

## A Capital Contribution

### John Everett Millais and the Vignettes for Trollope's *The Small House at Allington*

This paper presents the first investigation into the role in meaning production of the decorated capitals drawn by John Everett Millais for the serialisation of Anthony Trollope's *The Small House at Allington* in the *Cornhill Magazine* from September 1862 to April 1864. These decorated capitals are all pictorial, and are vignettes which incorporate the initial capital letter of the first word of a chapter within an image relevant to, or (as we might choose to say) illustrative of some aspect of the narrative of the novel. The terms "pictorial capital" and "decorated capital" are often used interchangeably, but the former is preferred in the present case, as all these vignettes incorporate relevant pictorial content. Historically, by far the majority of decorated capitals have had little or no pictorial element, or in many cases have had pictorial content not closely allied to the text, and it was well-established practice for publishers to re-use capitals they already had in stock as cut blocks or could buy off-the-shelf, adding them as part of the process of book reproduction rather than as a contribution to the meaning of the work, just as they would add ornaments, head- and tailpieces and other decorations. Bespoke pictorial capitals, such as those which are the subject of this essay, represent significant investment by a publisher in his product. A novel by Anthony Trollope, especially in these years, was a very marketable commodity, and well worth investing in. In the case of *The Small House at Allington*, no expense was spared, with nineteen pictorial capitals and eighteen full-page plates, all drawn by John Everett Millais and engraved by London's leading firm of wood-engravers, Dalziel Brothers, and all included in the Archives of the firm, held at the British Museum and described by Bethan Stevens of the University of Sussex (Stevens 2016). These archives are the sole authority for identifying Dalziel Brothers as the engravers for the two decorated capitals which do not bear their name. We can infer that the decorated capitals, though original works by a distinguished artist, had not been thoroughly discussed by all parties before serial publication, since on 8th September, with serialisation already started, Trollope writes to Smith, Elder & Co., "I did not hear from Mr Smith who was designing the Initial letters, but I presumed that it was Millais" (Trollope 1983, 199). Decorated capitals were clearly not thought of as usual in serial fiction. If Trollope didn't know about the pictorial capitals very far in advance, George Eliot made provision for them in her novel, *Romola*, which ran alongside the *Small House* as a serial in the *Cornhill Magazine* for twelve months. Her capitals were drawn by Frederik Leighton, and she demanded far greater control over the totality of her novel, and provided detailed specification for all the full-page plates and some of the vignettes. This essay will note further relevant differences of approach to pictorial capitals in the two novels.

Millais's illustrations to Trollope's fiction have received much praise, and he is universally regarded as the novelist's best illustrator. Trollope's *Autobiography* is worth quoting at some length to show the strength of the author's personal and professional regard for Millais: "When I did know [that Millais was engaged to illustrate *Framley Parsonage*], it made me very proud. He afterwards illustrated *Orley Farm*, *The Small House of* [sic] *Allington*, *Rachel Ray*, and *Phineas Finn*. Altogether he drew from my tales 87 drawings, and I do not think that more conscientious work was ever done by man" (Trollope 1998, 98). In the next generation, the art historian and later Director of the National Gallery of Ireland, Walter Armstrong declared "this verdict seems to me to be just" (Armstrong 1885). Trollope continues:

In every figure that he drew it was his object to promote the views of the writer whose work he had undertaken to illustrate, and he never spared himself any pains in studying that work so as to enable himself to do so. I have carried on some of those characters from book to book, and have had my own early ideas impressed indelibly on my memory by the excellence of his delineations. Those illustrations were commenced fifteen years ago, and from that time up to this day my affection for the man of whom I am speaking has encreased [sic]. To see him has always been a pleasure. His voice has been a sweet sound in my ears. Behind his back I have never heard him praised without joining the eulogist; I have never heard a word spoken against him without opposing the censurer. These words, should he ever see them, will come to him from the grave, and will tell him of my regard,—as one living man never tells another (Trollope 1998, 98).

Not everyone was so positive. When reviewing *Millais' Illustrations: A Collection of Drawings on Wood* (1866) in the *Spectator* no. 1965 (24 February, 1866, 219–20), the anonymous art critic was disparaging about the artist's narrative ability in illustration: "he cannot [...] tell you a story so that you are in no doubt as to its meaning." On the other hand, Walter Armstrong later praised "the dramatic quality" in them (Armstrong 1885), and Julia Thomas remarks on their "sophistication and elegance" (Thomas 2016, 632), recent commentators generally agreeing that "Millais had a complete grasp of the Trollopian world and understood the significance of his characters' slightest words or smallest manoeuvres – 'the moral "hooks and eyes" of life,' as the *Spectator's* reviewer of the *Small House* put it" (Goldman and Skilton 2017, 216). Yet, while the full-page wood-engraved plates which Millais drew of this novel have received copious attention, the nineteen pictorial capitals which he produced to accompany the serialisation of *The Small House at Allington* in the *Cornhill Magazine* have been largely neglected. John Hall, in his important *Trollope and His Illustrators*, calls them "very fine chapter-heading vignettes," and reproduces two of them (Hall 1980, 56), but few critics of the novel have read it with all its dedicated images, and none of them have considered the meanings the vignettes might create or reinforce in a reading of the novel. One of the reasons for

