

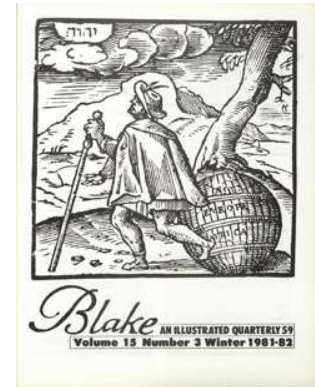
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M I N U T E
P A R T I C U L A R

A Rediscovered Colored Copy of Young's Night Thoughts

Thomas V. Lange

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Queens" in history, Elizabeth I of England and Christina of Sweden, both of whom withstood much pressure and some inclination to marry. The remarkable life of Queen Christina was the inspiration of Mme. de Scudéry's romance *The History of Cleobuline, Queen of Corinth* in volume II of *Le Grand Cyrus* (1649-53), which in turn became the basis of Dryden's play *Secret Love, or The Maiden Queen* (1668). The nameless Sicilian Queen of this play is secretly in love with Philocles, whom she affects to rebuff one moment and entices the next. Inflamed by jealousy of Philocles' love for Candiope, and unwilling to reveal her own love, she so completely baffles Philocles with her erratic moods that he decides to flee, but a series of twists in the plot sees him return to court, by now aware of her true feelings and half-inclined to woo her. Honor, however, and the conventions of comedy, determine otherwise, and at the end of the play the Queen resigns herself to remaining a maid.

The parallels between poem and play are naturally limited, yet Dryden's maiden Queen and Blake's share the same basic predicament:

And I wept both day and night,
And hid from him my hearts delight . . .

("The Angel," 7-8)

. . . I have conceal'd my passion
With such care from him, that he knows not yet
I love . . .

(*Secret Love*, III, i,
48-50, in Beaurline and
Bowers, eds., *John Dryden:
Four Comedies*, 1967)

Philocles is not exactly an "Angel mild," yet when he contemplates union with the maiden Queen he is moved to remark:

Sure I had one of the fallen Angels Dreams;
All Heav'n within this hour was mine!

(V, i, 448-49)

But the lines from Dryden's play which might provide the most enlightening gloss on Blake's poem are the words of the maiden Queen's song in IV, ii, of which I quote here the opening stanza:

I feed a flame within which so torments me
That it both pains my heart, and yet contents
me:
'Tis such a pleasing smart, and I so love it,
That I had rather die, than once remove it.

(IV, ii, 23-26)

Witless woe, if you like, but not without beguilement! The "hearts delight" that causes Blake's dreamer to weep is clearly akin to the "pleasing smart" of this little song of secret love, and Blake's one and only use of the phrase "maiden Queen," I suggest, is a deliberate nod in this direction.

A REDISCOVERED COLORED COPY OF YOUNG'S NIGHT THOUGHTS

Thomas V. Lange

In their exhaustive research, the editors of *William Blake's Designs for Edward Young's Night Thoughts* (1980)¹ were able to add four "new" copies to the two earlier censuses of colored copies of the engraved work,² and they state, "At present twenty-three coloured copies are believed to exist, all but one of which have recently been studied by one or more of the editors of the present edition." Somewhat later in their commentary they continue, "Still untraced is the well-attested Gaisford-Macgeorge copy, called G in the Bentley census and last located in 1926." The editors obscure this "well-attested" copy, since they choose to omit all mention of it from their census of colored copies. The only physical description appears in footnote 81, some forty pages after the census.

