. See William Andrew Chatto, *A Treatise on Wood Engraving: Historical and Practical* (New York, J. W. Bouton, [1881]) , p. 213.

8. Gilbert Dalziel to Philip D. Sherman, July 10, 1923, Brown University, Hay Manuscripts, Ms.55.52. Gilbert was the son of Edward Dalziel and, according to Rodney Engen, was an engraver himself.
9. Marion Spielmann, *History of "Punch"* [Extra-Illustrated], British Library, Add MS 88937/3/3, Vol 3, p. 464. The quotation was provided to the author in a private email, March 14, 2019, from the librarian Jeff Kattenhorn. I have failed to locate any book bound by Riviere (the bookbinding firm in Calkin's family) that contained touched weekly *Punch* cartoons, and so remain cautious on this point.
10. Lewis Carroll, *Though the Looking-Glass* [Extra-illustrated], Morgan Library.
11. *India-Proofs of Wood-Engravings by The Brothers Dalziel*, British Museum, 1913,0415.181, Vol. XX, [1865], spreads 77–81, and 1913,0415.189, Vol. XXVIII, [1871], spreads 145–149.
12. Illustrations with added highlights (Morgan's book or otherwise) are found on pages 41, 87, 110, 156, 160, and 201 for *Looking-Glass* (London: Macmillan, 1872), and pages 15, 26, 35, and 117 for *Wonderland* (London: Macmillan, 1866). The illustrations with added sheen (Morgan's book or otherwise) are found on pages 67, 87, 118, 172, and 201 for *Looking-Glass*, and pages 15 and 88 for *Wonderland*. By no means are these lists likely complete.
13. Illustrations that remove elements around characters (or objects), are found on pages 20, 57, 118, 160, and 166 for *Looking-Glass*, and pages 141, 150, and 186 for *Wonderland*. By no means is this list likely complete. Tenniel deleted elements around objects (as opposed to characters) as well, such as the shadows around a distant tree in the scene of the tripping soldiers (p. 138).
14. William A. Emerson, *Practical Instruction in the Art of Wood Engraving* (East Douglas, MA: Charles J. Batcheller, 1876), pp. 38–9.
15. Tenniel to Dalziel, ca. January 1871, private collection. The text appeared in *The Library of Jerome Kern*, an auction catalogue for the sale at Anderson Galleries, New York City, January 8, 1929, lot 246. Tenniel wrote: "He now wants some further alteration to be made in 'Alice in Armchair'; please send proof of *head only*."
16. For *Wonderland*, blocks with plugs are those for the illustrations found on pages 170 and 173 (for the absent bite in Hatter's tea cup); and for *Looking-Glass*, blocks with plugs are those found in the frontispiece and on pages 5, 50, 84, 87, 148, and 220 (for Alice's misbegotten face or hair); page 11 (for Alice's overly-straight conic fingers); and pages 184, 190, 198, 201, and 212 (for Alice's chess-piece dress). For Carroll ordering one plug, see Carroll to Harry Furniss, August 26, 1889, in *Lewis Carroll & His Illustrators: Collaborations & Correspondence, 1865–1898*, edited by Morton N. Cohen and Edward Wakeling (New York: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 159. Carroll writes as if this were a singular event, which implies all other plugs were ordered at Tenniel's request.



PRINT

It was late in the afternoon on November 23, 1897, when Frederick Macmillan picked up the letter left upon his desk. The recognition of the handwriting caused a spasm of dread to wash through his body. The return address only triggered a brief shiver, like an aftershock. He, as well as his uncle and others before him, had been dealing with this most pernicky author for over thirty years. Though he was pleased with the latest sales figures for the author's revised versions of his two most famous books, he knew that he only just sent him the first-run copies. His critique was due. The illustrator recently expressed his approval with the unbound proof sheets, only stating that a few of the illustrations were perhaps too dark—a treatable issue. But it was the author who became the more pernicky of the two over these many years.

"Dear Mr. Macmillan," the letter began, "After long consideration of the new issue of the Alice books" — he began to slump — "My hopes had been high that the new books would be faultless" — he became limp — "and I was much disappointed with the result" — thump!¹

No, John Tenniel's work on Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass* did not terminate with his approval of the final proofs. It ended with the printing process. Over the course of Carroll's life, Tenniel played the unofficial role of whistle blower at least twice and the official role of quality control, as illustrated above, once. But more importantly, since the everyday reader does not see hand-burnished proofs but instead mass-produced machine-made prints, to come to a full close on Tenniel's process, we need to understand the ultimate step in the evolution of his designs. As we will see, the printer, unlike the engraver, is able to not only lighten but also to *darken* certain aspects of the design. Moreover, he can lighten

one element (Alice's hair) and simultaneously darken another element (the Dodo's beak). Printers do this through a process called overlaying, a concept Carroll referred to in his letters and one that will be explained below. In fact, if given the opportunity to either proof his illustration for re-cutting or have it handled by a *conscientious* printer, Tenniel would know better, through his experience, to choose the latter. Indeed, the success of all Tenniel's work up to this point "will depend on the *printing*," as he once told Carroll.²

Contemporary printing manuals confirm that the printer often received the engravers' proofs. "Before commencing operations," one such manual advised, "the India-proof supplied by the engraver should be properly studied, with the aim of producing as nearly as possible the same effect."³ The evidence that the first printer for *Wonderland* had proofs (The Clarendon Press for the failed 1865 edition) or the second printer (Richard Clay for the 1866 and later issues) is unclear, however. In 1893 Carroll wrote, "they have 'rubbings' to guide them: and that ought to be quite enough." In the following year, he wrote, "Even if there were no early copies of the book accessible, there are of course the 'rubbings' from the wood-blocks, to refer to, of which I have a set." This could be read either way, but tends to confirm that Clay had a set (and Carroll too). Then again, in 1885 Carroll lent Clay his set of proofs for *Rhyme? and Reason?*, being greatly disappointed when they were returned, "creased, bruised, and soiled: the set is entirely spoiled"⁴—one of Carroll's best inadvertent rhymes. Nonetheless, it could be assumed that the Dalziels were well aware that they had to send proofs to printers, and did so as a matter of course.

The printer also received the woodblocks from the engraver. They did not place these in their press, however, as they would potentially wear out if successive reprints were needed. Instead, for safekeeping, they turned the woodblocks into electrotypes (or electros), essentially, metal copies. "From them," as Alexander Macmillan once told Carroll, "an unlimited number [of copies] can be printed, say 200,000, without injury to the plates."⁵ The process is technical but explained in figure 2.⁶

The first electros for *Wonderland* were made by the Clarendon Press for the failed 1865 edition. After its cancellation, they were sent to Clay. In 1868, Clay, who was beforehand printing from type (locked in a forme), either melded them to, or placed them side by side with, page plates (type as one concrete unit) to make the first fully electrotyped edition of the book (the 12th thousand). Carroll believed that these original plates lasted till 1896 when, to insure against piracy, he had them destroyed and ordered new ones created from the original wood blocks for the fully new typed-set edition of 1897 (the 86th thousand).⁷ The *Looking-Glass* electros were electrotyped separately from the text but were immediately fused with the page plates.⁸ In other words, Macmillan was so confident that the book would have reprintings that he expended the higher cost of having the first edition printed from page plates, and not

Figure 1. Previous Page: An Electrotype of the Mad Tea-Party.

THE PROCESS OF ELECTROTYPING

- ◆ The engraving is brushed with graphite of powder and impressed with pure wax or gutta-purcha
- ◆ The impressed face of the wax (the mold), after being separated from the block, is brushed with graphite powder
- ◆ The face is also given a wash of sulphate of copper
- ◆ Two wires are connected to the top two corners of the mold, touching the graphite (a)
- ◆ The two wires are attached to a metal rod (b)
- ◆ The mold is dipped into a vat of acidulated sulphate of copper (c), hanging from the rod and wires
- ◆ Facing the mold, a copper plate (d) is also hung with two wires (e) from another metal rod (f)
- ◆ An electro-magnetic battery (not shown) is attached to the rods and wires
- ◆ A current is run through the mold and the copper plate, from (a) and (e)
- ◆ The graphite's negatively-charged ions (g) attracts the copper's positively-charged ions (h), which swim across (i) planting themselves on the mold (j)
- ◆ In ten to twelve hours, a layer of copper forms on the face of the mold, like a film (about a thumb nail in thickness)
- ◆ The copper plate deteriorates in the process
- ◆ The copper forming on the mold (called a shell), being a "negative" of the original block, is in turn used as a mold
- ◆ Melted type-metal is poured into the copper shell
- ◆ After cooling, and with unwanted metal removed, the metal is screwed onto a block, type high

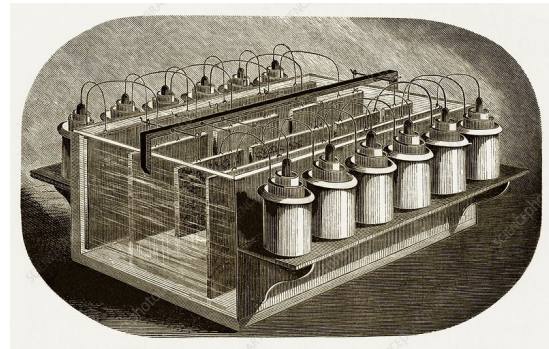
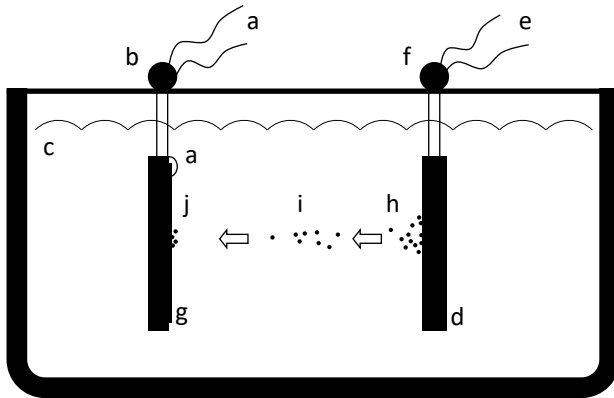


Figure 2. How to Make an Electrottype.

type. Along with the *Wonderland* plates, they were ordered destroyed and re-cast from the original blocks in 1897 (the 61st thousand).

