

Beyond the Lines

*Pictorial Reporting, Everyday Life,
and the Crisis of Gilded Age America*

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visual language to enunciate views in a different manner than does the word.¹⁵ Moreover, *Frank Leslie's* illustrations provide us with an unusual entrée to deciphering the nineteenth century's pictorial "lexicography," for unlike reproductions of fine art, their primary purpose was informational: they were intended for immediate social use, conveying to the American reading public the people, places, and events that composed the news of the day.¹⁶

Finally, I should address the question of "authenticity." To be sure, *Leslie's* illustrations were not the direct product of its varied readership. It would not be until the twentieth century, for example, that labor, immigrant, suffrage, and African American papers could afford to include illustrations (or, at least, more than the occasional cartoon). But breaking down visual expression into a Manichaean split between "essentialism" and "appropriation" assumes some "golden mean" of authentic objective representation that commercial visual forms are believed only to obscure. We must await future scholarship on the work—limited as it may have been—of immigrant, working-class, and African American art in the period before we can make any definitive claims. But preliminary studies suggest that "indigenous" expressions (such as cartoons in the immigrant press) relied on similar codes and conventions categorizing subjects into social types.¹⁷ Instead it may be more instructive to heed the art historian Timothy J. Clark's observations about the ways social classes, whether dominant or subordinate, seek meaning in the forms of visual expression available to them:

[T]here are always *other* meanings in any given social space—counter-meanings, alternative orders of meaning, produced by the culture itself, in the clash of classes, ideologies and forms of control. . . . [A]ny critique of the established, dominant systems of meaning will degenerate into a mere refusal to signify unless it seeks to found its meanings—discover its contrary meaning—not in some magic re-presentation, on the other side of negation and refusal, but in signs which are already present, fighting for room—meanings rooted in actual forms of life.¹⁸

The contingencies of visual expression in Gilded Age America notwithstanding, artists, engravers, publishers, and readers cooperated and contended in the practice of illustrated journalism. I offer *Beyond the Lines* as one contribution in a collective scholarly effort to recapture the complexity and richness of the popular nineteenth-century pictorial realm.

CHAPTER I

Pictorial Journalism in Antebellum America

Illustrated papers have become a feature. Every newspaper stand is covered with them. Every railroad train is filled with them. They are "object-teaching" to the multitude. They make the battlefields, the coronations, the corruptions of politicians, the balls, the race-course, the yacht race, the military and naval heroes, Napoleon and William, Bismarck and Von Beust, Farragut and Porter, Grant and Sherman, familiar to every one. They are, in brief, the art gallery of the world. Single admission, ten cents.

Frederic Hudson

With this paragraph, Frederic Hudson embarked on a survey of "the illustrated newspapers" in his 1873 *Journalism in the United States*.¹ In this first comprehensive history of American journalism, written by the former managing editor of the *New York Herald*, the illustrated publications of the Harper Brothers received the most extended consideration. Yet while Hudson lavished attention on *Harper's Weekly*, he reserved pride of place and precedence for the decidedly less refined publishing house of Frank Leslie. Hudson could hardly ignore the fact that this immigrant wood engraver had produced the first successful pictorial weekly in the United States. Despite the Harpers' subsequent commercial supremacy and emphasis on gentility and literature, it was *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, first published in 1855, that set the standard for representing the news in nineteenth-century America.²

"The 'illustration' mania is upon our people," the *Cosmopolitan Art Journal* had warned in 1857. "Nothing but 'illustrated' works are prof-

itable to publishers; while the illustrated magazines and newspapers are vastly popular."³ By the time Hudson wrote his account fifteen years later, the fruits of Leslie's antebellum innovation in pictorial reportage were readily apparent. To many observers, 1870s America seemed obsessed with printed imagery; the range and breadth of illustrated periodicals had become excessive, threatening to engulf the printed word in (as one historian has put it) a "frenzy of the visible."⁴ Newsstands and shops were filled with engraved books and weekly and monthly magazines; building exteriors were obscured by lithographed posters and advertisements; and homes were cluttered with chromolithographed prints, stereograph collections, and photographs. Every event, individual, and product seemed to be represented in the burgeoning marketplace of published images. Speaking for other genteel critics, the *Nation* editor E. L. Godkin equated the vast dissemination of imagery (along with other forms of "pseudo-culture") with the deterioration of a hierarchical moral and social order. Such media, he wrote in 1874, "diffused through the community a kind of smattering of all sorts of knowledge, a taste for 'art'—that is, a desire to see and own pictures—which, taken together, pass with a large body of slenderly-equipped persons as 'culture,' and give them an unprecedented self-confidence in dealing with all the problems of life, and raise them in their own minds to a plane on which they see nothing higher, greater, or better than themselves." America was fast becoming "a chromo-civilization," "a society of ignoramus each of whom thinks he is a Solon. . . . The result is a kind of mental and moral chaos." Although Godkin settled on the chromolithograph—the popular colored print so ubiquitously visible in household parlors and on poster walls—as his metaphor for the dilution of culture, his fears were in no small part a reaction to Frank Leslie's efforts.⁵

The vast expansion of the pictorial marketplace in the 1870s—most particularly the plethora of illustrated magazines—was perhaps most remarkable because twenty-five years earlier such magazines were almost unknown. In the generation before the Civil War, the nature and number of published images were severely limited; topical news images depicting the events of the day were, for all intents and purposes, nonexistent. When Frank Leslie arrived in New York City in 1848, having spent the previous six years running the engraving department of the weekly *Illustrated London News*, he discovered no comparable news publication in the United States that might require his services.

NEWS IMAGERY IN THE UNITED STATES: AN UNDERDEVELOPED ENTERPRISE

Pictures, whether original or reproduced, were scarce items in colonial America. But by the mid-eighteenth century, northern colonists had managed to overcome their forebears' puritanical aversion to images, at least to the extent of recognizing the utility of topical pictures in furthering political ends. As the revolutionary crisis intensified, woodcuts and copperplates appeared on Patriot broadsides, almanacs, and newspapers published in northern seaboard cities. However, with the exception of such celebrated and widely copied prints as Paul Revere's 1770 etching of the Boston Massacre, most political imagery—whether Patriot or Loyalist—was imported from Europe and England, where printers engaged in more active pictorial political practice.⁶

In the first decades of the new republic, Americans' appetite for pictures grew. Itinerant portrait painters and limners followed the expanding network of roads into the New England countryside, prompting and feeding rural Americans' interest in decorating their homes with commercial products that denoted affluence and respectability. The favored form of visual consumption was the individual or family portrait, rendered speedily through simplified and conventionalized techniques, that memorialized the ideal domestic matrix. With the perfection of the daguerreotype in 1839, portraitists traded in brushes and boards for cameras and copperplates (and were joined by journeymen looking for a new trade to replace their deteriorating crafts). Fast becoming the de rigueur representation of self and family, the photographic likeness quickly dominated one wing of the pictorial marketplace; traveling daguerreotypists captured the visages of rural Americans while daguerrean studios multiplied along commercial thoroughfares in the cities.⁷

Another wing of the pictorial market catered to the belief that images should instruct the household and sanctify the home. Chromolithographs, produced in commercial shops in northeastern cities and purveyed by traveling peddlers and agents for as little as twenty cents and as much as three dollars, flooded the pictorial marketplace from the 1840s onward. Unlike customized portraits, chromolithographs could be reproduced in the thousands, printed from limestone blocks upon whose surface images had been drawn with greasy crayons, pens, or pencils. The process provided respectable homes with colorful pictures that complemented prescriptions for the domestic cultivation of moral character.⁸ According to *The American Woman's Home*, Catharine Esther Beecher

and Harriet Beecher Stowe's popular manual instructing women on how to maintain the middle-class household, children reared amid "such suggestions of the beautiful, and such reminders of history and art, . . . are constantly trained to correctness of taste and refinement of thought, and stimulated—sometimes to efforts at artistic imitation, always to the eager and intelligent inquiry about the scenes, the places, the incidents represented." The scenes, places, and incidents represented were carefully chosen to provide "moral scope and bearing" against the increasing depredations of the "industrial and commercial spirit." Subject matter was meant to promote therapeutic as much as informational ends. "[T]he great value of pictures for the home would be, after all, in their sentiment," Beecher and Stowe instructed. "They should express the sincere ideas and taste of the household and not the tyrannical dicta of some art critic or neighbor."⁹ Landscapes, allegorical prints bearing homely motives, sentimental rural and urban genre scenes, and still lifes abounding with fruit, fish, and fowl hung in appropriate rooms (each decorated according to its specific theme). Imagery that threatened to overpower the senses, offering visions of life that might upset the equilibrium of sentiment, were unsuitable (a ban extending to the robust works of the Renaissance).

Beecher and Stowe's precepts notwithstanding, topical lithography in the form of portraiture invaded many a parlor. Portraits copied from paintings or daguerreotypes of revered statesmen, soldiers, businessmen, authors, and artists were standard fare in every lithography shop. This business in famous faces, often published in large editions, was supplemented by smaller runs of portraits commissioned by congregations, companies, associations, and sects to commemorate their own local luminaries. But the alliance of moral guardianship and lithography was not necessarily disrupted by the parlor mounting of inexpensive likenesses of illustrious Americans: their careers, if not their glowering visages, emanated instruction down upon impressionable youth.¹⁰

The exact place where Americans hung "journalistic" prints is harder to discern. The 1846–48 Mexican War bolstered this more dogged sector of the lithography trade: the New York firm of Nathaniel Currier printed some seventy lithographic scenes of the war, most quickly generated to capitalize on public interest in the events and sold in front of the shop or hawked by pushcart salesmen in the city streets. Ranging from crude monochromatic sketches to sumptuous tableaux (many based on eyewitness drawings or paintings), the war prints' appeal was topical and yet—steeped in heroism, nationalism, and romance—not necessar-

ily unfit for the respectable home.¹¹ The same could not be said, however, for the works produced by lithograph firms that catered to Americans' increasing political partisanship. In the heated political debates of the Jacksonian era, local and national electoral campaigns bristled with pictorial propaganda, principally in abrasive and derisive cartoons and caricatures. These lithographs, apparently produced for the most part by Whig artists such as Henry R. Robinson in New York and David Claypool Johnston in Philadelphia and Boston, may not have hung in genteel parlors, but there was room for them in artisanal workshops, saloons, and party headquarters (and perhaps even kitchens). When not contributing to the exuberant rancor of Jacksonian politics, Robinson, Johnston, and their colleagues produced prints depicting urban scenes and theatrical and sporting events, as well as portraits of popular thespians and sportsmen. The exact audience for such prints is hard to determine, at least as evidenced in the historiography of lithography. But judging from the subjects and style of their work, which at times celebrated the world of cheap amusements and "rough" sports, the market for these urban lithographers included the plebeian population of young male mechanics and laboring women.¹²

Wars and political campaigns might call forth a host of topical prints, but news and contemporary events remained inconsistently covered. It would be left to another medium of reproduction to depict the news. Unlike lithographs, which could not be produced in the same press as text printed from movable type, wood engravings could be locked into forms with hand-set type and printed in the same operation. When the penny press appeared in New York City during the 1830s, wood engraving's compatibility with type prompted its use in illustrating the pages of these innovative newspapers addressed to the "common men" of the Jacksonian era.

Beginning with Benjamin Day's one-cent *New York Sun* in 1833, the daily penny press broke with the structure and practice of the established six-cent papers. Whereas older newspapers such as the *Commercial Advertiser* and *Morning Chronicle* largely ignored daily events and instead served up a steady fare of partisan editorials, advertisements, and commercial notices to their subscription list of elite mercantile readers, the new penny papers enthusiastically embraced everyday news. Paid reporters covered national and local politics, investigated crimes and covered trials, conveyed the gossip of the streets, and pried open household secrets. Reporting the news was defined by many of the editors of the penny press as a mission of democratic education. "[T]he penny press,"

ran a *Sun* editorial, "by diffusing useful knowledge among the operative classes of society, is effecting the march of intelligence to a greater degree than any other mode of instruction." Although Day's *Sun* aimed for readers from the artisan and journeyman ranks and its later rival, James Gordon Bennett's *Herald* (1835) addressed a larger, middle readership, both editors saw their purpose as conveying information to the broad, changing population of the expanding city.¹³

The *New York Herald*, more than any other of the penny newspapers, published news pictures. Beginning with an engraving showing the smoldering ruins of the 1835 fire that devastated lower Manhattan, the paper published occasional news cuts on its front page depicting processions and meetings, crimes and trials, riots and wars, receptions and balls, and, a sign of the times, more fires. Maps and portraits of people in the news—particularly people involved in sensational scandals and crimes—regularly graced the *Herald's* cover page. More ambitious images appeared infrequently, and when they did—for example, the publication of several cuts illustrating the 1844 lynching of the Mormon Joseph Smith in Nauvoo, Illinois—their provenance was not an eyewitness artist but probably an already-published commercial lithograph of the event.¹⁴

Competition among the penny papers for readership and advertising revenues increasingly fueled their reporters' pursuit of exclusive news stories. Despite their paeans to "the facts," editors quickly found that to expand circulation, making news could be more effective than merely reporting it. The "sensation" was born, a term coined by Edgar Allan Poe after the *Sun* ran a two-week series of articles during the summer of 1835 delineating an astronomer's discovery of a civilization of winged creatures on the moon. The hoax displayed all the required reportorial conventions of detailed description, demonstrating that the seemingly reliable components of textual reportage could easily be transmogrified into fabrication. The visual codes used to depict news events were equally suspect. When the *Herald* published five detailed cuts on its cover showing New York's 1845 funeral procession honoring Andrew Jackson—the first full-page cover devoted to pictures ever to appear in a daily newspaper—the authenticity of its depiction was immediately challenged (figure 1.1). Rival newspapers claimed that the same engravings had been used to illustrate Queen Victoria's coronation, William Henry Harrison's funeral, and the celebration of the opening of the Croton reservoir. In this case, the *Herald* engraver Thomas W. Strong vehemently maintained authorship of his work, presenting a convincing defense.

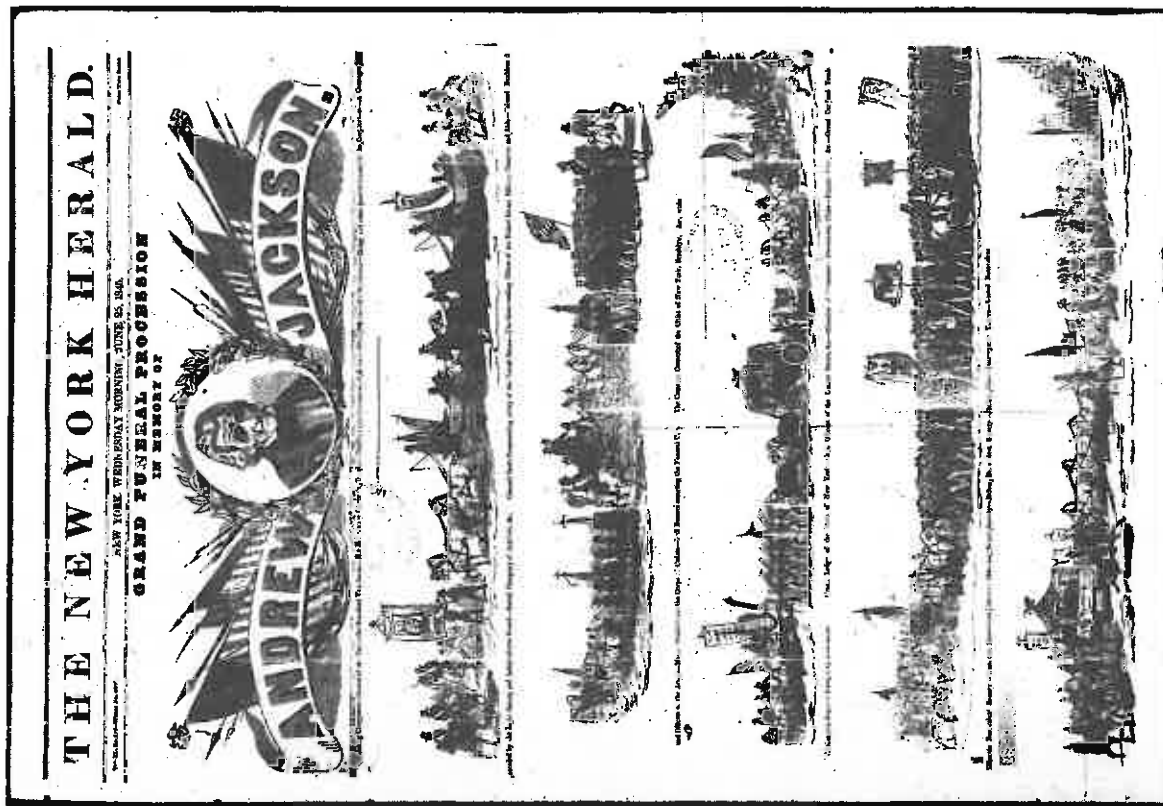


Figure 1.1. "Grand funeral procession in memory of Andrew Jackson." Wood engraving, *New York Herald*, June 25, 1845, cover. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

Nevertheless, though the penny papers claimed (in the words of the *Herald* admirer) to be "the daily daguerreotype of the heart and soul of a modern republic" casting a democratic light on monopolized news, realism hardly characterized the practice of either textual or pictorial journalism. Or perhaps it is more accurate to say that the realism seemingly inspired by the invention and dissemination of photography may have led to the production of deceptively authentic forms of representation and reportage. While this "operational aesthetic," as such hoaxes and humbugs have been characterized by Neil Harris, may have operated in part as a challenge to the public, actively testing their ability to decipher illusion and reality, the net effect at the very least was general skepticism toward both written and engraved journalistic accounts.¹⁵

Whatever the verdict about the veracity of their depiction of the news, wood-engraved images of topical events would soon leave the pages of the daily press. Wood engraving presented newspaper publishers with the means to reproduce detailed news imagery but, as we will see below, the process of inscribing the image on the woodblock was lengthy and complicated, and printing large quantities of images proved to be extremely slow and expensive. Faced with such technical limitations, editors like James Gordon Bennett soon opted to reserve the already cramped space of antebellum papers for news in letterpress and paid advertising. Around 1850, the *Herald* dropped illustrations as part of its news format. It was not alone; for the next thirty years, few pictures would appear in the pages of the American daily press.¹⁶

PIONEERING PICTURES IN THE PAPERS: THE BRITISH ILLUSTRATED PRESS

The model for what would subsequently become the American illustrated press was to be found not within the borders of the United States but across the Atlantic. At the same time as American newspapers were relinquishing the task of publishing news pictures, the *Illustrated London News* was systematically illustrating events of the day. The engravings that filled the pages of the British weekly were distinctly different from earlier American and British efforts: in their size, detail, placement, and number, these pictures rendered the text secondary.

