R.M. BALLANTYNE'S REVISIONS IN BLACK IVORY (1873)

THE SCOTSMAN ROBERT MICHAEL BALLANTYNE (1825-94) is now generally remembered, when at all, as the author of The Coral Island. In his own time, however, he became one of Britain's most popular and prolific writers of adventure stories for the young, with one hundred and ten books to his credit, together with short stories and articles. He wrote Black Ivory: A Tale of Adventure among the Slavers of East Africa in 1872-73, when he was already a very experienced and well-established author. An intriguing chain of events has brought the manuscript of this book into the possession of a neighbour in New Zealand. Collating its text with that of the first edition reveals much about Ballantyne's composition methods and about the special revision problems he encountered.

The manuscript is now owned by Mrs Alison McNeill of Palmerston North, and had come to her husband through R.M. Ballantyne's eldest son Frank. The majority of Ballantyne's manuscripts, letters and memorabilia were gathered together by Isobel, the youngest of his daughters, and this collection, or much of it, is now at Yale University.

Francis Grant Ballantyne (1869-1941) married Jeannie Hopkinson Montgomerie in October 1913. She was the fifth child of Colonel Samuel Crawfurd Montgomerie and Flora Anne, née Campbell. Frank and Jeannie spent some years in India running a tea plantation, then were able to retire early, in 1925, because of the death of Frank's younger brother Hans. He had made a fortune in India as a banker and company director before a gash from a thorn during a pig-sticking expedition led to a fatal attack of 'blood poisoning'. He died at the age of 41, unmarried, leaving over £120,000 to be shared between his surviving brother and his three sisters. Frank and Jeannie's share enabled them to buy a house at High Bickington in North Devon, and to live very comfortably. They remained childless.

Jeannie's elder sister, Ann Gillies McNeill Montgomerie, had married Duncan McNeill on 8 February 1902, and had four children, Hector, Flora, Jean and Torquil (b.1917). Torquil became the favourite nephew of Frank and Jeannie, and often spent his vacations at High Bickington. After Frank died in late 1941, Jeannie moved from her home in Devon to a flat in Kensington. When she became too old to live independently she moved into a private hotel, with a nurse-companion. At this time her furniture and other chattels were divided up among the family. Torquil's share remained in store for him, through to the time when he left for New Zealand. 'Aunt Jeannie' died in early 1967 at the age of 92.

Torquil began his medical studies in 1939, but in 1941 he failed an examination, and served for the rest of the war as a petrol lorry driver in the Tenth Hussars. After
being demobbed he recommenced his medical training, finally qualifying in 1953. By
this time, however, he was no longer young enough to fit easily into a general practice
as a junior partner, and he found himself limited to working as a house surgeon in a
series of six-month stints in hospitals in various parts of England. Hence when the
chance came he applied for and was appointed to a permanent position as an
anaesthetist at the Palmerston North Public Hospital. He married Alison Griffiths in
1949. With their two children, they came to New Zealand by sea, landing in Auckland

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The manuscript is made up of separate leaves of pale fawn paper, varying in size
between 225 x 140 mm. and 219 x 140 mm. Their left-hand edges tend to be rough,
as if they have been cut from larger sheets or from a series of blank exercise books.
The text is written in black ink of varying density, mainly on the rectos, but with
occasional addenda or corrigenda on the versos. Folio numbers appear upper right,
and catchwords lower right. Following the first leaf, which bears a rough draft of
materials for the title-page and also the 'List of Illustrations', and the two leaves of the
preface, the text leaves are foliated 1 to 364, and there are twenty-seven interpolated
leaves in five groupings (see below).

The manuscript is in good condition, except that a yellow stain, probably of
grease, has soaked into it from below, mainly in the upper right quarter. Only in the
last twelve leaves has the stain reached the part containing text. Exposure to the air
has caused the upper right corner of the last leaf to disintegrate. The text throughout
is in the author's hand, but some added notations appear to have been added by a
different person. These notations relate to the printed edition, which is bound in
gatherings of eight leaves, the first leaf of each gathering being signed with a small
capital letter. In the manuscript the point of transition between one printed sheet and
the next is indicated with a mark like an inverted 'L', and in the left margin is either
the signature or the first page number of the new gathering. However, after f.122,
addendum (c), these notations evidently correspond to the original pre-proofing
letterpress. There is also a series of crosses and small ticks, in pencil, some of them
presumably related to correct incorporation of significant rewritings. Otherwise their
import is uncertain, and one cannot tell whether they were added by the author or by
the printer.

The manuscript text includes numerous second thoughts, either immediately
following erasures, or inserted in a superlinear position, usually with a caret, or written
vertically in the left margin. Longer interpolations occur on the versos either of the
previous leaves or of the same leaves. For example, on f.46v, fifteen lines have been
written, crossed through, and then a further version of thirteen lines written below
with the instruction 'Enter on p.47'. These correspond to three and a half lines
deleted on f.47, and the direction, within a horizontal wedge, 'See back/ of p.46'.
Further on in the manuscript is is common to find 'See/ back/ hereof', again within
a horizontal caret wedged into the left of the text. Substantially longer interpolations
are added on inserted leaves.

