

Simon Cooke. *Illustrated Periodicals of the 1860s: Contexts & Collaborations.* Middlesex, England: Private Libraries Association; New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press; London: British Library, 2010. 228p. alk. paper, \$75 (ISBN 9781584562757). LC 200947859.

This handsomely printed and profusely illustrated book provides insight into the complex processes involved in illustrating British periodicals of “The Sixties” — that is, the period roughly from 1855 to the mid-1870s. Published to entertain and instruct middle-class readers, periodicals of this period contained serialized novels along with historical pieces, poetry, and articles of general interest. Among them were *The Cornhill Magazine*, *Good Words*, *London Society*, and *Once a Week*. Acknowledging that other scholars have paid close attention to these magazines’ illustrations as art, Simon Cooke chooses to emphasize the dynamic collaboration of publishers, editors, artists, authors, and engravers who were involved in producing appropriate illustrations for specific literary works.

In developing context for the book, the author explains how the illustrations of this period differed from those created earlier in the nineteenth century. Whereas such artists as George Cruikshank had employed art as social satire in creating prints or illustrating books, the artists of the Sixties worked in a more academic style to produce realistic drawings that were “both escapist and satirical, highly moral and overwhelmed with a sense of archaic dreaminess.” Although they found ways to express their creativity in producing illustrations of a more modern nature, these artists ultimately followed the wishes of their employers as they correlated their drawings to passages of text.

In successive chapters, Cooke explains the relationships between the artists and the publishers, editors, authors, and engravers with whom they worked. Publishers usually exercised tight control of the process of illustrating their magazines; some dispensed with editors altogether.

Such artists as George du Maurier, John Everett Millais, Frederick Sandys, and Frederick Walker worked directly with George Murray Smith, publisher of *The Cornhill Magazine*, and with John Cassell (*The Quiver*) and James Hogg (*London Society*). Samuel Lucas, editor of *Once a Week*, was a notable exception to the general practice of editors serving merely as middle-managers. Artists were expected to develop drawings that adhered strictly to the directives of their employers, who did not hesitate to reject submissions or to seek new talent. Some artists, including Charles Keene, were adept at varying their style to meet the requirements of each commission. His work for Lucas in illustrating novels by George Meredith and Forrest Reid demonstrated not only his versatility but also his ability to enhance the literary impact of the works themselves.

The dynamic among authors, artists, and engravers varied according to the personalities involved. Editor Lucas discouraged collaboration between authors and artists, but publisher Smith fostered such relationships. Writers could be very demanding in specifying aspects of the illustrations for their books. Charles Reade dominated Robert Barnes, a relatively unknown illustrator, as he developed pictures for Reade’s novel *Put Yourself in His Place*. On the other hand, novelist George Eliot freely cooperated with the highly regarded Frederic Leighton as he illustrated her book, *Romola*, which was serialized in *The Cornhill Magazine*. Engravers, who assumed the complex task of duplicating, insofar as possible, illustrators’ drawings on blocks of boxwood and then creating electrotypes from these woodcuts, had mixed results in pleasing the artists with whom they worked. Whereas Frederick Sandys took a confrontational approach in working with the engravers Dalziels Brothers, George du Maurier had a positive relationship with Joseph Swain, who engraved his illustrations for M.E. Bradon’s book *Eleanor’s Victory*, a book that appeared in *Once a Week* during 1863.

In explaining these complex relationships, Cooke provides insights that will be valuable to the fields of librarianship, print history, and literary criticism. A surprising number of libraries in the United States have solid holdings of some of the magazines discussed in this book. The author's ideas should aid scholars who study the magazines to understand their illustrations in new ways—not the least of which is the manner in which some of the illustrations enhanced the quality of the literary works in which they appeared. One only wishes that Cooke had paid at least passing attention to how the British periodicals he discusses relate to those published during the same period in the United States.

Cooke's solid scholarship, which is based on many years of collecting and studying nineteenth-century British periodicals, artists' drawings and proofs, plates, original correspondence and business records, published memoirs, and an extensive number of secondary sources, builds on his related articles, which have appeared in *Brontë Studies*, *Thomas Hardy Journal*, *Victorians Institute Journal*, and *Victorian Periodicals Review*. The book is enhanced by the inclusion of an appendix containing annotated listings of the principal periodicals, publishers, editors, artists, and engravers, and by a select bibliography and index.—*Maurice C. York, East Carolina University.*