In the *Illustrated London News*'s first edition on May 14, 1842, comprising sixteen pages with thirty-two engravings, publisher Henry Ingram pronounced a representational mission that was as lofty as it was ambitious:

We know that the advent of an Illustrated Newspaper in this country *must* mark an epoch—give wealth to Literature and stores to History, and put, as it were mile-stones upon the traveled road of time. . . . The life of the times—the signs of its taste and intelligence—its public monuments and public men—its festivals—institutions—amusements—discoveries—and the very reflection of its living manners and costumes—the variegated dresses of its mind and body—what are—what *must* be all these but treasures of truth that would have lain hid in Time's tomb, or perished amid the sand of his hour-glass but for the enduring and resuscitating powers of art—the eternal register of the pencil giving life and vigour and palpability to the confirming details of the pen.¹⁷

The promotional hyperbole notwithstanding, this declaration of the *Illustrated London News*'s intent to become the recorder of the age fit comfortably within the reigning ideology of representation in Victorian England. First articulated by Sir Joshua Reynolds in his *Discourses on Art* published between 1769 and 1790, this reinterpretation of seventeenth-century Franco-Italian theory erected a hierarchy that placed academic history painting at the summit of the arts. The cultivation of such art, in Reynolds's schema, would bestow moral benefits on the nation through the "contemplation of universal rectitude and harmony." Commercial ventures like the *Illustrated London News* took the next logical step, linking representations of contemporary events to the canonical pictorial chronicle of British history. As popular publications the illustrated press might not be the exact embodiment of the ideal, but by making art accessible to the public via wood engravings—which had been perfected as a practical method of visual reproduction by the English craftsman Thomas Bewick in the last decades of the eighteenth century—they conveniently conflated the laudatory goals of moral education with leisure pursuits.¹⁸

The pictures representing the news published in the *Illustrated London News* tended to support its lofty aims. Impressive panoramic views of London, the architectural detail of each building exquisitely rendered, alternated with views of exotic foreign locales and colonial holdings. The pursuit of knowledge was upheld in cuts of scientific expeditions and archaeological digs, and the cultivation of culture in the depiction of theatrical events and exhibitions. The doings of the royal family (including the repeated attempts on Victoria's life) received the paper's rapt attention, and there was a constant flow of portraits of leading statesmen and men of letters. Spectacular fires were complemented by equally fascinating battles; coverage of the Crimean War would raise the circulation of the *Illustrated London News* to more than 100,000.¹⁹

tically purchase the weekly during the subsequent Crimean War campaign, circulation failed to reach the heights achieved during the Great Exhibition. Soothing, uplifting images of current events seemed to be what the *Illustrated London News's* respectable readership preferred. Circulation had reached 300,000 by 1863—a time when the readership of the country's foremost daily newspaper, the *London Times*, totaled 70,000. Within a year of its first edition, the *Illustrated London News's* success prompted the inauguration of similar publications on the European continent, principally *L'Illustration* in Paris and *Illustrirte Zeitung* in Leipzig.²³

An alternative Hogarthian tradition challenged the Reynoldian vision, but in commercial practice its social reportage was largely restricted to comic magazines, notably *Punch* (1841), where humor and the use of caricature and social typing mitigated the sting of depiction.²⁴ More direct graphic reportage existed in small-circulation magazines with committed reform readers. However, one illustrated paper briefly challenged the *Illustrated London News's* dominance of representation: frustrated by the blinkered and pious view of the periodical he had helped co-found, Henry Vizetelly joined forces with Andrew Spotswoode in 1843 to publish the *Pictorial Times*. With an eye on reform goals, the paper strove to depict the conditions of working-class life in England and Ireland in the hopes of prodding its readers into action. Explaining the intent behind publishing engravings that showed the effects of tenant oppression and famine in Ireland in 1846, the *Pictorial Times* stated: "We wish, so far as possible, to annihilate distance, to bring our readers into contact with the peasantry of the sister isle, and to contribute our part to the urging of appropriate means for the amelioration of their wretched condition." Laudatory as its aims were, the *Pictorial Times* was unable to attract enough readers to maintain its operations and collapsed in 1848 under a debt of £20,000.²⁵

At least one member of the London weekly's staff was as much impressed by his employer's continuing popularity and profits as he was by the grinding work schedule required each week to get the periodical out on time. Looking at the *Illustrated London News's* commercial success, the young employee could imagine what might be accomplished in the potentially even more lucrative market of the United States. The ambitious artist-engraver in question was a portly young man in his mid-twenties named Henry Carter. Born in Ipswich, Suffolk, in 1821, in early adolescence Carter distressed his father by displaying a predilection for the marginality of the arts. As far as Joseph Leslie Carter

But the *Illustrated London News's* mission tended to restrict its vision of British society. In its formulation of pictorial reportage, anything that did not contribute to the elevation of morals and sentimental education failed to constitute news. The *Illustrated London News* lovingly recorded the progress of London's urban development, cluttering its engravings with exhibition halls, churches, and asylums; the activity in the surrounding streets was equally well-ordered and curiously devoid of the chaos and diversity of urban life in the 1840s. The crowds of the busy capital contained a sprinkling of stock types, including fashionably dressed women, itinerant tradesmen, and the requisite town criers.²⁰ What these engravings failed to convey was readily apparent to critics like Charles Knight, publisher of the *Penny Magazine*, the pioneering illustrated reform weekly dedicated to the popular dissemination of knowledge:

The staple materials for the steady-going illustrator to work most attractively upon are, Court and Fashion; Civic Processions and Banquets; Political and Religious Demonstrations in crowded halls; Theatrical Novelties; Musical Meetings; Races; Reviews; Ship Launches—every scene, in short, where a crowd of great people and respectable people can be got together, but never, if possible any exhibition of vulgar poverty.²¹

It was permissible to portray the less laudable fruits of industrialization as long as those scenes were set on the Continent. Readers might observe the poverty of the laboring poor or class warfare in France and Germany in 1848; but England remained tranquil and prosperous. There were a few occasions when social turmoil was depicted—such as an attack on a Stockport workhouse or a Chartist riot in Halifax in August 1842—but these engravings served only to support the overall vision of a largely ordered society.

This idealized, restricted view was grounded on a canny consideration of what would attract a readership sizable enough to support the expensive operation of a pictorial paper. The *Illustrated London News* perceived its primary patrons to be the "respectable families of England" who would prefer "the purity of our columns inviolate and supreme."²² Ingram and his colleagues could not have failed to notice the prosperity of British publishing houses that catered to a bourgeois readership hankering for genteel "family" books and magazines. The *Illustrated London News's* adherence to the wishes of such a market quickly proved commercially justified. By the end of its first year, it had attracted 66,000 readers. The numbers reached 130,000 in 1851, when the paper devoted excessive coverage to the Great Exhibition, chronicling every stage in the construction of the Crystal Palace. Although readers would enthusias-

was concerned, young Harry spent entirely too much time drawing pictures and haunting Ipswich wood-turning and silversmith shops. Instead of attending to his father's glove manufacturing business (the largest of a number of small factory enterprises run by the family), by thirteen Henry Carter had settled into an intensive pursuit of wood engraving. When Carter reached seventeen, his father sent him off to London to sit behind the glove counter at his uncle's wholesale dry goods firm. Unsurprisingly, London provided the youth with a golden opportunity to defy his father's wishes and follow his own. Brashly borrowing his father's middle name, Carter adopted the *nom de crayon* of "Frank Leslie" and began hawking drawings and engravings to cheap London printers and publishers. Carter endured three years behind the glove counter, but in 1841 he decided to break with his family and take up engraving full-time. He seemed to compound his risky decision by marrying Sarah Ann Welham that same year, but whatever financial problems the young couple may have experienced were short-lived, due to the fortuitous appearance of the *Illustrated London News*.²⁶

Carter was hired to work in the *Illustrated London News's* engraving department. With little experience, he probably received a fraction of the salary paid to older staff engravers; though they were subordinate to artists in status, the expanding pictorial market netted engravers high pay and a measure of independence. Still, he distinguished himself by displaying, in his youthful zeal, the kind of speed, dexterity, inventiveness, and self-exploitation that were indispensable in running an illustrated newspaper. Within a short time Carter was in charge of the engraving department. For six years he learned all of the tricks and pitfalls of producing news imagery on wood—also noting how the *Illustrated London News* continued to garner more readers and make greater profits. Carter began to form an ambition to run his own illustrated newspaper. But the prospects for an independent venture in England seemed unpromising; Carter possessed little capital and the pictorial market was glutted with illustrated papers. The fate of the *Pictorial Times*, the *Illustrated London News's* scrappy competitor, undoubtedly suggested to Carter that if he was setting his sights higher it was perhaps best to do so across the Atlantic.²⁷

FRANK LESLIE MEETS THE AMERICAN PICTORIAL PRESS

Having secured his reputation as an engraver with the name "Frank Leslie," on his arrival in New York in 1848 Henry Carter adopted the

pseudonym as his American identity. The engraving shop he opened at 98 Broadway under his new name immediately attracted the attention of aficionados of the craft. One of his early admirers was Phineas T. Barnum, who may have been less concerned with the aesthetics of Leslie's work than with its potential for publicity. In fact, it was probably Leslie who approached Barnum in 1849, just as the showman was beginning to promote the upcoming Jenny Lind tour. Leslie convinced Barnum that he was the man to produce a lavishly illustrated program to be sold at the Swedish Nightingale's concerts, a scheme that no doubt contributed to the \$500,000 in profits Barnum garnered from the overall venture. After producing the contracted engravings, Leslie joined the whirlwind 1850-51 tour, gaining in his travels a vivid impression of the potential public for an American illustrated newspaper as he also mastered the fine art of promotion.²⁸

While Leslie traveled about the United States, the first American pictorial weekly was inaugurated in Boston in May 1851. Produced by story-paper publisher Frederick Gleason and sold by subscription for three dollars a year, fully half of the sixteen pages composing *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion* contained engravings. Appearing on alternate page-spreads, the cuts presented a "faithful delineation of men and manners, all over the world, its perfect transcript of ancient and modern cities, its likenesses of eminent characters, its geographical illustrations of scenery and localities, and, in short, its illustrations of every notable current event[.]"²⁹ However, *Gleason's* endeavor to pictorially represent "every notable current event" was mediated by a definition of news that must have seemed familiar to Frank Leslie. Bracketed by editorials, essays, short stories, and serialized novels laden with religious and moral themes—appropriate to the family drawing room—*Gleason's* engraved record of American events sharply curtailed its vision in a manner that replicated both the format and the conventions of the *Illustrated London News*. To be sure, the occasional riot appeared and there was always the requisite cut of a disastrous fire, but newsworthy coverage was largely limited to events such as Commodore Perry's departure for "the Orient" or Hungarian patriot Louis Kossuth's reception in the United States.

One of the most striking indications of *Gleason's* blinkered view was a December 1852 engraving of an "Irish Harvest Scene, in Kilkenny, Ireland," depicting "a group of laborers in the harvest field partaking of refreshments after the labors of the day" (figure 1.2). This rendition of a bucolic idyll, occurring during the Irish famine, was peculiar enough to



Figure 1.2. "Irish harvest scene, in Kilkenny, Ireland." Wood engraving, *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion*, December 11, 1852, 380. American Social History Project, New York.

force a begrudging editorial concession: "It is true that many parts of Ireland have become very nearly deserted by reason of the extensive emigration to this country; but," *Gleason's* hastily added, "there are still, as our picture represents, smiling harvest fields and happy laborers there, still rich fields of ripened grain, and richly laden storehouses of prolific yields."³⁰

By the time *Gleason's* engravings, so emulatory of academic history painting, reached readers, the events they depicted were indeed securely anchored in the past. The process of engraving a single four-column box-wood block from which an image was printed was lengthy and costly: it took from three to four days for an artist to render a drawing in reverse on the boxwood surface, and then a single engraver labored ten to fourteen days to prepare the block for printing, all at a cost of forty to fifty dollars for each engraving. To make matters worse, skilled engravers were not readily available and the final result was not always successful. "We really owe our readers an apology for the miserable character of the picture on the first page of the last number of our paper," *Gleason's* lamented to its readers in one August 1851 edition. "It was miserably engraved, and we shall take care to print no more so deficient in this respect." In January 1852, a notice "To Wood Engravers" appeared on the editorial page, calling for "a few more experienced hands well acquainted with the business of fine wood engraving, who can find constant em-

ployment, by applying at our office."³¹ Returned from his sojourn with Barnum, Frank Leslie was one of a number of skilled engravers who answered the call. "Leslie Sc" would appear regularly at the bottom of some of the more ambitious engravings (with "sc" an abbreviation of the Latin *sculptit* or *sculptit*, meaning "sculpted by"—"sculptor" being an archaic term for engraver). By the next volume, *Gleason's Pictorial* could announce a decided improvement in the appearance of its engravings and the commensurate increase of its circulation to 100,000. Frederick Gleason was now realizing \$25,000 in profits, but by then one of his more valued employees had moved on.³²

In the fall of 1852 Leslie was back in New York and was once again engaged in a Barnum project. This time it was a pictorial weekly called the *Illustrated News*, published by Barnum in partnership with Henry D. Beach. Alfred E. Beach, the sons of the *New York Sun's* publisher, Moses Y. Beach. Inaugurating a New York paper seemed like a sound business proposition to Barnum and his partners even though another pictorial weekly had collapsed earlier in the year. That ill-fated venture was the *Illustrated American News*, founded by the former *Herald* engraver T. W. Strong, which had appeared in June 1851, close on the heels of *Gleason's Pictorial*. Though Strong was more inclined than his Boston contemporary to cover current news, his ambitions were nevertheless thwarted by the same lengthy engraving process. Within ten months, the field was again open for another adventurous or unwary entrepreneur. Barnum probably hoped that his publication could surmount the problems of its predecessor under the sure hand of an *Illustrated London News* veteran, but when he proposed Leslie for the post of general manager of the New York weekly, offering in return to double his investment of \$20,000, his partners demurred.³³

The *Illustrated News* began publication on January 1, 1853, with Leslie as its chief engraver. In the ensuing months its circulation reached 70,000. The numbers were satisfactory (apparently forty to fifty thousand readers were enough to ensure a profit), but operating a weekly pictorial newspaper proved to be a frustrating experience for the investors. There never seemed to be enough suitable boxwood, artists experienced in pictorial production always seemed wanting, and by the time the *Illustrated News* published its engravings the news they depicted was stale. "Numerous and almost insurmountable difficulties, for novices in the business, continued . . . to arise," Barnum would later recall, "and my partners becoming weary and disheartened with constant over-exertion, were anxious to wind up the enterprise at the end of the first year."

Eleven months after its first appearance, Barnum and his partners recouped their investment; they sold their store of engravings to *Gleason's Pictorial* and ceased publication of the *Illustrated News*.³⁴

Frank Leslie was not about to return to Boston. With the limited capital he had managed to accumulate during his six years in the United States, he embarked on his own publication. Recent experience and the limits of his income dictated a less risky venture than an illustrated weekly; casting an eye toward the continuing success of women's magazines, he managed to persuade the novelist Ann S. Stephens to leave her longtime editorship of *Peterson's Ladies' National Magazine*, and in January 1854 *Frank Leslie's Ladies' Gazette of Fashion and Fancy Needlework* was inaugurated. The illustrated twenty-five-cent monthly, balancing cosmopolitan gossip and sentimental instruction, quickly gained a dedicated readership. At the end of the year, Leslie was able to purchase a founding story paper, the *New York Journal of Romance*, to which he added his name and more lavish engravings. By January 1855, Leslie could savor his rapid ascent as a publisher of two prospering women's magazines; yet his primary goal remained unattained. Try as he might, he could not attract investors to such a seemingly foolhardy scheme as a weekly illustrated newspaper. Displaying the blend of impetuosity, incaution, and canniness that would characterize his entire career in publishing, as he seasawed between financial success and disaster, Leslie decided to establish a paper using his own meager stock of capital. On December 15, 1855, he published the first issue of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*.³⁵

NEW CONDITIONS FOR AN ILLUSTRATED PRESS

On first reflection, one might conclude (borrowing the parlance of his time) that Leslie's impetuosity and incaution had overwhelmed the other traits in his character. The history of the illustrated press in America, as he must have been aware, was marked by discontinuity and evanescence. But in fact, the time was ripe for pictorial journalism: by the mid-1850s the transportation revolution, innovations in printing technology, and an expanded literary and pictorial market came together to provide almost all the conditions necessary for a commercially viable illustrated press.

The American population quadrupled during the first half of the nineteenth century through a combination of natural increase, immigra-

tion, and the acquisition of new territories. Over three-quarters of the 23 million people living in the nation in 1850 could read and write. The spread of literacy occurred in tandem with profound changes wrought by the transportation revolution and the rise of industrial capitalism, altering social relations from the family to the workshop. Americans endeavored to position themselves in this shifting social landscape; whether heeding evangelical calls for the improvement of self and scion or wishing to defend themselves against the exigencies of the industrial capitalist economy, a broad "middle" public grew thirsty for knowledge. By the fourth decade of the century, books, magazines, and newspapers were traveling via road, canal, and rail to an unprecedented national reading public.³⁶

The 1850s also marked a decisive realignment in the structure of American publishing. The balance shifted from a localized, undercapitalized printing industry to centralized manufacturing by large publishers located in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston for a national audience. As publishing restructured into a culture industry of large, heavily capitalized firms, it became like other trades. Along with books, new magazines marked out specific reader territories across the nation. Their dissemination was aided by improved transportation and new postal regulations that lowered the costs of distribution; moreover, technological innovations, such as steam printing presses and new paper-making machinery, lowered costs and sped up production. Innovations in paper technology were particularly important: the substitution of wood pulp for rag in 1843 gave publishers an unlimited supply of cheap paper for the new popularly priced periodicals. Two other advances benefited the daily press and purveyors of weekly news like Leslie: by the early 1850s, the telegraph linked more than five hundred American cities in a vast system of wires that hurtled information across the nation; the completion of the transatlantic cable in August 1858 made international news equally accessible and immediate.³⁷

By the end of the decade, Frank Leslie would become one of the most prominent of the new magazine publishers that supplanted the earlier periodicals and publishers of the Jacksonian era. But the Harper Brothers' New York book publishing firm was the first to industrialize the printing process and exploit the new technology, enabling it to reach a national reading public.³⁸ Perhaps most important, Harper Brothers demonstrated the crucial role of pictorial representation in the success of a new generation of periodicals.

At its inception in 1850 *Harper's Monthly Magazine* was viewed by the publishing house as a convenient vehicle for its literary business, which had been built on the reprinting of popular English novels; the magazine would draw material from its books and, in turn, would serve as a source for future publications. Each 144-page issue of the new magazine presented a literary miscellany of serialized and short fiction, poetry, biography, travel accounts, historical essays, humorous sketches, and scientific articles by established Harper authors. But the engravings that supplemented these writings, illustrating stories as well as famous people, places, and events, soon proved to be as important as the text in drawing readers to the magazine. Starting with a meager offering of eight engravings in the first issue, the number of illustrations grew in subsequent issues along with *Harper's Monthly's* circulation. In 1853, with a readership of more than 100,000, Harper Brothers decided to increase significantly the number of engravings. The outlay of \$24,000 for the 356 pictures that appeared during that year was offset by the economies of scale enjoyed by a publishing house that could reuse illustrations in other publications—and by the 35,000 new readers that they attracted. “Probably no magazine in the world was ever so popular or so profitable,” grumbled the rival *Putnam's Monthly* in 1857.³⁹

Harper's Monthly—and Harper Brothers' publishing house—seemed to set the standard for the publication, appearance, and contents of the illustrated magazine in the United States. Aimed at a broad literate public, the Harpers assiduously kept the contents of their magazine above reproach and thus away from the news. Appearing in 1850, *Harper's Monthly* embodied the conciliation attempted by the political compromise of that year that maintained the balance of power between North and South, averting a national crisis.⁴⁰

When he entered the fray five years after the appearance of *Harper's Monthly*, Leslie aspired to something less rarefied, less aloof from the events of the day. His decision to publish a pictorial newsweekly would prove prescient, but his immediate prospects remained hazardous. *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* appeared at a critical if still not fully defined moment: all of the conditions for perpetuating an illustrated press were not yet in place. The first years of the paper's existence were marked by instability. During that time Leslie devised his approach to addressing the reading public and overcame major technical problems. But it would be the final phase of the struggle over slavery, a national crisis drawing large numbers of readers to the pictorial representation of the news, that would firmly establish pictorial journalism in America.

FRANK LESLIE'S ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER: THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

Operating in its first year out of cramped offices on Spruce Street, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* managed to be a convincing pictorial version of a weekly newspaper. What it may have lacked in depth of coverage *Frank Leslie's* made up for in breadth: the engravings that appeared on the cover and alternating spreads of its sixteen quarto pages included enthusiastic depictions of William Walker's marauding filibusters in Nicaragua and of the retributive actions of the Vigilance Committee in San Francisco. News of a less illicitly political nature (if one excludes Preston Brooks's physical assault on Charles Sumner on the floor of the Senate) included the congressional turmoil over Kansas and, later in 1856, the first extended pictorial narrative of a presidential campaign (with a decided bent, despite *Frank Leslie's* claims to political neutrality, toward the Democrats). European reportage focused primarily on the Crimean War; the engravings' subject matter, dashing soldiers and romantic war scenes, indicated their provenance in the *Illustrated London News*—a source to which *Frank Leslie's* would regularly resort, without acknowledgment, in its early years. In addition to national and international news, *Frank Leslie's* also regularly covered the New York theater; in the first year, portraits of popular actors and engravings of scenes from plays were balanced with a pictorial series on the city's Protestant churches and clergy (although articles sympathetic to the Catholic Church also appeared).⁴¹

Leslie's boldly claimed to be attracting readers, but the decision at the end of its first year to lower its price from ten to six cents, and its annual subscription rate from four to three dollars, suggested that circulation was insufficient to maintain the paper's operation. At that time Leslie also began to drastically rearrange the contents and design of the weekly; by February 1857, with serialized fiction, short stories, miscellaneous columns, and “borrowed” pictures filling three-quarters of each issue, *Frank Leslie's* was threatening to become a slightly less pristine version of *Gleason's Pictorial*. Leslie would later relate his desperate search for funds to buy paper for an issue or to pay his staff's weekly salary, resorting on more than one occasion to the largesse of an unnamed friend (who, on Leslie's third successive loan request, remarked, “Don't you think you had better give it up?”).⁴² This romantic portrayal of the publisher, often repeated after Leslie's death in official biographies, conveys his determination but glosses over his monomaniacal obliviousness. On

one occasion, after a three-week hiatus in pay—Leslie having spent the funds instead, according to Thomas Nast's biographer Albert Bigelow Paine, on the purchase of a yacht—the art staff went out on strike. The outcome of that particular confrontation remains unrecorded, but Leslie's flamboyance and exploitation continually exhausted the patience and goodwill of his employees. Beginning with the British essayist and poet Thomas Powell, he ran through a succession of chief editors and young artists, accumulating a host of former associates who would later express deep respect for Leslie's talent along with an equal measure of ambivalence about his disregard for the consequences of his actions.⁴³

Frank Leslie's fortunes changed dramatically in mid-February of 1857. As Leslie later recalled, he awoke one morning to hear

the newsboys crying a shocking murder. It was that of Dr. Burdell, the Bond-Street dentist, which, as you know, stirred all New York, and which, by the mystery surrounding it and the proceedings which followed, became a *cause célèbre*. . . . I seized upon this incident. I caused exact illustrations to be made of the minutest detail, and to be published immediately. The sales of the *Newspaper* rose enormously, and when the excitement subsided, enough new purchasers stuck by it to put the paper beyond any fear of failure.⁴⁴

Joining the other city papers' feverish coverage, *Leslie's* devoted most of its illustrated pages in February to depicting the principals in the case and the scene of the grisly crime as well as one particularly gruesome engraving of the victim's slashed heart and four re-creations of the murder itself. A month later *Frank Leslie's* lavished equal attention on James Buchanan's inauguration; the first illustrated coverage of the ritual of presidential office, though a less sensational subject, garnered increased sales.⁴⁵

Leslie chose to remember 1857 as a turning point. Indeed, as sales improved, news once more became dominant in *Frank Leslie's* pages; much of the fiction it had been publishing found a home in *Frank Leslie's New Family Magazine* (which absorbed the *Gazette of Fashion*, Leslie's first publication). In August Leslie also instituted *Frank Leslie's Illustrirte Zeitung*, a German-language edition of his illustrated newspaper; Leslie claimed that within a year it was reaching 50,000 readers. But 1857 also saw two new obstacles drop in the path of Leslie's fortunes. The first and more long-lasting problem was the Harper Brothers' new illustrated newspaper, *Harper's Weekly*, which began publication in January. By the end of the year, the *Weekly* was publishing as many engravings as *Frank Leslie's* (if depicting fewer news events) at five cents an issue. Leslie resorted to vituperative attacks on his rival, vaunting his paper's de-

vation to news over the *Weekly's* more literary and genteel content. "We forgive them their feeble assault on us," a comparatively mild December *Frank Leslie's* notice ran, "and only ask that they will continue on in the way they have begun, and their journal . . . may serve . . . as a foil in its old-fogyishness to our energy and enterprise."⁴⁶ Leslie endeavored to cover the news more assiduously, but competition from *Harper's Weekly* was soon exacerbated by the economic panic that swept the country in the fall.