With the electros and the engravers' proofs in hand (and a host of other matters settled), the printer proceeded to the "make ready" stage of his operation. In one printing manual, this stage is defined as "the operation necessary to produce a perfectly even impression."⁹ This, however, is misleading. A "perfectly even impression" to a print-

er is not a flat surface impressing on the paper with the type and illustration below. Rather, it is often a *bumpy* surface, created with what is called an *overlay*, essentially a contour map over the illustration where the highest peaks are over the darks and the lowest valleys are over the lights (figure 3). In other words, more pressure is applied to the areas where the artist's lines are condensed, and less pressure where the lines are more sparsely spread. The importance of this step in the printing process cannot be overstated. As another printing manual warned, "It will be seen that this process is one requiring much time and patience; without these, in fact, excellence in woodcut printing is not attainable."¹⁰

The reason for the "unevenness" of the pressure can be explained with an analogy. If a stage performer weighing 150 pounds lays on a bed of 450 evenly-spaced nails, each nail would only have to support about one-third of a pound of pressure, not enough to harm nor puncture the performer. But if the bed had 448 nails arranged under the lower half of his back and only one nail under each shoulder, ouch! Tenniel's lights (the sparser areas of his drawings) are those shoulders, needing—*pleading* for—less pressure. And Tenniel's darks are those condensed nails, doing too little work, requiring more pressure to bring them back to their original work load. This is why "a perfectly *even* impression" is essential. Tenniel's illustrations are not an evenly spread bed of nails (or an evenly spread page of letters). The overlay equalizes the pressure the "peaks" on the electrotype receive.

All printers and printing manuals have their own technique for making overlays, one of which is shown in figure 3.¹¹ It is important to understand the concept for two

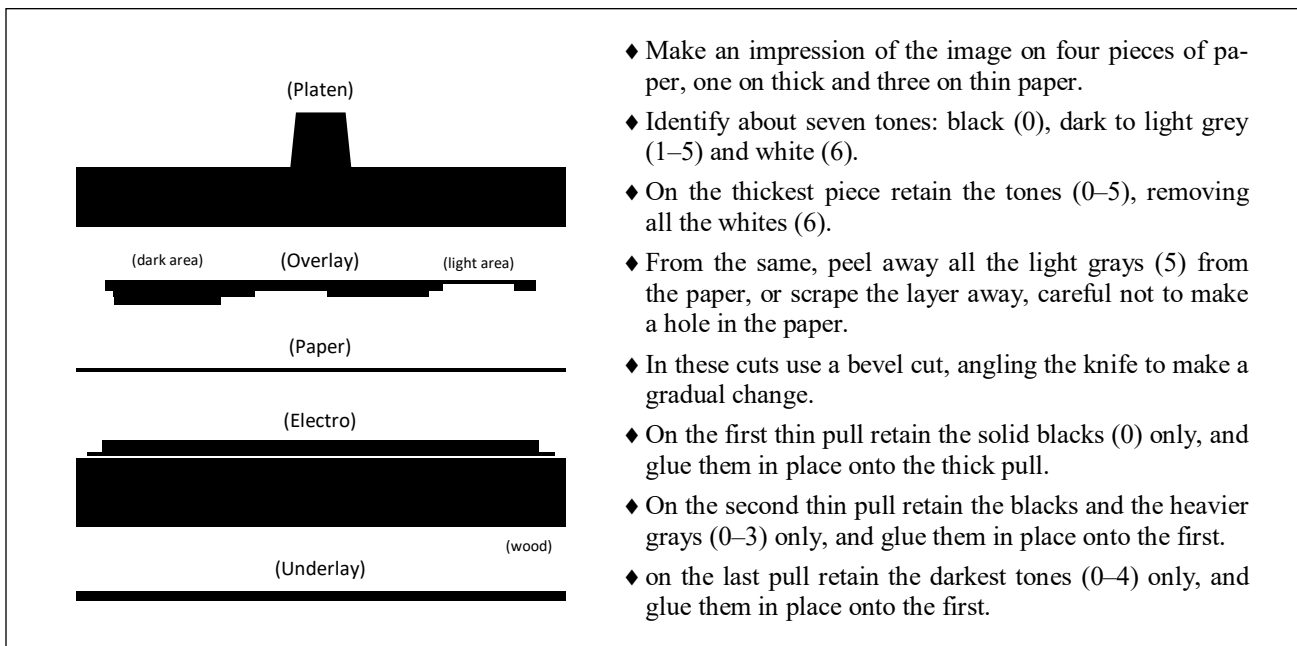


Figure 3. How to Make an Overlay.

reasons. First, to illustrate Carroll's problems with his printer and second, to understand that what we—the readers of Carroll's books—see is greatly dependent on the printing, and *not* on the proof Tenniel last approved.

Many of Tenniel's illustrations are vignettes. For these, printing manuals instructed printers to take pressure off shaded or textured edges "to keep them light and clear" for without doing so they would only appear "too hard" or to end too abruptly. Also, as these illustrations have no borders, manuals suggested using "bearers" (unprinted supports) to keep the pressure off the edges.¹²

Carroll understood the concept of overlaying, using the term "bringing up"—as in bringing up the drawings—a term found in printing manuals of the time, but he also used the term "making-up" as well as "overlay" itself. The first known instance of Carroll mentioning the concept, however, is late in his life as an author, 1890. "Clay have lost all interest in the book, after printing so many thousands, and do not trouble themselves further about 'bringing up' the pictures." He refers to the practice in two further letters three years later. "Evidently there has been gross carelessness, on the part of Messrs. Clay, in the 'making-up' of these pictures," and in the latter showing some knowledge of the business, "the electrotypes are not worn-out but that the 'making-up' for printing had been very carelessly done." Carroll's last mention of the concept is the only letter to use the official term. He writes in 1894, complaining of a disastrous printing of *Looking-Glass*, "it is of course essential to know whether a new 'overlay' had been made for it. You surely know as well as I do, that without a proper 'overlay' no electro will print well."¹³

It is only with this knowledge of the printing process that we can fully sympathize with the anguish Carroll and Tenniel experienced with the printing of the Alice books. At the time Carroll asked the Clarendon Press to print his fairy tale, "they were in the midst of change," as Peter Sutcliffe writes in *The Oxford University Press: An Informal History*. Carroll's friend Bartholomew Price, who he alluded to in "Twinkle, twinkle, little bat," was involved with the press, and, as Sutcliffe surmises, "must have been embarrassed by the failure of the Press to satisfy his friend." If Bat Price "were seeking anyone to blame it would undoubtedly have been Henry Latham." Sutcliffe, adds however—quite unnecessarily, as we will soon see—that some blame could fall on Carroll, who was "perversely fastidious."¹⁴ Of course, as is well-known, it was Tenniel, playing the role of whistle-blower, who first objected to the Clarendon printing, not Carroll. Carroll himself recorded the incident, writing that he received a letter "from Tenniel, who [was] dissatisfied with the printing of the pictures" on July 19, 1865, and took the letter to Macmillan the following day.¹⁵ Tenniel's exact complaint is not known. His only known remark of the incident is found in a letter to the Dalziels a few months later: "Mr. Dodgson's book came out months ago; but I protested

so strongly against the disgraceful printing, that he *cancelled the edition*. Clay is now doing it for Xmas.”¹⁶

Tenniel’s objection was, no doubt, not due to the mixed type (both normal and condensed letters), nor the fourteen or so widows (a typesetting faux pas when a paragraph ends at the top of page), nor the mis-centering of some of the illustrations, all of which are found in the Clarendon version. Instead, it was likely due to the bleed through (the visibility of text on the verso or recto of his illustration) and, to a much greater extent, to inadequate overlaying. In fact, some of the illustrations may exemplify what happens when a printer fails to even use an overlay.¹⁷