this neglect is that no Victorian reprint of the novel included the vignettes, almost certainly because it would have been expensive to re-size them to fit the smaller pages of the first book edition. Another is the melancholy fact that ignorant prejudice or idleness prevented most twentieth-century commentators from taking due notice of illustration in the magazines of the period.

Although the publisher, George Smith, did not have the vignettes re-cut for book publication in March 1864, he was investing impressive sums in the *Cornhill Magazine*. As he himself later wrote, he had “set to work with energy to make the undertaking a success. We secured the most brilliant contributors from every quarter. Our terms were lavish almost to the point of recklessness. No pains and no cost were spared to make the new magazine the best periodical yet known to English literature.” (Smith 1901, 6). Illustration was an essential and an expensive part of his project, with sixteen prominent artists employed in the early years. The late 1850s and early 1860s were exciting years in the development of periodical literature, and in no branch more transformative than in illustrated, monthly magazines aimed at a middle-class readership. These new periodicals offered poetry, serialised fiction and articles on science, history, topography and current topics of the day. A boom in illustrated journals was aided by cheap postage and a reduction in taxes on newspapers, paper and advertising. The techniques for producing and printing black and white illustration had reached new heights of sophistication, with the large firms of wood-engravers like the Dalziel Brothers, Linton and Swain, achieving standards previously unimaginable in mass-production. All these developments were putting illustrated literature, which had previously been the preserve of the wealthy, within the reach of many in the rapidly expanding middle classes. And women readers were now targeted with unprecedented accuracy. In his prospectus dated November 1859, Thackeray, the first editor of the *Cornhill*, assumes that his magazine will be read by many women with an educated interest in the subjects covered (Thackeray 1859). In addition, these new print media propagated fashion and all the other products of the modern world that tradition has assumed are of particular interest to women. It used to be believed that the “modern” in consumerism and social aspiration was a specifically French cultural phenomenon, but social historians have come to recognise the self-same movements in Britain. Books and magazines themselves were consumer products, of course, and could be bought, or even rented from circulating libraries, as they were in their many thousands. All aspects of commissioning, production and distribution of literature had been transformed over a few years as part of the development of the new consumer culture. The firms of Macmillan and Smith, Elder were the first in the race for the new readership, launching their new monthly magazines, *Macmillan's Magazine* and the *Cornhill Magazine*, at the price of one shilling (5p) per issue in November 1859 and January 1860 respectively. The death of Charles Babington Macaulay on Boxing Day 1859, with a copy of the new *Cornhill Magazine* open before him, has often been seen as a symbolic moment of transition in the history of English literature and publishing. (The *Cornhill* was not alone in issuing its January number early enough to catch the Christmas market.) There were soon many monthly competitors on the market, but it

was the *Cornhill* alone which could boast of circulation figures exceeding 100,000, and none of its rivals could out-perform it in providing for a newly prosperous middle-class readership, with its social centre of gravity and level of education somewhat higher than the public for the hugely popular periodicals which Charles Dickens and his collaborators had established some years earlier. The Dickens name was invaluable for these publications, and George Smith had set about finding another big “name” for his distinctive venture, and eventually secured another great novelist, Thackeray, as his editor for the *Cornhill*. The list of its contributors in these early years reads like a *Who’s Who* of fiction, poetry, science, the arts and current affairs of the period.

In 1862 the *Cornhill* was serialising fiction by three of the principal novelists of the age, Thackeray himself, George Eliot and Anthony Trollope. Leading artists were commissioned to provide the plates and pictorial capitals for two of these prestigious serials: Frederic Leighton for George Eliot’s *Romola* and John Everett Millais for Anthony Trollope’s *The Small House at Allington*. George Smith’s commissioning of pictorial capital letters was a sign of his lavish expenditure. *Romola* appeared in fourteen instalments July 1862 to August 1863 in volumes six to eight of the magazine, with two full-page, wood-engraved plates to each instalment from one to thirteen, a pictorial capital to each of the fourteen instalments, and an additional vignette at the end of the “Proem” which opened the first instalment. For its part, *The Small House* was serialised in twenty instalments from September 1862 to April 1864, in volumes six to nine of the magazine, with a plate to each of the first eighteen instalments and pictorial capitals to all but number nineteen. A good number of earlier illustrated ventures had collapsed, and the discipline of the market dictated that pictorial capitals did not continue as a general feature of serial fiction. Full-page plates, printed on a higher grade of paper, on the other hand, could transfer effortlessly into book publication. Besides, however distinguished the artist drawing them, decorated capitals printed with the letterpress did not carry the same prestige as the larger plates, reproduced on a higher grade of paper.