The panic of 1857 ruined many of the periodicals that had been published in the United States during the previous decade. Among its victims was *Ballou's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion*, the successor to Frederick Gleason's Boston weekly, which had been purchased in 1854 by its editor, Martin Ballou. As circulation fell in the wake of the panic Ballou progressively cut back the number of engravings until his publication's final issue, dated December 24, 1859. To the last, *Ballou's Pictorial* ignored "sordid" news, failing to illustrate, let alone mention, John Brown's execution on December 2. In contrast, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* continued to prosper during the hard times.⁴⁷ According to its own figures (an admittedly dubious source), circulation rose to 90,000 during 1858, with special editions reaching as high as 130,000. Circulation was probably helped by *Leslie's* increased news coverage, which included pictorial reports of the effects of the depression in New York. But it was the "swill milk" campaign that attracted readers during 1858 to 1859 and signaled a turn to a new activist policy in pictorial reporting.

The unhealthy condition of New York dairies, where cows were fed on distillery mash that stimulated milk production as it inexorably destroyed the animals, had long been the target of ineffective newspaper criticism and complaints of sanitary reformers. Leslie embarked on a concerted pictorial campaign, depicting sore-ridden, dying beasts in befouled barns; it detailed not just the deterioration of animals and the unsanitary conditions of milk production but also the stalwart artist-reporter at work—joined in one cut by his indomitable employer (figure 1.3). Aroused by these images, which appeared month after month, public pressure eventually overcame the sloth of city officials (who, to their consternation, soon found themselves pictorial subjects in *Frank Leslie's*) and led to the passage of an 1861 New York state law regulating dairy production. The swill milk campaign demonstrated the effectiveness of images in stimulating public outrage and reform. Pursuing a policy that departed utterly from the example set by the *Illustrated Lon-*

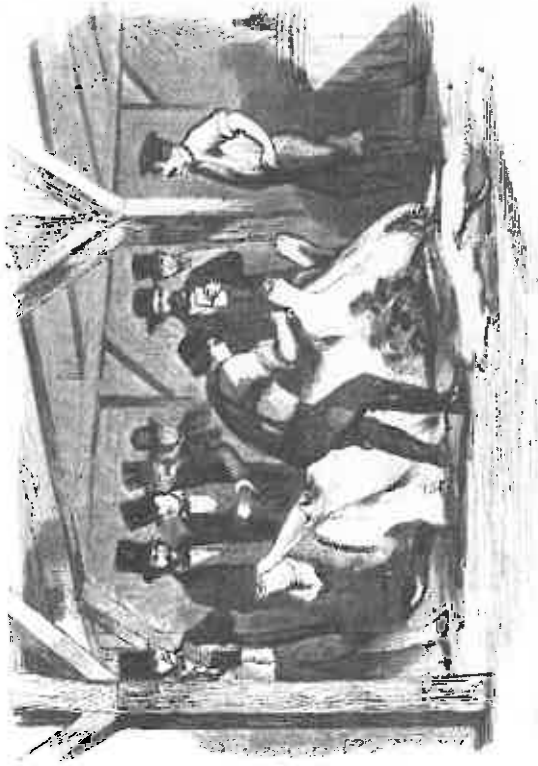


Figure 1.3. "Scene at the Offal Dock, foot of Forty-fifth Street, N.Y. Dissectiong the cow brought from the 16th St. Swill Cow Stables." Wood engraving, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, May 22, 1858, 385. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

don News, Leslie also discovered that combining self-promotion and reform drew readers.⁴⁸

During the next two years *Frank Leslie's* would energetically pursue sensation and revelation. While its pictorial coverage of the lurid murder case involving New York congressman Daniel Sickles was predictable (momentarily raising circulation to 200,000), *Leslie's* depictions of the Pemberton mill collapse in Lawrence, Massachusetts, and the 1860 Lynn shoemakers' strike staked out new territory for illustrated journalism (figure 1.4). In the latter two cases, the weekly focused attention on industrialization, its abuses and disruptions; it added a new visual dimension to a growing debate that, in the realm of publishing, had largely been carried out in text.⁴⁹ *Leslie's* greatest promotional feat, however, occurred in April 1860 when chief artist Albert Berghaus was dispatched to England to cover the eagerly anticipated bare-knuckle bout between the British champion, Tom Sayers, and his American challenger, John C. "Benecia Boy" Heenan. *Leslie's* exhibited its superior organizational, if not reportorial, skills by publishing a special London edition one day after the fight. While *Leslie's* pictorial competitors were still reeling (in-

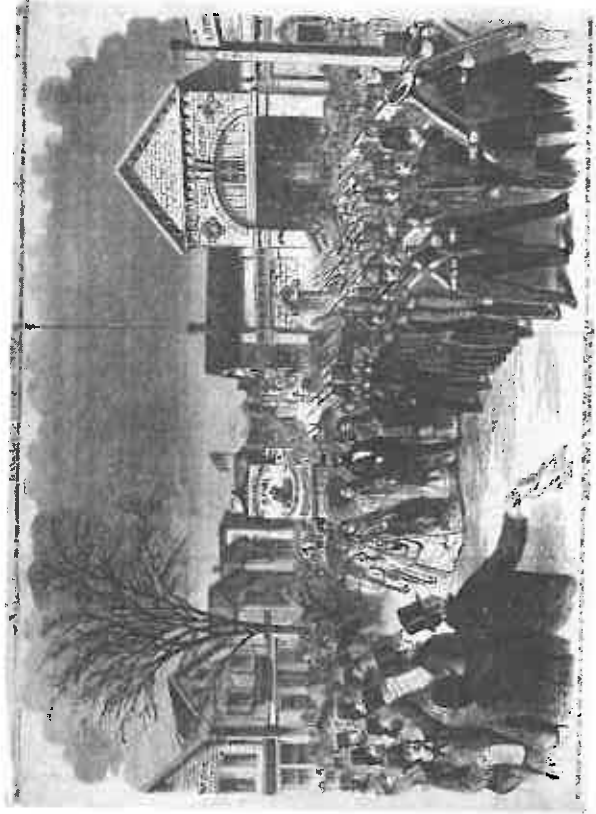


Figure 1.4. "The shoemakers' strike in Lynn, Mass.—Procession, in the midst of a snow-storm, of eight hundred women operatives joining in the strike, with banners, inscriptions, and working tools, preceded by the Lynn City Guards with music, and followed by four thousand workmen, firemen, &c., March 7, 1860." Wood engraving, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, March 17, 1860, 242, 251. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

cluding the five-month-old New York *Illustrated News*, which had sent the former *Leslie's* employee Thomas Nast to draw the march), the engravings of the gory forty-two-round fight were rushed across the Atlantic; *Leslie's* New York edition sold 347,000 copies. Although the *Illustrated News* cried foul, and later testimony would reveal that the pictures had been sketched in New York and largely engraved beforehand in London, the fact that *Frank Leslie's* had delivered timely pictures seemed to reinforce its claim of dominance in the field.⁵⁰

Leslie had learned that pictorial calls for reform and reportorial stunts attracted readers. Circulation grew—142,000 by the beginning of 1860, *Frank Leslie's* fifth year—yet readership remained undependable, a fibrillating heartbeat strengthened by steady infusions of promotion and revelation. As *Leslie's* constantly pursued readers and news that would attract them, its publication schedule grew erratic, provoking the rage of a prominent wholesale newsdealer. In a March 1860 circular letter to its customers, the firm of Ross and Tousey complained that

we find it utterly impossible to get our supplies of that paper with any satisfaction to ourselves, or justice to our customers. Since the establishment of *The New York Illustrated News*, Mr. Leslie has published his paper very irregular, sometimes on Saturday, sometimes on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, &c., his old publication day having been changed to keep up with the news. In his anxiety to get out his paper as soon as the other, he now publishes it as soon as he gets a few hundred printed, and then commences a struggle among the dealers for their supplies, many of us keeping two or three hands at his press watching and fighting for the papers. We, as well as the other dealers, are sick and tired of this kind of work, and shall submit to it no longer.⁵¹

It would be *Frank Leslie's* coverage of the growing sectional conflict, however, that would finally secure a public for the pictorial press.

As soon as news of John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry reached New York in October 1859, Leslie dispatched staff artists and writers to Virginia. Steeping its pictorial reportage in the crisis, the paper was careful to eschew any hint of partisanship as it attempted to avoid alienating any of its readers. Its strategy, in the ensuing weeks, was predicated on an unprecedented flow of imagery, supplemented by detailed descriptions of how the paper was serving the public's hunger for pictorial news of the raid and of John Brown's subsequent capture. *Leslie's* focus on the developing events in Virginia outstripped its competitors in the sheer quantity of engravings that depicted, week after week, the trial and, ultimately, John Brown's execution. Although the Virginia-born artist for *Harper's Weekly*, David Strother (better known by his *nom. de plume* "Porte Crayon"), was the first reporter on the scene at Harpers Ferry and gained unequalled access to the trial, his drawings of the execution were never published in the paper, which had grown wary of the vituperation provoked by its pictorial coverage. The *New York Illustrated News*, established by John King in November 1859, covered only the grim climax of the story. *Leslie's* John Brown coverage inevitably aroused the anger of southern sympathizers who saw such extensive reporting as serving abolitionist ends; nonetheless, the pictorial representation of the escalating national crisis helped *Leslie's* attain a consistent readership. By the 1860 presidential campaign, *Leslie's* was devoting all of its illustrated pages to news, though the weekly neglected Abraham Lincoln's rise to prominence. The dominance of engravings depicting the Democratic campaign seemingly had no effect on *Leslie's* circulation, which in 1860 stood at 164,000.⁵²

In February 1860 Leslie moved his operations from his second location (on Frankfort Street) to a more resplendent site at 19 City Hall

Square, along Chatham Street. Within the new five-story building (shared with the *Daily News*), *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* stood at the heart of a thriving publishing concern that kept 130 editors, artists, engravers, and writers constantly busy, yielding a yearly income of \$500,000.⁵³ Now both in name and substance a pictorial chronicle of contemporary American events, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* was established as the leading source of pictorial news in the nation.⁵⁴

CHAPTER 2

Illustrating the News

Then, there comes the artist of a picture newspaper, with a foreground and figures ready drawn for anything, from a wreck on the Cornish coast to a review in Hyde Park, or a meeting in Manchester,—and in Mrs. Perkins' own room, memorable evermore, he then and there throws in upon the block, Mr. Krook's house, as large as life; in fact, considerably larger, making a very Temple of it. Similarly, being permitted to look in at the door of the fatal chamber, he depicts that apartment as three-quarters of a mile long, by fifty yards high[.]

Charles Dickens

of news into a detailed pictorial narrative provided by a new type of journalist, the artist-reporter or “special artist.” In its first years, *Leslie's* drew on the talents of a number of young artists, many of whom gained experience in a new trade while enduring an incessant work schedule and low pay. For the most part, after a short time both established artists like the painter Jacob Dallas and newly seasoned “amateurs” like the precocious Thomas Nast moved on to other publications, though several returned occasionally for brief assignments.³

Although *Leslie's*, like other illustrated papers, proclaimed—and, as we will see, defended—the authenticity of its images as “eye-witness” recordings of events, the significance of the special artist's work was, in fact, not predicated on direct observation. Rather, much like the “traditional” print journalist, the artist-reporter usually formulated his report (at this time, all the special artists were men) after diligently collecting information. To be sure, artists were dispatched to cover “predictable” events such as receptions, rallies, and other public and private ceremonies;⁴ sudden local incidents such as fires, floods, and other disasters usually lasted long enough to permit the hasty dispatch of an on-the-spot recorder. But it is safe to say that most of the artist-reporters' work—including that of the broad network of corresponding artists who mailed in their sketches of distant news⁵—occurred after the event, requiring them to reconstruct the news through verbal testimonials and visual transcriptions of the details of place and circumstance. “Most of these scenes so pictured,” *Leslie's* commented regarding its coverage of an 1873 Atlantic shipwreck, “are real: others are pictorial reprints of authentic statements and descriptions, whereby our artists have caught and transcribed the reports of the telegraph.”⁶

The special artist's sketch often took the form of visual notes composed of hastily articulated lines supplemented by written comments supplying information that the artist didn't have the time or inclination to render. “A line made out of doors means as much as a dozen in the studio,” commented *Harper's Weekly* artist Charles Stanley Reinhart,⁷ and it was in the offices of an illustrated newspaper that the concerted work took place of converting the complexity implied in hasty slashes and shadings into a comprehensible picture. There, the special artist returned to work up his rough sketches into a finished drawing, or to hand his visual notes over to one or more staff draftsmen who specialized in specific subjects. The distinction between the artist in the field and the office draftsman was not always that marked, since roles were constantly exchanged depending on assignments and availability. In either case, the

Describing the pictorial coverage of the singular demise (via spontaneous combustion) of the loathsome Krook in his 1853 novel *Bleak House*, Charles Dickens cast an eye on the accuracy and skill of the new profession of the artist-reporter that was almost as jaundiced as the one he aimed at the British legal profession.¹ His derision was no doubt fueled by the speed with which such news images moved from, in Dickens's view, the fallible hand of the artist to the credulous eye of the public. With an impressive dependability, the sixteen-page weekly *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* (often accompanied by supplements and special editions) arrived on newsstands and through the mails with its collection of engravings depicting the events and personages of the previous week.² Supplementing daily press coverage, the pictures in *Frank Leslie's* added palpability to the news, displaying the faces of noted individuals, the contexts and content of events. The paper's contribution to reporting lay in its rapid visualization of the topical and in its transformation

in-house artwork was based on more than eyewitness sketches; office draftsmen often turned to *Leslie's* forever-expanding photographic file as a resource for elaborating on and verifying the observations of the "outside" artists.⁸

The on-the-spot artist's scanty representation was shaped by the limitations of time and the chaos of circumstance, but there could be little motivation for comprehensive sketching in the field when every artist knew that his work served as only the first step in an extended process of pictorial reproduction that would progressively reconfigure his interpretation. Art historians have emphasized what they see as the pure part of the process—the "accurate" or, at the very least, "expressive" artist-reporter's sketch—focusing on the more glamorous figure of the artist in the field while bemoaning the ensuing work of office artists and engravers as dilutions, misrepresentations, and outright infringements on the favored realm of artistic intention. Similarly, historians of photography have made invidious comparisons between the presumed documentary veracity of the photograph and the abuses and unreliability of graphic news imagery.⁹ But perhaps the essence of the original sketch is found less in its authenticity than in its place within a larger practice. Like it or not, it was the *engravings* that appeared in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, as well as in its competitors, that represented the news for readers; the engravings were the images the public viewed and it was their representation of events to which readers responded. In subsequent chapters we will consider how these reproduced images conveyed information and ideas to readers and how they succeeded and failed in conforming to their expectations—how the engravings operated as part of a complex social practice constituted by production methods and audience response. To start such a consideration, however, we must investigate the method of pictorial reproduction, which requires placing the work of the special artist in its proper context as the beginning of the process through which *Frank Leslie's* delivered the representation of the news to the public.

MASS-PRODUCED NEWS

To ensure the survival of an ambitious enterprise like an illustrated newspaper, Frank Leslie had to overcome the obstacles that had doomed earlier endeavors. The public wanted images of the events of the day, pictures that conveyed detailed visual information about the people involved, the

nature of the location featured, and the quality of the experience captured. Moreover, the public wanted pictures while the events were still topical, as an adjunct to the news they read in their newspapers every day. With these demands in mind, Leslie adopted the methods of mass production that were changing the labor process in mid-nineteenth-century America. Copying many of the processes inaugurated by the British illustrated press, Leslie added his own innovations in centralizing, subdividing, and speeding up production. And, as in so many other trades, this industrialization undermined the autonomy and status of craftworkers who saw what had been their signature and intention mediated and transformed into a new, mass-produced form of imagery.

After the art superintendent chose a sketch to be worked up into an engraving—an editorial procedure whose criteria of selection, beyond "newsworthiness," unfortunately remain murky—an artist drew a new version on paper. Rendered in outlines, the new drawing sometimes was merely a tracing of the original sketch; more often the original sketch was reworked with greater detail and consistent perspective, altering its composition to fit the proportions of *Frank Leslie's* page. The outlined drawing was then rubbed down in reverse upon a plank of Turkish boxwood, the surface of which had been polished and lightly whitewashed so that the transferred lines would be easily demarcated.¹⁰

Wood for engraving had to be cut across the grain so that the resulting plank could provide the proper surface for flexible incisions. As the Newcastle copperplate engraver Thomas Bewick discovered at the end of the eighteenth century, planks cut across the grain, where the wood fibers ran perpendicular rather than horizontal to the surface, provided a hard, nonsplintering plane into which one could etch fine lines.¹¹ The durable Turkish boxwood tree, however, rarely reached a diameter beyond six inches. That size was useful for smaller engravings, but the full-page and double-page engravings featured in the illustrated press exceeded the dimensions of the otherwise reliable boxwood. The straightforward solution to the problem, as indicated by the appearance of "oversized" engravings in *Gleason's Pictorial*, was to construct large planks by gluing together smaller blocks. Leslie has been credited with introducing an innovation: rather than gluing component pieces, he composed a large block of smaller sections—ranging between ten and twenty pieces, each approximately two inches square by one inch thick—secured by a system of sunken nuts and bolts (figure 2.1). The new jointed block not only allowed flexible sizing of engravings (and *Frank Leslie's* had more

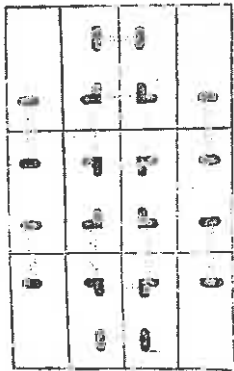


Figure 2.1. "Back of block, showing how it is fastened together." Wood engraving, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, August 2, 1856, 124. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

than its share of special supplemental four-page cuts, measuring twenty by thirty inches); it also was the key to a new process of mass reproduction of engraved images that could deliver pictures of news events to readers only one week after those events had occurred.¹²

With the transfer of the outlined drawing to the composite wood block, the subdivision of labor began in earnest. After one artist used brush and India ink to indicate the broad lights and shadows, the team of artists designated to work on the block gathered together briefly to discuss the overall tone of the composition, a critical consultation since it was for many of these artists the only time they would glimpse the full image. Then the block—sometimes complete, sometimes unbolted and in component parts—followed a harried, if systematic, course from one draftsman to another. Consulting stock drawings and photographs, each artist specialized in one area of drawing (e.g., figures, animals, architecture, landscape, sky, water, and machinery) and was responsible for delineating that detail in washes and pencil line upon the block's surface.¹³ Because drawing on the block was just the start of the process of reproduction, artists worked intensively, devising conventionalized styles to meet short deadlines.

