Handlist of the Essick Blake Collection

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ESSICK BLAKE COLLECTION

BY JANICE S. LYLE

The Robert N. Essick collection, one of the more important Blake collections still in private hands, is the result of careful but avid acquisition since 1969. Probably the largest collection, public or private, of Blake's commercial book illustrations, the Essick holdings also include Blake drawings, paintings, pages from the Illuminated Books, separate prints, and works by and after Blake's contemporaries (Flaxman, Fuseli and Stothard) and followers (Calvert, Linnell, Palmer and Richmond). This is the range of work included in the checklist; excluded are original prints by and after artists of the preceding generation (Barry, Mortimer, and Runciman), which form an important part of the Essick collection, and the approximately 800-volume library of critical books, sale and exhibition catalogues, facsimiles, editions of Blake's writings, books by and about Blake's associates, and other types of support material. This collection and that of the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery make Southern California a significant center for Blake scholarship.

I wish to thank Professor Essick for giving so freely of his knowledge about these works, particularly concerning the states of the engraved plates. The meticulous research he conducted when purchasing these items minimized the problems of compiling this checklist.

1. DRAWINGS & PAINTINGS
BY BLAKE

1. The Making of Magna Charta. (Illus. 1) c. 1780. Watercolor. 13.2 x 17.9 cm.

2. The Good Farmer. Early 1780s. Pencil, black ink, and grey wash. 32.5 x 46.5 cm. Pencil, black ink, and grey wash sketch of the same subject on verso, inscribed (not by Blake) "The Good Farmer giving His fields in famine."

3. Pestilence. (Illus. 2) c. 1784. Watercolor. 17.9 x 27.1 cm.

4. Tiriel Departing from Har and Heva. (Illus. 3) c. 1788. Monochrome wash drawing. 18.2 x 27.3 cm.

5. Lamech and His Two Wives. (Illus. 4) 1795. Color printed drawing. 38.5 x 48 cm.


7. Pencil sketch, probably by Blake, in upper right corner of Fuseli's drawing of Michelangelo (see VII, Fuseli, A).

8. Death Pursuing the Soul through the Avenues of Life (a rejected preliminary design for Robert Blair's The Grave). (Illus. 6) 1805. Monochrome wash drawing. 24.6 x 11.5 cm.

9. Harold killed at the Battle of Hastings. 1819.
II. BLAKE'S ILLUMINATED BOOKS


1. *America, A Prophecy*. Modern impression from extant fragment of cancelled plate a. Large etched white areas intentionally foul inked.6


4. *There is No Natural Religion*. Plates a3 (Copy G1) and a9 and b12 (Copy I) only.

III. BOOK ILLUSTRATIONS DESIGNED &/OR ENGRAVED BY BLAKE

Entry numbers are those used in G. E. Bentley, Jr., *Blake Books*, Oxford, 1977, hereafter referred to as B. References to plates from the following volumes indicate plates designed and/or engraved by Blake only. Information on the states of the plates not in B is based on Roger R. Esson and Robert N. Essick, *William Blake: Book Illustrator*, Normal, Illinois, 1972 (volume I published; typescript of volumes II and III consulted). Plates listed individually are disbound and matted unless otherwise indicated.


*Idem*. Plates only.
B416 A New and Improved Roman History.  
1798. Original boards, uncut.

B417A Ariosto, Lodovico. Orlando Furioso. 5 vols.  
1783.


B417C Idem. 2 vols. 1791.

B417D Idem. 1799.

Idem. Three copies of plate only: two in first state (one printed on a large sheet), one in third state.

B420 The Royal Universal Family Bible. (Illus. 9)  
1780-81 (i.e. 1782).

Idem. Plate 1 only. A later state, cut down; printed on paper watermarked 1803 and not known to have been published in this state.

Published proof impressions on laid India paper, original printed labels.


Plate 3, "When the Almighty was yet
5 Sketch of a standing male figure and two heads. After 1796. Pencil and red chalk.

6 Death Pursuing the Soul through the Avenues of Life. 1805. Monochrome wash drawing.

7 The Ghost of Abel, plate 1 only.

with me". Pre-publication proof. State b in Binyon and Keynes.

Plate 12, "With Dreams upon my bed". Pre-publication proof. State e in Binyon and Keynes.


B435D Idem. 1813 quarto.

