

American Bibliographical Notes

THE THREE 1823 EDITIONS OF
JAMES FENIMORE COOPER'S *The Pioneers*

BECAUSE of a virulent outbreak of yellow fever, the publication of James Fenimore Cooper's *The Pioneers*, originally scheduled for the autumn of 1822, was delayed by almost half a year.¹ But when the novel did appear in New York on February 1, 1823, Cooper's expectations for his third public venture into fiction were amply rewarded: his public, remembering the new American novelist's great success with *The Spy* in 1821, eagerly snapped up 3500 sets of the two-volume novel on the morning of its appearance.² Business logic dictated a quick reprinting of the best seller; more important, Cooper intervened in the resulting second edition to correct some textual errors perpetrated in the first edition, which was printed and proofed under the constraints of the yellow fever plague.³ But because the publisher, Charles Wiley, made no attempt on the title page to distinguish the second edition from the quickly sold first, the differences between these two

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¹On November 29, 1822, Cooper wrote to John Murray, the future British publisher of the novel, that 'the yellow fever, has caused a delay in the appearance of the *Pioneers*, which I greatly regret.' A second letter to Murray on January 15, 1823, establishes that *The Pioneers* had been completely printed by that date, for Cooper was then able to send Murray two sets for the London edition. See James Franklin Beard, ed., *The Letters and Journals of James Fenimore Cooper* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1960), I, 85, 91.

²Thomas R. Lounsbury, *James Fenimore Cooper* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1890), p. 41.

³The errata note at the end of the second volume blames the fever for the lax correcting of the text:

In consequence of the state of the city during the fever, the *Pioneers* has not received the careful revision that was desirable. Most of the time, the publisher was

editions have never been properly sorted out. All previous bibliographers have, in fact, lumped the two separate American editions together as one; also they have not considered the relation of these two editions to the first British edition, published on February 26, 1823. What follows is an attempt to clarify the textual relations of these three 1823 editions of *The Pioneers*, the first of Cooper's 'Leather-Stocking Tales.' This study may also shed some light on Cooper's early procedures of revision, and on the practices of a representative early nineteenth-century publisher, Charles Wiley.⁴

The first edition of *The Pioneers* bears on its title page the imprint of Charles Wiley, publisher, and E[dward] B. Clayton, printer. This textually ill-fated Wiley/Clayton edition was quickly followed by a new Wiley version of the novel, with the first volume set in Jonathan Seymour's printing shop and the second in Clayton's. Bibliographers since Spiller and Blackburn have noticed the existence of these two Wiley versions of *The Pioneers*, but have offered no account which fully defines their relative status.⁵ The *Bibliography of American Literature* notices some textual differences between the two Wiley versions, but stops short of identifying them as separate editions.

absent, and the proofs were not read in the usual manner. He will not publish a regular errata, but cannot suffer some of the mistakes to go without notice.—In the first chapter, the word 'Delaware' should be inserted for 'Mohawk.' 'Moreen' is spelt, once or twice, 'marine.' The printers have inserted the verb 'to fall,' instead of 'to fell.' 'A shapeless figure of good proportions!' should read any thing else. The 'surrounding atmosphere before it,' is an oversight. There are several little grammatical errors; but it is thought that those who detect them, will have charity enough to attribute them to their true causes, haste, and the reasons above mentioned.

⁴The textual collations which this paper draws upon were made by Lance Schachterle and Kenneth Andersen in preparation for a definitive textual edition of *The Pioneers*. This volume will be part of a new general edition of Cooper's writings, sponsored by Clark University in cooperation with the American Antiquarian Society, and published by the State University of New York Press.

⁵Spiller and Blackburn's bibliography distinguishes only between the two printings of Volume One, failing to notice that Volume Two also exists in two separate printings. Reasoning that Clayton printed Cooper's next novel, *The Pilot*, Spiller and Blackburn argue Clayton's version of Volume One followed Seymour's. Their account makes no attempt to distinguish the two editions of either volume in terms of textual variants. See Robert Spiller and Philip Blackburn, *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Writings of James Fenimore Cooper* (1934; rpt. New York: Burt Franklin, 1968), p. 27.