The block, rebolted together, now went to the engraving department. The supervising engraver first surveyed the wash- and pencil-covered surface and proceeded to carve out all the lines that traversed across adjacent constituent blocks, creating guidelines for the engravers who would work on the individual sections. Then the composite block was unbolted again and distributed to between ten and fifteen engravers, once more according to their specific skills. A four-page engraving could involve the work of as many as forty engravers.

According to one reminiscence, the subdivided specialties had their distinctive nicknames: sky and foliage were cut by "pruners"; drapery and cloth went to "tailors"; the youngest and least skilled artisans who were designated to incise the plane geometry of machinery were dubbed

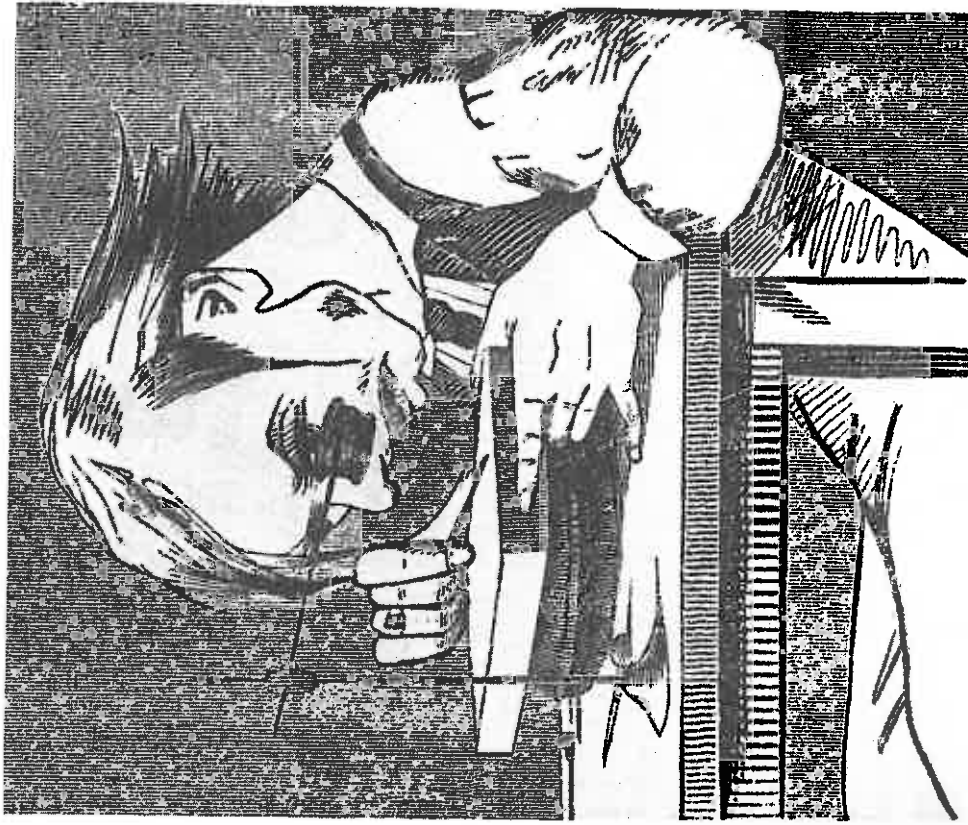


Figure 2.2. "Jonathan's Engraver." Wood engraving, *Yankee Notions* 1.9 (September 1852): 259. American Social History Project, New York.

"mechanics"; and on the more skilled engravers assigned to depict features was bestowed the fading compliment of "butchers." Perched beside a window by day and a lamp or gaslight by night (the illumination focused through a glass globe filled with water), the engravers bent over their work (figure 2.2). Each wearing eyeshades, they peered through watchmaker's lenses down on the block propped upon a small sandbag or leather cushion. Equipped with a number of tools, each with a handle designed to fit snugly in the palm of the hand, they maneuvered the

block to carve out spaces between the drawn lines, or translated shades of gray into analogous incisions. In effect, they thought and worked in what we might term the "negative," cutting out what would later appear as white in the finished engraving and leaving the lines in relief to print black.¹⁴

This specialized and subdivided process, perhaps introduced by Leslie but quickly adopted by all publications that required large, rapidly produced illustrations, marked the decline of wood engraving as a skilled craft. William J. Linton, the radical British engraver who would briefly work for *Frank Leslie's* in the late 1860s, excoriated the industrializing trend that transformed artisans into "two-legged, cheap machines for engraving,—scarcely mechanics, machines, badly geared and ineffective."¹⁵ Engravers were now trained to transcribe the drawn lines and washes into (in the phrase of the print historian William Ivins) "a predetermined system or network of engraved lines."¹⁶ Individual style and expression were suppressed to ensure that the constituent blocks presented a uniform effect. "A certain kind of line, it was held, should be used to represent ground," later remarked John P. Davis, who worked for *Leslie's* in its first years of publication, "another kind to represent foliage; another to represent sky; another, flesh; another drapery, and so on. Each sort of line was the orthodox symbol for a certain form." *Frank Leslie's* engravings, in contrast to the cuts that had been published in *Gleason's Pictorial*, no longer bore engravers' signatures, an absence that symbolized their subordination in the overall process.¹⁷ The decline of engravers' status was also denoted by the increasing feminization of the trade. Women did not invade the male enclave of the newspaper publishing house but worked freelance at home or in the few woman-run engraving shops. In New York, the Ladies School of Design, which opened in 1852 and then affiliated with Cooper Union in 1859, became a crucial if uncredited locus for the employment of women engravers. Assuming guardianship over women trained under its auspices, Cooper Union's engraving school (at which both Linton and Davis taught) commissioned jobs for its advanced students and alumnae and provided facilities for carrying out the work.¹⁸ The rise of a "New School" of wood engraving in the 1880s, inspired by the process of photoxylography in which photographs of artwork were directly transferred to the woodblock surface, would further diminish the engraver's task.¹⁹ Heralding a new era of art engraving with engravers inventing new codes that mimicked brush strokes and other painterly techniques, the New School ac-

tually marked the last phase of a dying craft; within a generation the half-tone would lead to engravers' virtual obsolescence.

Through the innovation of the divisible boxwood block, the time to engrave a full-page illustration was reduced from more than a week to approximately eight hours. As described by Hiram Merrill, who engraved for *Harper's Weekly* in the 1890s, even at that late date stringent deadlines dictated marathon bouts of engraving, often performed overnight:

... Mr. Smithwick (the director) would come around about three o'clock and whisper: "We're going to be busy tonight, Merrill, so you had better go out and get the air. Be back by 6 o'clock!"

I would promptly head for Dietz's Weinstube, which was crowded under the New York end of the Brooklyn Bridge, and soon another engraver would pop in, and another, until nearly all the eight engravers who were to work on the page were collected there. Some solid and liquid food was obtained, and then we usually started up Broadway to study art in the saloons along the way. . . . By 6 o'clock we had returned to the shop, rested and ready for the work. I cannot recall that the engraved work suffered noticeably in quality.²⁰

After the individual engravers were finished, the constituent blocks were rebolted together. Here, the supervising engraver applied his finishing touches, ensuring that incised lines met across the sections. Even with his best efforts, however, the final completed engraving often betrayed the contours of the individual blocks, which appeared as ghostly white lines (called "block marks" by engravers). Flawed or not, the engraved jointed block was then sent to the composing room, where it was locked into place with handset type to create a *Frank Leslie's* page.²¹

The page, however, was not printed directly from the form containing the wood engravings and hot type. Each page was electrotyped, a process that involved making a beeswax mold of the entire page and then immersing it in an electrocharged bath containing copper particles. The final cardboard-thin copperplate took between thirty and forty-eight hours to produce; though the procedure was slow, multiple plates could be made from one page form, making possible extended print runs. Electrotyping was a significant advance over the earlier stereotype process using plaster molds and fragile metal casts. The new process was substantially shortened when the electrical source was changed from a battery to a dynamo, enabling a plate to be formed in thirty minutes; by the 1880s three sets of *Frank Leslie's*, comprising forty-eight pages, were being electrotyped in three hours.²²

After the plates were secured to the cylinders of the printing press, one last step affected the appearance of the engravings. One impression of each engraving was made on a piece of thick paper; the white sections of each printed paper were then sliced away, leaving a reverse paper stencil. Printers then placed this "overlay," or parts of it, onto the cylinder, determining how its strategic placement would add to the pressure of the press in specific areas to strengthen and vary the blacks in each engraving (in contrast to the uniform tone of the type).²³

The purchase of a new Taylor Perfecting Press in 1858 significantly increased the speed of printing *Frank Leslie's*. Whereas previously the paper had to be produced in two print runs—one for illustrated pages, one for type—the Taylor press printed the weekly's sixteen pages on two sides of one large sheet of paper at a rate of 1,200 copies an hour. The resulting printed sheet carried eight pages of illustrations and text on one side and eight pages containing solely text on the other. To achieve the folio magazine with its alternating illustrated and text spreads required careful folding of the sheet and the slicing of horizontal creases to release the pages—but where these latter finishing touches were applied depended on the destination of the weekly. From the press room, some of the printed sheets of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* were delivered to a packing room where individual copies were folded, placed in wrappers, and mailed to subscribers who, following enclosed instructions, slit apart the pages; other sheets were bound into rolls of one hundred and sent to newsagents who both folded the copies and cut the pages to create the folio edition sold to customers. Finally, folded issues were allotted to waiting squads of newsboys who went off to vociferously hawk *Leslie's* latest edition in the New York streets (often, no doubt, selling its competitors as well).²⁴

APPEALING TO A NEW AUDIENCE

Frank Leslie's process of mass-producing images ensured that its readers would be furnished with visual representations of news events, often within days of their occurrence and at a relatively modest price. The adoption of an industrial model for producing visual news coverage represented one critical part in Leslie's strategy to construct a commercially viable illustrated paper. Another crucial factor, which complemented this technological and organizational transformation of production, involved Leslie's orientation toward his market. Leslie framed his publishing house, and particularly his capstone eponymous newsweekly, to re-

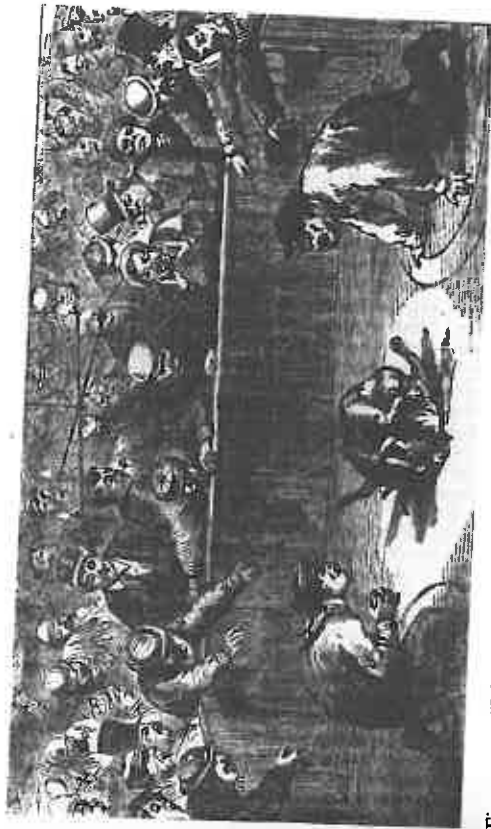


Figure 2.3. "The dog pit at Kit Burns' during a fight." Wood engraving, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, December 8, 1866, 181. American Social History Project, New York.

semble the very public he required to sustain the expensive operation of publishing a pictorial paper.

Unlike the House of Harper, his staid rival, Frank Leslie teetered on the cusp of respectability. While *Harper's Weekly* demurred, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* delved into the realm of sensation: its engravings depicting the scenes, perpetrators, and victims of notorious crimes alternated with less topical but equally lurid glimpses of raucous, sexually charged cheap amusements and violent "rough" sports. At times, as contemporary critics charged, *Frank Leslie's* appeared to be an illustrated adjunct to the daily penny press, or yet one more addition to weekly illustrated publications directed at plebeian tastes, such as the *National Police Gazette* (started in 1845).²⁵

Yet such representations of the lurid and profane were often accompanied or succeeded by images depicting differing perspectives: scenes of brawny bare-knuckle boxing matches were coupled with editorial diatribes about the moral degradation engendered by such amusements, or with pictures portraying the intervention of authorities; the six engravings detailing the dogfights held in Kit Burns's Sportsmen's Hall included cuts showing the gruesome effect of the sport and, two weeks later, an engraving of the proprietor's arrest (figure 2.3).²⁶ A strong dose of moral reform lay embedded in the weekly's representations of the sensational, an aspect that Leslie consistently emphasized when confronted

with charges of pandering to popularity. "We take some pride," *Leslie's* declared after depicting Kit Burns's arrest,

in knowing that the graphic illustration of the cruelties practiced in that place . . . was the means of directing the special attention of the police to the existence of such a den, and thus led to its suppression. And it is not unworthy of note, as showing the influence of such appeals to the sensibilities as only the pictorial art can give, that the written description of the scenes in Water Street, published by a daily contemporary, was read with indifference, if not with incredulity, by the public. . . . No more palpable instance can be given than this of the service an illustrated paper can render to the great cause of morals, and of the superiority we have in this respect over the daily journals, whose articles, however well written, must necessarily lack the striking appeal to the eye supplied by an illustrated newspaper like our own.²⁷

Adding insult to injury, as far as *Leslie's* critics were concerned, *Frank Leslie's* also took aim at the inadequacies—and pomposity—of non-pictorial reform efforts. Its brash publication of two contrasting engravings, showing evangelical reformers momentarily possessing Kit Burns's turf only to be replaced one hour later by a rat-baiting match, served to promote the superiority of *Leslie's* efforts. Such pictures also presented another perspective, adding yet one more ball to an editorial juggling act designed to address all viewpoints (despite the publication's reform claims to the contrary). As a correspondent of the *New York Express* opined, "It is difficult to find out what Mr. Leslie's personal politics are, since his serials all seem to have a different way of thinking; but no one can doubt the ability he bestows in at least hitting all around."²⁸

Frank Leslie's inclusive approach, its balancing of depictions of rough pastimes and reform, of the profane and the pompous, seems to substantiate contemporary and later charges of opportunism. However, while we should not ignore Leslie's bow to crass practicality, the simple reduction of the weekly's approach to "pandering to the masses" fails to consider how its inclusive, alternating coverage extended beyond the sensational to represent constituencies and popular pastimes that the more respectable *Harper's Weekly* steadfastly omitted. For example, the broad and varied world of the New York stage was a frequent subject in *Leslie's* pages. Theatrical audiences were increasingly bifurcating into class-defined spaces, but *Frank Leslie's* remained attentive to "blood and thunder" productions in the Bowery Theatre as well as to the more subdued theatricals performed in polite parlors.²⁹ And, whereas the pronounced

Protestant bias of *Harper's Weekly* was displayed in its treatment of Catholics as little more than subjects for the revelation of vice, *Leslie's* added coverage of the Catholic Church to its pictorial representation of religious pursuits. "While the Harpers are blackguarding us at every turn," one Catholic paper later commented, "it is pleasant to have this able journal animated by the spirit of even-handed justice and fair play toward our Church."³⁰

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper endeavored to address the varied constituencies that constituted the vastly expanded reading public. In effect, Leslie constructed his weekly newspaper to mirror that diversified marketplace. His larger publishing house approached this readership differently, if consistently. "Frank Leslie deserves to be called the pioneer and founder of illustrated journalism in America," New York publisher J. C. Derby remarked in his 1884 memoir. "He understood what the great reading public in this country wanted, and provided it, so that all tastes were satisfied by one or another of his many publications."³¹ *Leslie's* other periodicals were targeted at more specific audiences—fashion and story magazines for women, a newsweekly for German immigrants, a humor magazine for men, pristine story and instructional periodicals for the "family" (including didactic children's publications)—and overall, they embodied the range of the reading public. Leslie's book publishing ventures, begun in the 1860s, resembled his approach to periodicals. Frank Leslie's Publishing House printed expensive "souvenir" books (commemorating and reproducing *Frank Leslie's* pictorial coverage of the Civil War and, later, the 1876 Centennial Exposition), reprint editions of established nineteenth-century authors, and a series of cheap paper-cover "railroad" books (mostly reprints of stories and serialized novels published in one or another of *Leslie's* magazines), the latter available at newsstands, station kiosks, and on trains.³² In time, Leslie would genuinely embrace the "profane" as well by founding *The Days' Doings* in 1868. "Illustrating Current Events of Romance, Police Reports, Important Trials, and Sporting News," *The Days' Doings* assumed some of the sensational features previously published in a regular department of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*. Begun in 1866, "Home Incidents, Accidents, &c." offered readers a weekly page full of small cuts and brief reports about the gruesome, scandalous, and strange, closely resembling a pocket edition of the *Police Gazette*. It disappeared from *Leslie's* pages when publication of *The Days' Doings* began. Directed to a male, "nonparlor" readership, *Leslie's* sensational weekly paid

some obeisance to respectability by bearing no direct indication of his proprietorship.³³

In attempting to address the reading public, Frank Leslie's Publishing House, and especially *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, became a manifestation of that audience. Leslie's operation was rooted firmly in— if also in contradiction to—the material world of mid-nineteenth-century publishing as it began its transformation from small shop to culture industry. Leslie was certainly representative, and in some cases prototypical, of a new generation of periodical publishers whose firms were coalescing into centralized and heavily capitalized giants; for some of these publishers, one condition of that growth was the expansion of “legitimate” subject matter beyond the gentility harbored in older publications. While the established Harper Brothers firm relied on economies of scale to support a range of publications, it nonetheless consistently focused on a “politer” audience. Leslie's publishing company from the start was built on the more tenuous foundation of a broad and diverse readership. To survive, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* had to appeal beyond the localism of the daily press or the cloistered audiences for genteel publications to a public large enough to cover the exceptionally high production costs of an illustrated newspaper. In short, Leslie designed his illustrated newspaper for a “middle” readership, a vast and elastic range of readers that, in the miasma of class relations and formation in mid-nineteenth-century America, stretched across the nation and into the territories, and extended from mechanics to merchants. This public, composed of diverse constituencies, required an approach to pictorial news coverage that addressed differences and, more uneasily, attempted to encompass them.³⁴

Who exactly read *Leslie's* remains difficult to determine, reader polls and research being inventions of a later magazine era. *Frank Leslie's* references to its readers tended toward self-serving paeans to the “more matured classes of our people, the active, the enterprising, educated, and refined.” Whatever specificity might accrue to that remark was lost in other editorials that commented on how *Leslie's* “pictures appeal immediately and forcibly to the masses” or that, more ecumenically, touted its “pictorial illustration for everyday reading by all classes of the community.”³⁵ Stepping back from *Leslie's* columns for a moment, we can safely say that as comparatively inexpensive as the weekly's price was, at six cents (or seven, or eight, or the final figure of ten cents) per copy, regular purchase of the weekly would severely tax the budgets of many working-class households. The penny press gained its readership, after

all, by its price as well as its reportage. However, evidence exists that *Leslie's* was read by working people: the weekly printed a few communications from miners regarding coverage as well as endorsements from other publications that indicated a readership extending not only across class but into comparatively isolated regions of the country. At the risk of further muddying the interpretive waters, we must keep in mind that *Leslie's* circulation figures, undependable as they are, do not reflect individual sales. Copies clearly circulated among populations, especially in the unions, associations, and organizations that were able to procure *Frank Leslie's* through the more economical club subscription rates.³⁶ Finally, the venues for viewing the pictorial press extended beyond the proverbial parlor. Observing the downtown Pittsburgh streets after the ironworks let out on a Saturday afternoon in the late 1860s, the journalist James Parton noted the public nature of plebeian culture in respect to reading the news: “They [working-class families] stroll about; they stand conversing in groups; they gather in semicircles, about every shop-window that has a picture in it, or any bright or curious object; especially do they haunt the news-stands, which provide a free picture-gallery for them of Illustrated News, Comic Monthlies, and Funny Fellows.” And, as recent scholarship on late-nineteenth-century reading has indicated, public libraries served as a crucial location for many working-class readers.³⁷

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper was hardly unique to the period, and it is helpful to consider another entrepreneur of the popular to better capture the essence of the weekly's appeal and approach to its readers. We can do so without taking any great conceptual or temporal leap. *Leslie's* introduction to the American audience, and particularly the increasingly varied urban crowd, took place under the auspices of Phineas T. Barnum. Accompanying the 1850–51 Jenny Lind tour, *Leslie* not only ascertained the nature of the public he wished to reach but also observed how Barnum successfully structured his amusements to fit the opportunities and strictures of that public.