B435E Idem. 1813 (i.e. 1870) folio. Publisher's binding.

Idem. Complete plates loose in portfolio as issued, 1870.


Plate 4. Proof lacking letters.

Plate 5. First state.

Plate 11. Proof before plate was cut down with imprint dated 1 Feb. 1806.

Death Pursuing the Soul through the Avenues of Life. Rejected preliminary drawing (see 1, 8).

B437 Boydell's ... Shakespeare. 1803?

B438 Plate only from Brown, John. The Elements of Medicine. 1795.

B439A Bryant, Jacob. A New System, or an Analysis of Ancient Mythology. 3 vols. 1774-76.


B440 Bürger, Gottfried. Leonora. 1796. Frontispiece disbound, matted.

Idem. (Illus. 10) Frontispiece only. Proof lacking finished work in design, trimmed to design. Sketches by Blake on verso (see 1, #6).

B441 Catullus. The Poems of Catullus. 2 vols. 1795.

B442 Chaucer, Geoffrey. The Poetical Works of Geoffrey Chaucer. 14 vols. 1782 (i.e. 1783).

B446A Cumberland, George. Outlines from the Ancients. 1829.

B446B Idem. Variant issue.

B447 _____. Thoughts on Outline. 1796. Original boards, uncut.


B450E _____. The Poetical Works of Erasmus Darwin. 3 vols. 1806.

Idem. Plates 1, 3, and 4 as appearing in first three editions.

Plate 6. Proof lacking finished work in design and letters except signatures.

B452A Emlyn, Henry. A Proposition for a New Order in Architecture. 1781.

Idem. Third edition. 1797.


B456A Flaxman, John. Compositions from ... Hesiod. 1817. Two copies.

B456B Idem. 1870. Two copies: one the separate issue in publisher's binding, one the composite issue (see B page 563).

B457A _____. The Iliad of Homer. 1805. Two copies, one in original boards.

B457B Idem. 1870. Composite issue only (see B page 563).


Sketch for plate 2 (see VII, Flaxman, A).


Idem. Plate only. Proof before letters except signature.

Sketch for plate (see VII, Fuseli, A).


B460B Idem. 1793 (i.e. 1811).

Idem. Plates 1, 2, 4, 7-9, 11, 12 only.


B462 Plates only from Grego, Joseph. Mrs. Q-- and
The CLOD & the PEBBLE

Love seeketh not itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care;
But for another giveth its ease,
And builds a Heaven in Hells despair.

To sing a little Clod of Clay,
Trodeth with the cattle feet:
But a Pebble of the brook
Warbled out these mists sweet.

Love seeketh only Self to please,
To bind another to its delight:
Joy in another's loss of ease,
And builds a Hell in Heavens despite.
Windsor Castle. 1906. (See IV, B 9).


B465 Hayley, William. Ballads. 1805. Two copies: one in boards, uncut, with first state of plates; other with second state of plates 1-3.

  Idem. Plates 1-4 only. First states.

B466 Designs to A Series of Ballads. 1802. Front matter and first ballad only.

  Idem. Plate 1 only.

B467 An Essay on Sculpture. 1800.

B468A The Life ... of Cowper. 3 vols. 1803-4.


B469 The Life of George Romney. 1809.

B471A The Triumphs of Temper. Twelfth edition. 1803. Large paper copy; original boards, uncut and partly unopened.


B472 Henry, Thomas. Memoirs of Albert de Haller, M. D. 1783.

B473 Hoare, Prince. Academic Correspondence. 1803.

B474 An Inquiry into the ... Arts of Design in England. 1806. Original boards, uncut.

B475 Blake's plate only from Hogarth, William. The Original Works. (See IV, B 1).


B478 Plates 1 and 3 only from Kimpton, Edward. A New and Complete Universal History of the Holy Bible. 1781?


  Idem. Plate only. First state.

B481A Essay on Physiognomy. 3 vols. bound in 5. 1789-98.

B481C Idem. 1810.


  Idem. Plate only.

B483 Plate only from The Monthly Magazine. Vol. IV, no. xxiii (October 1797).

B484 Plates 3-5, 7 and 8 only from Mora, Jose Joaquin de. Meditaciones Poeticas. 1826.

  Nicholson, William. An Introduction to Natural Philosophy. 2 vols. London. 1782.?