The rewritings during the process of composition, whether within the text or
written elsewhere for insertion, are too numerous to list. One can however categorise
them, either by their nature or by their function. Some were evidently made during
the composition of a single sentence, and others came later. For example, on f.2, one finds:

"What, then, do you propose to do?" enquired <Sea> Young Seadrift with a troubled expression of countenance. "<Lower the boats and leave> —Abandon her." replied the —Captain. —

"Well, <Captain,> you may do so —Captain—but I shall not forsake my father's ship as long as she can float."

Here the interlinear words have obviously been added later. Functionally, they either improve the correctness or explicitness of the narration, or generate a more vigorous tone of voice in the passages of direct speech. The whole of 'replied the Captain.' is crammed into the space originally left at the end of the speech. The ink for the underlining of 'you' is darker than it is for the word itself, as is the line crossing through 'Captain' — hence these marks belong to the second stage of rewriting. (The same ink has been used but with a freshly dipped pen.)

Rewritings may: (a) rearrange a sentence to make it fit with those that follow; (b) reduce verbosity; (c) alternatively, spell things out more explicitly; (d) change emphases, increase pointedness; or (e) introduce new material.

An example of late-stage revision involving new material is found in the ten-line insertion for f.28 (p.32): here a conversation involving the Portuguese Governor Lettotti, his daughter Maraquita, and the Arab Yoosoof has been interrupted by the entry of the slave trader Marizano. In the first version, the second sentence of the Governor's speech that begins 'Come, come, gentlemen' is:

We have met just now — that is to say Yoosoof has come/ here to talk of his own affairs, and as/ most of them are well-known to my/ friend — I suppose there is no/ objection to his remaining.

In the second version, Ballantyne has added to the introductory 'with a laugh' the words 'and a glance at his daughter'. Then, to replace the above lines, he has added on the verso of the leaf:

"Yoosoof has come here to talk with me about other matters. Now, Maraquita, dear, you had better retire for a short time."

When the senhorina had somewhat unwillingly obeyed, the governor turned to Yoosoof; "I presume you have no objection to Marizano's presence during our interview, seeing that he is almost as well acquainted with your affairs as yourself?"

The new text gets Maraquita out of the room (as a sympathetic character later in the story, her innocence must be preserved by preventing her from learning too much about the slave dealing that is being discussed, and about her father's implication in it). The relationship between Yoosoof and Marizano is also adjusted, to reflect his appearance later as Yoosoof's lieutenant. The awkward transition from addressing Marizano to addressing Yoosoof is eliminated.

These examples give some idea of the minor revisions. More detailed attention can be given to the major interpolations, most of which occur on inserted leaves:
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(a) Three leaves, between f.7 and f.8, foliated ‘2/5’, ‘2/6’ and ‘2/7’, corresponding to matter on pp.8-10 in the first edition (‘Harald’s first exclamation’ to ‘Without hesitation Harald Seadrift bounded’); a late composition-stage addition.

(b) A twenty-five line insert on f.45v, marked initially to be added as a footnote keyed to ‘poor Azinte’ on f.45 (p.49, first edition) changed to ‘Enter this with matter on back of p.59’, which is itself marked for insertion on f.60, before the last sentence of Chapter III (f.59v: ‘It is certainly’ to ‘coast of Africa’; f.45v: ‘Sir Bartle Frere’ to ‘Nile and Egypt.’); on pp.65-66 in the first edition.

(c) Six leaves, numbered ‘1’ to ‘6’, between ff.122 and 123, with the instruction, on f.‘1’: ‘Interpolate <between pp.> at letterpress p.133.’. The interpolated material begins with ‘which flows into the Zambesi about 150 miles/ from <the mouth of that river> -the coast-.’ (p.133, first edition), and ends with ‘he bade him/ adieu on the following morning & pursued/ his onward way.’ (p.139, first edition). In effect, this involved the cancellation of the last three and a half lines of f.122, and the first line of f.123. The sentence as it stands in the manuscript reads:

It is sufficient for/ the continuity of our tale to say that
<they> -after- many days <journey> -after- leaving the coast they turned/ into the Shire river up which they proceeded as/ far as they could conveniently.-go-
<do so> in canoes,/ & then, landing, made up their goods & food/ & camp equipage into bundles of a shape & size/ suitable for being carried on the heads of the men.

The final version reads ‘It is sufficient . . . into the Shire river, which flows into the Zambesi . . .’, so that much of the original sentence is gone.

(d) Eleven leaves, numbered ‘1’ to ‘11’, interpolated at a point corresponding to halfway down f.124, with the instruction on f.‘1’, ‘Add to Cap VIII at p.135 (Forming the commencement of the cap)’. Subsequent leaves have at the top ‘Cap VIII — interpolate — p.135’. On the eleventh leaf, below the text, is the instruction ‘Here follows printed matter on p.135, beginning "<On the way> -Higher- up the Shire" &c./’. These leaves contain matter which is on pp.142-52 in the first edition (as it is repaginated to accommodate insert (c)).