If *Frank Leslie's* resembles any other cultural entity in the mid-nineteenth century it is Barnum's American Museum on Broadway. In purchasing the foundering Scudder Museum in 1843, Barnum took an institution that through its exhibits and classifications embodied rational education and transformed it into a venue that combined unrestricted entertainment with instruction and moral uplift. For a twenty-five-cent admission, visitors viewed peculiar “transient attractions,” from the patchwork Feejee Mermaid to the diminutive and articulate Tom

Thumb. But the museum, festooned in Bowery bunting and glutted with oddities, also promulgated educational ends, including temperance and Shakespearean dramas in its "Lecture Room," or theater. Thus, in one site, Barnum not only gathered exhibitions and amusements that previously had been sequestered in separate locations; he also coalesced a new audience that ranged from the truculent Bowery denizens Mose and Lize to families in search of "respectable" edification. In an urban culture characterized by increasing difference—in taste, in subject, and in audience—Barnum constructed a middle institution where, in one place, diverse constituencies could gather if not merge.³⁸

Like Barnum's American Museum, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* prospered because of its ability to both address and encompass difference. However, at least for the reading public, this inclusiveness could never successfully bridge oppositions. A middle periodical sooner or later would be confronted with the realization that its heady concoction of diversity also carried an explosive charge. As we will see in subsequent chapters, the broad public that *Frank Leslie's* attempted to address would at times fracture into opposing constituencies. Losing its footing on such tenuous turf, *Leslie's* would grapple for purchase by reconfiguring its pictorial coverage.

THE CIVIL WAR

We need not look far for such hazards in the history of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*—or, for that matter, in the history of the United States. The rapid secession of southern states following Abraham Lincoln's victory in November 1860 threw *Leslie's* and its rival illustrated papers into a quandary. Along with northern literary monthlies such as *Harper's Monthly* and *Godey's Lady's Book*, the pictorial weeklies had made vast inroads into the southern market (much to the consternation of cultural advocates below the Mason-Dixon line who saw these publications as part of a northern hegemony smothering regional literature and art). For *Leslie's*, war threatened to cut off a significant readership on whose patronage it had come to rely. In the years leading up to secession, the weekly had circumspectly ignored slavery to focus on travelers' accounts and scenic views of the South. Nevertheless, by simply covering the looming crisis, the illustrated paper made southern enemies: *Leslie's* editorials opposed abolition and denounced John Brown as a "maniac," but its extended coverage of the Harpers Ferry raid and Brown's ensu-

ing trial and execution fanned southern ire. "These Northern illustrated papers are all unworthy of respect," fumed the *Savannah News* in January 1861. "Frank Leslie's paper is as bad as the one before us and *Harper's Weekly* is not one whit better. Their sale at the South—and the *New York Ledger*, the *New York Mercury*, et id omne genus—should be interdicted. They are incendiary and pernicious, to say nothing of their demoralizing effect."³⁹ By conveying the news of growing sectional conflict—by reporting on the presidential campaign, transcribing speeches, and publishing engravings of turbulent rallies—the press in general served as a catalyst in the general deterioration leading to war. No matter how hard *Leslie's* tried to "balance" its coverage, the publication of pictures that portrayed sectional division undermined compromise. Its images unavoidably depicted a nation fracturing in two.⁴⁰

In the first few months of 1861, as one southern state after another seceded from the Union, *Frank Leslie's* attempted to retain its southern readers. Its editorials criticizing Lincoln's new administration were in perfect harmony with the pro-southern Democratic press in the North. "The destruction of our Union, merely to rescue a runaway nigger," *Leslie's* concluded in February 1861, "would be as absurd as the Chianaman who set fire to his house merely to roast a little pig."⁴¹ Later that month, it accepted the establishment of the Confederacy and called for compromise with the new southern nation (a position mirrored by the Republican *Harper's Weekly*). Meanwhile, preparing for the worst, *Leslie's* endeavored to position itself as a nonpartisan chronicler of events, "without bias and without feeling." As Fort Sumter lay under siege, the weekly published a call for artists on both sides of the barricades:

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

To Officers and others Attached to the Armies of
the Federal and the Confederate States

I shall be happy to receive from Officers and others attached to either Army, sketches of important events and striking incidents which may occur during the impending struggle which seems to threaten the country. For such sketches, forwarded promptly, I will pay liberally. . . .

Any gentleman connected with either Army who will forward us a small sketch, as a specimen of his ability as a draughtsman, will receive, gratuitously, "Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper," for the coming year. . . .

The most convincing proof of the reliability and accuracy of our illustrations is, that ours is the only Illustrated Paper which is allowed to circulate freely in the South, and an additional proof is, that it stands a critical examination in those places where the scenes we illustrate occurred.⁴²

Once Fort Sumter was bombarded, however, *Frank Leslie's* became a vigorous supporter of the Union. Forsaking its southern readers, *Leslie's* found a new, broader audience for its coverage in a North mobilized by war. Embracing partisanship, it soon proved, was an economically feasible choice for the illustrated press. Whereas the loss of southern subscribers would lead to the demise of many northern magazines that had managed to survive the depression of the late 1850s, *Leslie's*, *Harper's Weekly*, and the *New York Illustrated News*, in concert with the nation's daily press, discovered that civil war gave them a new stature and importance. Northerners were desperate for the latest news about the conflict; and in purveying information, the press became an indispensable part of most citizens' everyday life. Newspaper circulation soared as reporters, aided by the telegraph, presented news within a day of its occurrence. But in the years leading up to war, the reading public had grown used to observing pictorial representations of news events. While daily newspapers could provide only maps and occasional portraits, the weekly illustrated press offered pictures that conveyed stories and visual evidence about the progress of the war. Five months after the attack on Fort Sumter, the circulation of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* hovered at an exceedingly profitable 200,000.⁴³

Historians of the Civil War have recognized its visualization as a unique feature of the conflict. Because the war coincided with technological innovations in pictorial recording and reproduction, it was perceived through new informational forms—engravings and photographs. Historians have emphasized the photograph over the engraving, retrospectively attributing significance to the former's representational detail, clarity, and "authenticity."⁴⁴ Observing the thousands of pictures taken by Mathew Brady, Alexander Gardner, Timothy O'Sullivan, and other photographers who accompanied the Union Army, scholars have judged the engravings published weekly in the illustrated press to be poor substitutes. Clearly, the celebrated photographs of mangled bodies and smoldering buildings presented the public with new, gruesome evidence of the effect of total war. But the extremely slow exposure time and precarious "wet plate" process of developing photographs limited their representations. "The photographer who follows in the wake of modern armies," observed the *London Times* in December 1862, "must be content with conditions of repose, and with the still life which remains when the fighting is over[.]"⁴⁵ Moreover, the limitations of pictorial reproduction made photographs largely exhibition pieces, which lined the walls of Broadway photographic salons or were "published" in albums and ste-

reograph cards. The photograph stands as an invaluable pictorial record for the historian; for the northern public during the Civil War, however, the engravings in the illustrated press—almost 6,000 cuts by one estimate—though they were at times based on photographs, outweighed in their accessibility and immediacy the comparatively expensive photographic albums and cards.⁴⁶

Every week, the northern public examined new engravings depicting detailed panoramas of battles, specific incidents during combat, and the mundane and peculiar camp life of "Billy Yank." The home front also was a subject for news illustration, as the weeklies showed women sewing havelocks for the troops, resplendent Sanitary Commission fairs, and raucous recruitment rallies, as well as political dissension and social revolt (most conspicuously in the draft riots of July 1863). Such engravings, along with the ubiquitous portraits of Union officers and politicians, not only presented information but also served as a source of popular art: "All over the country," *Harper's Weekly* commented in 1865, "thousands and thousands of the faces and events which the war has made illustrious are tacked and pinned and pasted upon the humblest walls."⁴⁷ The pictorial papers' readership extended to the battlefield. Languishing in isolated encampments during the long intervals between combat, soldiers eagerly sought any form of reading matter. *Frank Leslie's*, *Harper's Weekly*, and the *New York Illustrated News* were particular favorites; unlike the literary magazines, their appeal extended across the ranks. Although the United States Sanitary Commission distributed illustrated papers as part of its support service, and some soldiers subscribed to the weeklies (usually receiving their copies weeks late), most soldiers bought copies directly from the sutlers and newsboys who followed the troops. Faced with a ravenous hunger for publications, these roving newsagents often raised their prices as much as 250 percent; and even at those rates, they usually sold out their stock. "A curious sight it was to see," remarked a British traveler who arrived at one camp on a mail boat carrying a consignment of illustrated papers, "a tearing up of envelopes . . . a general rustle of opening leaves, and in a moment every man as if it had been part of his drill, was down upon the ground with the same big picture before him." By the time each copy had been read, passed from one soldier to another, all that remained were tatters of newsprint.⁴⁸

While Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson, commander of the African American First South Carolina Volunteers, would dismiss "*Leslie's Pictorial*" as one of the many newspapers used to blot up stains in the

officers' mess ("Every steamer brings us a clean table-cloth"), the illustrated papers found avid readers among black troops. In a report on freedmen's schools made to the commissioners of the Freedmen's Bureau in January 1866, an army surgeon noted the newly literate black soldiers stationed at Fort Livingston in New Orleans: "A short time since the commanding officer of the fort told the doctor that the soldiers, who were his A B C pupils one year ago, now took over forty copies of Harper's and Frank Leslie's weeklies, besides other papers."⁴⁹

The thousands of engravings published in New York City by the three weekly illustrated newspapers and disseminated throughout the Union and on the warfront portrayed the Civil War from a decidedly northern perspective. Copies of the northern illustrated papers also managed to make their way into the Confederacy, where their resolute depiction of the northern side aroused equal measures of interest and venom. "The pictures in 'Harper's Weekly' and 'Frank Leslie's' tell more lies than Satan himself was ever the father of," wrote Georgia's Eliza Francis Andrews in her journal. "I get in such a rage when I look at them that sometimes I take off my slipper and beat the senseless paper with it."⁵⁰

In comparison, only a handful of images were produced in the South representing the Civil War behind Confederate lines. In September 1862 the Richmond publishing firm of Ayers and Wade established the *Southern Illustrated News*, an eight-page weekly that aimed to present a pictorial record of the Confederacy at war. However, faced with the loss of materials previously supplied by northern industry and cut off by the naval blockade from an alternative European supply, the Confederacy lacked the resources necessary for publishing any pictorial paper comparable to *Frank Leslie's* or *Harper's Weekly*. From its inception, the *Southern Illustrated News* struggled with shortages of paper, ink, and printing presses. Most crucially, the southern weekly could not find competent engravers to produce its pictures. A July 1863 notice offering craftsmen "the highest salaries ever paid in this country for good engravers" ultimately failed to elicit any response.⁵¹ As a result, the paper was largely composed of text with one portrait of a Confederate general or crudely engraved scene on its cover, and one cartoon on its back page. In November 1864 the *Southern Illustrated News* ceased publication. The scarcity of resources also undermined the operations of two other short-lived and barely illustrated periodicals, *Southern Punch* and the Raleigh *Illustrated Mercury*.⁵²

Extensive pictorial coverage of the Confederacy was supplied by one



Figure 2.4. "Family worship in a plantation in North Carolina." Wood engraving based on a sketch by Frank Vizetelly, *Illustrated London News*, December 5, 1863, 561. American Social History Project, New York.

publication, but its provenance lay far from the American South and its engravings were viewed by only a small minority of southern readers. With the outbreak of war, the *Illustrated London News* dispatched Frank Vizetelly, the younger brother of the British weekly's co-founder (and himself co-founder of the Paris *Le Monde Illustré* in 1857), to cover the conflict. Fresh from reporting on Garibaldi's campaign, Vizetelly soon witnessed and recorded the Union rout at Bull Run. After the *Illustrated London News* published uncompromising engravings based on Vizetelly's sketches, Secretary of War Stanton turned down the British artist-correspondent's request to accompany McClellan's planned advance into Virginia. Frustrated, Vizetelly went South to depict the Confederacy at war from the Battle of Fredericksburg in 1862 to Jefferson Davis's ignominious departure from Richmond in 1865. Vizetelly's engravings depicted more than warfare or camp life from behind Confederate lines; an ardent supporter of the southern cause, he also sympathetically presented the "civilization" that was being defended (figure 2.4). While the *Illustrated London News* published 133 engravings based on his sketches, few of these images appeared on this side of

the Atlantic; those that did were published in *Harper's Weekly* after Vizetelly's sketches were commandeered en route to England by the Union naval blockade.⁵³

Though Frank Vizetelly gained some fame in the South, it was the more numerous special artists of the northern illustrated press who won broad public recognition through their pictorial service and their (often self-proclaimed) exploits. A comparatively small part of the vast "Bohemian Brigade" of reporters who thronged the war front, the artist-correspondents were dashing, theatricalized figures, constructing themselves as roving servants to the news positioned between the military and the public. "As you know," *Frank Leslie's* Henri Lovie reported to the weekly's readers in December 1861,

I have travelled in all directions—from Western Maryland to the Indian Territories; made the acquaintance of a great many different divisions of the army, and so informed myself of their movements, so as to be at the *right* place at the *right* time. All this has kept me moving incessantly . . . I have spent more than three months in the open air, sleeping in tents or bivouacs, and have ridden nearly 1,000 miles on horseback. A "Special Artist's" life is certainly not one of elegant leisure, but I like action, and have no objection to a spice of danger. I have several horses at various points, which have "come to me," and am prepared for whatever may turn up.⁵⁴

Representing themselves in their sketches as inevitably bearded, wearing knee-high boots and a rakishly angled broad-brimmed hat, and burdened by revolver, canteen, knife, binoculars, and, of course, drawing pad, the Civil War special artist inaugurated the romantic image of the wartime correspondent that, with minor variations, would persist through the twentieth century.

"We have had since the commencement of the present war," *Frank Leslie's* proudly announced in December 1864, "over eighty artists engaged in making sketches for our paper, and have published nearly three thousand pictures of battles, sieges, bombardments, and other scenes incidental to the war."⁵⁵ This number, if the claim was anywhere near true, was composed mainly of "amateurs" within the ranks of the military. During the first half of 1861, most of the engravings in *Leslie's Harper's Weekly*, and the New York *Illustrated News* were based on contributions mailed to New York from military outposts. Once the war started, however, the pictorial papers quickly organized a coterie of artists: William Campbell has counted thirty special artists who each contributed more than ten drawings to the three illustrated weeklies. Alto-

gether, *Leslie's* employed sixteen, as many artists as the two other weeklies combined (occasionally losing one to its competitors).⁵⁶

No doubt, for the purposes of copy, the life of the special artists was adventurous. But as the war continued, it also proved to be fraught with difficulties and danger. Their middle position, as neither civilians nor soldiers, provided opportunities but also hazards. When not being harassed by hostile officers—Henri Lovie presented his credentials to William T. Sherman in October 1861 and was immediately expelled from Louisville—they risked capture and injury: *Leslie's* John F. E. Hillen was briefly caught by Confederate troops at the Battle of Chickamauga, and later was severely wounded while accompanying the now more cooperative Sherman during his campaign against Atlanta.⁵⁷ Even when not confronting combat, artists had to endure lengthy bouts of discomfort and deprivation. Writing in a May 1862 issue of *Leslie's*, William Waud reported on the conditions under which he lived while accompanying Farragut's expedition against New Orleans: "Our diet . . . is simple, if not cheap, consisting of hard ship biscuit—which we beg of the marines opposite—harder salt tongue, and coffee without milk or sugar. Add to this . . . that our sleeping arrangements imply no blankets, which I neglected to bring and which I cannot buy; imagine all this and more, and you will form some notion of the delights of a 'Special Artist' off the mouth of the Mississippi."⁵⁸ Although all the special artists were young, with the oldest in his early thirties, most suffered repeated and debilitating bouts of illness.

But the greatest challenge that faced these artists was fulfilling the task of sketching combat. With the exception of Thomas Nast, who had covered Garibaldi in Italy (but who would do little battlefield work during the Civil War), none of the special artists had ever experienced warfare, let alone attempted to draw its particulars while under fire. "I fully expected when I started for the front," *Frank Leslie's* Edwin Forbes later recalled, "to accompany troops into the battle and seat myself complacently on a convenient hillside and sketch exciting incidents at my leisure."⁵⁹ Once faced with actual battle conditions, Forbes and his compatriots devised new strategies for recording the fighting. When possible, artists located an elevated position behind the lines from which they could sketch the events. From such a vantage point, they gained a more comprehensible panoramic view while, with the aid of binoculars, they also observed specific aspects of the fighting. Nevertheless, not all of the battles of the Civil War provided a conveniently detached vantage, and as the artist-correspondents would learn, actual warfare was

more chaotic and harder to grasp at a glance than the conventions of history painting that governed the pictorial representation of combat suggested.⁶⁰

When the fighting was over, the job of sketching had only begun: artists spent hours doing follow-up drawings on the littered battlefield and interviewing soldiers to find order in the confusion. "I commenced on the extreme left wing," Henri Lovie wrote in a letter accompanying his packet of sketches depicting the Battle of Shiloh, "and visited every division, obtained guides, listened to all stories from all sides, and made upwards of 20 local sketches of positions and scenery, including all the battlegrounds—for there were many—and send them to you in something like their logical and chronological relation, a task of no little difficulty, where nobody knows what was done by anybody else."⁶¹

Based on observation and secondhand description, these sketches were rendered hurriedly in penciled shorthand with scribbled notations or, time permitting, organized and ordered into comprehensible compositions in washes and white on colored paper, and then were mailed back to New York. At the offices of *Frank Leslie's, Harper's Weekly*, and the *New York Illustrated News* the sketches were reconfigured for the boxwood block in the complicated reproduction process described above. Rough sketches were worked up into finished drawings, and compositions were often revised to fit the dimensions of the woodblock.⁶² Although images were occasionally altered to spare readers "offensive" details, the one historian to methodically compare sketches to finished engravings has concluded that the alterations were minor.⁶³

Nonetheless, inaccuracies abounded in the engravings; these errors often arose from the invention of the staff artist, but they could be found on the pages of the field sketchpad as well. *Leslie's* William Waud, in an 1864 letter to his brother Alfred, a special artist for *Harper's Weekly*, noted how officers' hostility to the artist-correspondents was mixed with a low regard for their abilities: "Gen Patrick told me he should have kicked the artist out of Camp but that Gen Meade to whom they [the artist's sketches] were shewn said they were so unlike the places they were intended for & so bad they could do no harm."⁶⁴

The officers' irritation with the representations and representatives of the illustrated press was understandable insofar as *Frank Leslie's*, in particular, made it a point in its editorials to excoriate the upper ranks, not to mention the Lincoln administration, when battles were lost or their outcomes were indeterminate. As *Leslie's* saw it, the Union army was in-

domitable but for inept or corrupt officers and officials—a stance that undoubtedly endeared the weekly to its readers in the ranks. Yet these soldier-readers, these unmitigated pictorial-press enthusiasts, enjoyed pointing out the engravings' inaccuracies and fantasies as much as they enjoyed lavishing attention on the cuts' overall depiction of warfare. Negligible errors involving misplaced scabbards or uniforms drew constant comment. But it was the larger representation of combat that at times raised the greatest mirth, such as engravings that depicted officers valiantly leading their men into enemy fire, the troops marching in perfect shoulder-to-shoulder symmetry, or cuts showing cavalrmen charging forward, firing rifles and swinging sabers while exhibiting little concern for how they might stay atop their horses. "If all the terrific hand-to-hand encounters which we have seen for two or three years displayed in the pages of our popular weeklies had actually occurred," the *Army and Navy Journal* commented in 1864, "the combatants on each side would long ago have mutually annihilated each other[.]"⁶⁵

Accuracy was important to the illustrated papers, which frequently published soldiers' testimonials to the "correctness" of the engravings' portrayals, but it seemed of less concern to *Frank Leslie's* and the other pictorial papers than "authenticity." Throughout the war, the papers constantly defended their illustrations as based on eyewitness observation while simultaneously and ceaselessly accusing their competitors of fabrication. The satirical weekly *Vanity Fair* persistently ragged the pictorial press in cartoons showing artists drawing toy soldiers "on the spot," or diligently recording a ship explosion (having clairvoyantly predicted its destruction).⁶⁶ As a consequence of the charges and countercharges, the papers increasingly ascribed authorship of their pictures to individual artists, a strategy simultaneously adopted by the daily press in the *Herald's* innovation of reporters' "by lines" in 1863. *Frank Leslie's* adopted its own particular method to establish the "authenticity" of its representations: it issued prestamped drawing pads to its artists that bore in the lower left corner of each sheet the statement, "An actual sketch, made on the spot by one of the Special Artists of Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper. Mr. Leslie holds the copyright and reserves the exclusive rights of publication."⁶⁷ As the second sentence suggests, *Frank Leslie's* was as concerned about preventing any other publication from using its artists' work—a realistic problem after the weekly donated 500 drawings for sale at the U.S. Sanitary Commission's 1864 New York Metropolitan Fair—as about authenticating the origin of its engravings.