8 Songs of Innocence and of Experience, "The Clod and The Pebble" only.

9 From The Royal Universal Family Bible. 1780-81. Plate 1.
10 Leonora. Frontispiece only.

11 Joseph of Arimathea among the Rocks of Albion. Second state.

B485C *Idem*. 1792. With engraved titlepage 1792; second state of the plates.


B486C *Idem*. 1793. With engraved titlepages of 1785 (Sentimental Journey), 1792 (Gulliver's Travels), 1792 (David Simple), 1792 (Sir Laounelot Greaves), 1792 (Peruvian Princess), 1793 (Jonathan Wild); second state of the plates.

*Idem*. Plate 2 first state and plate 3 second state only.


B488 Olivier, J. Fencing Familiarised. 1780.


Idem. Plates 1-3, 5 and 7 only.

B490A Remember Me! 1825. In Blake Books Binding no. 7.

Idem. Plate only.


Idem. Plate 2, printed on a card, only.

B492A Salzmann, C. G. Elements of Morality. 3 vols. 1791. First state of the plates.


B492E Idem. 2 vols. 1815? Third state of the plates.


Plates inscribed nos. 30-50, third state.

B493 Gymnastics for Youth. 1800.

Idem. Plates only.


B497A Shakespeare, William. The Dramatic Works of Shakespeare. 9 vols. 1802 (i.e. 1803).


B498C Idem. 9 vols. 1805.

B499A Stedman, J. G. Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition. 2 vols. 1796.


B499C Idem. 1813. Plates handcolored.

Idem. Plates 1, 3, 5-7, 13-15 only.


B503 Vetusta Monumenta. 1789?


Idem. Plates 1-25 only.

Plate 7 as printed in The Athenaeum, 21 Jan. 1843.


Idem. Plates 1-5 only.

B514A Wollstonecraft, Mary. Original Stories. 1791. Second state of plates 1 and 2; first state of plates 3-6.


B515 Young, Edward. The Complaint, and the Consolation; or Night Thoughts. 1797. Two copies: one uncut with the two-page Explanation of the Engravings and Impressions of plates 5 and 25 before imprints; other disbound and mounted, lacking explanation leaf.

IV. SEPARATE PLATES ENGRAVED BY BLAKE

Information concerning the states of the separate plates is based on Geoffrey Keynes, Engravings by William Blake The Separate Plates, Dublin, 1956; hereafter referred to as K.

A. ORIGINAL GRAPHICS


2. Christ Trampling Upon Urizen. K XII.


B. COPY PLATES

EVENING AMUSEMENT

From an Original Picture in the Collection of H.E. Earsen.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS UNIQUE MATERIALS RELATING TO BLAKE

1. Letter from William Etty to Thomas Campbell. 25 March 1830. Contains a description of Sir Thomas Lawrence's kindness to Blake.10

2. Six letters from H. P. Horne to H. H. Gilchrist. 1866-87. Contain minor references to Blake and Richmond.


4. Notebook inscribed on cover (by Kerrison Preston?) "Graham Robertson's rough Notes on Blake's Books and Drawings etc."


6. Millboard block made by W. Graham Robertson after Blake's design for plate 3 of The Book of Urizen. Inscribed in pencil "Ore or 'Flames of Desire' Block from which 12 impressions have been taken".

7. Impression from W. Graham Robertson's millboard block. Inscribed in pencil "First impression from Block Local colours to be added by further printings".

VII. ASSOCIATES & FOLLOWERS OF BLAKE

FLAXMAN

A. Drawings

Preliminary sketch for Minerva Repressing the Fury of Achilles, plate 2 from The Iliad. (Illus. 14) c. 1805. Pen and pencil. 10 x 15.4 cm.

B. Engravings of Classical Compositions

Entry numbers follow G. E. Bentley, Jr., The Early Engravings of Flaxman's Classical Designs, New York, 1964, hereafter referred to as BF.

Odyssey

BF4 The Odyssey of Homer. London. 1805. Two copies, one in original boards.


V. PORTRAITS OF BLAKE

1. Monochrome wash drawing. (Illus. 13) Possibly by Linnell. Oval, 24.4 x 20.2 cm.9

2. Engraving. Schiavonetti after Phillips. From 1808 folio of Blair's The Grave. Published proof on laid India paper.

3. Engraving. Schiavonetti after Phillips. From Jose de Mora, Meditaciones Poeticas, 1826. (See also III, B435A-F).
14 Minerva Repressing the Fury of Achilles.
John Flaxman. c. 1805. Pen and pencil.