Insert (d) ends with ‘In other words, it has been/ coolly decreed by that weakest of all the/ European nations that slavery - murder,/ <gross> injustice, and every other -<conceivable-> <namable> & unmentionable vice & villainy shall/ -still continue to- be practiced
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on the men women and children of Africa <negroes> till that year! f.11; p.152). The remainder of the original Chapter VII then follows, to complete the new Chapter VIII.

Accordingly the original material that comes between inserts (c) and (d) (ff.123-24; pp.139-41) now completes Chapter VII. The last part of the original Chapter VII now follows insert (d). Hence instead of simply adding insert (d) to the original Chapter VIII, the decision has been taken (by the printer?) to preserve the original break, and to renumber the original Chapter VIII as Chapter IX, carrying through this renumbering for the remainder of the book.

(e) Three leaves, numbered ‘(1)’ to ‘(3)’, inserted at the composition stage between ff.263 and 264, as an extension to the original Chapter XVI (now Chapter XVII). On f.263 is the instruction: ‘See paper apart for continuation of Cap XVI / page (1) to (3); and on f.‘(3)’ is ‘Cap XVIII/ follows here’ (i.e., in the first edition, Chapter XVIII). They begin with ‘On hearing this’, and occupy pp.300-303 in the first edition.

(f) An extended footnote, added at proof stage, on f.327v (p.372, first edition).

(g) Four leaves, numbered ‘(1)’ to ‘(4)’, inserted between ff.352 and 353, with the instruction on f.’(1)’, ‘Interpolate/ between pp.386 & 387.’. This is the new Chapter XXIII, ‘The Remedy’, which occupies pp.387-91 in the first edition. Chapters XXIV and XXV follow.

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Ballantyne’s established practice was to combine an exciting, affecting story-line, woven around some exotic or out-of-the-way contemporary setting, with a mass of information relevant to this setting, and plenty of evangelistic moralising. He had a contract with James Nisbet and Company to provide a full-length adventure story each year for the Christmas gift market. Seeking out a fresh and exciting topic for this book was a crucial feature of his yearly activities. His earliest books had grown out of his own experiences in Hudson’s Bay; and thereafter, whenever he could, he went to see for himself places and situations he wished to write about. This had several times led him into championing social causes, such as the needs of the lifeboat service, and the plight of merchant seamen forced to man grossly unseaworthy ships.

On the other hand, some of his most popular adventure stories, like The Coral Island, had developed from his imaginative responses to other people’s books, about adventures in parts of the world he had never been to. He had no personal experience of Africa. But a factor that distinguishes Black Ivory from this second category of tales is that from its inception his interest in the subject matter and choice of sources were bound up with a fervent commitment to a cause.

On 3 December 1872 he wrote to Dr Ryan, ‘then Vicar of Bradford, but until lately the Bishop of Mauritius’, saying he had ‘just read, with much interest, the report [in the Mercury] of the Anti-Slavery meeting held in Leeds on the 16th of the last month,’ and contemplated ‘devoting my next Christmas tale for young people to
the exposition of [the] subject' of African slavery. Accordingly he asked him 'to do me the favour to point out what you consider the best sources for obtaining detailed information' about it:

East African slavery is prominently before the public just now & will doubtless continue to be for some time to come. All of the speakers & writers on the subject call on men & women to do what they can to bring about its abolition. I heartily sympathise with the effort & pray God that He may accord success to it. I would also respond to the call by doing what lies in my power to further the good cause in the way indicated.8

In the preface to Black Ivory he thanked Dr Ryan, as well as the Reverend Charles New, Edward Hutchinson, Secretary of the Church Missionary Society, ‘and others, for kindly providing me with information on the slave trade’:

In writing this book my aim has/ been to give a true picture in outline of/ the slave-trade as it exists at the/ present time on the east coast of Africa./

In order to do this I have selected/ from the most trustworthy sources what/ I believe to be the most telling points of/ "the trade", & have woven these together into/ a tale, the warp of w, is composed of/ thick cords of fact, the woof of slight lines/ of fiction — just sufficient to hold the/ fabric together . . .

I began my tale in the hope that I/ might interest the young (perchance also the/ old) in a most momentous cause — the total/ abolition of the /-African- slave trade. <throughout the world.>/ I close it with the prayer that God may/ make it a tooth in the file w5. shall/ eventually cut the chain of slavery & set/ the black man free.

The difficulties Ballantyne faced in writing his tale were threefold. First, there was the usual need to get one's facts right, and this was made harder because he was dealing with a live political situation which changed radically during 1873. Second, he had to so interweave his warp and his woof as to hold his readers with an interesting story, and, as far as possible, to present his factual material dramatically. Third, he needed to organize both warp and woof to serve his rhetorical strategy, that is, to present a convincing case for a coherent programme of practical actions.

Characteristically, he created for his young readers a hero, Harald Seadrift, not very much older than themselves. The experiences of Harald, with his older companion, the honest tar Disco Lillyhammer, and of some of the people they encounter, make up ‘the slight lines of fiction' through which he interwove his depictions of the cruelties of the slave trade and his diatribes against British official half-heartedness.