Two novels of the period could not be more dissimilar than *Romola* and the *Small House*, and the relations of the two prominent artists to their respectively novelists were correspondingly unlike. George Smith had already employed Leighton to illustrate what became one of Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s better known poems, “A Musical Instrument,” which appeared in volume 2 of the magazine in July 1860. He had made his reputation in 1855 with a period painting, *Cimabue’s Celebrated Madonna is carried in Procession through the Streets of Florence*, and was a good choice to illustrate George Eliot’s novel set in the Florence of 1490s. The novelist directed him to what she considered the most significant representations of the people and places of the period, the frescoes of Ghirlandaio, who was active in the very years in which *Romola* is set. Specifically, she recommended particular frescoes in the church of Santa Maria Novella as models to emulate, though, at that time, because of restoration work, they could only be examined in reproduction (George Eliot 1956, 4). Millais was the foremost, realistic painter of the life of the day, and had already illustrated two Trollope novels, *Framley Parsonage* (1860–61) for Smith, Elder’s *Cornhill Magazine*, and *Orley Farm* (1861–62) for the rival

firm of Bradbury and Evans. The pictorial capitals from these artists for the two novels were the result of very different relations between novelist and artist in each case. George Eliot was scholarly in her approach to illustration, requiring a high degree of control, and making as exigent demands on her artist as she did on herself. Moreover, given her unorthodox domestic life and her intense wish for privacy, her relations with the artist were distant, and she communicated her intentions in formal letters specifying passages of detailed description for Leighton to follow in the plates and in a small number of the vignettes.

Here is Leighton's decorated capital to Chapter One of *Romola*, and the text which George Eliot gave him to illustrate (Fig. 1):

Under this loggia, in the early morning of the 9th of April, 1492, two men had their eyes fixed on each other: one was stooping slightly, and looking downward with the scrutiny of curiosity; the other, lying on the pavement, was looking upward with the startled gaze of a suddenly-awakened dreamer.

The standing figure was the first to speak. He was a grey-haired, broad-shouldered man, of the type which, in Tuscan phrase, is moulded with the fist and polished with the pickaxe; but the self-important gravity which had written itself out in the deep lines about his brow and mouth seemed intended to correct any contemptuous inferences from the hasty workmanship which Nature had bestowed on his exterior. He had deposited a large well-filled bag, made of skins, on the pavement, and before him hung a pedlar's basket, garnished partly with small woman's-ware, such as thread and pins, and partly with fragments of glass, which had probably been taken in exchange for those commodities.



*Fig. 1. F. Leighton capital, Chapter 1, G. Eliot, Romola*

George Eliot was less than satisfied with some of Leighton's plates, but it must be allowed that he copes rather well in this vignette with the overload of information. The vignette at the end of the Proem to the novel also corresponds to a lengthy and complex passage, requiring an exceptional degree of evocation not only of a topographical scene but of a complex phase in the European and Florentine history.

Annie Thackeray Ritchie, the great novelist's daughter, refers to Eliot and Leighton as "Two gifted workers, each steeped in Florence [...] moving on parallel lines which would not meet. Trollope, whose novels were illustrated for the CORNHILL by Millais, was less particular, or the artist was more complaisant" (Ritchie 1910, 25). Ritchie was a friend of both Trollope and Millais, and by "complaisant" we should understand her to

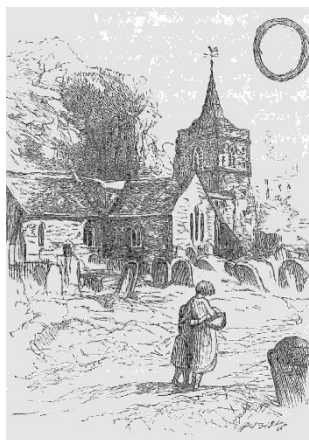


Fig. 2. J. E. Millais, *capital*  
Chapter 1, Trollope, *The*  
*Small House at Allington*  
(Sept 1862)