A full comparison of both printings, however, demonstrates beyond question that the second printing goes far beyond merely correcting what the errata note at the end of the first edition calls 'several little grammatical errors.' Both sight and mechanical collations (the latter carried out on the American Antiquarian Society's Hinman Collator) indicate that the second Wiley version, for all of Volume One and most of Volume Two, was printed from type newly set. The Wiley/Seymour Volume One and the Wiley/Clayton Volume Two (second printing) must therefore be considered a genuine second edition of the novel.⁶

The best way to begin discussing these two Wiley editions is with an account of the printing history of each volume in the set. For the first volume of *The Pioneers*, the BAL distinguishes between the Clayton and Seymour printings, accurately calling the Clayton printing the earlier since the improvements in the Seymour text appear in all subsequent editions (except for the 1823 Murray and 1825 Baudry editions which derive from the Clayton printing). This pattern of textual transmission suggests that Cooper regarded the Seymour Volume One as the preferred and presumably corrected text; it was used as printer's copy for the Collins and Hannay edition of 1825, which itself in turn served as copy for the Carey, Lea, and Carey edition of 1827. A final piece of evidence confirms the argument that the Seymour printing follows the Clayton: the Seymour first volume incorporates all the corrections recorded in the errata note at the end of the earlier Clayton printing of Volume Two.⁷

⁶The later authorized editions of *The Pioneers* in Cooper's lifetime are the 1825 Collins and Hannay, the 1825 Baudry, the 1827 Carey, Lea, and Carey (the first to be stereotyped and thus reprinted late into the century), the 1832 revised Bentley, the 1835 Baudry, and the 1851 revised Putnam.

⁷'Mohawk' is corrected to 'Delaware' at p.17, l.3; 'marine' to 'moreen' at p.103, l.26 and p.123, l.10; 'to fall' is changed to 'to fell' at (among other places), p.82, l.14, p.128, l.11, and p.237, l.7, and 'a shapeless figure of good proportions' is corrected to 'a square figure of large proportions,' p.45, l.20. The last phrase mentioned in the errata note, 'surrounding atmosphere before it,' appears nowhere in Volume One. No doubt 'surrounding atmosphere in front of it' (Volume Two, p.70, l.27) is intended; 'surrounding' is deleted from the phrase in the second edition of Volume Two.

A sight collation of the two texts of the first volume indicates that the Seymour printing is far more important than the BAL's account suggests. The BAL describes the Seymour first volume as 'an attempted line-for-line reprint of the Clayton setting' which 'shows some improvements.'⁸ A full collation of the Wiley/Clayton and Wiley/Seymour first volumes reveals that the Seymour version has been revised attentively and systematically, suggesting Cooper's own intervention. Fully one-quarter of the substantive changes which appear in the last revised edition, the 1851 Putnam, appear first in the Seymour printing. These revisions fall into five categories: 1) correction of blatant errors in the Wiley/Clayton first volume, 2) revision of faulty style or bad grammar, 3) preservation of dialect, especially for Natty Bumppo, 4) use of 'shall' instead of 'will' in the future first person, and 5) replacement of a 'so' or 'as' phrase by a more precise locution. A list of examples of variants may be found in the footnotes.⁹

⁸ *Bibliography of American Literature*, comp. by Jacob Blanck (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), II, 277.

⁹ Some examples selected from the 489 recorded substantive variants suggest the range and thoroughness of the revisions made for the Wiley/Seymour Volume One.

Wiley/Clayton Edition

Wiley/Seymour Edition
(Page and line nos. same as
in Wiley/Clayton passage)

1) Correction of blatant errors

p.60, l.17 The last object at which Elizabeth had gazed when they renewed their journey, after the rencontre with Richard, was the sun, as he expanded in the refraction of the horizon

The last object at which Elizabeth had gazed when they renewed their journey, after the rencontre with Richard, was the sun, as it expanded in the refraction of the horizon

p.90, l.25 they were not, like Marmaduke here, puffed up with an accidental thing, such as the time when you drew in the hip-joint of the man

they were not, like Marmaduke here, puffed up with an accidental thing, such as the time when he [ie, Marmaduke] drew in the hip-joint of the man

2) Revisions of faulty style or bad grammar

p.35, l.22 the mountains ... were formed into kind of terraces that admitted of cultivation.

the mountains ... were formed into terraces and hollows that admitted of cultivation.

p.45, l.19 Opposite to this personage, sat a shapeless figure of good proportions.