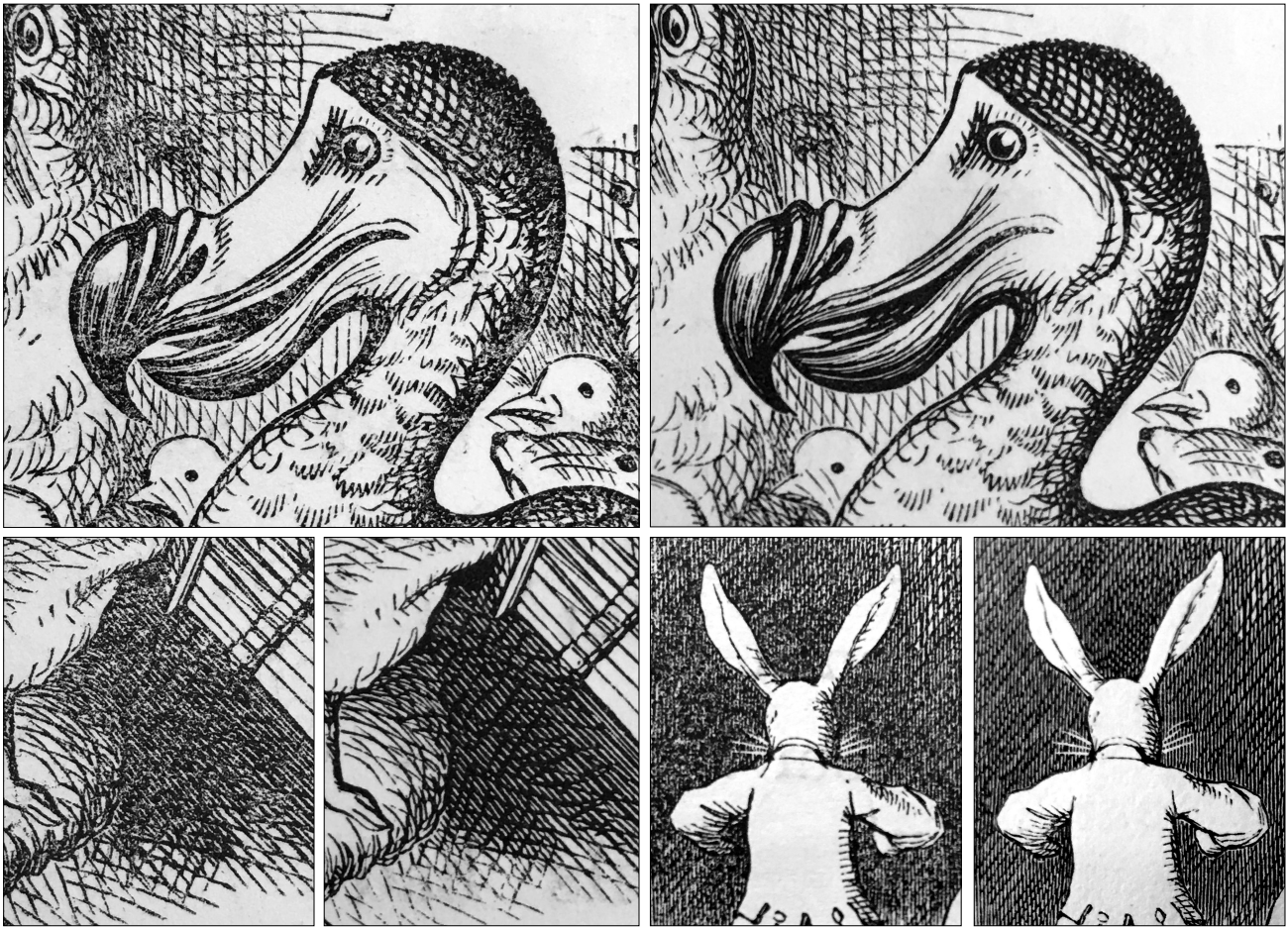


Figure 4. Clarendon’s *Rotted Darks* and Clay’s *Rich Blacks*. The Dodo’s beak is smudgy in the 1865 edition (top left) but strong and solid in the 1866 edition (top right). The shadow beneath the tipped jury box is mottled in the 1865 edition (bottom, far left) and crisp and clear in the 1866 edition (bottom, to the right), even allowing a layer of cross-hatching and swirling lines to be discerned above a ground of tight vertical hatching. Likewise, the White Rabbit scurries through a splotchy hall in the 1865 edition, but a dark and dangerous hall in 1866 edition.



Figure 5. Clarendon's Hard Lights and Clays Delicate (if Rotted) Lights. Alice's hair appears oily in the 1865 edition, but blonde and beautiful in the 1866 edition (top right). The edge of the drawing above Alice ends with a blunt abruptness in the Clarendon but with a thoughtful and thinning taper in the 1866 edition. It is debatable whether it does so with a tad too much rottenness. The two pairs on the bottom, when Alice pulls the curtain and when the Cheshire Cat disappears (Clarendon on the left, Clay on the right) show rottenness to a greater degree in Clay's first edition.

After Carroll's meeting with Macmillan, the book was sent to Richard Clay who printed under the name R. Clay, Son, and Taylor at Bread Street Hill. He was known for his "fine woodcut work, and turned out some of the finest books ever printed in London." It was said that "his office was always crowded with work—work which was sent to Clay 'because it was sure to be done well,'" and that "a more painstaking, conscientious printer never lived."¹⁸

These attributes are apparent in Clay's handling of Tenniel's rich blacks. Converging black lines give the Dodo a strong and solid beak in Clay, but a mottled one in Clarendon (figure 4). An abundant number of cross-hatching lines that surround the White Rabbit have him running down a dark and dangerous hall in Clay, but a splotchy one in Clarendon. Nor can the darkness of the cross-hatching beneath the March Hare's table hide Alice's feet, being distinct and discernable in Clay, but am-

biguous in Clarendon. Clay's superiority with the darker tones is also shown in the gleaming black of the big puppy's eyes, the sheening black on Alice's shoes when she pulls the curtain aside, and in countless other examples, especially in the densest parts of Tenniel's cross-hatching.

These attributes are also apparent in Clay's handling of Tenniel's delicate lights. The graceful curve of the flamingo's neck when it is staring at Alice is easy and elegant in Clay, but bulky in Clarendon. The clouds behind the dancing Gryphon are white and wispy in Clay but hard in Clarendon. Alice's hair when she swims alone (and in many other cuts) is blonde and bright in Clay but merely oily in the Clarendon (figure 5, top). Clay's superiority with these sparser areas is also shown in the inner lines of the large envelope, in the barristers' wigs, and in several other trivial areas.

Clay's conscientious attention to the darks and the lights gives the illustrations more dimension. Their thinner and lighter background lines allow the area to retreat from the foreground, giving the whole more depth. While Clarendon's relatively thicker and darker background lines only allows the area to move forward, flattening the whole. This is notable, for example, in the haystacks behind an eel-balancing Father William, in the clouds behind the character's dancing the Lobster Quadrille, and in the drapery behind the royals in the frontispiece.

The concept that Clarendon's printing was wrongly condemned—that Carroll was “perversely fastidious,” that Tenniel was “hypersensitive”—has gotten far too much traction.¹⁹ It derives, no doubt, to one notable (or perceived) fault in Clay's printing and one notable (or perceived) asset in Clarendon's printing. Printing manuals tell us that when creating an overlay, pressmen should take pressure off the edges of vignettes. Engraving manuals suggest that proof takers should dab away ink from the edges of the wood block before burnishing. In other words, vignettes should taper softly and not suddenly away when their edges contain shadows or texturing. Clay's pressmen were evidently aware of this objective—but perhaps *all too aware*. In the first edition, seven to thirteen of the twenty-two vignettes taper away but with only a good degree of rottenness, a printing term for decaying lines (figure 5, bottom).

It just so happens, however, that in Carroll's day books displayed great variability with the rottenness on a vignette's perimeter.²⁰ Consider as well that these decaying elements occur mostly on squiggles and shadows, insignificant details. Should they not be seen as mere quibbles in a critic's otherwise perfect five-star review?

Even if Clay is completely at fault on this single issue, it must be agreed that his printing is unquestionably an enormous improvement on Clarendon's. Clay produced no illustration that consistently had rotten blacks (where Clarendon produced a whopping thirty-three to thirty-nine); Clay beautified the heroine's hair in about sixteen of the twenty-two illustrations in which she appears (where Clarendon often gave the most important character in the book heavy hair); and he added dimension in about sixteen of the forty-two illustrations (where Clarendon did so in only one). It should be noted that Clarendon also had trouble with the edges of vignettes, producing rotten borders in about three illustrations and overly firm borders in at least two, something

Clay avoided completely.²¹ A hundred long leaps forward and one short shuffle backwards does not a printing condemn.²²

Tenniel saw, no doubt, Clay's handling of the perimeters as *conscientious* and *acceptable*, and Clarendon's as *unschooled* and *boorish*. But he also saw the *complete* picture. The proof for this (and the degree of acceptability in "border control") may lie in Tenniel's and Carroll's response to the publication. Carroll wrote that he "heard from Tenniel, approving the new impression" and Carroll himself wrote that it was "very *far* superior to the old, and in fact a perfect piece of artistic printing."²³

A "vexed" Tenniel also played the job of whistle blower after the first printing of *Through the Looking-Glass*, a story usually left untold despite its importance in the Carroll–Macmillan dynamic. "I have no doubt that what you told me of," Carroll wrote to his publisher in December 1871, the first extant document on the matter, "the pressing between sheets of blank paper in order to dry for binding, is the real cause of all the 'inequality,' which has so vexed Mr. Tenniel in the copies already done." By