BF12 The Classical Compositions of John Flaxman.
London. 1870.

--- Composizioni de Giovanni Flaxman sculptore
inglese tratte dall' Odissea di Omero. n.p.
n.d. Not in BF.

Iliad

BF2 The Iliad of Homer. London. 1795.

BF6 The Iliad of Homer. London. 1805. Two
copies, one in original boards.

BF11 See Odyssey, BF10.

BF12 See Odyssey, BF12.

--- Disegni d'invenzione dello scultore inglese
n.d. Not in BF.

AESYCHLUS

BF1 Compositions from the Tragedies of Aeschylus.
London. 1795.

BF5 Compositions d'après les tragedies d'Eschyle.
Paris. 1803. Variant lacking imprint, bound
with Odyssey, BF10.

BF7 Compositions from the Tragedies of Aeschylus.
London. 1831.

BF8 See Odyssey, BF12.

DANTE

BF1 La Divina Comedia ... Composto di Giovanni
Flaxman. Rome. 1793. Complete proof copy
with pen inscriptions by Mrs. Flaxman and
minor pencil additions in the designs probably
by John Flaxman. Manuscript label on cover
reads: "First proofs before printing (titles
written by Mrs. Flaxman) The frontispiece of
Purgatorio p. 72 signed by Flaxman for the
Printer The plates were lost on the Voyage
home and again engraved in England for the
Edition now in common use".

BF5 Compositions by John Flaxman ... from the

BF8 Illustrations ... of Dante Alighieri by John
Flaxman. London. 1867.

HESiOd

BF1 Compositions from ... Hesiod. (See III,
FUSELI

A. Drawings

1. Sketch for Blake's plate in Fuseli's Lectures on Painting (see III, B459). c. 1801. Pen and pencil. 22.4 x 18.7 cm. Inscribed "Mich. Angelo by Fuseli original Drawing had From Wm Blake". Pencil sketch of Michelangelo's legs and right arm, probably by Blake, upper right corner. Unrelated pen and pencil sketches on verso. 11

2. Sketch for Blake's plate in Lavater's Aphorisms on Man (see III, B480). c. 1788. Pen. 22.5 x 18.1 cm. Sketch of two heads (possibly of Lavater) on left margin. Unrelated pen sketch on verso. Inscribed on verso "Given by W. Blake to John Linnell[.] by Fuseli". See endnote 11.

B. Book Illustrations


(See also III, B415, B416, B437, B450, B459, B480, B481, B497 and B498.)
C. Separate Engravings After Fuseli

1. A Midsummer Night’s Dream Act 3 Scene 1, engraved Rhodes. 1794.
3. The Death of Cardinal Beaufort, engraved Rogers. n.d.
7. The Night Mare, engraved Burke. 1802. Handcolored.
8. The Night Mare, engraved Raddon. 1827.
9. Queen Katherine’s Dream, engraved Bartolozzi. 1788.
10. Titania and Bottom from A Midsummer Night’s Dream, engraved Tomkins. 1787. Two impressions, one color printed.

STOTHARD

The engravings after Stothard’s designs in eighteenth century books and magazines, as well as the large published proof of Pilgrimage to Canterbury, form a substantial collection within the Essick holdings. Because these engravings are so numerous, they will not be listed here.

Drawings
1. Pen drawing. 2.5 x 4.9 cm. Inscribed “She fell to the ground” on the mount. This and the following probably intended for a calendar.
2. Pen drawing. 2.4 x 4.7 cm. Inscribed “She wept in wild despair” on the mount.
3. Four monochrome wash drawings for funeral monuments. All approx. 8 x 10 cm. Inscribed “T Stothard” not in the artist’s hand.

CALVERT

Entry numbers and information on the states of the plates follow Raymond Lister, Edward Calvert, London, 1962, hereafter referred to as LC.

Prints by Calvert

LC2 The Bacchante, wood engraving by Welby Sherman after Calvert’s design.

Sherman after Calvert’s design.