Opposite to this personage, sat a square figure of large proportions.

p.269, l.13 Elizabeth ... soon forgot, not only the changes in the country, but those, also, in her own condition

Elizabeth ... soon forgot the changes in the country, with those in her own condition

Several revisions deserve specific comment, for they strongly suggest authorial second thoughts made while Cooper was correcting more obvious errors. In the passage where Benjamin Pump is introduced, the steward's height, 'five feet two inches' (p.62, l.38) in the first edition, is reduced in the second to an even five feet, no doubt to emphasize the stuntedness of the droll Cornishman. In describing Christmas Eve services at Templeton, Cooper remarks that 'half the nations in the north of Europe had their representatives in this assembly, though all had closely assimilated themselves to the natives, in dress and appearance...' (p.149, l.1). But in the second edition 'natives' becomes more accurately 'Americans'; no doubt Cooper, who did more than any other novelist to make the world aware that the true native of the New World was the Indian, caught and corrected this embarrassing oversight in the first edition. Finally, on p.265, l.16, a whole sentence is deleted from the revised edition: 'Vulgarity over the bottle, was an embellishment of some fifteen years later date.' This passage was blue pencilled, probably not only because Cooper disliked an authorial intrusion in a scene which describes Judge Temple's Christmas banquet, but also because the author realized Marmaduke Temple needed no authorial testimony to his sobriety.

Wiley/Clayton Edition

Wiley/Seymour Edition
(Page and line nos. same as
in Wiley/Clayton passage)

3) Preservation of dialect

p.51, l.1 'Der teufel, Richart!'	'Ter deyvel, Richart!'
[Major Hartmann]	
p.164, l.25 times are altering	times be altering
[Natty Bumppo]	

4) Use of 'shall' instead of 'will' with the future first person

p.56, l.9 I will take	I shall take
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5) Replacement of a 'so' or 'as' phrase by a more precise locution

p.92, l.17 itself, so as to catch the lead, and, at the	itself, and caught the lead, while at the
p.170, l.5 head, so as to allow his dark	head, allowing his dark
p.270, l.28 hemlock, as it glistened through	hemlock, glistening through

The relationship between the two editions of the second volume of the novel is rather more complex, partly because both versions were printed in the same shop, E. B. Clayton's. The BAL considers these two versions as different states, noting as variants only the placement of the page number of folio 329 at the top left or right, and the presence or absence of the errata note. According to the BAL, the earlier edition (BAL 'A') carries the page number incorrectly on the left side and of course concludes with the errata note, while the later state (BAL 'B') correctly moves the page number to the right and drops the errata note. The BAL notes no textual variants between the two 'states,' but collating the two texts reveals half as many substantive changes for Volume One as for Volume Two (489 to 244). These two 'states' are in fact two editions, with the 'A' version the earlier, full of corruptions and errors which were removed in the 'B' version.¹⁰

Though the second volume contains only about half as many substantive revisions as the first, the kinds of changes resemble

¹⁰A parallel list of variants for the second volume demonstrates the textual significance of the 'B' version.

1) Correction of blatant errors

'A' Edition

'B' Edition

p.9, l.14 Nothing could be more marked, than the contrast between the earth and the heavens; for, while the latter presented the dreary view that we have described, a warm and invigorating sun was dispensing his heats

Nothing could be more marked, than the contrast between the earth and the heavens; for, while the former presented the dreary view that we have described, a warm and invigorating sun was dispensing his heats

2) Revisions of faulty style or bad grammar

p.5, l.1 the immense piles of snow, that, by alternate thaws and frosts, and constant accumulation, had obtained a firmness

the immense piles of snow, that, by alternate thaws and frosts, and repeated storms, had obtained a firmness

p.104, l.25 the youth pulled his little boat, in a very few minutes, alongside of, and fastened it to the light vessel

the youth pulled his little boat, in a very few minutes, to the place where his friends were fishing, and fastened it to the light vessel

3) Preservation of dialect

p.73, l.38 women are used

women be used

[Natty Bumppo]

p.109, l.31 snow, before it

snow, afore it

[Natty Bumppo]

those in the preceding volume and suggest that the program of correction was sustained through both volumes of the second edition. Though fewer in number, these corrections point with equal weight to Cooper's intervention, since their range and detail do not suggest the work of a mere reviser of copy. One revision in Volume Two merits special note, since it seems to fall into the category of an authorial second thought. The passage appears in Oliver Edward's explanation to his friends in the Mansion-house of his relationship to old Mohegan. He assures them his title of 'son' is derived from his grandfather's adoption by the Indians, and that he has 'no other Indian blood' (p.309, l.13). In the revised Volume Two, the words 'or breeding' are added after 'blood' as a further assurance of the limits of Oliver's relation to the natives. The addition of course makes Oliver Edward's transformation into Edward Oliver Effingham more credible, and thus provides a small but significant assist to the denouement of the romance.