Quayle records that ‘to enable him to write the book in peace, in March 1873 he rented a room for six weeks at Mrs. Poole's, Meriville House, Llandudno, Wales'; and that ‘the manuscript was completed by . . . May'. It will be seen from the nature of the interpolated revisions in the manuscript that some of these, at least, were added at the proof-reading stage, at some time after early June.

The first impression of 3,000 copies went on sale in September 1873, in good
time for the Christmas gift market. The publishers were James Nisbet and Company (London), and the printers T. and A. Constable of Edinburgh. The book 'enjoyed...an immediate success' greater than that of any of his previous works; and a second impression of 3,000 copies came out in December of the same year, though it bore the date '1874'. Nonetheless it did not go on to join the select group of Ballantyne's books that were often reprinted. Its only subsequent appearance has been in the photofacsimile edition issued by Afro-Am Books in 1969.

Undoubtedly the initial popularity of Black Ivory owed much to its topical appeal. Dr David Livingstone had drawn public attention to Central (i.e. southern East) Africa, and to the slave trade in this region, by the ongoing saga of his epic journeyings, his public appearances while in England, and the publication of his letters sent from Africa. The arrival of news of his death in January 1874, and his funeral in April, would create a final wave of public emotion. Moreover the Anti-Slavery Society had mounted big open meetings about the East African trade in slaves in 1872-73, which climaxed with news of the successful outcome of the Frere Mission in June 1873. Developments thereafter were less spectacular and less publicized.

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To appreciate the nature of Ballantyne's self-appointed task, and the way in which it changed in between the stages of composition and final revision, one must briefly consider the complex patterns of East African slave trading at this time. Slavery had for centuries been a 'domestic' African institution; and for a long time, on a relatively small scale, enslaved Africans had been carried off to the Arab countries, Persia or India. A part of this trade operated entirely (or almost entirely) overland, and a part by sea.

During the nineteenth century the sea-borne trade northward massively increased. A key role in this development was played by Zanzibar. This island provided a major slave market to which slaves were brought from many parts of the coast, to be sold and exported to their final destination. It offered a secure base for many of the Arab caravaneers, and for the Indian merchants, the Banyans, who financed and to one degree or another controlled their operations. It gave them political and legal protection. Development of plantations, both on the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, and on the mainland territories, absorbed a certain number of slaves. Zanzibar was ruled by the Imam of Muscat, and in 1828 the current Imam, Sultan Sayyid Sa'id-bin-Sultan, moved his court to this island, so as to profit more effectively from the growing trade in slaves and ivory. His dominions on the African mainland extended over three hundred and fifty miles of the coast and its hinterland. The intervention of Europeans had created new demands for slave labour, not only for the Portuguese settlements on the coast, and on the banks of the Zambesi, and for the French plantations on Réunion Island and Madagascar, but also for more remote places. In the 1870s slaves were still being shipped from Mozambique to Cuba and Brazil.

The primary agency seeking the abolition of the slave trade was the British Government, responding to the pressure of the Anti-Slavery Society and the personal commitment of some of its leading members of parliament over the years. It had abolished slavery within its own territory in 1807, and throughout its Empire as from 1 February 1835. It had induced other European states to renounce slavery, through various treaties. Portugal had signed such a treaty in 1837, though it did not put a
stop either to slave trading or to slave ownership in its colonial territories, despite numerous promises to do so. Beyond Europe, Britain tried to end the slave trade through a combination of diplomacy and the efforts of the British Navy.

It had signed the Moresby Treaty with Sayyid Sa’id in 1822, followed by the Hamerton Treaty in 1845, which gave the Navy the right to seize Zanzibarian slave ships under certain restrictive conditions. These included exemption from seizure of ships transporting slaves for ‘domestic’ purposes from one part of the Sultan’s dominions to another, in an area between the ports of Lamu in the north and Kilwa in the south. In return Sa’id gave a promise to prohibit the export of slaves, a promise he clearly had no intention of honouring. Such terms were probably the best that he could have been induced to accept at that time, given the current limits of British power in the region, and the need to draw him away from the competing influences of the French and the Americans.

In the 1860s and early 1870s the situation was very different. Sa’id’s successors, Majid (from 1865) and Burghash (from 1870), were less strong and more clearly pro-British. On the other hand, since the death of Lord Palmerston in 1865, there had been no dynamic advocacy at a high level for new British Government initiatives against slaving. Priority had long been given to trying to block the transport of people from West Africa to the Americas; and the shrinking away of this traffic brought about a sense of relative complacency. The East African coast was more remote (though the opening of the Suez Canal in 1871 would make it much less so); the slave traffickers were non-Europeans, apart from (mainly) the Portuguese; and the Government was reluctant to upset British political and mercantile interests in the region by objecting too strongly to the institution of domestic slavery within friendly states.