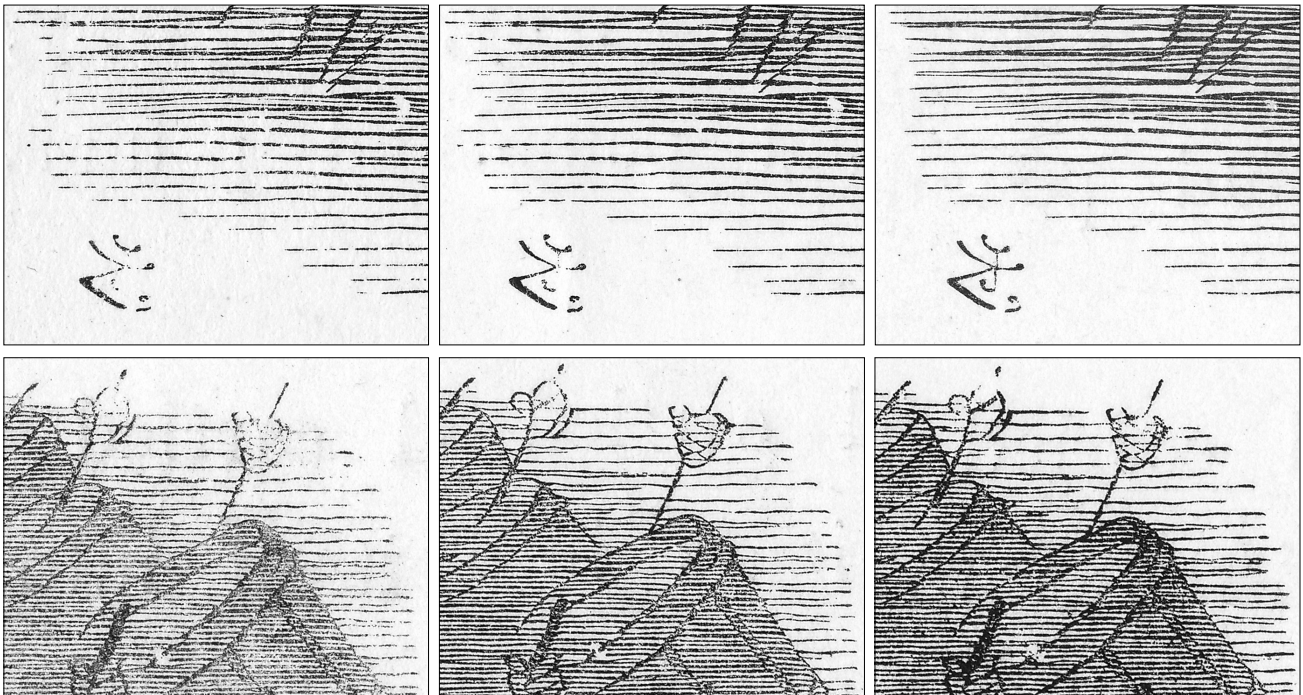


Figure 6. "Inequality" in the First Edition of *Looking-Glass*. Tenniel also found fault with the first printing of *Looking-Glass*. Macmillan blamed the pressing of the sheets between mill boards to hasten drying. Seemingly, editions had their own unique mix of acceptable and unacceptable illustrations. The examples above are from Alan Tannenbaum's collection of five first editions, showing the worst (first column), the best (middle column), and a version from his 10th thousand printing, where the issue was corrected (right column). (The examples include the Macmillan–London edition as well as the Lee & Shepard and Macmillan–New York, editions, which were printed at the same time.)

“inequality,” Tenniel was referring to the fact that each book had its own mix of rotted illustrations and acceptable illustrations, as is evident in several copies reviewed for this article (figure 6). One book could have a rotten Jabberwock and a fresh Mutton and another a fresh Jabberwock and a rotten Mutton. Macmillan agreed there was an issue and surmised it was caused by a technique for hastening the drying of printed sheets. It isn’t difficult to detect in Carroll’s words—as Macmillan no doubt did—that the matter would likely have gone undetected if it hadn’t been for Tenniel: “indeed I can see for myself that several of the pictures have in this way quite lost all brilliance of effect.”²⁴

The letter included a healthy rant on the importance of creating an “artistically first-rate” product over the generation of profits. “I have now made up my mind that, whatever be the *commercial* consequences,” Carroll wrote, “we must have no more artistic ‘fiascos’... You will think me a lunatic for thus wishing to send away money.” He even mentioned a bad impression of *Wonderland* (sometime after Clay’s first) that was “a blow to the artistic reputation of the book” hoping he “could only annihilate them off the face of the earth!”²⁵

Macmillan responded to Carroll’s stricture, and a subsequent lost letter, knowing full well that the catalyst for it was that illustrator of his: “I think Mr. Tenniel hardly realizes all the conditions needful for producing a book like *Through the Looking-Glass*.” The publisher, more than a bit annoyed, pointed out that his drawings for books had denser blacks than his weekly work for *Punch*: “But then see how these are cut. I don’t suppose that more than one line in five in the same space is given in the Cartoon that is given in *Alice*.”²⁶

Macmillan solved the issue by promising not to dry the paper between sheets and also by obtaining “paper made with less size [a term meaning smoother] for those new copies.” He believed this would “obviate a good deal of the *rottenness* which Mr. Tenniel complained of.”²⁷ Carroll wouldn’t fail to mention his ban on the drying of paper between sheets in the years to come, referring to at least two times in letters in 1885 and 1893. Finally, Frederick Macmillan told him, one imagines exasperatingly, “With regard to the drying of the sheets, I may say that the old system of doing this by pressing them between mill boards has for some time been abandoned.”²⁸

In the 1890s Carroll took over the job of whistle blower, playing the role three times. The first was in 1890 when he wrote to Macmillan, “I’ve thought a good deal about the Quality of the recent impressions... and am not at all comfortable about them. They are so distinctly inferior to the earlier ones.” He suspected that Messrs. Clay (their father died in 1878) “lost all interest in the book... and do not trouble themselves further about ‘bringing up’ the pictures, but simply aim at getting the thousands worked off with the minimum of trouble.” This is the first recorded instance of Carroll referring to overlaying, though Macmillan had used the term four years before.

Carroll also suspected that the cheaper paper, which he consented to, may have added to the problem and directed Macmillan, if he agreed, to “return to the dearer paper, even if it swallows up most of the profits.”²⁹ Oddly enough, this single letter to his publisher is the sole data point on the issue, despite there being plenty of existing letters between the parties before and after this time.

Carroll’s second foray into whistle blowing occurred three years later, and was so severe that he even discussed the possibility of splitting with Macmillan. It all began with a lady-friend—as it always does—to whom he wished to inscribe an edition of *Looking-Glass*. Not having any at hand, he asked Macmillan to send him six copies. But it was to his publisher, and not his lady-friend, to whom he ended up inscribing the first of the copies. Written on the half-title were the underlined words: “*Received Nov. 21/93 / paper too white / 26 pictures over-printed / 8 of them very bad.*” Macmillan was fortunate enough to have other pages inscribed as well, mostly those with Tenniel’s illustrations: “*much over-printed,*” “*very much over-printed / very bad,*” “*very much over-printed / very bad indeed,*” and so on (figure 7). Some comments were about the misalignment of right–left pages: “*bad folding / page half a line too low down.*”³⁰ In a letter to his publisher, written the same day, he repeated his assessment of the pictures but added a devastating conclusion: “The book is worthless, and I cannot offer it to my lady-friend.”³¹

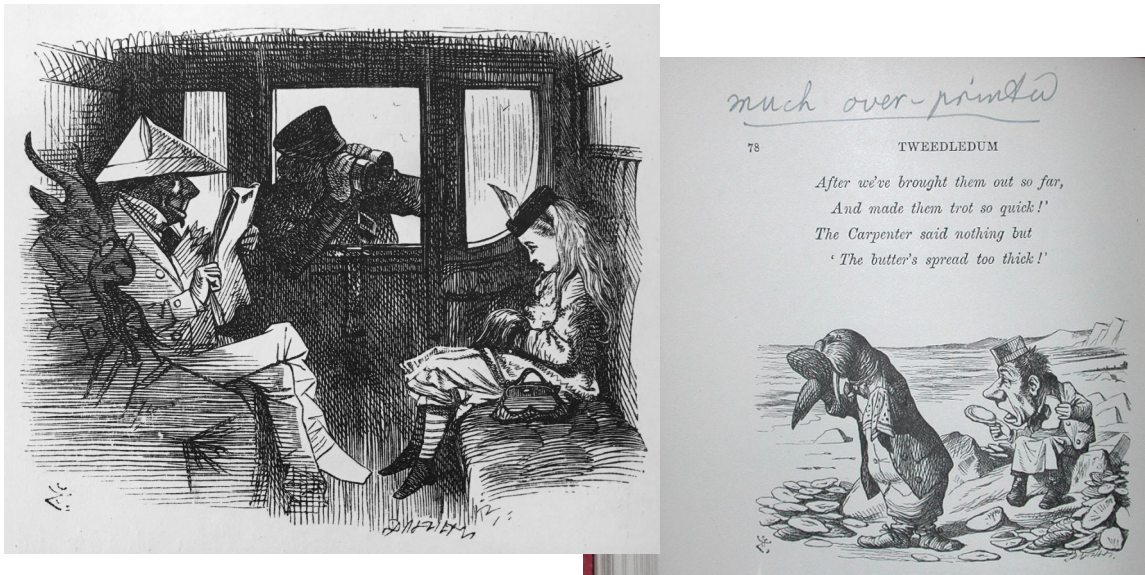


Figure 7. The Fiasco. In 1893 Carroll complained that the printing of *Looking-Glass* was a “fiasco,” writing comments in one edition (right) and sending it back to Macmillan. The Railway scene is perhaps the worst transgression on the part of the printer.