mean that Millais was agreeable to fitting his work to the author's wishes. Trollope, understandably delighted that Millais was to illustrate another of his works, was relaxed about their relationship. It was not his way to be bother himself with fine art scholarship. His fiction was as up-to-date as a recent issue of *Punch* and it was enough that Millais was a leading realist. Trollope was highly gregarious, a clubman and confident that Millais's views would suit his fiction, so that he could leave many decisions to the artist. The two men were by now firm friends and shared much in outlook and habits, often hunting together, for example. Millais had once made a major mistake in a plate for *Framley Parsonage* (1860–61), giving a modest young orphan woman an expensive dress at the cutting edge of fashion (Skilton 2007), but thereafter all was well. Image and word worked in genial harmony to produce the fiction, Trollope leaving the design of the decorated capitals to the *Small House* to Millais and the publisher. In

place of the careful, historical establishment of the scene in *Romola*, we have a simple sentence from Trollope, summoning up what for his readers was a given. The combination of the vignette and the text at the opening of the *Small House at Allington* is an appeal to a widespread nostalgia for the traditional village in the South of England, in an act of ideological reinforcement (Fig. 2).

George Eliot needed to instruct her readers about the setting of her novel, whereas Trollope takes it for granted that his readers will be ready to recognise this English setting. "Of course there was a Great House at Allington. How otherwise should there have been a Small House?" This sentence allusively defines the type of fiction we are reading, and draws on established conventions for constructing a rural village that shall be representative of a southern county of England. Millais responded to Trollope's opening text with an appropriateness which makes them appear to be working as one. The vignette shows two children of agricultural labourers, in old-fashioned dress, passing the graves of their forebears in an attractively aged village churchyard. The "of course" involves the reader in adopting the fiction that is put forward, and promises that the traditional view of things shall be a matter of course in this fiction. Yet the experienced reader of Trollope will have learnt to distrust the reassuring modality of the phrase. To accept an oily probability of this kind is often to be misled, as Frank O'Connor explains: "His favourite device is to lead his reader very gently up the garden path of his own conventions and prejudices and then point out that the reader is wrong" (O'Connor 1956, 167–168). This country peace is about to be disturbed by a metropolitan intruder, while another central character moves to London to make a career for himself, and the rural world, as much as the metropolis, turns out to be pace of rush and railways, politics, mercenary motives and dishonesty. Richard Holt Hutton, literary editor of the *Spectator*,

put it clearly in an anonymous article, “From Miss Austen to Mr Trollope,” in the *Spectator* of 16th December 1882, a few days after Trollope’s death: “In Miss Austen’s novels – it is one of their chief attractions [...] you hardly see the crush of the world on any one. [...] Turn to Mr. Trollope, and everything is changed. The atmosphere of affairs is permanent.” A novel like the *Small House* “is, above all things, possessed with the sense of the aggressiveness of the outer world, of the hurry which threatens the tranquillity even of such still pools in the rapid currents of life as Hiram’s Hospital at Barchester, of the rush of commercial activity, of the competitiveness of fashion, of the conflict for existence even in out-lying farms and country parsonages.” What is important in our present context is that the fictional idyll is produced by the illustrator as well the novelist, and the two, although apparently operating independently, meld their visions into one. Trollope and Millais had already jointly practised a similar mild deception on their readers in *Framley Parsonage*, which was the first novel to appear in the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1860–61, and which hinted at a future seduction of an impoverished middle-class orphan by an aristocrat, a narrative possibility quite at variance with the love story which actually ensues (Skilton 2007). All this, as I show elsewhere (Skilton 2016), takes place in novels which are loaded with evidence of the modern material world, and which record and exemplify the importance of periodical publications that propagate fashion in clothes, relationships, lifestyles and architecture.

In the vignette to the second instalment we see the sisters, Lily and Bell Dale, nieces of the Squire of Allington, playing croquet, one of the latest crazes, as they are seen to do in the text (Fig. 3). They are dressed as befits their class, and of course are *au fait* with fashion in dress and behaviour thanks to the rapid circulation of periodical literature, of which the *Cornhill* in which they appear is a leading example. Significantly, back in autumn 1861, Millais had written to advise his wife to practise croquet, which was then “all the rage” (John Guille Millais, vol. 1, 368). Artist and novelist notice and respond to what is in vogue. This is a simple demonstration of the strengths of their collaborative work. When the novel was published in book form without the pictorial capitals, an unknown artist supplied an alternative image of the sister playing croquet, in the form of a false title-page. From the artistic shorthand for grass in both images one might wonder if the lawn was adequate for serious play, and if we wished to enter petty objections, we should record that, as recorded in Chapter 2, Lily Dale was very particular that her uncle’s gardener, Hopkins, should keep the lawn of the Small House in tiptop condition for the game. The prominence of the two sisters in these and other images,



Fig. 3. J. E. Millais, *capital Chapter 4, Trollope, The Small House at Allington* (Sept 1862)