The net result, as the abolitionists recognized, was that although the Navy was stepping up its patrolling of the coast, the cruisers were still too few, and the restrictions they were obliged to operate under were such that their efforts remained largely ineffectual. According to one estimate, in the years 1867 to 1869 inclusive they captured 116 dhows and released 2,645 slaves, yet some 37,000 were successfully shipped to the slave markets.11

By 1873, according to G.L. Sullivan, the scale of the sea-borne trade through Zanzibar had more than trebled: ‘according to the lowest estimate twenty thousand, but in reality at least fifty thousand negroes are imported annually into (Zanzibar) and consequently re-exported to other places’.12 Sir Bartle Frere’s more modest estimate of 30,000 per year (see below) was still horrifically high. To put this level of slavery in its true perspective, it is necessary, as Ballantyne reminded his readers, to take into account David Livingstone’s estimate that each African who reached the coast represented the loss of between five and ten human beings at the point of origin. Raiding villages to seize people as slaves involved the slaughter of their active warriors, and of the old or sick; and very large numbers often died during the long forced marches to the coast.

Growing official awareness in Britain of the scale of this devastation led to the setting up of two committees of enquiry. The first of them reported in January 1870, recommending the negotiation of a new treaty with the Sultan of Zanzibar, but Burghash refused to agree to this. The second, a select committee of the House of Commons on the Slave Trade, met in July 1871; and the outcome was the despatch
to Zanzibar of an exceptionally able colonial administrator, Sir Bartle Frere, to make a fresh attempt to secure a more favourable treaty, and to devise a more efficient way of halting the slave trade.

Frere left England on 21 November and reached Zanzibar on 12 January 1873. He presented to the Sultan a draft treaty which required that all transport of slaves via Zanzibar should be stopped forthwith, and that the island's slave markets should be closed. Once again Burghash refused to agree to a measure so prejudicial to the interests of his leading subjects. Indeed they had threatened to depose him if he gave way on this. On 18 March Frere finally left Zanzibar to visit countries to the north and east. Ten days later, acting entirely on his own initiative, he despatched orders to the chief British political and naval representatives on the island, and also a letter to the Sultan, to the effect that, as from 1 May 1873, the British Consul should take over control of the customs office, and examine all Africans landed at Zanzibar to ascertain whether or not they were bona fide 'domestic' slaves. Moreover, the British Navy should from that date launch completely unrestricted action to halt all transport of slaves by sea in the region.

This single-handed gunboat diplomacy caused as much consternation in London as in Zanzibar; but the British Cabinet decided it was less difficult to go forward than back, and their representatives on the island responded with great skill and vigour. On 14 June, two days after Frere's return to England, a telegraphic message reached London announcing that on 5 June Burghash had bowed to compulsion and signed the new treaty.13

This measure proved reasonably successful in halting the northward sea-borne slave traffic, though it did not stop the activities of the Arab slave traders. Some of them turned to moving their slaves northward by land, 'down the Nile, through the towns on the Somali and Red Sea coasts, and by other routes'.14 Others developed their own plantations in adjacent areas of the mainland, served by large gangs of slaves.15 The last major slave catcher in the Lake Nyasa region, Mzoli, was not finally defeated until 1895. The ownership of slaves in the territories of Zanzibar was not abolished until 1907.

Ballantyne had no first-hand knowledge of Africa, of Africans, or of slaving. Nonetheless, as he says in his preface, he had access to what were, for the time, excellent and relatively up-to-date sources of information: the testimony and advice of Dr Ryan, the Reverend Charles New, and Mr Edward Hutchinson of the Church Missionary Society; the relevant Parliamentary blue books; and the works mentioned in his footnotes. These included ex-Consul Lyons McLeod's Travels in Eastern Africa; With the Narrative of a Residence in Mozambique (1860), David and Charles Livingstone's Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi and its Tributaries (1865), Henry Rowley's The Story of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa (1866) and Captain George Lydiard Sullivan's Dhow Chasing in Zanzibar Waters (published ca. March 1873). Clearly, Ballantyne was also following the course of events in the newspapers.

The following survey of Ballantyne's organisation of his story, and of the effects of his major revisions, reveals the nature of his rhetorical intentions, the ways he sought to fulfil them, and how he responded to the news of Frere's success.
Chapter I: The young English adventurer Harald Seadrift and his loyal companion Disco Lillyhammer stay with a sinking ship and are cast ashore on the Mozambique coast, not far from a Portuguese settlement. Here they encounter the Arab slave trader Yoosoof, and the captured African girl Azinte. Interpolation (a) comes towards the end of this chapter, and is evidently simply a recasting of the narrative during the main process of composition to make it more coherent. There is no sign of an earlier version, and f.8 follows on from f.2/7.

Chapter II: The two Englishmen witness the arrival of Yoosoof's slave caravan. Yoosoof visits Lettotti, the Governor of the nearby Portuguese settlement, and his daughter Maraquita becomes attached to Azinte. With the help of Lieutenant Lindsay, from the British cruiser ‘Firefly’, who is in love with Maraquita, the Governor buys Azinte for his daughter, though the half-caste slave trader Marizano had wished to purchase her.

Chapter III: Yoosoof prevents the ‘Firefly’ from capturing his good quality ‘black ivory’ by allowing it to catch a small dhow laden with exhausted and sick slaves, so that the cruiser is forced to run to the Seychelles to put them on land in a safe place. Harald and Disco, tied up, have been left on this dhow.