One might suppose that the first and second editions of Volume One and Volume Two occur together in chronologically matched sets. This is not invariably the case, however. A census prepared by Warner Barnes reports fifty-five American libraries with first editions of *The Pioneers* (as defined previously by the BAL). These libraries were questioned in some detail in the fall of 1972 concerning actual first and second editions of the novel. Specific information on the Wiley/Clayton-'A' and Wiley/Seymour-'B' editions was returned for forty-four sets. Eighteen of the sets fit the BAL description for the

'A' Edition	'B' Edition
4) Use of 'shall' instead of 'will' with the future first person	
p.13, l.11 I will remember	I shall remember
p.74, l.31 I will, for	I shall, for
5) Replacement of a 'so' or 'as' phrase with a more precise locution	
p.6, l.22 changes. So long as the	changes. While the
p.14, l.3 called, so as to leave a wide space	called, and a wide space of many acres was
of many acres, which	cleared, which
p.70, l.26 out, so as to enlighten the surrounding atmosphere	out, and enlightened the atmosphere

first edition; Volume One was of course credited on the title page to E. B. Clayton, printer, and Volume Two carried the page number '329' on the left side, and concluded with the errata note. Nineteen other sets were reported with Volume One from Seymour's printing shop, and with Volume Two in some instances having the page number for folio 329 correctly on the right and in all cases dropping the errata note.¹¹ The remaining seven sets, all of which have been examined personally or by proxy, are mixed sets made up of earlier and later editions of the separate volumes. The existence of so many mixed sets—others may well have escaped record—suggests that the second edition was printed hard upon the first, so close in fact that the binder of the volumes in some cases made up sets from different editions. This fact, coupled with the lack of distinguishing information on the title pages, explains why the two editions were not detected until subjected to full sight collations.

There is no documentary proof that Cooper had a direct hand in creating the Wiley/Seymour-'B' text by revising the Wiley/Clayton-'A' version; nowhere in his collected correspondence does he speak of the new edition, and the Wiley firm, while still in business, has no records of its early nineteenth century transactions. But the extent and thoroughness of the revisions, which pass beyond the care an early nineteenth century proofreader might be expected to show, argue persuasively for the intervention of a more concerned hand. As noted

¹¹Specifically thirteen 'B' editions of Volume Two were reported with page number 329 on the left, and six with the number corrected to the right. Assuming that the libraries have correctly classified the volume, it is clear that the correction of page number 329 is by no means a valid distinction between the two editions. There exist several 'B' editions (as determined by collation of substantives) with the page number on the left; probably this correction was not made for early impressions of the volume. Considering that the errata note, printed as it is on an unnumbered page two pages from the end of the text, can easily have been lost in rebinding, neither variant listed in BAL suffices for distinguishing the earlier and later editions. Only a sight collation will accomplish this; as a rule of thumb the following easily observed variant on the third line of the first page of the text may be followed:

'A'	'B'
p.5, l.3 and constant accumulation, had	and repeated storms, had

before, the Wiley/Seymour-'B' edition was the printer's copy for all the subsequent American editions before the 1832 revised Bentley edition, indicating Cooper's clear preference for the later New York edition. Cooper was not given to overlooking the sloppiness of his publishers, and we may suppose he was not appeased with the excuse of 'the fever' which Wiley offered to the first readers of *The Pioneers*. He may well have compensated for the oversights committed in the first Wiley printing by insuring a greater accuracy in the second.

An examination of Cooper's correspondence with Murray, the London publisher of *The Pioneers*, provides some support for this hypothesis. To Murray Cooper acknowledged that he had neither revised the manuscript of *The Pioneers* with care nor been vigilant in seeing the first edition through the press. In the letter of November 29, 1822, accompanying 'matter enough to make two of your volumes,' Cooper wrote:

I ought in justice to myself to say, that in opposition to a thousand good resolutions, the *Pioneers*, has been more hastily and carelessly written than any of my books — Not a line has been copied, and it has gone from my desk to the printers — I have not to this moment been able even to *read* it — The corrections I have made are from *Queries* of Mr. Wiley, or by glancing my eye over the work, so that if you find any errors in grammar or awkward sentences you are at liberty to have them altered—Though I should wish the latter to be done very sparingly, both because that one mans [sic] style seldom agrees with anothers, and because a similar liberty was abused to a degree in 'Precaution,' that materially injured the Book —.¹²

By mid-January of 1823 the complete text, in the Wiley/Clayton-'A' edition, was despatched to the London publisher, with the comment that

You will percieve [sic] that corrections are made in some of the pages that are omitted in the duplicates — I wish them all to be made. The difference arises from my making corrections as my

¹²Beard, I, 86.

eye accidentally detected the error — The words 'kind of' and 'sort of' occur too frequently in the book, though sometimes properly — You are at liberty to strike out most of them —.