Of course, Carroll blamed the imperfect impression on Clay's inattentiveness. "Evidently there has been gross carelessness, on the part of Messrs. Clay, in the 'making-up' of these pictures" (as was quoted earlier).³² Macmillan was "concerned" and found Carroll's claims "well founded." He called in Mr. Clay, who claimed the plates were "worn out." Macmillan asked Carroll's permission to electotype new ones from the original blocks.³⁰

Carroll, a keen logician, as we well know, was not so easily played. He reasoned that the supposed wearing was too sudden, and waited for the arrival of a 58th thousand edition that he had given away before granting his approval for new electotypes. As suspected, after comparing it to the "worthless" 60th edition, he wrote to his publisher: "Messrs. Clay have been laying on the electotypes, the blame they ought to have taken on *themselves*... the electotypes are *not* worn-out but that the 'making-up' for printing had been very carelessly done—probably they did not make new cushions at all, but used the old ones: and these probably had got quite dry and hard."³⁴ By "cushions," Carroll is no doubt referring to the *underlay*, material beneath the block to "bring up" the cut. Indeed, if the whole of the illustration is too dark, it would obviously be the underlay and not the overlay. And "dry and hard" underlays, ones that would not compress, would seem to produce the results Carroll observed in the edition. He also noted how the plates for *Wonderland* lasted longer and were *still* in use. (Carroll and Macmillan did not consider the concept that the plates were made in different cities, perhaps giving them slightly different metallic properties.)

In fact, there were several volleys back and forth whether the blame was on worn out underlays or worn out electros. Clay was even allowed to supply his own pulls (proofs from the electros, one being the railway scene) as evidence—a move Carroll thought best done by an outside party.³⁵ In the end, Carroll accepted the plates as being worn, but not without a serious grudge against Clay, who was still to blame even if the plates *were* worn. "The loss they have caused to me by their gross carelessness (for which they have never expressed the slightest regret)," Carroll wrote ten months later to Macmillan, "in giving you no warning about those *Looking-Glasses*, is probably over £500."³⁶ In accepting Macmillan's decision not to have an independent party make test prints and in accepting the appearance of mysteriously sudden worn-out plates, Carroll, no doubt, felt emasculated by the whole affair. This only intensified his grudge against Clay and his publisher as well.

Carroll eventually did inscribe away the other five books, all being accounted for in various collections. The one held in Princeton being most noteworthy. It is signed to "JAE". (perhaps John or Jane Earle) from "CLD" (both initials done as stylistic logos) and dated "Dec. 4, 1893," with the following *rare, uncollected* verse:

This book, unfit to give or lend,
Scarce fit to throw away, I send,
A worthless gift to a worthy friend.³⁷

In 1896, Lewis Carroll had an idea, perhaps to make the matter moot—the cause of the *Looking-Glass* “fiasco,” which kept it out of print for three years—to revise *both* Alice books with wholly new editions! He first wrote to his publisher about the idea in January, suggesting they use another printer than Clay (with a brief reminder of the *Looking-Glass* “fiasco”). In February, he suggested a new printer for the book that would become *Three Sunsets and Other Poems* (with a brief reminder of the *Looking-Glass* “fiasco”). In August, he again suggested a new printer for the new editions of the two Alice books (*without* a brief reminder... but give the man time). In all three instances, Frederick Macmillan defended Clay. In the last reply, likely withholding any sign of his exasperation, he wrote: “I must say that I do not know of any printer who would be likely to do them better or even so well as Messrs. Clay.”³⁸

The next month Carroll had the idea of bringing in John Tenniel as part of the quality control team. “Certainly,” Tenniel responded, “I will do what you wish, in regard to supervising the pictures, with much pleasure: of course everything will depend on the *printing*.” His plan, as he told Macmillan, was to have the sheets of the books sent to the artist “as fast as they are made up for working off.” That is, the pressmen would make all the necessary overlays, work off sample sheets, stop, take them to Tenniel (who would presumably sign off on them), take them back, and begin pressing a thousand copies. “It is, of course, needless to say,” Carroll explained, “that it would be of no use, at all, to *work off* the 1000 copies of a sheet, and *then* send one to him.”³⁹

Carroll’s plan was unworkable. “A printing machine is of course expected to earn a certain amount each day,” Macmillan explained to Carroll, “and if it is kept compulsorily idle as it must necessarily be if your proposal is adopted, it means a serious loss to the printer every time.” Clay suggested another plan—as Macmillan explained—that “he should at once ‘bring up’ all the new editions from the woodcuts for the two *Alice* books and should send careful impressions of them to Sir John Tenniel for approval. Mr. Clay would then take the responsibility of seeing that the impressions in the printed sheet corresponded exactly with the prints as passed by Sir John.”⁴⁰

The proximity of the words “Clay” and “responsibility,” no doubt, worked as a fuse. It blew that missing brief reminder of that never-to-be-forgotten ‘fiasco’ out of Carroll’s head and spattered it onto the page:

At present, I have no such confidence in Mr. Clay as to be willing to trust him, in any important matter, without having a written guarantee. You remember, as well as I do, his most discreditable behaviour as to the spoiled 1000 *Looking-Glass*, when he calmly ignored being in *any* degree responsible for the “fiasco,” and tacitly assumed the right of sending you sheets unfit for publication, and that it was *your* duty to examine *all* sheets received from him....

and on and on he went, closing with, "'Once bit, twice shy.' After the heavy money-loss entailed on me by Mr. Clay's misconduct, I cannot afford to run any further risks, in dealing with so untrustworthy a man."⁴¹

On the same day that Macmillan wrote his letter revising one aspect of Carroll's plan, Tenniel was writing his own letter revising another aspect of his plan. At some point, Carroll asked if Tenniel would not only take charge of quality control for the pictures but also be willing to *rework* the pictures in the books. Perhaps the plan only included Tenniel revising the amount of crinoline in Alice's dress in *Wonderland*. But it was likely more than that. Tenniel had done such a thing before with his *Aesop's Fables*. In the New York Public Library there is an edition of the book with Tenniel's original drawings and tracings tipped into it. Except the tracings were not

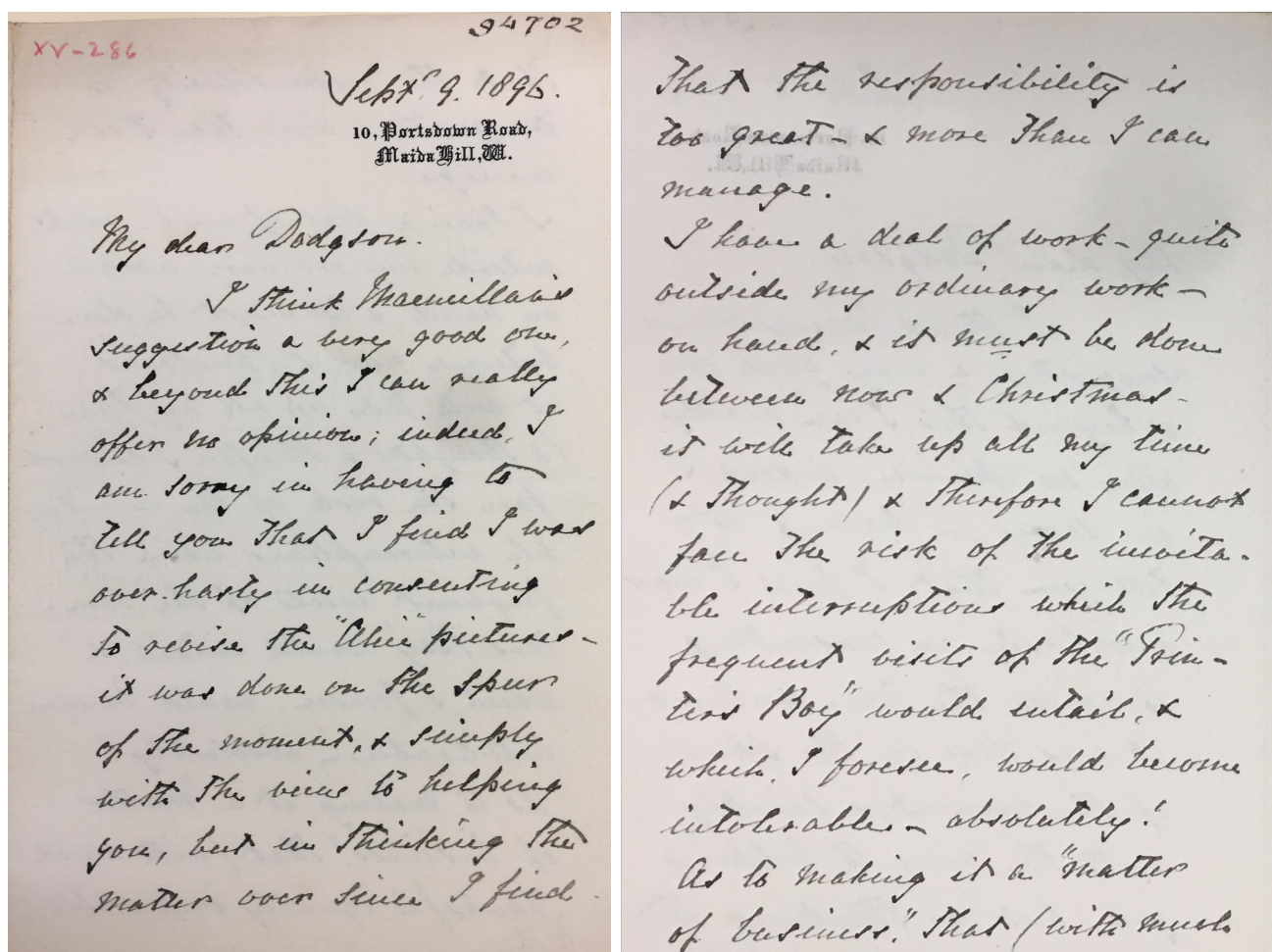


Figure 8. Letter from Tenniel to Carroll, Berol Collection, New York University. Carroll asked Tenniel to revise some of his pictures for the 1897 editions of the Alice books. Tenniel at first agreed but here apologizes for having a change of heart.

created *for* the drawings to be transferred *onto* the wood. Instead they are tracings *of* the finished printed illustrations (1848) but with changes that he would make *for* the new and improved illustrations (1858).⁴² It was very likely that Tenniel was going to revise his Alice pictures in a similar manner, perhaps not all, but some, just as Carroll was going to revise the writing.

