

FOUR BAMFORTH STUDIO PLATES

JOHN JONES

These fascinating plates, which I am able to reproduce by courtesy of Marian Barrowclough – the one-time Bamforth child model – show the studio settings used by Bamforths for four of their life-model sets. Outside the lined-off central areas used for reproduction on the final slides they give glorious behind-the-scenes glimpses of how things were managed – with many touches of unintentional surrealism: the clashing perspectives of the set and studio; the carpeted street; the snow that falls from nowhere; the shrubbery growing from a chair.

Plate 1 is slide 12 from *Billy's Rose* by G.R. Sims – a set of 17 slides. With her eyes upturned to heaven, down she sank upon the ground.

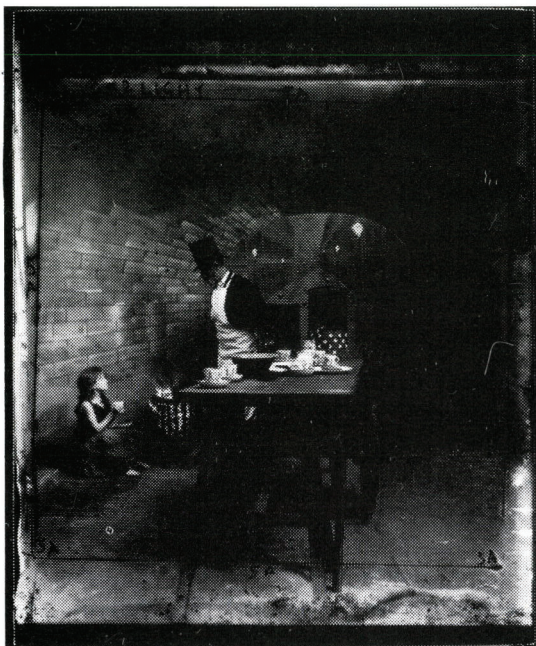


Plate 2 is slide 5A from *Jessica's First Prayer* by Hesba Stretton. She lifted the cup of coffee to her lips with both her benumbed hands. This set was issued in a basic version of 34 slides with a further 17 slides available as optional extras – any of which could be ordered separately as required. These extra slides were numbered 1A-17A; that we reproduce here clearly being one of these.



Plate 3 is from *The Newsboy's Debt* which is a set first appearing in 1888. Although numbered 7 in the negative the Bamforth catalogue lists the corresponding line of text for this slide as **We hired a stable-loft today**. While this could fit, it might be that this image finally appeared as slide 6 which has the more appropriate text I said, **'You seem a little lad'** associated with it.



Plate 4 is slide 20 from *Matt Stubb's Dream; or, Christmas at the Blue Boar* by Mark Guy Pearse – a set of 40 slides. The seat jumped up of its own accord. We reproduce also the finished slide for comparison.