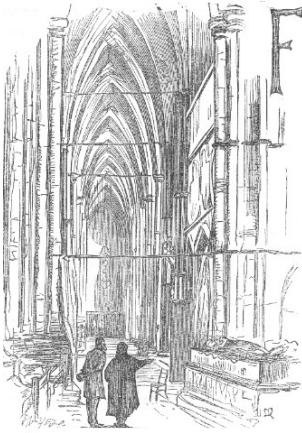


Fig. 4. J. E. Millais capital  
Chapter 16, Trollope, *The  
Small House at Allington*  
(Feb 1863)

such as the plate to Chapter 7, is a reminder that Trollope first proposed the novel as “The Two Pearls of Allington,” but on 2nd May, 1862, eighteen days before he began to write, he was persuaded by George Smith to change the title because a novel entitled *The Pearl of Orr’s Island* by Harriet Beecher Stowe was announced for publication in 1862 (Trollope 1983, 179–180). So, as we learn from a letter of 2nd May 1862, Trollope’s novel became *The Small House at Allington* (Trollope 1983, 179–180 and footnote). In the capital which opens the third instalment we once more see the sisters, this time out for a quiet walk, and sheltering their complexions from the sun. The rural setting is quickly notated by Millais by a pair of haystacks. Although the young ladies are dressed in current fashion, this is still the country world, untroubled by the great city and the world of high fashion and high expenditure. The rural calm of the *Small House* is already made uneasy by the conscientious resolve of Mrs Dale, the mother of Bell

and Lily, not to continue to be accommodated at the expense of the brother of her late husband, who is the squire of the village and allows his sister-in-law and her daughters to live rent-free in a house which has over the generations been used as a dower-house, although in the present case the arrangement does not stand on that legal basis. In making this arrangement to provide for his brother’s widow, the squire is acting out his traditional view of his responsibilities as a hereditary landowner. Mrs Dale’s desire may be activated by pride alone, but may also, as far as the aware reader of the time is concerned, be associated with a new spirit of economic individualism among women, in the age of the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857, which established the first divorce court, and in the years leading up to the first Married Women’s Property Act of 1870. But this vein of tension is as nothing to the arrival on the scene of Adolphus Crosbie, a rising Civil Servant, who, although not in command of inherited wealth, is handsome and fashionable, and as Bell says, is “a swell.”

He is seen in the vignette to the sixth instalment (Fig. 4) being shown around Barchester Cathedral by a verger, and this image ties the new novel into the series later known as the *Barchester Chronicles*, even though Allington lies in the next county. Crosbie is on a visit to the *Great House* as a friend of the Squire’s son, and rapidly forms a love relationship with Lily, proposes and is accepted. Critical opinion is divided as to whether Trollope expects the reader to understand that the couple consummated their relationship physically, but there is no doubt that there was a great deal of sexual as well as emotional warmth in their relationship, enough to make Lily refer to them ever afterwards as husband and wife. The village is naturally agog with excitement, and when Lily first rides through the village with her intended, Millais gives us a decorated capital which, in a charming but ominous way, depicts the couple as children at play.



This capital for instalment five at the head of Chapter 13 (Fig. 5) is at once an ill omen and a *homage* to Thackeray and his ironic depiction of Becky and Rawdon as children in his vignette to Chapter 36 of *Vanity Fair* (1847–48) (Thackeray 1848, 321). Thackeray's couple are flying a kite, and the phrase was slang for raising money by a promissory note. The aware reader of the images as well as the words may well feel anxious on Lily's behalf, having received a warning that all may not be as it seems. This relationship is not afflicted with money troubles but by Crosbie's ambition for social advancement, and he "teaches himself" that he will be doing no harm if jilts Lily and enters into a loveless marriage with the daughter of an earl. His punishment is both social and financial after the breakdown of this disastrous match, when he finds himself with fewer friends, no real home, and making heavy payments to maintain his wife and her mother in the spas of Germany.

The decorated capitals have helped to establish a rural environment where at first there are few threats to a contented life. Another sequence of capitals develops a second, metropolitan theme, and shows the increasing impact of life in London on the damaged rural idyll.

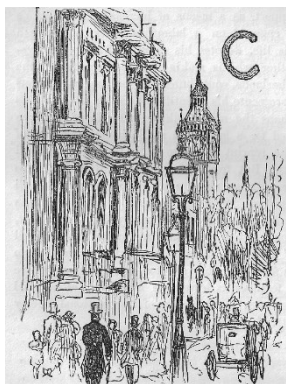
That to the fourth instalment, in which the action predates the catastrophe of Crosbie's villainous behaviour, shows Johnny Eames, a young man from Allington, in his lodgings in London (Fig. 6), where, very much like the young Anthony Trollope in 1834, he has entered the Civil Service as a lowly clerk in an unglamorous department, in contrast to the "swell," Adolphus Crosbie, a rising man in the prestigious General Committee Office. Eames is hopelessly in love with Lily, and is reading letters concerning the anxieties of his life in the capital city. These are not directly related to Allington, but give a picture of the temptations of the city, and the rather sordid alternative loves young clerks might fall into away from home. The capital to the tenth instalment, depicting Whitehall (Fig. 7), setting the scene for Crosbie's promotion to Secretary in his altogether higher sphere of professional life, and Johnny Eames's less meteoric rise in the Civil Service through time and diligence. The capital to the twelfth instalment shows Eames dressed for his Civil Service life (Fig. 8),