But it was not to be. Tenniel wrote a no-doubt disappointed Carroll: “I am sorry in having to tell you that I find I was over-hasty in consenting to revise the Alice pictures. It was done on the spur of the moment, and simply with the view to helping you, but in thinking the matter over since I find that the responsibility is too great, and more than I can manage” (figure 8). It sounds a bit more than changing the crinoline on ten or so pictures, especially with the words: “I cannot face the risk of the inevitable interruptions which the frequent visits of the ‘Printer’s Boy’ would entail, and which, I foresee, would become intolerable, absolutely!” He would not be persuaded by making it a “matter of business”—an indication that this was actually his second refusal. He ended the letter with an apology and a rather inarguable excuse: “I am now in my 76th year and *that*, I take it, at any rate from my own point of view covers a multitude of—shortcomings!”⁴³

With these matters put aside, Carroll and Tenniel went ahead with Clay’s revised plan. In truth, it is certainly debatable which is better to use as a guide: *achievable* press proofs from the printer—as they agreed to do here—or *unachievable* but ideal hand-burnished proofs from the engraver. The latter seems to be the usual practice. Nonetheless, in January 1897, Tenniel approved the whole of *Wonderland*’s illustrations for press and Carroll the whole of its text for press.⁴¹ And in February, Carroll and Tenniel likewise approved for press their respective sheets for *Looking-glass*.⁴⁵ The book was delayed, however, much to Carroll’s chagrin, though he agreed with Macmillan’s judgement that they should avoid the Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee in June and publish in September.⁴⁹

Macmillan received Carroll’s assessment of Clay’s new editions two months later. The author, he read in a letter, was “disappointed with the result.” (Fanciful scholars have Macmillan falling out of his chair— *Thump!* —when he read this letter.) Carroll thought that “Some sheets seem to have taken the ink better than others: If you turn over the leaves you will find places in which one of two opposite pages is pale compared with the other. It might be well to see to the *inks* also, + to make sure that, next time the ‘Alice’ books are printed, it is the *blackest* ink procurable”⁵⁰ (figure 9).

Macmillan reviewed a few of the copies he had in his office. “I do not recognize the faded appearance of which you complain.” He suggested that using “dead white paper” would bring the drawings out more than the “creamy tone” that Carroll requested to match the first edition.⁴⁸

Copies reviewed for this article show that Carroll, though he may be technically correct about the blackness of the ink, may have been letting the grudge he had against Clay get the best of him. In one comparison made by the author at the New York Public Library, their sole 1897 edition of *Looking-Glass*, when compared to an

Ch. Ch., Oxford.
Nov. 23, 1897.

Dear Mr. Macmillan,
After long consideration of the new issue of the "Alice" books, I have written the enclosed letter to Messrs Clay, which I request you to read before forwarding. My hopes had been high that the new books would be faultless, & I was much disappointed with the result. Some sheets seem to have taken the ink better than others: if you turn over the leaves you will find places in which one of two opposite pages is pale compared with the other.

Figure 9. Letter from Carroll to Macmillan, Rosenbach Museum and Library. Carroll writes of his disappointment in the 1897 versions of his Alice books, believing the ink not "the blackest ink procurable."

It might be well to see to the ink also, & to make sure that, next time the "Alice" books are printed, it is the blackest ink procurable. I feel quite sure that more brilliant copies can be produced.

By the way, I saw, the other day, a copy of the "Alice" published (& I suppose printed) by the "Macmillan Company" in America. The pictures (& indeed the text also) were wretchedly bad. Can nothing be done to mend matters? I don't like such worthless copies coming out under your auspices.

Very truly yours
C. L. Dodgson.

1872 edition (one with signed proofs tipped in), had twenty-six illustrations printed ever so slightly lighter and nine printed a bit more noticeably lighter. But all were indeed acceptable. Six were actually printed a bit darker. No spread had one side any darker or lighter than the other (figure 10).

There are many cordial yet unrelated letters between the two after these, showing that Clay's latest strike against Carroll's artistic sensibilities was relatively tame, yet not ignorable. In fact, it took Carroll two and a half weeks—proving as well his milder frustration—to request from Macmillan unbound sheets of the illustrations to mark with his eagle eye.

In the end, Carroll had the books examined by a professor, "an authority on artistic questions," who claimed the ink wasn't "really black." Clay responded that the best ink isn't necessarily the blackest ink. There are other qualities to consider and he

could very well get a deeper image with the same ink. As Macmillan expressed to Carroll, Clay “reminds us that in the case of the *Alice* blocks he was working to a standard which has been approved of by Sir John Tenniel, and that each sheet as it was put in the machine was carefully compared with the proofs which Sir J. Tenniel had seen and signed.”⁴⁶ Carroll ends the debate rather dramatically. He dies.

The story of the print quality of John Tenniel’s illustrations to Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass* does not end with author’s death nor with the illustrator’s death. It only began with Tenniel and Carroll. Was Tenniel (who initiated the claim against Clarendon and the first against Clay) too fussy? He was surely in the right in both cases, the first being quite clear and the second confirmed at least by Macmillan’s admittance of the less-than-ideal manner in which the sheets were dried. Was Carroll (who presented three of the four claims



Figure 10. Comparing the 1866 Edition with the 1897 Revised Edition. The two editions come from one unmanipulated photograph, but here presented as two images for comparison. They show that Carroll had a point, that the 1897 edition (right) was not as black as the 1866 edition (left). Macmillan did not see the “faded appearance” and Clay responded that the best ink isn’t necessarily the blackest.

against Clay) too fussy? Certainly not for the 1893 ‘fiasco,’ where Macmillan agreed with his assessment, but perhaps a bit so for the other two claims. Fussiness is not, however, the strongest attribute of Carroll’s personality that comes through in his letters about Clay; rather, they exude repetitiveness, righteousness, and long-windedness.

The print quality of Tenniel’s illustrations will, in truth, be a never-ending story. Soon after the author’s and illustrator’s death, it continued, often with lazy graphic artists, boorish publishers, or ignorant authors. If Whistler threw paint on a canvas, Tenniel might as well have splattered *mud* on the wood (figure 11). Carroll and Tenniel are currently rolling over in their graves. Alice’s eyes are often nothing but a splat and a splotch; the Walrus’s muzzle, a splodge; and the Dodo’s beak, a smudge, making one yearn for the good old days of Clarendon’s rotten darks. Even a book titled *Sir John Tenniel: Aspects of His Work*, a book dedicated to the artist, had atrocious reproductions of its own subject’s



Figure 11. The Mud Hatter Reciting, from a publisher that will remain anonymous. Tenniel’s illustrations are all too often mishandled by publishers and websites. Here, the illustration was printed too dark, along with all the others.

Alice illustrations. A dreadful publication that showed no respect for Tenniel’s craft.⁵⁰ And even a book like Martin Gardner’s *Annotated Alice: The Definitive Edition* reproduced several illustrations with *visible* plug lines. What would Carroll and Tenniel make of that? Not necessarily a bad idea if the genuine versions were nearby and the *unsightly* deviations explained, after all, it is an *annotated* book.⁵¹ But the presentation as it was, was disrespectful.

