

SAVILE CLARKE'S ALICE IN WONDERLAND — A DREAM PLAY,
or THE CASE OF THE CRUCIAL COMMA
by Selwyn Goodacre and Jeffrey Stern

The various editions of this play present something of a problem — this appears to have arisen because of scarcity of copies for examination. Roger Lancelyn Green did not have access to a copy of the first edition when he revised *The Lewis Carroll Handbook* in 1962, though he stirred up the problems, by wondering about which edition, if any, might have included extra stanzas for the Oyster Ghosts. He finally decided that 'subsequent research showed that' they were 'in fact, included in later reprints'. But he did not specify which. Denis Crutch left the entry unaltered in the 1979 revision.

Jeffrey Stern (*Jabberwocky* Winter 1980/81) stated that his copy of the first edition did not have these extra stanzas. Some while later, Selwyn Goodacre acquired a copy, contacted Stern, and the two copies were laid side by side. For the first time the precise differences could be assessed, and some conclusions drawn on priority.

We can now state with some confidence, that item 195 in the current *Handbook* (the apparent first edition) in fact describes a slightly later edition, and that the issue described as having 'First Edition under revision' on the front wrapper is the true first edition.

The words 'under revision' might suggest to some that there must be a first that predates it, but we consider this unlikely, as the words 'First Edition, under revision' include that crucial comma (omitted in the *Handbook* description). In our opinion this comma confirms that this issue is the first, printed in time for the first performance on 23 December 1886; Savile Clarke and / or Lewis Carroll would appreciate that revision might be needed in the light of actual performance, and therefore put the provisory note on the front cover.

The copy with the provisory note is in the Stern collection, the Goodacre copy, without the note, but also dated 1886, would appear to be a copy of the item described as No.195 in the *Handbook*, and is noteworthy in having a significant amount of added text. If we assume that the case presented thus far is the correct understanding, we can now discuss the two in detail.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND.

A DREAM PLAY FOR CHILDREN,

IN TWO ACTS.

FOUNDED UPON

MR. LEWIS CARROLL'S

"Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," and "Through
the Looking-Glass," with the express sanction
of the Author.

BY

H. Savile Clarke.

MUSIC BY

Walter Slaughter.



London:

PUBLISHED AT "THE COURT CIRCULAR" OFFICE,
2, SOUTHAMPTON STREET, STRAND.

1886.

Title Page 2nd Edition
(slightly reduced)

The First Edition

Stitched in cream wrappers, printed in reddish grey (the Weaver collection copy is lettered in black), the front cover has a double line border with decorations at each corner, below the full title there is Tenniel's White Rabbit. The title page is as described in the *Handbook*. the word 'sanction' is typographically faulty: 'sanc on'. The volume contains four pages of Tenniel pictures, with two per page, the reverses are blank, but still included in the pagination.

The text closes on p.55, the reverse is blank, and the famous advertisement for the issue of *The Court Circular*, which contains a revision of Carroll's *Mischmasch* (see J Stern, *Jabberwocky* Winter 1980/81), is on the inside of the back cover. The external back cover is blank.

The Second Edition

Stitched in brown wrappers, printed in black, but less elaborate type than the first edition, though still including the same double line border with corner decorations and the White Rabbit again is present. The title page is also very similar, but the error is corrected, and the provisory note, as explained above, is dropped.

The lay out of the text in the booklet is similar to the first , with only minor typographical changes. As with the First, there are four pages of Tenniel pictures, but with the crucial difference that there is text on the reverse. This means that extra text can be accommodated without affecting the pagination.

All the text changes are in Act II of *Looking-Glass*. Paradoxically, the first change to be noted is one of deletion — the whole of the first scene is dropped (depicting Alice going through the looking-glass) - instead the Act opens directly with the scene on the hearth.

The section referred to at the beginning of this paper, concerning the Oyster ghosts, follows 'The Walrus and the Carpenter', an extra verse of the poem itself is reinstated, there is a short piece of dialogue, and then the extra verses for the Ghosts of the 1st and 2nd Oysters follow.

The next major addition concerns the White Knight. In the first edition, the conversation with the Knight is brief, the poor old soul barely having 20 words. In this edition, there is a further 1½ pages of text, to include the bees, the box and the blotting paper pudding. Obviously this is better, the earlier version hardly makes it worth the White Knight's while putting on his costume.

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IN TWO ACTS

FOUNDED UPON

MR. LEWIS CARROLL'S

"Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," and "Through the Looking-Glass," with the express sanction of the Author

BY

H. SAVILE CLARKE

MUSIC BY

WALTER SLAUGHTER

Performed at the Opera Comique Theatre under the Management
of Mr. ARTHUR ELIOT

PRINTED BY RICHARD CLAY AND SONS, LIMITED
LONDON AND BUNGAY

Opera Comique Edition (1898)
(slightly reduced)

At the conclusion of the White Knight interlude there is an extra song for him, the White King, and the White and Red Queens, called 'The Waits' — it bears all the irrelevant hall marks of Savile Clarke's writing.