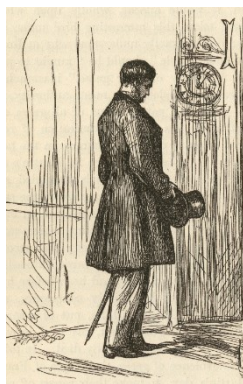
Fig. 5. J. E. Millais, *capital Chapter 13, Trollope, The Small House at Allington* (Jan 1863)



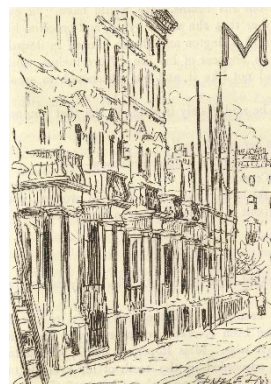
Fig. 6. J. E. Millais, *capital Chapter 10, Trollope, The Small House at Allington*



*Fig. 7. Chapter 34  
(Aug 1863)*



*Fig. 8. Chapter 28  
(June 1863)*



*Fig. 9. J.E. Millais, capital  
Chapter 46, Trollope, The  
Small House at Allington*

present and future. There is in the placing of these vignettes a reinforcement of a typically Trollopian irony, which Millais completely understands, arising from a simultaneous awareness of two opposing states: in this case, Crosbie's worldly success – promoted and about to marry the daughter of an earl – and his impending doom, as he realises he may never be happy again, and his colleagues harbour severe doubts about his marital ambitions. The decorated capital to instalment sixteen (Fig. 9), showing a pretentious but insubstantial terrace being built in a new part of West London, presents the new, cold and damp house into which Crosbie and his aristocratic wife move their cold, ill-founded marriage. It is also of course a token of the concern felt at the rapid expansion of London, in this case in housing to meet the pretensions of the newly wealthy. Impermanence here is in implicit contrast with the enduring qualities traditionally associated with the landed gentry, although Trollope's fiction, of course, commonly shows how industrial wealth is triumphing over the physiocratic myth of landed permanence. Along the way there has been one image for the fourteenth instalment, in the chapter about the Crosbie wedding, of an urn overflowing with weeds in what appears to be a suburban garden, and a second to the fifteenth instalment of a gate opening to an unpeopled house in the Scottish baronial style, almost "gothic" in its forbidding atmosphere.

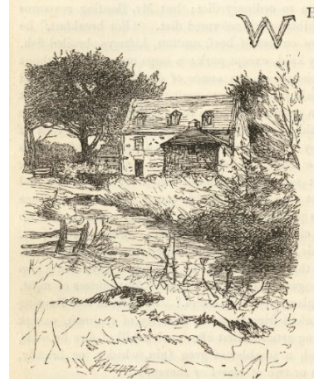
There are two further vignettes associated with Mrs Dale's resolve to leave the Small House. The first, to instalment thirteen, shows the squire, pacing the terrace of the Great House, deep in thought, while the other second, to instalment seventeen, contains familiar iconography of an impending house-moving: cases packed and half-packed. The iconography is in itself emotionally neutral, since moving house may be a positive or negative experience, but here the imagery is made melancholy by the reader's acquaintance with the circumstances.



*Fig. 10. J. E. Millais, capital to Chapter 19 Trollope, The Small House at Arlington (March 1863)*



*Fig. 11. Chapter 22 (April 1863)*



*Fig. 12. Chapter 52 (Feb 1864)*

A further capital to the eleventh instalment, showing two women, presumably Lily and her mother, and fits well to the title of Chapter 31, “The Wounded Fawn,” where it appears.