Figure 2.5. "The Charge of the First Iowa Regiment, with General Lyon at its head, at the Battle of Wilson's Creek, near Springfield, Missouri." Wood engraving based on a sketch by Henri Lovie, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, August 31, 1861, 244. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

The criticisms and defenses, the demands for accountability regarding the "truth" of the visualization of war, should not obscure the fact that the engravings in the illustrated press changed substantially over the course of the Civil War. As W. Fletcher Thompson Jr. has compellingly argued in *The Image of War: The Pictorial Reporting of the American Civil War*, the romanticism of early engravings, where combatants assumed the classic poses of academic painting, soon gave way to less lyrical compositions. Henri Lovie's depiction of General Nathaniel Lyon's death at the Battle of Wilson's Creek, published as an engraving in *Frank Leslie's* in August 1861, preserved the familiar heroic conventions of gesture and pose (figure 2.5). By October 1862 an engraving of "Maryland and Pennsylvania farmers visiting the battle-field of Antietam," based on a sketch by Frank H. Schell, portrayed the carnage after the battle—highlighting corpses that, while not dismembered, were twisted in the gruesome clutches of rigor mortis—and also showed the morbid curiosity of local inhabitants touring the field (figure 2.6).⁶⁸

The most distinctive transformation in representation during the war occurred in the depiction of African Americans. Confronted by slaves'

flight to Union lines, their sheltering of Union soldiers who had escaped from southern prisons, and their self-possessed activities in the Union-controlled South Carolina Sea Islands, the illustrated press—in concert with the northern public generally—departed from its earlier anti-abolitionist stance to embrace emancipation. *Frank Leslie's*, along with its two competitors, supported the recruitment of black troops; and as they portrayed the troops' role in prosecuting the war, the familiar physiognomic codes of race evident in antebellum depictions of African Americans sometimes diminished. Engravings such as *Leslie's* "Assault of the Second Louisiana (Colored) Regiment on the Confederate Works at Port Hudson, May 27, 1863," based on a sketch by Frank H. Schell (figure 2.7), extolled the bravery of black troops as much as, a year later, its cuts depicting Confederate soldiers slaughtering captured black soldiers at Fort Pillow, Tennessee, testified to black soldiers' sacrifice for the Union cause.⁶⁹

The overall change in the pictorial reporting of the Civil War was predicated at least in part on the artists' experiences in the field, where expectations and assumptions were progressively undermined by the reality of the war. But change cannot be located at only one source, and the alterations in representation also reflected interaction with the subjects of the imagery and the readers of the illustrated press, as well as competition between the papers themselves. As later chapters will discuss, the mediation of these forces of production and consumption, as they composed a social practice, would continue to affect the nature of news imagery in the years following the Civil War.



Figure 2.6 (above). "Maryland and Pennsylvania farmers visiting the battlefield of Antietam while the national troops were burying the dead and carrying off the wounded, Friday, Sept. 10." Wood engraving based on a sketch by Frank H. Schell, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, October 18, 1862, 62. American Social History Project, New York.



Figure 2.7 (below). "Assault of the Second Louisiana (Colored) Regiment on the Confederate Works at Port Hudson, May 27, 1863." Wood engraving based on a sketch by Frank H. Schell, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, June 27, 1863, 216-17. American Social History Project, New York.

9. See Michele H. Bogart, *Artists, Advertising, and the Borders of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Rebecca Zurier, Robert W. Snyder, and Virginia M. Mecklenburg, *Metropolitan Lives: The Ashcan Artists and Their New York* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995); Rebecca Zurier, "Picturing the City: New York in the Press and the Art of the Ashcan School, 1890-1917" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1988). The boundary-breaking trend has been nurtured by the still-amorphous field of "visual culture" studies: see Nicholas Miu-zoeff, *An Introduction to Visual Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1999), esp. 1-33; Emily Fourmy Cutrer, "Visualizing Nineteenth-Century American Culture," *American Quarterly* 51.4 (December 1999): 895-909.

10. See Sally Stein, "Making Connections with the Camera: Photography and Social Mobility in the Career of Jacob Riis," *Afterimage*, May 1983, 9-16; Maren Stange, *Symbols of Ideal Life: Social Documentary Photography in America, 1890-1950* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Sarah Burns, *Pastoral Inventions: Rural Life in Nineteenth-Century American Art and Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).

11. See Celina Fox, *Graphic Journalism in England during the 1830s and 1840s* (New York: Garland, 1988); eadem, "The Development of Social Reportage in English Periodical Illustration during the 1840s and Early 1850s," *Past and Present*, no. 74 (February 1977): 90-111; Michael Wolff and Celina Fox, "Pictures from the Magazines," in *The Victorian City: Images and Reality*, ed. H. J. Dyos and Michael Wolff (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), 559-82; Maidment, *Reading Popular Prints*.

12. See Michele H. Bogart, *Public Sculpture and the Civic Ideal in New York City, 1890-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989); Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

13. See Matthew Schneirov, *The Dream of a New Social Order: Popular Magazines in America, 1893-1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); Helen Damon-Moore, *Magazines for the Millions: Gender and Commerce in the "Ladies' Home Journal" and the "Saturday Evening Post"*, 1880-1910 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994); Jennifer Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings: The "Ladies' Home Journal," Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Ellen Garvey, *The Adman and the Parlor: Magazines and the Gendering of Consumer Culture, 1880s to 1910s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Richard Ohmann, *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (London: Verso, 1996). See also Michael Denning, *Mechanic Accents: Dime Novels and Working-Class Culture in America* (London: Verso, 1987); Kenneth M. Price and Susan Belasco Smith, eds., *Periodical Literature in Nineteenth-Century America* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995). For a useful survey of the field, see Wayne A. Wiegand, "Introduction: Theoretical Foundations for Analyzing Print Culture as Agency and Practice in a Diverse Modern America," in *Print Culture in a Diverse America*, ed. James P. Danky and Wayne A. Wiegand (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 1-13.

14. Stern, *Purple Passage*; Gambee, "Frank Leslie and His Illustrated Newspaper." See also William E. Huntzicker, "Frank Leslie (Henry Carter)," in *Amer-*

ican Magazine Journalists, 1850-1900, ed. Sam G. Riley, vol. 79 of *Dictionary of Literary Biography* (Detroit: Gale Research, 1989), 216-19.

15. Porter, "Seeing the Past," 188-89; Maidment, *Reading Popular Prints*, 9-10, 14-16.

16. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 217-51; see also Maidment, *Reading Popular Prints*, 3-5.

17. For useful comments on "essentialist" illusion, see Zurier, Snyder, and Mecklenburg, *Metropolitan Lives*, 25-27.

18. T. J. Clark, "Preliminaries to a Possible Treatment of 'Olympia' in 1865," *Screen* 21.1 (spring 1980): 40.

CHAPTER I. PICTORIAL JOURNALISM IN ANTEBELLUM AMERICA

1. Frederic Hudson, *Journalism in the United States, from 1690 to 1872* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1873), 705.

2. *Ibid.*, 705-9; on Hudson, see Joseph P. McKerns, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of American Journalism* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1989), 359-61.

3. *Cosmopolitan Art Journal* 1 (January 1857): 3, quoted in Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines, 1850-1865* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1938), 192.

4. Jean-Louis Comolli, "Machines of the Visible," in *The Cinematic Apparatus*, ed. Teresa de Lauretis and Stephen Heath (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), 122-23.

5. E. L. Godkin, "Chromo-Civilization," *Nation*, September 24, 1874, quoted in Peter C. Marzio, *The Democratic Art: Pictures for a Nineteenth-Century America* (London: Scolar Press, 1980), 1-2; Lawrence W. Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), 160.

6. Clarence S. Brigham, *Paul Revere's Engravings*, rev. ed. (New York: Atheneum, 1969); Donald Cresswell, comp., *The American Revolution in Drawings and Prints: A Checklist of 1765-1790 Graphics in the Library of Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1975); Museum of Graphic Art, *American Printmaking: The First 150 Years* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1969); Thomas C. Leonard, *The Power of the Press: The Birth of American Political Reporting* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 44-45, 98. Revere's print was itself plagiarized from the work of a fellow Boston engraver.

7. See David P. Jaffee, "An Artisan-Entrepreneur's Portrait of the Industrializing North, 1790-1860," in *Essays from the Lowell Conference on Industrial History, 1982 and 1983*, ed. Robert Weible (North Andover, Mass.: Museum of American Textile History, 1985), 165-84; idem, "Peddlers of Progress and the Transformation of the Rural North, 1760-1860," *Journal of American History* 78.2 (September 1991): 511-35; Alan Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs: Images as History: Matthew Brady to Walker Evans* (New York: Hill and

Wang, 1989), 21-70. Robert Taft, in *Photography and the American Scene: A Social History, 1839-1889* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), 81, estimates that over three million daguerreotypes were taken annually in the United States between 1849 and 1853; by 1850, there were ninety-three daguerrean studios along Broadway alone.

8. Georgia Brady Bumgardner, "George and William Endicott: Commercial Lithography in New York, 1831-51," in *Prints and Printmakers of New York State, 1825-1940*, ed. David Tatham (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 43-65; Jo Ann Early Levin, "The Golden Age of Illustration: Popular Art in American Magazines, 1850-1925" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1980), 4-5; Marzio, *Democratic Art*, 117-26. For an insightful reading of the rules of domestic imagery, see Lori E. Rotskoff, "Decorating the Dining-Room: Still-Life Chromolithographs and Domestic Ideology in Nineteenth-Century America," *Journal of American Studies* 31.1 (April 1997): 19-42.

9. Catharine Esther Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The American Woman's Home* (New York: J. B. Ford, 1869); quoted in Marzio, *Democratic Art*, 117, 123, 125. *The American Woman's Home* was an expansion of Beecher's *Treatise on Domestic Economy*, which was repeatedly reprinted after its first publication in 1841.

10. Wendy Wick Reaves, "Portraits in Every Parlor," in *American Portraits: Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Print Conference* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1984), 83-134.

11. Robert W. Johannsen, *To the Halls of Montezuma: The Mexican War in the American Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 222-30; Martha A. Sandweiss, Rick Stewart, and Ben W. Huseman, *Eyewitness to War: Prints and Daguerreotypes of the Mexican War, 1846-48* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989).

12. See Malcolm Johnson, *David Claypool Johnston: American Graphic Humorist, 1798-1865*, exhib. cat., American Antiquarian Society et al. (Lunenburg, Vt.: Stinchour Press, 1970); David Tatham, "David Claypoole Johnston's Theatrical Portraits," in *American Portrait Prints, 162-93*; Peter C. Welsh "Henry R. Robinson: Printmaker to the Whig Party," *New York History* 53.1 (January 1972): 25-53; Nancy R. Davison, "E. W. Clay and the American Political Caricature Business," in Tatham, *Prints and Printmakers of New York State*, 91-110; Bernard Reilly Jr., "Comic Drawing in New York in the 1850s," in *ibid.*, 147-62; Stephen Hess and Milton Kaplan, *The Ungentlemanly Art: A History of American Political Cartoons*, rev. ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1975), 65-79; Marzio, *Democratic Art*, 43-44. While Marzio largely ignores the "rough" lithography trade, Harold Holzer, Gabor S. Boritt, and Mark F. Neely, in *The Lincoln Image: Abraham Lincoln and the Popular Print* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1984), 3-4, assert that political prints were placed in the home; see also Robert Philippe, *Political Graphics: Art as Weapon* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1980), 7, 172.

13. Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 14-31; Dan Schiller, *Objectivity and the News: The Public and the Rise of Commercial Journalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 12-75; Rebecca Zurier, "Picturing the

City: New York in the Press and the Art of the Ashcan School, 1890-1917" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1988), 72-81; Andie Tucher, *Froth and Scum: Beauty, Goodness, and the Ax Murder in America's First Mass Medium* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 7-20. The *Sun* editorial of November 9, 1833, is quoted in Frank M. O'Brien, *The Story of "The Sun"* (New York: D. Appleton, 1928), 25.

14. Roger Butterfield, "Pictures in the Papers," *American Heritage*, June 1962, 96-97; Zurier, "Picturing the City," 83-84. On the *Herald's* pictorial coverage of the Mexican War, see Johannsen, *To the Halls of Montezuma*, 225; Sandweiss, Stewart, and Huseman, *Eyewitness to War*, 18, 19, 114, 139. These newspaper pictures were an improvement over the crude woodcuts and engravings that decorated chapbooks, almanacs, and cheap street literature; produced as "stock cuts," such pictures appeared repeatedly in different publications (Susan G. Davis, "'All-me-knack': or, a Working Paper on Popular Culture" [typescript, University of Pennsylvania, 1980]; Susan G. Davis and Dan Schiller, "Street Literature and the Delineation of Deviance in the United States, 1830-1860" [typescript, University of Pennsylvania, n.d.]).

15. Butterfield, "Pictures in the Papers," 96-97; Zurier, "Picturing the City," 81-84; Neil Harris, *Humburg: The Art of P. T. Barnum* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973), 68-70; Tucher, *Froth and Scum*, 46-61. Inspired by the *Sun's* hoax, Poe manufactured a seventy-five-hour transatlantic balloon voyage for an 1844 article. The 1848 admirer of the *Herald* is quoted in Schiller, *Objectivity and the News*, 88. On the influence of "photographic realism" on reporting, see Schiller, *Objectivity and the News*, 88-95; *idem*, "Realism, Photography, and Journalistic Objectivity in Nineteenth Century America," *Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication* 4.2 (winter 1977): 86-98.

16. Levin, "The Golden Age of Illustration," 20; Butterfield, "Pictures in the Papers," 97. The exceptional case of the *New York Daily Graphic* (1873-89) will be discussed later in this book.

17. "Preface," *Illustrated London News* (hereafter *ILN*) 1 (1842); quoted in Celina Fox, "The Development of Social Reportage in English Periodical Illustration during the 1840s and Early 1850s," *Past and Present*, no. 74 (February 1977): 92.

18. Fox, "The Development of Social Reportage," 90-91; on Bewick, see William M. Ivins Jr., *Prints and Visual Communication* (1953; reprint, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1969), 86-87; Levin, "The Golden Age of Illustration," 20-23; John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1997), 499-530. According to *Illustrated London News* co-founder Henry Vizetelly, Ingram's original intent had been a far cry from what eventually emerged. Having established himself, in partnership with his brother-in-law, as a Nottingham printer, bookseller, and newsagent, Ingram had noticed that his customers seemed particularly interested in cheap London weekly papers such as the *Observer* and *Weekly Chronicle* that, adorned with small woodcuts, proffered stories about murders and sports. Ingram enthusiastically joined in, publishing an illustrated broadside about the current notorious Greenacre murder case. After another venture, a life-lengthening placebo called Parr's Pills, proved financially

successful, Ingram and his brother-in-law moved to London, intent on publishing a crime periodical. If Vizetelly's version is true (and, in the light of his alienation from Ingram only a year after the founding of the *Illustrated London News*, some skepticism is in order), sometime before the inauguration of the newsweekly he became enamored of loftier—and, as we will see, more remunerative—goals. See Mason Jackson, *The Pictorial Press: Its Origins and Progress* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1885), 306-11; Clement Shorter, "Illustrated Journalism: Its Past and Its Future," *Contemporary Review* 75 (April 1895): 485-86.

19. Jackson, *The Pictorial Press*, 284-304; Christopher Hibbert, "The Illustrated London News": *Social History of Victorian Britain* (London: Angus and Robertson, 1975), 11-13; Michael Wolff and Celina Fox, "Pictures from the Magazines," in *The Victorian City: Images and Reality*, ed. H. J. Dyos and Michael Wolff (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), 561.

20. Fox, "The Development of Social Reportage," 92-93; Wolff and Fox, "Pictures from the Magazines," 561-65; Alex Potts, "Picturing the Modern Metropolis: Images of London in the Nineteenth Century," *History Workshop*, no. 26 (autumn 1988): 28-56; Caroline Arslott, Griselda Pollock, and Janet Wolff, "The Partial View: The Visual Representation of the Early Nineteenth-Century City," in *The Culture of Capital: Art, Power, and the Nineteenth-Century Middle Class*, ed. Janet Wolff and John Seed (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1988), 191-233.

21. Charles Knight, *Passages of a Working Life During Half a Century*, vol. 3 (London, 1864-65); quoted in Fox, "The Development of Social Reportage," 93. On Knight and the *Penny Magazine*, see Celina Fox, *Graphic Journalism in England during the 1830s and 1840s* (New York: Garland, 1988), 138-57; Patricia Anderson, *The Printed Image and the Transformation of Popular Culture, 1790-1860* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 50-83.

22. "Preface," *ILN*, July 8, 1843; quoted in Fox, "The Development of Social Reportage," 92-93.

23. Jackson, *The Pictorial Press*, 300-304; Hibbert, *The Illustrated London News*, 14.

24. See Richard D. Altick, "Punch": *The Lively Youth of a British Institution, 1841-51* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1997). In "Pictures from the Magazines" (565-67), Wolff and Fox note that in contrast to the *Illustrated London News's* blinkered vision of urban society, humor magazines like *Punch* depicted poverty; but they argue that humor made sordid conditions and appearances palatable, demonstrated the innate unworthiness of the poor through their representation, and defused any sensational impact by placing the images in a humorous (and, in the case of George Cruikshank's "Progress" tales, didactic) frame. Peter G. Buckley, in "Comic and Social Types: From Egan to Mayhew" (paper presented at the American Historical Association Annual Meeting, New York, December 1990), suggests a different relationship, seeing the comic as a structure of feeling out of which social reportage and critique emerged.

25. Fox, "The Development of Social Reportage," 100-111; Jackson, *The Pictorial Press*, 311-12. *Pictorial Times*, February 7, 1846, is quoted in Fox, "The Development of Social Reportage," 101. For the broader field of British

pictorial publishing in the first half of the nineteenth century, see Anderson, *The Printed Image and the Transformation of Popular Culture*.

26. "Frank Leslie," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* (hereafter *FLIN*), January 24, 1880, 382; Richard B. Kimball, "Frank Leslie," *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* 9-3 (March 1880): 258; Budd Leslie Gambee Jr., *Frank Leslie and His Illustrated Newspaper, 1855-1860*, University of Michigan Department of Library Science Studies 8 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1964), 4-6.

27. "Frank Leslie," *FLIN*, 382; Kimball, "Frank Leslie," 258; Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 6-8. On engravers' status, see F. B. Smith, *Radical Artisan: William James Linton, 1812-97* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1973), 4; Fox, *Graphic Journalism in England*, 26-72.

28. "Frank Leslie," *FLIN*, 382; Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 8; Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 432-53. Leslie quickly gained fame as a wood engraver in his new home; he was awarded a medal for excellence in wood engraving at the American Institute's 1848 exhibit, an achievement that very likely recommended him to Barnum. On the Jenny Lind tour, see Harris, *Humburg*, 111-41; Peter George Buckley, "To the Opera House: Culture and Society in New York City, 1820-1860" (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1984), 498-540.

29. *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion* (hereafter *GP*), January 17, 1852, 45. See Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 2, 43, 409-12; Butterfield, "Pictures in the Papers," 97-98. The eight pages of engravings were printed on one side of the uncut folio paper. Mott (*American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 44 n. 70) notes that it was Leslie who cited Chevalier Wikoff's *Picture Gallery*, an eight-page supplement to his *Republican* newspaper during its short 1843 life, as the first actual attempt to establish a weekly American pictorial journal; see also F. J. Splitstone, "Our Sixtieth Birthday," *Leslie's Weekly*, December 16, 1915, 661.

30. *GP*, December 11, 1852, 381.

31. *GP*, August 16, 1851, 253; January 3, 1852, 13. For a description of the process and costs, see *GP*, January 17, 1852, 45.

32. *GP*, December 11, 1852, 381; "Frank Leslie," *FLIN*, 382; Kimball, "Frank Leslie," 258-59; Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 9. On "sc" see A. Hyatt Mayor, "Terms and Abbreviations Found on Prints," in *Prints and People: A Social History of Printed Pictures* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1971), n.p.; *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., s.v. "sculptor."

33. Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 43-44.

34. P. T. Barnum, *Struggles and Triumphs; or, Forty Years' Recollections* (1871; reprint, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981), 234-35; "Frank Leslie," *FLIN*, 382; Kimball, "Frank Leslie," 259; Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 10; Harris, *Humburg*, 319; A. H. Saxon, P. T. Barnum: *The Legend and the Man* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 188-89.

35. "Frank Leslie," *FLIN*, 382; Kimball, "Frank Leslie," 259; Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 10-11; Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 437-38, 453; William E. Huntzicker, "Frank Leslie (Henry Carter)," in *American Magazine Journalists, 1850-1900*, ed. Sam G. Riley, vol. 79 of *Dictionary of Literary Biography* (Detroit: Gale Research, 1989), 211-12. Stephens's decision to move

to Leslie's magazine was probably in part provoked by her frustration with her status at *Peterson's*: although she was listed as the monthly's editor, its publisher, Charles J. Peterson, was interested only in securing a woman's name on the masthead to help attract female readers and actually edited the magazine himself (John Tebbel and Mary Ellen Zuckerman, *The Magazine in America, 1740-1990* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1991], 37). On Stephens, see Madeleine B. Stern, *We the Women: Career Firsts in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Schulte, 1963), 29-54.