Interpolation (b) cites Sir Bartle Frere’s statement at a meeting in Bombay in April 1873 that 30,000 Africans were being shipped from the coast each year, and Livingstone’s estimate that on average only one in five of those captured survived the march to the coast, so that this represented an annual loss of 150,000 people by this route only. Evidently (b) was added at the proof stage. Ballantyne initially marked it for inclusion as a footnote, keyed to ‘poor Azinte’ on f.45 (p.49). Instead it was inserted within the text just before the last sentence of the chapter, on f.60, and after a sentence that had earlier been added on f.59v. Accordingly the last sentence, originally starting ‘Yoosoof’s venture was/ but a drop in the vast river of blood/ that is drained annually from poor Africa’s/ veins ... ’, was emended to ‘Yoosoof’s venture was,/ therefore, but’, etc. In an earlier stage of rewriting, the sentence on f.59v, ‘It is certainly within the mark to say that at least thirty thousand slaves are annually carried away as slaves out from the east coast of Africa. every year.’ was keyed to a footnote: ‘For the data on which this statement is founded see Appendix’. The footnote is deleted, and the words added, ‘Sir Bartle Frere &c. &c. / [Here add matter on the back of page 45]’. Other deleted footnotes, on f.37 and f.63, refer to an appendix, but the notion of having one was evidently given up at a relatively early stage.

Chapter IV: Having the ‘Firefly’ land ‘our heroes’ at Zanzibar enables Ballantyne to present the miseries of the slave market through their eyes, drawing, especially in two insertions to f.66 (on f.66v and 65v), on Sullivan’s eye-witness account and his exasperation at the blatant misuse of the terms of the 1845 treaty that allowed so much of the sea-borne trade to go unmolested under the guise of providing for ‘domestic slavery’.

Out of curiosity, Harald determines to return to the Mozambique area and explore the interior. He and Disco travel to the mouth of the Zambesi, engage a troop of men, and buy canoes, etc.
Chapters V and VI: The party travels up the Zambesi. Harald and Disco rescue Chimboło, a slave who has been thrown into the river in a sack. An exposition on the extreme cruelty of Portuguese slave owners is keyed to references in McLeod's Travels. This (in the manuscript) leads Ballantyne into a fresh tirade against the abuses of the British treaty with Zanzibar, 'w. Sir Bartle Frere has <gone> — been sent— to put a stop to, if possible'. Fortunately the gross irrelevance of the paragraph at this point causes him to delete it (f.110; p.121, first edition). Chimboło tells his story and our heroes decide to take him back to his wife's village in the Manganja country.

Chapter VII: The party turns north up the Shire River. Here (see above), interpolations (c) and (d) break the original Chapter VII into two parts. The first insert tells us of the savage cruelty towards his slaves of the otherwise civilised Portuguese planter Senhor Gamba, which he tries to justify to Harald as an inevitable feature of his situation as a slave owner (Ballantyne's footnote states these words were actually spoken by such a man to members of the Universities' Mission, citing Rowley, pp.64-66). Three of the original paragraphs (on ff.123-24; pp.139-41, first edition) complete the reorganised chapter.

Chapter VIII: The eleven manuscript pages of insert (d) begin the chapter with a geographer's description of the River Shire, Disco's capture of a baby elephant, and an encounter with an exceptionally sadistic and murderous Portuguese slave owner (again, citing a source in Rowley, pp.78-79).

Travelling further up the Shire the party move through a devastated area, and Chimboło rediscovers his wife and child, although their village has just been destroyed by Ajawa (i.e. Yao) slave raiders.

Chapters IX to XV (revised numbers used hereon): Further inland, the chief Kambira kills a hippo. The happy domestic life of his village and his family are portrayed, and Harald's party is welcomed, after initial suspicion. After an enjoyable hunting expedition, and a feast, during which Kambira turns out to be the husband of the long-lost Azinté, the travellers set off once more. They attack a slave caravan led by Marizano, and learn from the freed slaves that another group of slavers has been planning to attack Kambira's village. They hurry back, only to find it already destroyed and deserted. Disco goes down with fever.

Chapter XVI: Back at the coast, Maraquita is furious because her father has sold Azinté to Marizano, and tells Lindsay he must bring news of Azinté if he is ever to visit her again. An account of the 'Firefly's' boats chasing of three dhows leads on to a further denunciation of the 'legal' slave trade sanctioned by the 1845 Treaty.

Chapter XVII: Lindsay on separated duty compels his Arab interpreter to give him news of Marizano's doings. Insert (e) has him return to the 'Firefly', however, to find that Azinté is already on board and being taken to the Seychelles, where in due course she goes to a Protestant mission. So, he cannot return her to Maraquita. (Ballantyne evidently had second thoughts here. If Lindsay had himself captured the dhow with Azinté on board, it would have generated a potential for conflict between 'love' and 'duty' contrary to the author's purposes. Hence he resorts to coincidence.)
Chapter XVIII: In Zanzibar, Yoosoof negotiates with an English sea-captain who denounces the Banyans, the Indian merchants who control the slave trade, and denies that the well-being of Zanzibar justifies ruining half the continent of Africa. Yoosoof then visits one of these Banyans, who agrees to finance his next venture, and tells him of a reward being offered for rescuing an Englishman rumoured to be lost in the Zambesi area. (A composition-stage insert on f.279v, p.311, explains why Yoosoof does not connect this rumour with Harald.) Back in Central Africa, Yoosoof passes on this news to his lieutenant Marizano.