The text closes on p.54, then p.(55) carries the *Court Circular* advertisement, the reverse is blank. The inside back cover has a list of some of Macmillan's current publications (less than half being by Lewis Carroll), the inside front cover has adverts for Rowland's products (including Macassar oil), and the external back cover is an advert for Chlorodyne.

We have been unable to examine the editions of 1888 and 1889. Copies again seem to be rare; both are recorded in the Parrish collection, the Weaver collection only has the 1888 edition.

Selwyn Goodacre does however possess a copy of the (1898) edition, mentioned by R. L. Green on p.147 of the *Handbook*. This is a stapled 20 page booklet, and as Green states, consists of the songs only, though what he means when he says 'they are not complete' is unclear. All the songs that are in the second edition (above) are included, except for the Oyster Ghost verses (even though the stage direction about the entry of the first ghost is included). The 'Waits' song is omitted, being replaced by three verses of the White Knight's song — one hopes that this replaced the 'Waits' song in the actual stage performance.

Falconer Madan, in the *Handbook* also mentions a 1906 edition, published by Ascherberg, a quarto publication of 99 pages. In the 1931 *Handbook* it is described more fully, on p.272. The publishers were Ascherberg, Hopwood & Crew, and the book priced at 3s. Selwyn Goodacre has a copy priced at 6s. presumably a later issue. This 1906 publication, as mentioned by Madan, contains the full piano score of the work, with twelve songs in each act, supplemented by 6 purely orchestral sections including one with the title 'Entrance of Executioner', and the words 'Here come the Executioner' (obvious echoes of *The Mikado*). The second act has 8 orchestral sections.

There are two supplementary songs at the end - 'Naughty Little Bunny', by Aubrey Hopwood, and 'Flowerland'. The latter was later issued separately in 1907 as a 'Song from Alice in Wonderland', though not of course by Dodgson.

Madan describes the 1906 edition as bearing a tinted picture of Alice with two characters and four animals. The later issue described above, has a picture of Alice looking round a tree (with Cheshire-Cat in the branches) at the King, Queen and White Rabbit, with a glimpse of the Duchess. The colour picture is signed 'W George'.

- It was so kind of you to come !
And you are very nice !
- CAR. Cut us another slice of bread !
(*louder*) Cut us another slice ;
I wish you were not quite so deaf—
I've had to ask you twice !
- WAL. It seems a shame, dear little things,
To play them such a trick.
After we've brought them out so far,
And made them trot so quick !
- CAR. That may be ; but it seems to me
The butter's spread too thick !
- WAL. I weep for you, O oysterlings,
I deeply sympathise.
- DUM. With sobs and tears he sorted out
Those of the largest size,
Holding his pocket-hankerchief
Before his streaming eyes.
- CAR. O little oysters ; don't you think
You've had a pleasant run ?
Shall we be trotting home again ?
- DEE. But answer came there none—
And this was scarcely odd, because
- DUM. They'd eaten all but one.
- [WALRUS and CARPENTER put remains of feast into
basket, yawning and half asleep.]
- DUM. The Carpenter he ceased to sob ;
The Walrus ceased to weep ;
They'd finished all the Oysters,
And they laid them down to sleep—
- DEE. And of their craft and cruelty
The punishment to reap."
- CAR. Forty winks for me ! [*lies down and snores.*]
- WAL. Order another forty for me ! [*lies down.*
[*ghost of first OYSTER appears.*]
- 1st. OYS. The Carpenter is sleeping, the butter's on his
face,
The vinegar and pepper are all about the place !

From 2nd Edition
(slightly reduced)

Let oysters rock your cradle and lull you into rest ;

And, if that will not do it, we'll sit upon your chest ! [seats herself.]

We'll sit upon your chest ! [CAR. groans.]

We'll sit upon your chest !

The simplest way to do it is to sit upon your chest !

[Ghost of second OYSTER appears.]

2nd Oys. O woeful, weeping Walrus, your tears were all a sham !

You're greedier for Oysters than children are for jam.

You like to have an Oyster to give the meal a zest—

Excuse me, wicked Walrus, for stamping on your chest ! [stamps.]

For stamping on your chest !

[stamps—WAL. groans.]

For stamping on your chest ! [stamps.]

Excuse me, wicked Walrus, for stamping on your chest ! [stamps.]

[Seats herself on WALRUS. Ghost of third OYSTER appears. The ghostly hornpipe, and ghosts go off.]

[Scene closes back to garden.]

AL. I like the Walrus best, because you see he was a little sorry for the poor oysters.

DEE. He ate more than the Carpenter though. You see he held his handkerchief in front so that the Carpenter couldn't count how many he took : Contrariwise !

AL. That was mean, then I like the Carpenter best— if he didn't eat so many as the Walrus.

DUM. But he ate as many as he could get.

AL. (lights rather down) It's getting dark ! Do you think it's going to rain ?

[TWEEDLEDUM spreads large umbrella over himself and brother.]

From 2nd Edition
(slightly reduced)