36. David D. Hall, "Introduction: The Uses of Literacy in New England, 1600-1850," in *Printing and Society in Early America*, ed. William L. Joyce et al. (Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1983), 1-47; Mary Kelley, *Private Woman, Public Stage: Literary Domesticity in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 7-12. On the impact of a new commercial literary market on the practice of several American authors, see R. Jackson Wilson, *Figures of Speech: American Writers and the Literary Marketplace, from Benjamin Franklin to Emily Dickinson* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989). The creation of the reading public has been equated by some historians with the defining of shared values in the formation of a new middle class, a perspective that overlooks how such values changed meaning as they crossed class boundaries. See John F. Kasson, *Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century Urban America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1990), 37-43; in contrast, see studies of the restructuring of labor and working-class formation in antebellum America: e.g., Alan Dawley, *Class and Community: The Industrial Revolution in Lynn* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976); Bruce G. Laurie, *Working People of Philadelphia, 1800-1850* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980); Paul G. Faler, *Mechanics and Manufacturers in the Early Industrial Revolution: Lynn, Massachusetts, 1780-1860* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981).

37. Ronald J. Zboray, "Antebellum Reading and the Ironies of Technological Innovation," *American Quarterly* 40.1 (March 1988): 65-82; Hall, "The Uses of Literacy in New England"; Kelley, *Private Woman, Public Stage*, 7-12; Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 3; Peter C. Marzio, *The Men and Machines of American Journalism* (Washington, D.C.: National Museum of History and Technology, Smithsonian Institution, 1973), 47, 55-59; Levin, "The Golden Age of Illustration," 27-28.

38. Zboray, "Antebellum Reading and the Ironies of Technological Innovation," 68-72. Zboray also delineates the destructive impact of the Harpers' innovations on the printing trade.

39. *Putnam's Monthly* 9 (March 1857); quoted in Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 391. The figures are given in Levin, "The Golden Age of Illustration," 32-37. See also Eugene Exman, *The House of Harper: One Hundred and Fifty Years of Publishing* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 69-79; Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 383-91; Tebbel and Zuckerman, *The Magazine in America*, 20-22.

40. Kathleen Diffley, "Home on the Range: Turner, Slavery, and the Landscape Illustrations in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine, 1861-1876*," *Prospects* 14 (1989): 175-202.

41. Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 60-63; idem, "Frank Leslie and His Illustrated Newspaper, 1855-1860: Artistic and Technical Operations of a Pioneer Pictorial News Weekly in America" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1963), 381-420. The friend is quoted in Kimball, "Frank Leslie," 259. See also Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 63-64; Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 454-55.

43. Albert Bigelow Paine, *Th. Nast: His Period and His Pictures* (New York: Macmillan, 1904), 23-24; "The late Thomas Powell, author and journalist," *FLIN*, January 22, 1887, 392; John Parker Davis, letters written to Albert Bigelow Paine, in *Life in Letters: American Autograph Journal* 4.2 (May 1940): 290.

44. Leslie, quoted in Kimball, "Frank Leslie," 259.

45. Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 65-66; Edward Hatton, "Domestic Assassins: Gender, Murder, and the Middle Class in Antebellum America" (Ph.D. diss., Temple University, 1997), 320-71.

46. Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 67-68 (comment about *Harper's Weekly* from *FLIN*, December 5, 1857, quoted on 68); Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 469-74; Huntzicker, "Frank Leslie (Henry Carter)," 211, 214-15; Exman, *The House of Harper*, 80. For the *Illustrirte Zeitung*, see the issue of October 3, 1874, which is the only copy of the paper in the New York Public Library's Steiger Collection of German American Newspapers: with the exception of a cover and back-page engraving, the German-language edition includes all the news illustrations in the October 3, 1874, issue of *Frank Leslie's* (though in a different order).

47. Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 4-5; excluding newspapers, approximately 685 periodicals existed in 1850; ten years later the number was reduced to 575. Between 1850 and 1865, about 2,500 magazines were published, on average lasting about four years before folding. The illustrated weeklies killed off the single-sheet lithographic trade in New York: individual publication of caricatures and cartoons could not compete with the new periodicals that included comic illustration along with news images. See Davison, "E. W. Clay and the American Political Caricature Business."

48. Kimball, "Frank Leslie," 259; Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 69-72, 128-34, 295-98; Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 456-58; Andrea G. Pearson, "Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper and Harper's Weekly: Innovation and Imagination in Nineteenth-Century American Pictorial Reporting," *Journal of Popular Culture* 23.4 (spring 1990): 82-86. The artists responsible for sketching the will milk scenes—chief artist Albert Berghaus and staff artists Thomas Nast and Sol Eytinge Jr.—were not credited in captions, to thwart possible libel actions from political supporters of the dairy owners that might stop the campaign (Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 133).

49. *FLIN*, March 17, 1860, 242, 251 (illustrations of the strike appeared as well in the April 7 issue); Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 76, 80. Moreover, Leslie featured the strike in the May 1860 cover cartoon of his new humor magazine, *Frank Leslie's Budget of Fun*; see Gary L. Bunker, "Antebellum Caricature and Woman's Sphere," *Journal of Women's History* 3.3 (winter 1992): 37. Illustrations of the Pemberton disaster also appeared in the January 21, 1860, issue of the *New York Illustrated News*, a new Leslie's competitor.

The engraving of the Lynn strikers' procession may have been the first image

of a strike to appear in the American press. In contrast, the visual realm of industrialization was dominated by monumental imagery of invention and technological development, exemplified in the illustrations published in *Scientific American*. See James P. Shenton, ed., *Free Enterprise Forever! "Scientific American" in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Images Graphiques, 1977); Marianne Doezema, "The Clean Machine: Technology in American Magazine Illustration," *Journal of American Culture* 11.4 (winter 1988): 73-92.

50. Elliott J. Gorn, *The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1986), 148-57; Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 80; idem, "Frank Leslie," 147-64, 304-5; Mott, *American Magazines*, 1850-1865, 458-59; Davis, letters, 292-94. For Nast's coverage of the fight, see Paine, *The Nast*, 37-44. *Harper's Weekly* denounced the celebration of blood sports, but ended up printing a full-page cut of the match.

51. Letter quoted in Splitstone, "Our Sixtieth Birthday," 661.

52. Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 77-80, 81, 86; idem, "Frank Leslie," 141-47. On the illustrated press's efforts not to lose readers, including its publication of innocuous southern views that for the most part downplayed such ubiquitous and distressing sights as slave auctions, see W. Fletcher Thompson, *The Image of War: The Pictorial Reporting of the American Civil War* (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1959), 87. The *Frank Leslie's* artist William S. L. Jewett was forced to flee Virginia in November after it was learned that he had sold a John Brown drawing to the *New York Tribune*. *Leslie's* chose to report the incident in a three-panel cartoon, perhaps in an attempt to defuse the rancor surrounding the event. See "The Retreat of our Artist from Charlestown, Virginia," *FLIN*, November 26, 1858, reprinted in Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 79. For *Harper's Weekly's* curtailed coverage, see Boyd B. Stutler, "An Eyewitness Describes the Hanging of John Brown," *American Heritage*, February 1955, 4-9; Cecil D. Eby Jr., "Porte Crayon": *The Life of David Hunter Strother* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960), 103-9.

53. Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 86; "The Home of Illustrated Literature," *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* 16.2 (August 1883): 129. Aside from his *Illustrated Newspaper*, *Leslie's* 1860 publications aimed at more narrow readerships included *Frank Leslie's New Family Magazine*, *Frank Leslie's Illustrirte Zeitung*, *Frank Leslie's Budget of Fun*, and *Stars and Stripes* (Madeleine Bettina Stein, *Purple Passage: The Life of Mrs. Frank Leslie* [Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953], 197).

54. Mott, *American Magazines*, 1850-1865, 10-11, notes that *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* and *Harper's Weekly* were among only thirteen magazines in the United States during this period whose circulation surpassed 100,000. Moreover, all American pictorial news now came from three papers located in one American city.

CHAPTER 2. ILLUSTRATING THE NEWS

1. Charles Dickens, *Bleak House* (1853; reprint, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971), 523-24.

2. By 1858, with its purchase of a new high-speed press, *Frank Leslie's* lea-

time was often reduced to one week. This achievement has been obscured by historians' reliance on the date appearing on *Leslie's* masthead, which seems to suggest a two-week gap between an event and *Leslie's* newsstand appearance; in fact, *Leslie's* was advance-dated one week and the printed date marked the end of that issue's week, not its beginning. Therefore, as Budd Gambee has pointed out, an issue dated December 22 actually appeared on newsstands on December 15 (Budd Leslie Gambee Jr., *Frank Leslie and His Illustrated Newspaper*, 1855-1860, University of Michigan Department of Library Science Studies 8 [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1964], 56); see also Roger Butterfield, "Pictures in the Papers," *American Heritage*, June 1962, 98.

3. Budd Leslie Gambee Jr., "Frank Leslie and His Illustrated Newspaper, 1855-1860: Artistic and Technical Operations of a Pioneer Pictorial News Weekly in America" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1963), provides the most valuable account of the early work of *Frank Leslie's* artists, particularly chief artist Albert Berghaus (who worked for the weekly from its inception into the 1880s), Jacob A. Dallas, Charles Parsons (an established lithographer who, in 1863, became the longtime supervisor of the Harper Brothers' art department), Sol Eytings Jr., Henry Louis Stephens, Granville Perkins, and Thomas Nast. The experience of Nast, who began his employment with *Leslie's* at the age of fifteen, also has been chronicled in Albert Bigelow Paine, *The Nast: His Period and His Pictures* (New York: Macmillan, 1904); see also the less laudatory account in "Nast's Early Endeavor," *New York Sun*, June 24, 1877 (interview with Frank Leslie); John Parker Davis, letters written to Albert Bigelow Paine, *Life in Letters: American Autograph Journal* 4.2 (May 1940): 289-90.

Leslie's also imported talent from abroad: its most notable acquisition was the British cartoonist Matthew Somerville Morgan, hired to compete with *Harper's Weekly's* Thomas Nast during the 1872 presidential campaign (Paine, *The Nast*, 246-61). On the limitations of American artists' figurative proficiency, cited as one reason for *Leslie's* hiring of European artists, see the letter by the British art editor Henry Blackburn to the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, reprinted in "Editorial Topics," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* (hereafter *FLIN*), November 14, 1874, 147; see also Frank Leslie's derogatory remarks about American artists, made in a quasi-official capacity, in his "Report on the Fine Arts," in *Reports of the United States Commissioners to the Paris Universal Exposition*, 1867, ed. William P. Blake (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1870), quoted in Mark Thistlewaite, "The Most Important Things: History Painting and Its Place in American Art," in *Grand Illusions: History Painting in America*, ed. William H. Gerdts and Mark Thistlewaite (Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum, 1988), 51.

4. See, for example, the request to "committees of fairs, exhibitions, dedications, and everything of a similar nature" to notify *Leslie's* beforehand to make arrangements for illustration; *FLIN*, December 4, 1869, 186.

5. See, for example, the notice to artists and professional and amateur photographers to send their addresses to *Frank Leslie's* offices; *FLIN*, May 26, 1877, 198.

6. *FLIN*, April 26, 1873, 102. Gambee (*Frank Leslie*, 40-42) compares the behindhand procedures of print journalism to artist-reporters' work. Like print

reporters, artist-reporters did more than report the news: their personae became part of its chronicling. As the coverage of the "swill milk" scandal and John Brown's trial and execution demonstrated, the artist often appeared as a character in news engravings, delineating his role both as recorder and as surrogate for the reader: see Andrea G. Pearson, "Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper and Harper's Weekly: Innovation and Imitation in Nineteenth-Century American Pictorial Reporting," *Journal of Popular Culture* 23.4 (spring 1990): 81-111.

7. Reinhart, quoted in William Allen Rogers, *A World Worth While: A Record of "Auld Acquaintance"* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1922), 236.

8. See FLIN, April 16, 1870, 75, and February 11, 1871, 363, on the publication's traveling photography van and its "system of ambulant photographs" respectively.

9. Frederic Ray, *Alfred R. Waud: Civil War Artist* (New York: Viking, 1974); Jo Ann Early Levin, "The Golden Age of Illustration: Popular Art in American Magazines, 1850-1925" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1980); Rebecca Zurier, "Picturing the City: New York in the Press and the Art of the Ashcan School, 1890-1917" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1988); Peter Bacon Hales, *Silver Cities: The Photography of American Urbanization, 1839-1915* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984).

10. My description of the process is based on the following sources: "How Illustrated Newspapers Are Made," FLIN, August 2, 1856, 125-26; "How an Illustrated Paper Is Made," FLIN, July 7, 1866, 251 (a reprint of an article originally published in the *New York Evening Post*); "The Home of Illustrated Literature," *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* 16.2 (August 1883): 129-31; Rogers, *A World Worth While*, 12-15; Mason Jackson, *The Pictorial Press: Its Origins and Progress* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1885), 315-26; William M. Ivins Jr., *Prints and Visual Communication* (1953; reprint, Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1969), 97-99, 99-108; Levin, "The Golden Age of Illustration," 22-23, 26-27, 28-31, 43-44, 49; Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 46-55; Peter C. Marzio, *The Men and Machines of American Journalism* (Washington, D.C.: National Museum of History and Technology, Smithsonian Institution, 1973), 64-69.

11. Ivins, *Prints and Visual Communication*, 86-87; Levin, "The Golden Age of Illustration," 20-23; John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination. English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1997), 499-530.

12. A full-page engraving in *Frank Leslie's* measured 9 by 14 inches, a double-page cut measured 14 by 20 inches, and could be divided into as many as thirty-six sections. Harriet Quimby, in "How Frank Leslie Started the First Illustrated Weekly" (*Leslie's Weekly*, December 14, 1905, 568), credits Leslie for inventing the jointed block; Celina Fox, in *Graphic Journalism in England during the 1830s and 1840s* (New York: Garland, 1988), 62 n. 2), argues that Charles Wells, a British cabinetmaker and boxwood importer, devised the innovation around 1860. As Gambee suggests, "it might be safer to say that he [Leslie] was the first to make extensive and successful use of the device" (*Frank Leslie*, 47).

13. For artists' specializations in *Frank Leslie's* first year, see Gambee, "Frank Leslie," 118-19; Albert Berghaus did architectural and mechanical drawings,

Jacob Dallas, human figures; Charles Parsons, sea- and landscapes; and Samuel Waller, portraits, while Frank Bellew and John McLenan were responsible for cartoons.

14. Timothy Cole, *Considerations on Engraving* (New York: W. E. Rudge, 1921); cited in James Watrous, *American Printmaking: A Century of American Printmaking, 1880-1980* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), 20. For a vivid, illustrated discussion of engraving, see William M. Ivins Jr., *How Prints Look*, rev. ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987), 28-43.

15. William J. Linton, "Art in Engraving on Wood," *Atlantic Monthly* 43 (June 1879); quoted in Levin, "The Golden Age of Illustration," 43-44. On Linton at *Frank Leslie's*, see FLIN, February 2, 1867, cover (369); William James Linton, *Memories* (London: Lawrence and Bullon, 1895), 207 (published in the United States as *Threescore and Ten Years, 1820 to 1890*); F. B. Smith, *Radical Artisan: William James Linton, 1812-97* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1973), 160, 178.

16. Ivins, *Print and Visual Communication*, 98-99.

17. John P. Davis in "A Symposium of Wood-Engravers," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 60 (February 1880); quoted in Levin, "The Golden Age of Illustration," 49. See also Ann Prentice Wagner, "The Graver, the Brush, and the Ruling Machine: The Training of Late-Nineteenth-Century Wood Engravers," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 105, pt. 1 (1995): 167-91.

18. Wagner, "The Graver, the Brush, and the Ruling Machine," 182-85; Helena E. Wright, *With Pen and Graver: Women Graphic Artists before 1900* (Washington, D.C.: National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, 1995), 7-8. On women in the British trade, see Fox, *Graphic Journalism in England*, 66-70. See also FLIN, April 14, 1883, 125, 126; and see the *Magazine of Art* 40 (October 1947): 243, for a photograph of the engraving class (with Peter Cooper and, possibly, William Linton observing).

19. By 1866, *Leslie's* was employing photoxylography to transfer some images directly onto the wood surface, circumventing the earlier stages of artists' work on the block ("How an Illustrated Paper Is Made," 251). At the time, this process was apparently reserved for transferring photographs, since the 1866 *Frank Leslie's* article describing the process also listed twelve artists assigned to sketch pictures onto the block. Photoxylography would be perfected in the 1870s. See Levin, "The Golden Age of Illustration," 49-55; Watrous, *American Printmaking*, 20-26.

20. Hiram Campbell Merrill, *Wood Engraving and Wood Engravers* (Boston: Society of Printers, 1937), 5-6; quoted in Wagner, "The Graver, the Brush, and the Ruling Machine," 181-82.

21. Leslie estimated that each engraving cost approximately \$30 to draw and cut; double-page engravings, involving as many as thirty-six pieces, ran up to \$130. In 1866, when Leslie employed twelve in-house artists and more than forty engravers, the weekly bill for engraving alone came to more than \$2,000 (Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 67-68; "How an Illustrated Paper Is Made," 251). Similar costs were accrued for engravings in *Harper's Monthly*, which we can assume reflects *Harper's Weekly's* expenses: see "Making the Magazine," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 32 (December 1865): 1-31; Frank Luther Mott, *A His-*

tory of *American Magazines*, 1850-1865 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1938), 193. It is instructive to compare the above description of the subdivided process to that of the process it replaced, published in *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion*, January 17, 1852, 45.

22. "The Home of Illustrated Literature," 130; Levin, "The Golden Age of Illustration," 28-31; Ronald J. Zboray, "Antebellum Reading and the Ironies of Technological Innovation," *American Quarterly* 40.1 (March 1988): 72-73. *Harper's Monthly* was the first illustrated publication to substitute electrotyping for stereotyping.

23. "How Illustrated Newspapers Are Made," 251.

24. "The Taylor Perfecting Press," *FLIN*, March 20, 1858, 125-26; Gambee, *Frank Leslie*, 49-53. Leslie's use of new printing technology stands in contrast to the House of Harper, which continued to use an outmoded Adams press to print pictures into the late 1870s (Levin, "The Golden Age of Illustration," 28-29). According to "How an Illustrated Paper Is Made," after failing to locate either domestic or imported inks of "the right quality," Leslie began manufacturing his own formula. Gambee (*Frank Leslie*, 86) reports that in 1860 Leslie was expending between \$6,000 and \$7,000 annually for ink, an insignificant figure compared to the \$160,000 allotted for paper.

25. On less genteel amusements, see *FLIN*, August 8, 1868, 329. See also "The Tribune's Doubts," *FLIN*, August 22, 1868, 354, which quotes the *New York Tribune's* criticism of Leslie's sensational engravings: "proofs of our civic degradation being multiplied and scattered all over the country, debauch the imaginations of our rural population." On the *National Police Gazette*, see Dan Schiller, *Objectivity and the News: The Public and the Rise of Commercial Journalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981); Elliott J. Gorn, "The Wicked World: The *National Police Gazette* and Gilded Age America," *Media Studies Journal* 6.1 (winter 1992): 1-15; Edward Van Every, *Sins of New York, as "Exposed" by the "National Police Gazette"* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1930); Gene Smith and Jane Barry Smith, eds., *The Police Gazette* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972); Mott, *American Magazines*, 1850-1865, 325-37.

26. On boxing, see *FLIN*, January 25, 1868, cover (289), versus June 13, 1868, 205. On Kit Burns, see *FLIN*, December 8, 1866, 181 (seven cuts), and December 22, 1866, 217.

27. "Look on This Picture and on That," *FLIN*, December 29, 1866, 226. For other declarations in *FLIN* that sensational pictures had reformist goals, see "Horrible Pictures. The Duties of the Illustrated Press," February 15, 1868, 338. "The 'Tribune' not 'Orthodox,'" February 8, 1873, 346-47. On Burns, see Daniel Czitrom, "Wickedest Ward in New York," *Seaport* 20.3 (winter 1986-87): 20-26.

28. *New York Express*, quoted in *FLIN*, March 21, 1868, 3. The portrayal of pointless evangelical intervention was published as two engravings in *FLIN*, October 10, 1868, 56. See also, as both an alternative to the earlier cut of John Allen's establishment and a tweak to reform efforts, "Reformation of the Wickedest Man in New York"—The noon prayer meeting at John Allen's late Dance

House, Water Street, N.Y., Sept. 1st," *FLIN*, September 19, 1868, cover (1). In contrast, see *Harper's Weekly's* reverent "Prayer-meeting in the 'Wickedest Man's' dance-house," September 19, 1868, cover (593).