Cooper adds that as yet 'I have not even read the printed book, regularly.'¹³ These two letters demonstrate clearly Cooper's awareness that *The Pioneers* required revision; some revisions, as his letter states, had already been made for the benefit of Murray's London edition.

Cooper's decision to 'read the printed book, regularly' may have been made in light of the novel's remarkable success on the first day of sales. As mentioned earlier, before noon on February 1, 1823, 3500 sets were sold. Since it is unlikely Wiley's original press order was for much more than this quantity, his stock of the best-seller must have been depleted almost immediately. So quickly was the required new edition printed that Wiley made little attempt on the title page of the volumes to indicate what collating reveals: the Wiley/Seymour-'B' set is a genuine new edition, almost entirely reset from the original.

Almost entirely. A further consideration of the evidence for the printing of the Wiley/Seymour-'B' version lends additional support to the hypothesis that it was a hurriedly executed second edition. The collation of accidentals (that is, punctuation and other changes not affecting the meaning of the text) and substantives (changes in actual wording) for the two editions of Volume One bears out the evidence of the title pages that they were indeed printed in two different shops from two different type settings. Wiley even farmed out the new Volume One to a shop hitherto unconnected with *The Pioneers*. But once again the situation in Volume Two proves more complex. Initial sight collations of copies of the 'A' and 'B' states indicated that the number of substantive changes declined markedly towards the end of the volume. A Hinman collation of the two

¹³ Beard, I, 91-92.

books provided the answer to this riddle: of the twenty-eight signatures in Volume Two, the first twenty-one and the twenty-third have been completely reset by the Clayton shop in the later edition. But for signatures twenty-two and twenty-four through twenty-eight, Clayton made use of the original formes of the first edition, making what changes were necessary in the standing type. For all of these signatures except signature twenty-four, the changes in substantives and accidentals are few in number, and obviously required only the replacement of a few lines of type. Signature twenty-four, however, was totally reset for five and one half of its twelve pages; one page, folio 285, was reset for the first two lines and the next two paragraphs, while the last two paragraphs were not reset at all. The other pages of the signature, like those in all the later signatures, were revised only at certain points. This curious pattern appears in all five of the second edition copies of Volume Two inspected on the Hinman Collator.¹⁴ Presumably the orders for a second edition arrived in Clayton's shop before all the formes from the first had been broken up; for these signatures Clayton simply made the necessary revisions in type already set and went on with his new task. In fact only seven changes of any kind occur in the last four signatures of the new edition: either Clayton's work had improved with the abeyance of the plague, or Cooper, no doubt pressed for time for his revisions, found less and less to object to as his revising approached the novel's conclusion.

One final fact adds to the weight of evidence that the Wiley/Seymour-'B' edition came into existence after the success of the first edition. In Cooper's second letter to Murray (January

¹⁴To guard against the possibility that for the second volume Clayton may have mixed together signatures from both editions, I have examined signature by signature four additional copies of the later edition. In all nine cases the texts followed the pattern described above for Volume Two. Only one anomaly occurred, a first edition which contains, in its 27th signature, the unique variant associated for that signature with the 'B' edition. The variant is insignificant ('A' p.322, l.37 you got then the; 'B' p.322, l.37 you then got the), and suggests the casual replacement, late in the printing of the first edition, of some damaged type resulting in the transposition of the original phrase.

15, 1823), Cooper began by assuring the English publisher that two complete American sets of *The Pioneers* would arrive concurrently with his note. These sets provided the printer's copy for Murray's edition; a sight collation of this first London publication of the novel demonstrates beyond question that Murray's edition was set directly from the Wiley/Clayton-'A' edition. Surely Cooper would have supplied his London publisher with the revised second edition, had it been available in mid-January of 1823; but instead he supplied the first edition, albeit with some corrections (to be examined below). The Wiley/Seymour-'B' second edition was thus printed sometime after January 15, 1823—most likely soon after the great first day of sales on February 1.