Chapter XIX: While most of their party are hunting, Harald and Disco are assailed by a band of Africans and taken to Yambo's village, where Harald in his turn goes down with fever. Disco befriends Yambo.

Chapter XX: Marizano with a full complement of slaves reaches Yambo's village, and the two Englishmen reluctantly agree to accompany his caravan to the coast, as their only means of getting there.

Chapter XXI: Harald and Disco, separated from the caravan, encounter their own party, who go off to attack it and kill Marizano.

Chapter XXII: A portrayal of Yoosoof's cruel and callous greed as a slave trader leads on to a further denunciation of the fiction of 'domestic' slaving, 'with w3 Britons <have> -are- pledged <themselves> not to interfere!' Here an extended footnote is added — insert (f), which is worth quoting in full:

Since the above was written Sir Bartle Frere <'s Mission> / has returned from his mission & we are told that a treaty/ has been signed by the Sultan of Zanzibar putting an end/ to this domestic slavery. We have not yet seen the terms/ of this treaty & must go to press before it appears. We/ have reason to rejoice -& be thankful- however, that such an advantage has/ been gained. But let not the reader imagine that this/ settles the question of East African slavery. <The drain of human> -Portugal- still/ holds to -the- "domestic -institution- <slavery>" in her Colonies & has decreed that/ it shall not expire till the year 1878. Decreed in fact,-/ that the horrors w³ we have attempted to depict shall/ continue for five years longer! And let it be noted that/ the export slave-trade cannot be stopped as long as/ domestic slavery is permitted. Besides this, there is a/ continuous drain of human beings from Africa through/ Egypt. Sir Samuel Baker's Mission is a blow aimed at/ that, but nothing, that we know of, is being done in/ regard to Portuguese wickedness. If the people of this/ country could only realize the frightful state of things/ that exists in the African Portuguese territory & knew/ how many thousand bodies -shall- <should> be racked with torture/ & souls be launched into eternity during these five/ years, they would indignantly insist that Portugal shd/ be compelled to stop it at once. If it is righteous/ to constrain the Sultan of Zanzibar, is it not equally/ so to compel the King of Portugal?17

Yoosoof's prisoners include Kambira and his little son Obo. They are taken off to sea
in a crowded dhow, on which there is great suffering and loss of life (here Ballantyne notes 'See account of capture of dhow by Capt. Rob' B. Cay of H.M.S. Vulture in the *Times of India* 1872.').

This dhow is spotted by two cutters from the 'Firefly', who prepare to attack it. (At this point, a proposed chapter break is deleted.) They capture it, and the prompt arrival of the 'Firefly' makes possible the offloading of the slaves and departure.

**Chapter XXIII:** Back in the coastal town, Harald and Disco intercede for a negro being flogged, but despite the Governor's promise he would be pardoned from further punishment, during their absence from the town he is flogged to death (this incident was communicated to Ballantyne, so his footnote states, by Dr Ryan). Early-stage revisions introduce the death of the Governor, and Maraquita's departure for Capetown. Harald and Disco, and also Kambira and Obo, with Lindsay, converge on the Seychelles for a reunion with Azinte.

**Chapter XXIV:** This is entirely made up of insert (g), 'The Remedy': not only must the Portuguese be compelled to renounce the institution of slavery in their African dependencies at once, but able consuls must be appointed there and in Egypt to ensure that professions of intentions are translated into reality. One or more British colonies must be established on the African mainland to serve as refuges for freed slaves. The preaching of the Christian gospel must go forward, to change men's hearts.

**Chapter XXV:** The main (good) characters all go and settle in Cape Province, with the noble African chief Kambira installed as head gardener(!) to the newly married Maraquita and Lindsay. Meanwhile the evil trade goes on: 'There is urgent need for action. There -is death where life sh'd be; -ashes <where there shd be> instead of beauty; desolation -in place -/ <where> -of- fertility, and, -even while we write, -terrible activity -in the horrible -traffic in <B> -b-lack <I>ivory.'

* * * * * * * * *

Ballantyne may well have reacted to the news of Frere's success in mid-June 1873 with a mixture of elation and dismay. The imposition upon the Sultan of a new treaty was an outcome he deeply desired. On the other hand, his book, which had already gone off to the printer, was primarily and pervasively directed towards demanding the bringing about of this very event. He was threatened with a fiasco.

