

MILLAIS'S ILLUSTRATIONS: FUEL FOR TROLLOPE'S WRITING

Ileana Marin

During the 1860s John Everett Millais provided 86 illustrations and two frontispieces for four novels by Anthony Trollope: *Framley Parsonage* (1861), *Orley Farm* (1862), *The Small House at Allington* (1864), and *Phineas Finn* (1869). The fruitful collaboration between Millais and Trollope was initiated by George Smith, the publisher of *Cornhill Magazine*, who believed that a successful magazine should combine quality illustrations with good literature. Smith thus invited Millais to illustrate Trollope's *Framley Parsonage*, starting with the third installment of the novel (the first two were already out). Trollope was so excited about the news that he did not wait to write a formal letter of thanks to his publisher, but rather put a note directly on the proofs of the current installment: "Should I live to see my story illustrated by Millais, no body will be able to hold me" (Trollope, *Letters* 56). Another factor that might have helped Smith secure Millais's collaboration was through the reader for the press, William Smith Williams, who was an old acquaintance of Millais from 1849, when the young painter was a member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.¹

With the increasing success of Millais and the popularity of Trollope, it is no coincidence that these four novels were the most successful in the writer's career. John Hall explains Trollope's success by the fact that he gave Millais an "undeniable authority" and because the publishers integrated the plates in the text (2). For ten years, Trollope and his readers benefitted from Millais's partnership, as did Trollope's later illustrators, who borrowed postures and gestures from Millais's sets of illustrations in order to maintain the Trollope brand.² Not only did Millais create the prototypes of Trollope's characters, some of which reappeared in his later novels, but he also revealed to the writer the potential of his own characters. I argue that this collaboration