Three further decorated capitals, those to the seventh, eighth and eighteenth instalments (Figs. 10, 11 and 12), can be seen as developing the theme of Johnny Eames and his repeatedly unsuccessful attempts to woo Lily. In the first we see him lovelorn, an awkward, country hobbledehoy standing on a bridge he associates with his proposal to Lily. Already in Chapter Five we have read that “many of the attributes of a hobbledehoy had fallen from him, and even Lily Dale might now probably acknowledge that he was no longer a boy.” This is only the beginning of a process of growing into a mature mid-Victorian man, and three further stages in his development are recorded in the vignettes: having to come to terms with his unrequited love for Lily, receiving guidance from Earl De Guest, and making his way in the Civil Service in London. The vignette opening the eighth instalment records the moment when Johnny saves Earl De Guest from a charging bull, an event which cements a relationship in which the earl acts as a mentor and almost a father-figure to the young man, teaching him, among other things, how to drink wine after dinner and how properly to quote Latin tags in the company of educated men. I discuss the link between these two elsewhere. (Skilton 1988). The third, introducing instalment number eighteen, is an atmospheric picture of rural decay, showing the destruction of both Lily’s love and Johnny’s love. It lends an appropriate general aura of melancholy to conclude the story of two failed loves and a failed marriage. But Johnny Eames has now matured and freed himself from an entanglement with a young woman who is unworthy of him, and Chapter 59 is entitled “Johnny Eames Becomes a Man.” In the pictorial capital to the final instalment – one of the less accomplished of Millais’s vignettes – Lily is seen through a rustic arbour, standing alone, and



her isolation perhaps indicates her unmarried condition, which she describes as “widowhood.” She is contemplating an urn, which may be the same as portrayed in the capital to instalment fourteen, which seems a silent register of love denied. Once more Trollope and Millais are working together. It is not until Chapter 35 of Trollope’s next novel in the Chronicles of Barsetshire, *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, that she inscribes herself as “Lillian Dale – Old Maid” (Trollope 1866–67).

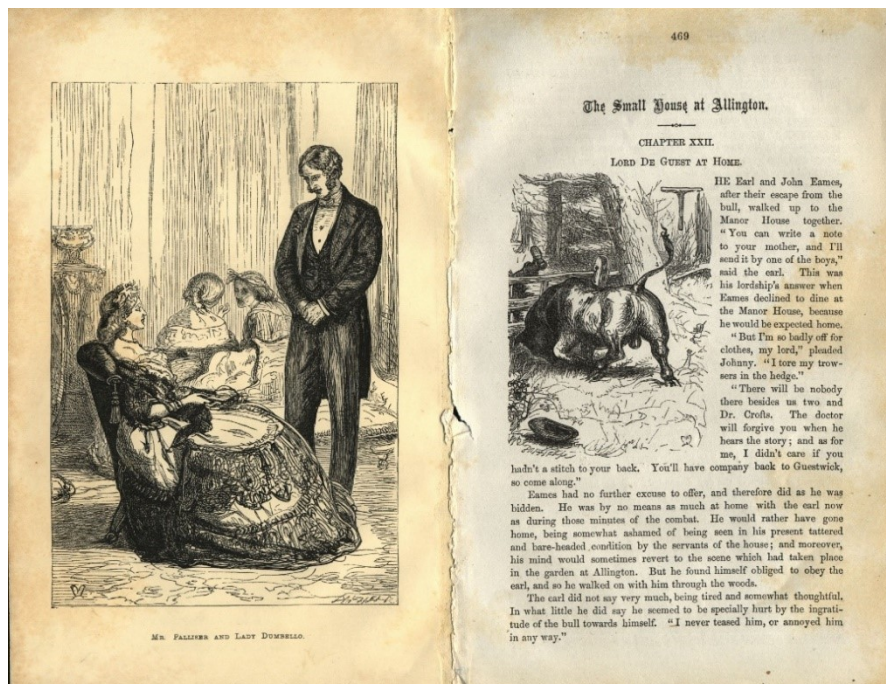


Fig. 13. Double page opening of Anthony Trollope, *The Small House at Allington*, in the bound *Cornhill Magazine*, showing a full-page plate, “Mr. Palliser and Lady Dumbello,” and the capital to Chapter 22. J. E. Millais, engraved Dalziel.

The vignette of the bull, however, which we have already noticed above, takes part in meaning-production that is considerably more complex than is ordinarily the case with decorated capitals. This particular one appears in the same instalment as a full-plate illustration, “Mr. Palliser and Lady Dumbello” (Fig. 13). In bound copies of the *Cornhill Magazine*, the two images are on facing pages, the plate being bound in as though a frontispiece to instalment eight. (The two images may be separated if bound differently but will always be closely allied.) The double-page opening reveals a surprising *double-entendre* such as we have only recently expected to find in mid-Victorian fiction. Mr Palliser is heir to the richest dukedom in the country, and devotes himself to service to his country in Parliament, his ambition being to devise a scheme for decimalisation of