29. On theater's increasing bifurcation, see Lawrence W. Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988); Peter George Buckley, "To the Opera House: Culture and Society in New York City, 1820-1860" (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1984).

30. *New York Catholic Total Abstinence Union*, quoted in *FLIN*, October 2, 1875, 51.

31. J. C. Derby, *Fifty Years among Authors, Books, and Publishers* (New York: G. W. Carleton, 1884), 692-93.

32. On Leslie's book publishing, ranging from expensive compendia of previously published illustrations to "Frank Leslie's Home Library of Standard Works by the Most Celebrated Authors" (the thirty-five titles of which, despite its title, were almost exclusively available on or in the proximity of trains), see Madeleine B. Stern, *Imprints on History: Book Publishers and American Frontiers* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1956), 226-29; eadem, ed., *Publishers for Mass Entertainment in Nineteenth Century America* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1980), 183-86.

33. Succeeding the short-lived *Last Sensation*, *The Days' Doings* began publication in June 1868, purportedly under the auspices of James Watts and Company. However, Leslie's ownership was apparent from the start, evidenced in the reprinting of illustrations published in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* (see, e.g., coverage of Kit Burns's dogfights in the issues of September 26, 1868, and October 3, 1868, using material published in *Frank Leslie's* in 1866), the featuring of engravings signed by familiar Leslie artists (notably chief artist Albert Berghaus), and the substantial listings of other Leslie publications among its back advertisements. On *The Days' Doings*, see Madeleine Bettina Stern, *Purple Passage: The Life of Mrs. Frank Leslie* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953), 52, 191, 223; Fulton Oursler, "Frank Leslie," *American Mercury*, May 1930, 98-99; and Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines, 1865-1885* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1938), 44 (differing somewhat from Stern's account). By the time he began publishing *The Days' Doings*, Leslie himself had become a figure of notoriety based on his heedlessly flamboyant style of living—almost a caricature of the Gilded Age—and the scandal-ridden circumstances surrounding his divorce from his first wife and his second marriage.

34. My thanks to Peter Buckley and Dan Schiller for discussions and correspondence that contributed to some of the ideas in this paragraph. My consideration of a middle reading public departs from recent historiography of popular culture in the nineteenth century (exemplified by Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow*) that proposes a rapid and decisive split into "high" and "low" constituencies.

35. *FLIN*, January 23, 1869, 290; November 20, 1869, 154.

36. David Paul Nord, "Working-Class Readers: Family, Community, and Reading in Late Nineteenth-Century America," *Communication Research* 13.2

(April 1986): 156-81. Regarding working-class readers of *Frank Leslie's*, see letters printed in *FLIN*, April 3, 1875, 51; June 24, 1882, 275.

37. James Parton, "Pittsburg," *Atlantic Monthly* 21 (January 1868): 34-35; quoted in Francis G. Couvares, *The Remaking of Pittsburg: Class and Culture in an Industrializing City, 1877-1919* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 37. On the range of public reading experiences offered by the city, see David Henkin, *City Reading: Written Words and Public Spaces in Antebellum New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999). Nicholas Salvatore's research on Amos Webber, an African American wire mill worker living in Worcester, Massachusetts, during the 1880s, has revealed Webber's extensive reliance on materials available in the Worcester Free Library and local YMCA reading room, including reference to *Frank Leslie's*; see Amos Webber, *Temperature Book and Diary*, vol. 122, July 23, 1885, 103 (American Steel and Wire Collection, Baker Library, Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, Boston [reference provided by Nicholas Salvatore]), and Nick Salvatore, *We All Got History: The Memory Books of Amos Webber* (New York: New York Times/Random House, 1996), 237-38.

38. Buckley, "To the Opera House," 486-95, 540; Neil Harris, *Humburg: The Art of P. T. Barnum* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973), 54-57, 107-8, 165-72, 179-81; Bluford Adams, *E. Pluribus Barnum: The Great Showman and the Making of U.S. Popular Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 75-163, esp. 87-89. Leslie engraved *Barnum's American Museum Illustrated* (New York: William Van Norden and Frank Leslie, 1850).

39. *Savannah News*, January 10, 1861; quoted in Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 108. See also W. Fletcher Thompson, *The Image of War: The Pictorial Reporting of the American Civil War* (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1959), 87; Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 7.

40. On the role of the press in propelling the Civil War, see Thomas C. Leonard, *The Power of the Press: The Birth of American Political Reporting* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 90-96. A copious pictorial battle between abolitionist and proslavery forces, largely carried out in individually published prints and broadsides, antedated the illustrated press. For surveys of the decades-long representational struggle, which heightened southern sensitivity to pictorial coverage, see Bernard F. Reilly Jr., "The Art of the Antislavery Movement," in *Courage and Conscience: Black and White Abolitionists in Boston*, ed. Donald M. Jacobs (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 47-74; Phillip Lapansky, "Graphic Discord: Abolitionist and Antiaabolitionist Images," in *The Abolitionist Sisterhood: Women's Political Culture in Antebellum America*, ed. Jean Fagan Yellin and John C. Van Horne (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1994), 201-30.

41. *FLIN*, February 2, 1861; quoted in Stuart William Becker, "Frank Leslie's *Illustrated Newspaper* from 1860 to the Battle of Gettysburg" (M.A. thesis, University of Missouri, Columbia, 1960), 55; see also 52-57.

42. Notice in *FLIN*, April 27, 1861; quoted in Jan Zita Grover, "The First Living-Room War: The Civil War in the Illustrated Press," *Afterimage*, February 1984, 9, 11. On *Harper's Weekly* during the secession crisis, see Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 472-74. *Leslie's* position is given in *FLIN*, No-

vember 24, 1860; quoted in Becker, "Frank Leslie's from 1860 to the Battle of Gettysburg," 52.

43. Becker, "Frank Leslie's from 1860 to the Battle of Gettysburg," 19; Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 7; Marzio, *The Men and Machines of American Journalism*, 61, 64-67; Zurjer, "Picturing the City," 85. See also Francis H. Schell, "Recollections of a Leslie's Special Artist in the Civil War: No. 1 Baltimore in 1861; Generals Butler and Banks and the Baffled Insurrectionists," *Imprint: Journal of the American Historical Print Collectors Society* 23.1 (spring 1998): 18-26, for early *Leslie's* coverage of the war.

44. While Grover ("The First Living-Room War") exemplifies the view that Civil War photographs conveyed the "authenticity" of warfare, Alan Trachtenberg, in *Reading American Photographs: Images as History: Mathew Brady to Walker Evans* ([New York: Hill and Wang, 1982], 71-118), suggests that these images may have not so much led to sobering reflections on the part of viewers as legitimated already-held beliefs. Authenticity is, of course, a thorny subject in the interpretive history of Civil War photography; as recent scholarship has noted, photographs were often staged with the subjects posed to connote informality, and photographers may have gone so far as to shift the position of corpses to gain a more theatrical effect (William Frassanito, *Gettysburg: A Journey in Time* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975], 186-92).

45. *Times* (London), quoted in Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*, 73. On the photography of the Civil War, see Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*, 71-118; Grover, "The First Living-Room War"; Michael L. Carlebach, *The Origins of Photojournalism in America* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 62-101; Robert Taft, *Photography and the American Scene: A Social History, 1839-1889* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), 223-47.

46. On the number of engravings, see Roger Butterfield, "Pictures in the Papers," *American Heritage*, June 1962, 99. William P. Campbell, in *The Civil War: A Centennial Exhibition of Eyewitness Drawings* ([Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1961], 107), lists 2,625 engravings based on artists' sketches (1,322 for *Frank Leslie's*, 759 for *Harper's Weekly*, and 411 for the *New York Illustrated News*), suggesting that if Butterfield's total is anywhere near correct, the difference reflects engravings not based on the work of or ascribed to a particular special artist.

47. *Harper's Weekly*, June 3, 1865; quoted in Harold Holzer, Gabor S. Boritt, and Mark E. Neely, *The Lincoln Image: Abraham Lincoln and the Popular Print* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1984), 84.

48. Robert Ferguson, *America during and after the War* (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1866); quoted in Thompson, *The Image of War*, 137. On soldiers and the illustrated press, see David Kaser, *Books and Libraries in Camp and Battle: The Civil War Experience* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984), 33-34, 56-57; Thompson, *The Image of War*, 136-37.

49. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, *Army Life in a Black Regiment* (1870; reprint, East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1961), 16; report by J. W. Alvord, inspector of schools and finances, to the commissioners of the Freedmen's Bureau, January 1, 1866, appended to his testimony to the Joint Committee on

Reconstruction on February 3, 1866, in House, *Report of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction*, 39th Cong., 1st sess., 1866, H. Doc. 30, part 2, 256-57.

50. Eliza Francis Andrews, *The War-Time Journal of a Georgia Girl, 1864-1865* (New York: D. Appleton, 1908); quoted in William Fletcher Thompson Jr., "Illustrating the Civil War," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 45:1 (autumn 1961): 20.

51. *Southern Illustrated News*, July 1863; quoted in Thompson, *The Image of War*, 23.

52. Campbell, *The Civil War*, 11; Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 8-9, 112-13. For examples of the *Southern Illustrated News's* engravings, see Lamont Buchanan, *A Pictorial History of the Confederacy* (New York: Crown, 1951).

53. W. Stanley Hoole, *Vizetelly Covers the Confederacy* (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: Confederate Publishing, 1957); Thompson, *The Image of War*, 189 n. 20; Campbell, *The Civil War*, 11-13, 134-35, and passim. Vizetelly, who received the appointment of "honorary captain" after serving as a messenger for General Longstreet during the Battle of Chickamauga, returned to England after the Civil War. He disappeared in Egypt in 1883 while covering the Sudanese War for the *London Graphic* (FLIN, November 29, 1884, 227; February 7, 1885, 403).

54. Lovie in FLIN, December 7, 1861; quoted in Campbell, *The Civil War*, 27. See Louis M. Starr, *Bohemian Brigade: Civil War Newsmen in Action* (1954; reprint, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 252-55.

55. FLIN, December 10, 1864; quoted in Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 460.

56. Campbell (*The Civil War*, 107) counts ten artists for *Harper's Weekly* and four for the New York *Illustrated News*. *Frank Leslie's* artists, according to Campbell, included Arthur Lumley, William T. Crane, Frank H. Schell, Edwin Forbes, Henri Lovie, William Waud, Joseph Becker, C. E. H. Bonwill, Joseph (sic, for James) E. Taylor, Fred. B. Schell, J. F. E. Hillen, Bradley S. Osbon (one published picture), William R. McComas, Edward S. Hall, Andrew McCallum, E. F. Mullen, and James W. McLaughlin. Two decades after the Civil War, *Leslie's* Publishing House still persisted in claiming that it had employed eighty artists during the war, listing by name twenty-seven artists, misspelling a number of those names, leaving out its then art department supervisor Joseph Becker, substituting *Harper's Weekly's* Alfred R. Waud for his brother William, and including at least one artist, Thomas Nast, who had ceased working for *Leslie's* by the time the war began ("The Home of Illustrated Literature," 134). More generally, see Thompson, *The Image of War*, 30-31; Campbell, *The Civil War*, 101-2 n. 9.

57. According to Lovie, Sherman declared, "You fellows make the best spice that can be bought. Jeff Davis owes more to you newspapermen than to my army" (FLIN, December 7, 1861; quoted in Becker, *Frank Leslie's* from 1860 to the Battle of Gettysburg, 40); see also Campbell, *The Civil War*, 59. On the other hand, many officers, cognizant that pictorial publicity might further their careers, gladly accepted the company of artists—at least one to his own detriment: a Captain De Golyer was fatally wounded at Vicksburg while admiring;

Harper's Weekly engraving of his battery (Theodore R. Davis, "How a Battle Is Sketched," *St. Nicholas* 16 [July 1889]: 664; idem, "Grant under Fire," *Cosmopolitan* 14 [January 1893]: 337). On John Hillen, see Thompson, *The Image of War*, 84; Campbell, *The Civil War*, 39.

58. FLIN, May 17, 1862; quoted in Ray, *Alfred R. Waud*, 29.

59. Edwin Forbes, *Thirty Years After: An Artist's Story of the Great War Told and Illustrated with Nearly 300 Relief-etchings after Sketches in the Field and 20 Half-tone Equestrian Portraits from Original Oil Paintings*, vol. 1 (New York: Forks, Howard, and Hulbert, 1890); quoted in Thompson, *The Image of War*, 121.

60. On Forbes, see Thompson, *The Image of War*; Campbell, *The Civil War*, 42, 45-46, 49-50, 52, 54. See Davis, "How a Battle Is Sketched," 661-68; Frank H. Schell, "Sketching under Fire at Antietam," *McClure's Magazine* 22 (February 1904): 418-29.

61. Lovie, FLIN, May 17, 1862; quoted in Campbell, *The Civil War*, 86-88. The most detailed retrospective account of the wartime life and work of the special artist appears to be "With Sheridan up the Shenandoah Valley in 1864: Leaves from a Special Artist's Sketch Book and Diary," by the *Leslie's* artist James E. Taylor; these illustrated memoirs, completed in 1898, were never published, but excerpts in *American Heritage* make it clear that they are a valuable source; see Oliver Jensen, "War Correspondent: 1864: The Sketchbooks of James E. Taylor," *American Heritage*, August-September 1980, 48-64.

62. At the end of the war, *Frank Leslie's* stated that "many of the pictures and nearly all the portraits, which our readers admire weekly, are photographed directly on the wood. . . . [C]omparatively little work or skill is then requisite to fit it for the hand of the engraver" (FLIN, December 16, 1865; quoted in Campbell, *The Civil War*, 103 n. 42). The process of photoxylography seems to have been instituted at the weekly during the war. Although it clearly facilitated the transfer of images, since many of the special artists' sketches were rough or not proportioned to the woodblock, the process may have been used mainly to transfer photographs (see n. 19 above). Photoxylography was not perfected until the late 1870s, suggesting that *Leslie's* announcement was aimed more at tending off charges of fabrication than at reflecting usual practice.

63. Campbell, *The Civil War*, 72, 74-75; cf. Thompson, *The Image of War*, 83-84. The most notorious change involved Alfred Waud's sketch showing a surgical procedure on the Antietam battlefield, where artists at the *Harper's Weekly* office reversed the position of the body of a wounded soldier on an operating table to hide the stump of his amputated leg. The engraving, "Carrying off the Wounded after the Battle," was published in the October 11, 1862, edition; see Ray, *Alfred R. Waud*, 112-13, for a comparison of the sketch and cut.

64. Waud, quoted in Campbell, *The Civil War*, 65.

65. William J. Hoppin, *United States Army and Navy Journal* 1 (1863-64); quoted in Grover, "The First Living-Room War," 9. For *Leslie's* editorial positions critical of the Lincoln administration and military officers while displaying goodwill toward soldiers (reflecting in part the weekly's perception of a broad northern readership), see Becker, *Frank Leslie's* from 1860 to the Battle of Get-

tylsburg," 61-68. Leslie's supported Lincoln's decision to institute conscription, although it proposed substantially higher pay scales than those codified in the law. On soldiers' critiques of engravings, see Thompson, *The Image of War*, 137-39; Kaser, *Books and Libraries in Camp and Battle*, 33-34.

Soldiers' enthusiastic yet skeptical attitude toward the pictorial press persisted long after the war, as shown on the occasion in 1880 when the Leslie's artist Georgina A. Davis visited the Washington, D.C., Soldiers' Home established for Civil War veterans (FLIN, July 24, 1880, 351): "As the artist rapidly sketched [the institution's dining hall], our guide betrayed a nervous anxiety lest any detail should be disrespectfully slurred over. 'Be sure there's seven chairs to each table,' he repeated, feelingly. 'Every man here'll see the picture, and count 'em up to see if they're all right. You can't make any mistake but what they'll hit on it.'" Later, in the institution's hospital ward, the guide elaborates:

"No, the men don't mind you," he adds, in reply to a question; "it's something for them to look at and talk about after you're gone; and they'll see the pictures when they come out, and if there's a pencil-stroke out of the way in the leg of a table, they'll know it," he warns the artist, cheerfully.

So we depart, conscious of a body of stern censors who are ready to pounce on our notes and sketches as soon as they see the light in the columns of FRANK LESLIE'S ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER.

66. On soldiers' testimonials, see Thompson, *The Image of War*, 138-39. Campbell, *The Civil War*, 63-65. On papers' accusations of competitors' fabrication, see Becker, "Frank Leslie's from 1860 to the Battle of Gettysburg," 27; Zurier, "Picturing the City," 89. For satiric commentary on fabrications, see "Our own artist sketching 'A view of Gen. Banks' army on the spot, from a drawing by our artist," *Vanity Fair*, September 14, 1861, 130; "Explosion of the 'Merrimac,' or any other ship," *Vanity Fair*, May 31, 1862, 262.

67. The advent of bylines was provoked by a War Department edict designed to make censorship easier: see Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 68; Maurizio, *Men and Machines of American Journalism*, 62; Zurier, "Picturing the City," 90-91. On Frank Leslie's drawing pads, see Campbell, *The Civil War*, 112.

68. The August 1861 engraving left Lyon atop his horse and heroically urging on his troops; Lovie's original sketch caught him toppling off his horse. See the comparison of the sketch and cut in Campbell, *The Civil War*, 88-89; see also Thompson, *The Image of War*, 60-61. On the Antietam engravings, see *ibid.*, 57-58.

69. The Fort Pillow engravings appeared in FLIN, May 7, 1864, 97, and July 16, 1864, 259. See Sidney Kaplan, "The Black Soldier of the Civil War in Literature and Art," in *The Chancellor's Lecture Series, 1979-1980* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1981), 1-39 (Kaplan mistakenly credits several Leslie's cuts to *Harper's Weekly*); Thompson, *The Image of War*, 172-74; Becker, "Frank Leslie's from 1860 to the Battle of Gettysburg," 68-70. Leslie supported black troops because they offered a practical contribution to the Union war effort; *Harper's Weekly*, in contrast, saw their inclusion in the unitary as a right.

CHAPTER 3. CONSTRUCTING REPRESENTATION, 1866-77

1. William Wordsworth, "Illustrated Books and Newspapers," in *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*, ed. William Knight, vol. 8 (Edinburgh: William Paterson, 1886), 172; see Lawrence W. Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), 160-66.

2. "Our New Volume," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* (hereafter FLIN), March 16, 1872, 2.

3. "A New Volume," FLIN, September 14, 1872, 2.

4. "Notice," FLIN, September 2, 1871, 414. In its early years, Leslie's did not hesitate to "borrow" images of European events from the foreign press, especially from the publisher's former employer. However, after it instituted "The Pictorial Spirit of the Illustrated Foreign Press" in December 1866, Leslie's regularly devoted its fourth page to anywhere from four to ten reduced engravings derived from its French, German, and British counterparts. The department ended in May 1889 after Leslie's was sold to the Judge Publishing Company. On early piracy, see Budd Leslie Gambee Jr., "Frank Leslie and His Illustrated Newspaper, 1855-1860: Artistic and Technical Operations of a Pioneer Pictorial News Weekly in America" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1963), 381-420. For denunciations of competitors' use of foreign sources in FLIN, see "The Handsomest Illustrated Newspaper," January 8, 1870, 274; "What Is an 'American Illustrated Newspaper?'" January 29, 1870, 330; "Illustrated Newspapers, Again," April 9, 1870, 50; "Notice," September 2, 1871, 414.

5. Stuart William Becker, "Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper from 1860 to the Battle of Gettysburg" (M.A. thesis, University of Missouri, Columbia, 1960), 20-21; W. Fletcher Thompson, *The Image of War: The Pictorial Reporting of the American Civil War* (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1959), 125-26. While the Civil War created difficulties for Frank Leslie's, it devastated the New York *Illustrated News*, whose war coverage was never comparable to either of its rivals. In January 1864 the journal was sold and began a new, if brief, life as *Demorest's New York Illustrated News*. The paper included less and less news until, in August, it was merged with Demorest's *Mirror of Fashion* (Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines, 1850-1865* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1938], 45).

6. For circulation figures, see George P. Rowell, ed., *Geo. P. Rowell and Co.'s American Newspaper Directory* (New York: G. P. Rowell, 1869), 72, 73; Budd Leslie Gambee Jr., *Frank Leslie and His Illustrated Newspaper, 1855-1860*, University of Michigan Department of Library Science Studies 8 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1964), 14; Mott, *American Magazines, 1850-1865*, 460, 476. For example, according to Leslie's, pictorial coverage of the 1871 Chicago Fair sent circulation up to 470,000 (FLIN, November 11, 1871, 131).

7. Goldsmith, in Charles F. Wingate, ed., *Views and Interviews on Journalism* (New York: F. B. Patterson, 1875), 104-5. Goldsmith apparently lasted only two years as editor of *Frank Leslie's*. As his career with Leslie's indicates, throughout its history the paper (or its proprietor) ran through a stream of editors who, for the most part, have remained anonymous. With the exception of