Tenniel’s Alice illustrations deserve a *restoration* project, one that would make them freely available to all in high-resolution detail. It is often pointed out that the hand-burnished proofs by the engraver are the ideal. “It will be patent to all that engravings worked at machine,” as one printing manual put it, “rarely, if ever, equal the proof supplied with the cut.” Another stated, albeit cowritten by the previous, that

such proofs were “perfect. It is the engraver’s impression of his own work; and as it is often passed by the artist who made the drawing, we may assume it to be the standard of excellence.”⁵² Carroll himself believed this to be the case. “Dalziel called the process ‘rubbing off by hand,’ I don’t know what that means exactly,” he admitted to Macmillan, “but the result contains delicacy of detail to which there is no approach in the printed book.” Earlier Carroll described them as “more delicate than any prints from the electro-types” (figure 12)⁵³

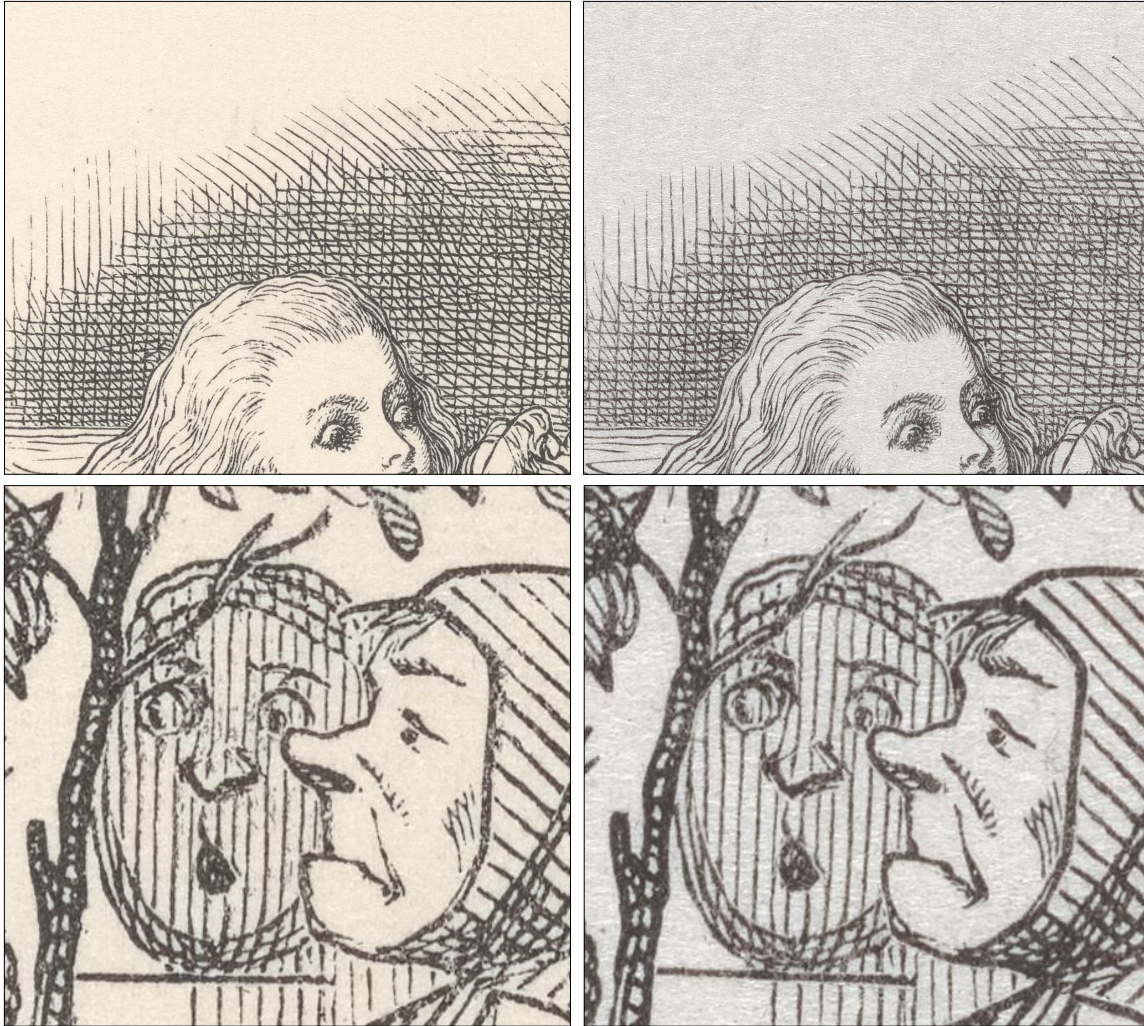


Figure 12. Clay's Prints vs Dalziel's Proofs. It is difficult for printers to taper the borders of vignettes without producing some degree of rottenness (top left), a matter often avoidable for the proof taker (top right). The proof taker achieves this by not only lightening the pressure of his burnisher but also by dabbing away some of the ink on the block beforehand. Note as well, the more delicate handling of Alice's hair. Printers often produce mottled lines (bottom left), a matter totally absent from the ideal proof (bottom right). All images are untouched scans derived from the copy of *Wonderland* with signed proofs held at the New York Public Library, Berg Collection.

There just happens to be a full set of proofs for both Alice books tipped into copies now housed in the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library. They were likely produced around 1898 in response to Carroll's own proofs being burned in a fire at the binder Riviere. They have authenticity—they were signed by Tenniel and Dalziel, and each of the two sets has the extra touch of being authorized in an inserted note by Tenniel himself.⁵⁴ Though these copies may be exquisite, they are as Carroll stated "delicate" and therefore difficult to manipulate. When turning the now tan back-





Figure 13. Hatter Reciting (enlarged, opposite page, top), John Tenniel, signed hand-burnished proof, from The Berg Collection, NYPL. It is debatable how to best reproduce Tenniel's illustrations. One method would be to simply reproduce the full set of ninety-two proofs for both Alice books found in the New York Public Library. Proofs were considered at the time to be the ideal, and these being final proofs, signed, and produced by Dalziel makes them especially authentic.

They could be reproduced as shown in the original scan (opposite page, top) or with a slight correction to the contrast (opposite page, below). If white grounds are desired, a certain amount of rottenness, already present, becomes a bit alarming, obliterating their initial appeal (above).

However, this could be corrected by restoration, that is, filling in the gaps where Tenniel obviously drew (right). The top left hatching, the shine in the hat, the right side squiggle, and the Dalziel signature and lines above were all restored.



ground paper into pure white, a certain degree of rottenness becomes amplified and the lines appear less than black—delicate indeed—obliterating their original charm. As shown in figure 13, this can be corrected but not without a great deal of tedious work, work that often imitates that of the painstaking engraver. (At the author's request, Carolyn Vega, the curator of the Berg Collection, agreed to place all ninety-two of these signed and final proofs in high definition on the library's *Digital Collections* website.)

Another methodology to obtain a full and perfect set of Tenniel's Alice illustrations would be to browse through many copies of Clay's prints for the best version of each illustration. It would be folly to use a single printing; any one book can have a fine Jabberwock but a lousy Dodo. Also, there should be no reason not to "Frankenstein"—taking the left side cross-hatching from one book and the right side squiggles from another. Indeed, why not include a proof if need be, even if in part, mixing both methodologies.

Some may question the authenticity of such a project. However, as long as it has Victorian printing values in mind, as expressed here, and the illustrator's best interests at heart, it would seem to be exactly what both John Tenniel and Lewis Carroll would want for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*.



1. This fiction is based on actual letters between the two men. For the letter quoted, see Lewis Carroll to Frederick Macmillan, November 23, 1897, in *Lewis Carroll and the House of Macmillan*, edited by Morton N. Cohen and Anita Gandolfo (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 359. Though many of Carroll's letters to the Macmillan company are reprinted in this book, for this article, they are based on the originals found in the Rosenbach Museum (EMS 1176/22 Dodgson MSS, Macmillan Correspondence), unless otherwise stated.
2. John Tenniel to Carroll, September 5, 1896, Berol Collection.
3. F. Wilson, *Typographic Printing Machines and Machine Printing: A Practical Guide to the Selection of Bookwork, Two-Colour, Jobbing, and Rotary Machines* (London, Wyman & Sons, [1879]), p. 27.
4. Carroll to F. Macmillan, November 24, 1893; January 31, 1894; and July 8, 1885. Carroll's letter to Macmillan on November 25, 1897, shows that Clay had hand-burnished proofs of the *Three Sunsets* illustrations.
5. Alexander Macmillan to Carroll, February 1, 1870. Technically, Macmillan is speaking about page electros (illustration and text combined). Letters from the Macmillan Company to Carroll are based on copies of Morton Cohen's own copies in the Berol Collection, New York University, along with transcripts worked on by many dear souls from the Rosenbach (as they are intensely difficult to read). See Clare Imholtz, "Carroll's Publishing History with Macmillan: A Research Narrative," *Knight Letter* 3, Issue 1, No. 100 (Spring 2018): pp. 14–18.