the British currency. He finds himself taking particular interest in the coldly beautiful Lady Dumbello, who is what we might nowadays call “a fashion icon.” He is pictured standing a little awkwardly, looking perhaps a little too intently at Lady Dumbello’s corset, his hands clasped in front of him. Trollope is at his best presenting what may or may not be an attempted seduction – and what other people thought about it – including the Duke, who has a long-standing liaison with Lady Dumbello’s mother-in-law. As a contrast to the restraint of this amorous encounter (if that is what it is), Millais has drawn a vignette for the opening of the instalment which shows the bull which has nearly tossed the Earl De Guest. The bull, unlike the English gentleman, is unashamedly well-endowed, sexually speaking. The reader, progressing in the story, will after twenty-one chapters and seven months of serialisation, come to a passage in instalment fifteen, Chapter 43, which describes Mr Palliser’s reaction to Lady Dumbello: “It seemed as though a new vein in his body had been brought into use, and that blood was running where blood had never run before.” No further comment seems necessary. Seen in the context of Trollope’s more extended oeuvre, this insight into Plantagenet Palliser is invaluable. He will eventually be married by his family and friends to the richest heiress in the country, with whom he will have a troubled but ultimately rich relationship. He is developed over a further six novels to become the eponymous Prime Minister of the novel of 1875–76 (Trollope 1875–76), and the embodiment of Anthony Trollope’s own political ideals (Trollope 1996, 227–229 and 186–189).

It is striking that Millais deals so well with elements in Trollope’s texts which are carried forward into later novels, most prominent among them Lily Dale “Old Maid,” Johnny Eames become a man, and most importantly, the political future of Plantagenet Palliser. The loss of the vignettes from later book editions of the *Small House* is to be deplored not only for their own sake, as decorations which go far beyond decoration and collaborate with the text in producing meanings in terms of plot, of settings and of themes, but as images which act out in conjunction with the full-page plates and the text, of course, the invasion of the countryside by the metropolis, which must be considered, from the historical point of view, the most important feature of *The Small House at Allington*, and the other Trollopian novels associated with it. The two great realists, Trollope and Millais, joined forces to present the modern world at the very moment when the concept of modernity was being imported from the French (Skilton 2016).

## Figures

NOTE. All the images reproduced in this essay are wood-engravings which first appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* (*CHM*) at the dates given in each entry. With the exception of the engraving reproduced as Figure 1, which was drawn by Frederic Leighton and engraved by Linton, they are all drawn by John Everett Millais and engraved by Dalziel Brothers, and they appeared in Anthony Trollope, *The Small House at Allington* (*The Small House*), 1862–1864.

- Fig. 1. Frederic Leighton, capital to Chapter 1 of George Eliot, *Romola* in *CHM* 6 (July 1862) wood-engraving, 76 mm × 51 mm, engr. Linton.
- Fig. 2. J. E. Millais, capital to Chapter 1 of Trollope, *The Small House* in *CHM* 6 (August 1862) 83 mm × 63 mm.
- Fig. 3. J. E. Millais, capital to Chapter 4 of Trollope, *The Small House* in *CHM* 6 (September 1862) 87 mm × 67 mm.
- Fig. 4. J. E. Millais, capital to Chapter 16 of Trollope, *The Small House* in *CHM* 7 (February 1863) 88 mm × 65 mm.
- Fig. 5. J. E. Millais, capital to Chapter 13 of Trollope, *The Small House* in *CHM* 7 (January 1863) 83 mm × 44 mm.
- Fig. 6. J. E. Millais, capital to Chapter 10 of Trollope, *The Small House* in *CHM* 6 (December 1862) 87 mm × 62 mm.
- Fig. 7. J. E. Millais, capital to Chapter 34 of Trollope, *The Small House* in *CHM* 8 (August 1863) 84 mm × 57 mm.
- Fig. 8. J. E. Millais, capital to Chapter 28 of Trollope, *The Small House* in *CHM* 7 (June 1863) 88 mm × 60 mm.
- Fig. 9. J. E. Millais, capital to Chapter 46 of Trollope, *The Small House* in *CHM* 8 (December 1863) 88 mm × 65 mm.
- Fig. 10. J. E. Millais, capital to Chapter 19 of Trollope, *The Small House* in *CHM* 7 (March 1863) 87 mm × 63 mm.
- Fig. 11. J. E. Millais, capital to Chapter 22 of Trollope, *The Small House* in *CHM* 7 (April 1863) 87 mm × 62 mm.
- Fig. 12. J. E. Millais, capital to Chapter 52 of Trollope, *The Small House* *CHM* 9 (February 1864) 83 mm × 63 mm.
- Fig. 13. *CHM* 7 (April 1863), page 469, and full-page plate facing it in bound copies of the magazine: J. E. Millais, "Mr Palliser and Lady Dumbello," 160 mm × 104 mm, and capital to Chapter 22, 87 mm × 62 mm, wood-engravings, engr. Dalziel, in Anthony Trollope, *The Small House at Allington*.

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