Even if it might have been possible to withdraw his book and radically recast it, he probably could not have done this without disrupting the publishing schedule to such an extent that he would have missed out on the Christmas gift market, thus inflicting financial loss both on the publisher and on himself and breaching his long-term contract. The way in which he responded to this crisis was highly ingenious. Having himself had professional experience in a printing firm, he was aware of the practicalities of dealing with material that was already in page proof. What he did, apart from making minor changes of tense, was to introduce several blocks of new material which acknowledged the result of the Frere mission, and others that threw stress upon the cruelties of Portuguese slave ownership in Zambesia (the modern Mozambique), and thus redirected the reader's efforts towards putting pressure on the British Government to take action against Portugal. Inserts (c) and (d)
incorporate new material from Rowley's *The Story of the Universities' Mission* about two brutal Portuguese slave owners; and these are padded out with descriptions of the Shire Valley, and with a mildly amusing incident involving a baby elephant, so as to make up a whole new sheet without disrupting the imposition on either side. Of course the compositors would have had to reorganize the pagination and chapter numbering throughout the rest of the book, but this was evidently an acceptable outlay in extra trouble and cost. The new penultimate chapter, 'The Remedy', was so near the end of the book as to cause little disturbance.

References to the abuses permitted by the previous treaty with Zanzibar are too numerous and pervasive to be omitted, or even significantly changed. This creates an odd sense of confusion, ameliorated to some extent by the fact that the acknowledgements of the supercession of the obnoxious Hamerton Treaty, in inserts (f) and (g), come near to the end of the book. Hence, in a way, a real-life success story is re-enacted within the timespan of the reading experience.

Nonetheless Ballantyne's shaping of his story is clearly directed to awakening the reader to the horrible cruelties of each stage of 'the Zanzibar connection': the ensainment of slaves at the end of their march; the miseries of the Zanzibar slave markets; the devastating raid on Kambira's happy, peaceful village; the dreadfulness of the Arab slave caravan and barracoon; and the ghastly squalor of the slave-dhow voyage. While earlier parts of the book provide the younger reader with portrayals of the more straightforwardly pleasurable experiences of Harald and Disco, in exploring the Zambesi or hunting wild animals, the later parts concentrate more upon such rhetorically significant descriptive material, and include frequent direct address to the reader. This rhetoric is manifestly directed to inducing English readers to put pressure upon their own Government to adopt a more wholeheartedly aggressive approach towards Zanzibar. The interpolated revisions endeavour to redirect this indignation against other aspects of the Arab slavers' activities, and against the Portuguese — but the cumulative effect is inevitably somewhat broken-backed.

Despite occasional crassnesses (including an excruciatingly patronising treatment of most of the African characters) and too much evangelical moralizing, *Black Ivory* is an effectively told tale. Britain has surprisingly few fictional works about slavery and slaving, considering the large numbers of British subjects involved either in the trade or in the efforts to suppress it. This one deserves to be better known.

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NOTES

1. I gratefully acknowledge the help of Mrs Alison McNeill, the present owner of the manuscript, who has given me free access to it, and much information about Ballantyne and McNeill family history; and also of Dr Robert Hoskins, for the loan of his copy of the 1969 photo-facsimile reprint of the 1873 edition. Mr Eric Quayle's works, *Ballantyne the Brave: A Victorian Writer and his Family* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1967), and *R.M. Ballantyne: A Bibliography of First Editions* (London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1968), have been invaluable. I am also grateful to my wife Audrey and to Mr David McKitterick for advice about the writing.

2. Quayle, *Bibliography*, passim. Eighteen of the books were relatively short, as constituents of *Ballantyne's Miscellany* (1863-86).

3. *Ballantyne the Brave*, preface. The majority of [Ballantyne's] original manuscripts are now housed in the library of Yale University, U.S.A.; others are to be found in the National Library of
Scotland; the University of California, U.S.A.; and here at Greensleeves' (i.e. Quayle's home, Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire; Bibliography, p.14). It is not known how 'Black Ivory' compares with other Ballantyne manuscripts.

4. Ballantyne the Brave, pp.300-301. Edgar had died in 1906 or 1907, at the age of thirty-five; hence the legatees were Frank, Jean, Alice and Isobel.

5. The preface bears the author's signature; and cf. the hand in Ballantyne's personal letters in the University Library, Cambridge, MS. Addl. 7339/11-12.

6. That is, at the stage prior to the insertion of the major interpolated passages detailed below. It is not known whether Ballantyne would have corrected the galley proofs as well as the page proofs. There are many minor textual discrepancies, mainly in accidentals, between the manuscript and the first edition. Most were probably compositorial in origin, but some may have come about through authorial changes either to galley or to page proofs, or to both.

7. Quotations from Black Ivory are taken from the manuscript, using diagonal strokes to indicate line-endings, diamond brackets to identify words crossed through for deletion, and half-brackets to identify super-lineal insertions, with a caret where present in the original. Ampersands have been used for lower case tironian 'and' signs.

8. Ballantyne the Brave, p.262.


15. Lovejoy states that 'British measures to force an end to the slave trade were relatively ineffective till the 1880s . . . Not until after the (Zanzibarian) abolition law of 1873 was there any real chance for success, and then not till the last decade did the trade actually fall off' (p.153). On the mainland, 'the peak of the plantation economy was reached between 1875 and 1884' (p.225; and see pp.224-27).

16. The names 'Azinte' and 'Lettotti' (ex-'Leotti') are drawn from McLeod, II, pp.19-21 and I, p.193.

17. Portugal indeed abolished the legal status of slavery in 1878. Sadly, this affected the institution of slavery in its colonies in name only, for several decades more (Lovejoy, pp.286, 261).