6. Some details of the process were taken from other sources, but a great majority are from William A. Emerson, *Hand-Book of Wood Engraving* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1884), pp. 93–4. *The Metropolitan Museum of Art* has a video demonstration of the process on their website that is worth seeing.
7. For being sent to Clay, see A. Macmillan to Carroll, July 28, 1865; for the 1868 edition, see *The Lewis Carroll Handbook*, edited by Sidney Herbert Williams and Falconer Madan, revised and augmented by Roger Lancelyn Green, and further revised by Denis Crutch (Chatham, Great Britain: W & J Mackay, 1979), p. 35; and for being destroyed, see A. Macmillan to Carroll, February 13, 1896. It is not out of the question that Carroll was incorrect and new plates were made in 1868 or 1871, and that some of the plates last sold at auction in 2018 were for the first edition. But this debate is too involved for the present.
8. A. Macmillan to Carroll, February 1 and 3, 1870; and February 19, 1876; as separately crafted, see George Craik (a Macmillan partner) to Carroll, June 16, 1871.
9. Wilson, *Typographic Printing*, p. 15.
10. John Southward, *Practical Printing: A Handbook of the Art of Typography* (London: J. M. Powell & Son, 1884), p. 477. See as well, Thomas Mackellar, *The American Printer: A Manual of Typography* (Philadelphia: Mackellar, Smiths & Jordan, 1871), p. 259; Frederick J. F. Wilson and Douglas Grey, *A Practical Treatise Upon Modern Printing Machinery and Letterpress Printing* (London: Cassell, 1888), p. 337.
11. Wilson and Grey, *A Practical Treatise*, pp. 337–339. The description is “translated” from their rather bewildering explanation.
12. Mackellar, *The American Printer*, p. 260.
13. Carroll to A. Macmillan, February 28, 1890; Carroll to F. Macmillan, November 21 and 24, 1893; Carroll to F. Macmillan, January 31, 1894.
14. Peter Sutcliffe, *The Oxford University Press: An Informal History* (Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 2005), pp. 27, 36.
15. Lewis Carroll, September 13, 1864, and July, 20, 1865, *Lewis Carroll’s Diaries: The Private Journals of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson*, edited by Edward Wakeling, vol. 5 (Luton, Beds: The Lewis Carroll Society, 1999), pp. 10 and 97. The September entry lists important dates (before and after) in the history of *Alice’s Adventures*.
16. Tenniel to Dalziel, ca. November 1866, Huntington Art Gallery.
17. William H. Bond, “The Publication of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*,” in *Harvard Library Bulletin* 103 (Autumn 1956), pp. 314–15, 318–9; Selwyn Goodacre, “The 1865 *Alice*: A New Appraisal and a Revised Census,” in *Soaring with the Dodo: Essays on Lewis Carroll’s Life and Art*, edited by Edward Guiliano and James R. Kincaid ([Charlottesville, Va.]?: The Lewis Carroll Society of North America and The University Press of Virginia, 1982), pp. 79–80. Bond seems to be the first to suggest that overlaying was a problem with the 1865 edition. Despite defining the practice, he does not dig deep into the issue, and offers other possible problems.
18. Obituary, *The Bookseller*, January 4, 1878, no. 242, p. 7.

19. For perhaps the earliest writer to defend Clarendon, see Sidney Herbert Williams, *A Bibliography of the Writings of Lewis Carroll (Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, M.A.)* (London: "The Bookman's Journal," 1924), p. 11. Williams observes lightness around perimeters on some of Clay's prints and assumes that the entire illustration was therefore printed lighter. In other words, he seems to be unaware of the great powers of the overlay, which he does not mention. For Tenniel being "hypersensitive" (penned by Green), see *The Handbook of Lewis Carroll*, p. 32.
20. For books with a healthy dose of rottenness around the perimeters of vignettes, see H. Cholmondeley Pennell, *Puck on Pegasus*, illustrated by Tenniel, et al. (London: John Camden Hotten, Piccadilly, 1861); Thomas Moore, *Lalla Rookh: An Oriental Romance*, illustrated by Tenniel (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, & Green, 1863); and countless books on arctic exploration. For books without such deterioration, see Lewis Carroll, *Rhyme? and Reason?*, illustrated by A. B. Frost and Henry Holiday (London: Macmillan, 1883); Lewis Carroll, *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, illustrated by Harry Furniss (London: Macmillan, 1889 and 1893). A copy of Clay's thirty-thousandth printing of *Wonderland* (1872) at Princeton (PR4611 .xA7 1872) shows noticeably less perimeter rottenness, as do his 1897 re-issue printings. All named books, in both categories, were printed by Clay.
21. The statistics are based on three Clarendon printings (expa Dodgson 8, 2006-1078N, Eng 19 657) and three Clay first editions (Eng 19 27693, Dodgson 10, Taylor 19th-157) housed in Princeton University. Cell phone images were taken of all the illustrations and deeply scrutinized and charted at home. Many more editions were examined in Harvard, the Morgan Library and Museum, the New York Public Library, New York University, and in the Rosenbach Museum and Library, to assure these numbers are not anomalies. The best of Clarendon's prints are Bill the Lizard; Queen Pointing (which even has more dimension than Clay's); Executioner, Alice and the Cheshire Cat; and his Disappearing.
22. I will go so far as to say, it is through Clarendon's careless printing that scholars are able to see how illustrations evolve in the printing stage. Without such instances, we would have no forensic measure, only bookish ideas, of how printers influence illustrations.
23. Lewis Carroll, Nov. 9, 1865, Wakeling, *Diaries*, pp. 10 and 115. It would be unlikely for there to be some lost document showing Tenniel's disapproval; Carroll stated as late as 1896, that "the new copies," that he was working on at the time, "ought to be fully equal, from an artistic point of view, to the original issue." See Carroll to Frederick Macmillan, August 27, 1896.

For a more detailed history and a more visual experience regarding the differences between the 1865 Clarendon printing and the 1866 Clay printing of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, see the author's video "Still Splattered" on YouTube, also available from the Lewis Carroll Society of North America's website.

24. Carroll to A. Macmillan, December 17, 1871, p. 97. I at first thought that the word "inequality" referred to the overlay (where *equality* of pressure is achieved). But inspec-

tions of several first editions, along with Alan Tannenbaum's scans, Macmillan's stated cause, and successful remedy, found in the next printing, proved the case to be otherwise.

25. Ibid.
26. A. Macmillan to Carroll, December 21, 1871.
27. A. Macmillan to Carroll, December 23, 1871.
28. See the letters from Carroll to Craik, December 26, 1885; Carroll to F. Macmillan, November 28, 1893; and F. Macmillan to Carroll, November 29, 1893.
29. Carroll to A. Macmillan, February 28, 1890; for Macmillan's first reference to overlaying, see A. Macmillan to Carroll, November 1, 1886
30. See the auction catalogue *The Nicholas Falletta Collection of Lewis Carroll Books and Manuscripts*, November 30, 2005 (South Kensington: Christie's, 2005), pp. 12–3. Some of the quotations come from my own photographs of the book when I was able to see it in New York at Mr. Falletta's office. Sadly, I was not interested in this issue at the time. Selwyn Goodacre did a full accounting like Carroll and found eleven "the same," twenty "slightly blacker," nineteen "particularly blacker" and eight "over-printed as to destroy the fine detail of the engraving." See Selwyn Goodacre, "Lewis Carroll's Rejection of the 60th Thousand of *Through the Looking-Glass*," in *The Book-Collector* 24, no. 2 (Summer 1975): p. 254. I compared an 1873 with an 1893 copy and found four too light, seventeen too dark, and six extremely dark.
31. Carroll to F. Macmillan, November 21, 1893.
32. Ibid.
33. F. Macmillan to Carroll, November 22, 1893
34. Carroll to F. Macmillan, November 24, 1893
35. Carroll to F. Macmillan, January 31, 1894
36. Carroll to F. Macmillan, September 17, 1894
37. The copies are in the Lindseth Collection, Harvard, Berol, Princeton, and Berg (NYPL). The last two were reviewed for this paper. I especially noted the illustrations on pages 67, 138, 148, 156 and 160 were particularly dark.
38. Carroll to F. Macmillan, January 29, 1896; February 9, 1896; August 27, 1896. In each case, Macmillan responded the next day.
39. Carroll to F. Macmillan, September 6, 1896. Tenniel's letter does not survive; it is quoted verbatim by Carroll.
40. F. Macmillan to Carroll, September 9, 1896.
41. Carroll to F. Macmillan, September, 10, 1896.
42. In the NYPL catalogue, the books (two, originally one volume) are credited after their rebound title: *Aesop's Fables: Drawings and Tracings* / by John Tenniel, Spencer Coll. Eng. 1848 93-388. The volume was originally published as Thomas James, *Aesop's Fables: A New Version, Chiefly from Original Sources* (London: John Murray, 1848).
43. Tenniel to Carroll, September 9, 1896, Berol.
44. F. Macmillan to Carroll, January 7 and 14, 1897; Carroll to F. Macmillan, May 27, 1897.

45. F. Macmillan to Carroll, February 24, 1897, May 27, 1897.
46. F. Macmillan to Carroll, May 28, 1897; and October 5, 1897.
47. Carroll to F. Macmillan, November 23, 1897.
48. F. Macmillan to Carroll, November 23, 1897.
49. Carroll to F. Macmillan, December 15, 1897; and F. Macmillan to Carroll, December 16, 1897
50. Roger Simpson, *Sir John Tenniel: Aspects of His Work* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press). And my kids hated swimming in the publisher's always frigid pool, too!
51. Martin Gardner, *The Annotated Alice: The Definitive Edition* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2000). The *150th Anniversary Deluxe Edition* (2015), edited by Mark Burstein, at least mentioned the unsightly deviations in footnote 11, p. 305. Though some go unexplained still. The illustrations derive from the Rocket Press versions of the illustrations taken from the original wood blocks in 1988. This was a wonderful project and *since it defined itself upfront* is not in its execution criticizable.
52. Wilson, *Typographic Printing*, p. 28; Wilson and Grey, *A Practical Treatise*, p. 338.
53. Carroll to Craik, June 18 and 24, 1867; and Carroll to A. Macmillan, June 13, 1867.
54. The books are first recorded as being in Charles Plumptre Johnson's collection. See the auction catalogue: *A Few Choice Books & Manuscripts Chiefly from Private English Collections*, Anderson Galleries, November 25, 1927, Lots 19 and 20. They were bought by Edmund Hackett (Brick Row) for \$1,350 and sold to Owen D. Young for \$2,000 on December 8, 1927. In truth, Tenniel failed to sign the Red King in Hand and the Bread-and-butter-fly proofs.