Before any conclusions can be drawn about the nature of Cooper's revisions of *The Pioneers* in 1823, the third edition, that published by John Murray on February 26, 1823, must be considered.¹⁵ Cooper forwarded two sets of the first edition of the novel to Murray in mid-January; these sets included some revisions Cooper wished executed for the British edition. Apparently Cooper kept no record of these revisions, which probably were the first he made to *The Pioneers* beyond those which may have been done casually when the first edition was being printed. Few of these Murray revisions appear in the Wiley/Seymour-'B' revision. Consequently the three-volume Murray edition possesses the special distinction of containing a number of unique revisions of the first of the *Leather-Stocking Tales*.¹⁶

In addition to these unique revisions, there are twenty revi-

¹⁵The Murray edition is the third edition of 1823 to be discussed here, but it of course may be the second in chronological terms, depending upon when the Wiley/Seymour-'B' edition was published—before or after the appearance of the Murray edition on February 26, 1823.

¹⁶A sample of these revisions in Murray may be of interest.

Wiley/Clayton	Murray
Volume One, p.27, l.37 privileges of his offspring	Volume One, p.41, l.26 privileges which would have descended to his offspring
Volume One, p.112, l.32 of temperament, had	Volume One, p.171, l.15 of temper, had

sions in Volume One and four in Volume Two which appear in both the second Wiley and the Murray editions. This fact provides a final weighty piece of evidence that Cooper was the source of the revisions found in the Wiley/Seymour-'B' edition. If the Murray revisions are known to be authorial, then the same revised passages in the second Wiley edition are certainly authorial. And we do know, from Cooper's letter to Murray of January 15, 1823, that he revised the copies forwarded to London. The fact that twenty-four of these revised Murray passages also appear in the second Wiley edition points to Cooper's remembering some earlier changes, made for the Murray, when he was revising for the second Wiley. We even find two revised passages in Volume One of Murray which are also revised but not with the same words in the Wiley/Seymour edition of Volume One.¹⁷

In conclusion, this study of the 1823 editions of *The Pioneers* demonstrates that three separate editions of the novel appeared in close succession. The Wiley/Clayton-'A' edition is unquestionably the first, and the Murray is the first to be revised though not necessarily the first revision to be published. The Wiley/Seymour edition of Volume One and the 'B' edition of Volume Two, long regarded as second 'states' or 'printings,' are demonstrably a second Wiley edition, for the most part printed from type newly set. The variety and extent of the revisions; which resemble in kind those changes Cooper made

Wiley/Clayton	Murray
Volume One, p.174, l.5 The wrongs which have been done to the natives are shared by Judge Temple	Volume One, p.264, l.25 The injuries which have been done to the natives are to be alleged against Judge Temple
Volume Two, p.101, l.30 man in an equivocal situation	Volume Three, p.26, l.21 man whose situation is so equivocal
Volume Two, p.101, l.35 the abstracted position	Volume Three, p.26, l.26 the contemplative posture
¹⁷ Wiley/Clayton	Murray
p.35, l.25 into kind of terraces that	p.53, l.21 into a kind of terraces that
p.45, l.20 a shapeless figure of good proportions.	p.69, l.6 a shapeless figure of a large stature.
Wiley/Seymour	
into terraces and hollows that	
a square figure of large proportions.	

for the 1823 Murray edition, support the hypothesis that the revisions in the second Wiley edition were made by Cooper himself.

In addition to defining the relationship among these three editions, the evidence of revision presented here demonstrates that in 1823 Cooper manifested no lack of concern over the stylistic purity and accuracy of detail of his third novel. Cooper simply does not show in *The Pioneers* the indifference to prose style often alleged against him, for he took some pains to revise the novel twice in the year of its first appearance. Admittedly his correcting was hurried: the Murray edition had to be published as soon as possible after the Wiley to head off English pirates, and the second Wiley was probably revised under pressure to supply enough new copies for the eager American public who had devoured 3500 sets on the morning of issue. Later in life Cooper still referred to *The Pioneers* as an especially corrupt text,¹⁸ but this acknowledgement itself demonstrates his continued concern for the text of a novel he knew he had corrected imperfectly in 1823. Though the 1832 Bentley and 1851 Putnam editions contain many more corrections, this examination of the 1823 revisions shows without question that, at this point in his career, Cooper acknowledged by his labors of revision the need to correct the imperfections which had crept into the first edition of *The Pioneers*.

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¹⁸See Cooper's comments to Colburn and Bentley, Beard, II, 63, 93.

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