LC6C-8C, The Ploughman; The Cider Feast; The Bride; 9B, 12C, The Sheep of his Pasture; The Brook; The 13C, 14B, Lady with the Rook; The Return Home; 15B The Chamber Idyll as published in A Memoir of Edward Calvert, Artist by his Third Son, 1893.

LC10 The Flood, apparently one of the five remainder impressions not used in the Carfax portfolio, 1904 (see LC page 103).

LC11 Ideal Pastoral Life, from the Carfax portfolio, 1904.

LINNELL

A. Drawings and Paintings
1. A Shepherd with his Family. (Illus. 15) c. 1840. Oil on board. 26.7 x 35.2 cm. Signed “J Linnell”.
2. Sketch of a faun. 1809. Pencil and chalk. 70 x 50.5 cm. Inscribed “John Linnell for permission to study as probationer, 1809”.
3. Sketch of a man’s hand. c. 1807-10. Pencil and chalk. 31 x 44.3 cm. Inscribed “John Linnell for the Life”.
4. Sketch of figures by a river bank. Pen and pencil. 13.5 x 18.2 cm. Inscribed “Painted for W. Collard Size 24 x 18 inches”.
5. Sketch of two men in a field. Pencil and wash. 9.5 x 13.8 cm.

B. Engravings by Linnell.
1. Blencowe, portrait of. 1841.
2. John Martin, the large plate. 1813. Two impressions with variations in title inscription.
3. John Martin, the small plate. 1817.
5. The Journey to Emmaus. 1839.
8. The Rev. Joseph Hallett Batten. 1838.
9. The Rev. Rowland Hill. 1827. Two impressions, one an unfinished proof lacking letters with pencil inscriptions probably by Linnell.


11. Sheep at Noon. 1818.

12. Thomas Norris. 1837.

(See also III, B501 and IV, B 7, 11).

PALMER

States of the plates are identified according to Raymond Lister, Samuel Palmer and his Etchings, London, 1969, hereafter referred to as LP.

Prints by Palmer


LP2 The Skylark. State vii.

LP3 The Herdsman’s Cottage or Sunset. State ii.


LP5 The Vine or Flumpy Bacchus. State iv, large paper issue.

LP6 The Sleeping Shepherd; Early Morning. State vi.

LP7 The Rising Moon or An English Pastoral. Between states vi and vii, with changes in the design as in state vii but before additional inscriptions.

LP8 The Weary Ploughman or The Herdsman or Tardus Bubulcus. State viii.

LP9 The Early Ploughman or The Morning Spread Upon the Mountains. State viii?


2 See Gerald Eades Bentley, Jr., ed., William Blake, Tiriel (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967); David Bindman argues for an earlier date “nearer the middle of the 1780s than the end” for the series of Tiriel designs in Blake as an Artist (Oxford: Phaidon, 1977), pp. 43-44.

3 See catalogue entry by Nancy Smith in Walker, Art of his Time, p. 84.


17 Prospero. George Richmond. Inscribed in pencil “Prospero”.

LP10 The Morning of Life. State vii.


LP13 Opening the Fold or Early Morning; The Homeward Star; The Cypress Grove; The Sepulchre; Moeris and Galatea as published with inscribed verses in Samuel Palmer, An English Version of the Eclogues of Virgil, 1883.

Harvest under a Waning Moon, woodcut. No. 9 of 50 printed January 1932.

The Shepherd, engraved by Welby Sherman after Palmer. (Illus. 16)

RICHMOND


A. Drawings

1. Drawing of Prospero. (Illus. 17) Pen. 33.3 x 22 cm. Inscribed in pencil “Prospero”.

2. Drawing of a sleeping shepherd with his dog. Pen. 13.5 x 22 cm.

3. Sketch of a man’s hand. Pencil. 15.5 x 10.8 cm. Inscribed “Angelo”.

4. Profile of a man’s head with small pencil sketch of girl’s face. Red chalk. 20.5 x 16.2 cm.

B. Prints by Richmond

1. The Shepherd. Second state. Inscribed in pencil “Geo Richmond R. A. designed & engraved 1827.”

2. Subject from Macbeth or The Fatal Bellman.

6 For reproduction of copperplate and a different impression see John W. Wright, “Blake’s Relief-Etching Method,” Blake Newsletter 36 (Spring 1976), pp. 105, 109, 112.

7 See C. Heppner’s essay on Blake’s engraving in this book, forthcoming in Blake, An Illustrated Quarterly.