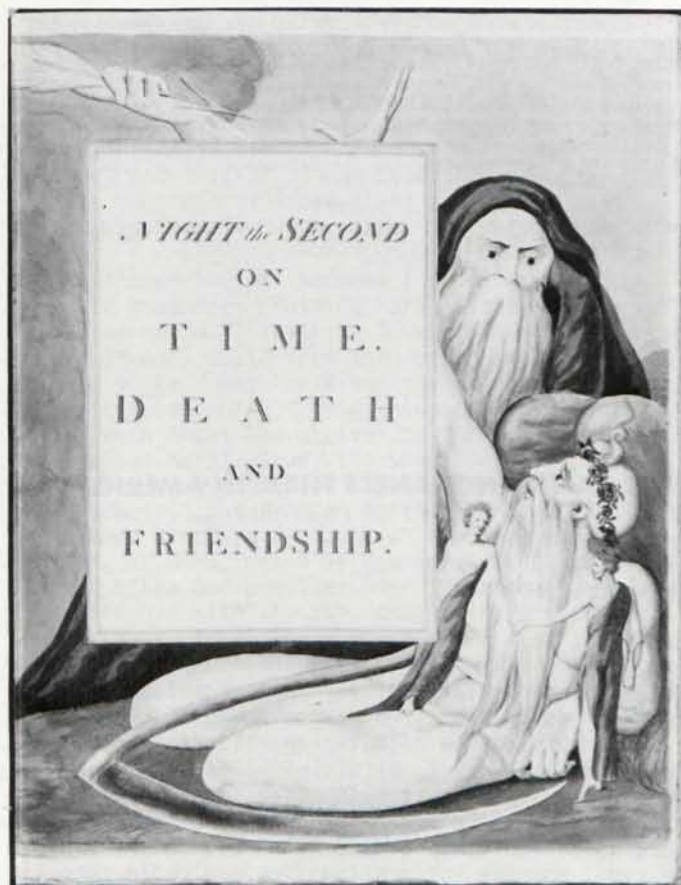
While engaged in research quite unrelated to Blake for the Lutheran Church in America, I discovered this untraced colored copy of *Night Thoughts* in a disused closet, among the books bequeathed to the Church by Mrs. William T. Tonner in 1971. Upon her death, a portion of Mrs. Tonner's distinguished Blake collection passed to the Lutheran Church, including one of the two recorded impressions of the color-print "Newton" (Butlin 307), an early state of the copper engraving, "The Canterbury Pilgrims," and a drawing, "Moses striking the rock" (Butlin 445). The remainder of the Tonner Blake collection was given to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and was described by Martin Butlin in the Museum's *Bulletin*.³ Hereafter I will refer to the Gaisford-Macgeorge copy as the Tonner-Lutheran Church copy.

The purpose of this brief note is to describe this newly discovered copy of *Night Thoughts*, and to correct and update the provenance information. The following entry follows the format used by the editors of the recently published edition of *Night Thoughts*:

I-12A (Moss-Bentley G). White Death.

Bound in three-quarter red-brown morocco over greenish-blue marbled paper by Riviere, marbled end-papers. The spine is tooled in the style of Roger Payne. Top edge gilt, others uncut. Lacks the Explanation of the Engravings, which is, however, supplied in 19th century type-facsimile. Watermarks on twelve leaves. 16-3/4 x 12-3/4 inches. (42.5 x 32.8 cm.). Grotesque color on p. 10 (6E), p. 31 (18E), p. 35 (20E). No JC monogram.

1) Acquired by Thomas Gaisford (1779-1855) of Offington, Worthing. He added his engraved book-



Engraved title-page to the second Night. Courtesy of the Lutheran Church in America.

plate and the volume was sold with his library at Sotheby's, 23 April 1890, lot 192, for £40.10.0 to Quaritch for;

- 2) Bernard Buchanan Macgeorge and listed in his privately-printed library catalogues of 1892 (p. 9--not listed as colored) and 1906 (p. 14--as colored); sold with his library at Sotheby's, 1 July 1924, lot 118, for £125 to Quaritch;
- 3) Offered by Quaritch in their catalogue 388 (October 1924), item 326, and again in their catalogue 401 (May 1926), item 218, for £175;
- 4) Sold to Cortlandt F. Bishop, who added his red leather bookplate; sold at the Bishop sale at American Art Association, Anderson Galleries (part III, 14-15 November 1938), to Charles Sessler for \$325;
- 5) Sold in December 1938 to Florence Foerderer Tonner for \$357.50; she added her distinctive bookplate and bequeathed the volume in 1971 to
- 6) The Lutheran Church in America.⁴

Certain details of the provenance and physical description do not exactly correspond to those published by Bentley and Moss, neither of whom ever examined the actual volume. The most obvious of these differences is the absence of the Explanation leaf. As late as the Bishop sale, and when the

volume was sold by Sessler to Mrs. Tonner, the accompanying bibliographical descriptions noted, "Laid in at the end is the scarce leaf of 'Explanation of the Engravings,'" and pencilled in an unidentified hand on the front binder's blank is the statement, "At the end is Blake's explanation of the Engravings, often wanting." The leaf included in the Tonner-Lutheran Church copy is, however, a curious and apparently unrecorded facsimile printed from type and loosely inserted in the volume, the source of which has not been traced.⁵ The text of this leaf is a column-for-column and page-for-page reprint of the original, is printed on both sides of the sheet (as the original), but is in a much-reduced format: 11-1/4 x 8-5/8 inches. There are no stubs in the volume (other than modern binder's stubs) to suggest that the original leaf of Explanation was ever present. Nor are there marks at any point to indicate where the facsimile leaf was "laid in at the end," but modern stains from pressure-sensitive tape show that the leaf was crudely stuck facing the titlepage some time after the Bishop sale, since the catalogue entry for that sale was taped below the facsimile, and has left identical stains.

Three further bits of penciled notes have not yet been identified; they may belong to the above-mentioned owners, or may indicate still further owners. On the verso of the front free endpaper is the notation "Cat/3759"; on the front binder's blank is the price code "puuacy" and beneath that can be seen the erased price "1200.00"; and on the final free endpaper is written "c9901." None of these notations is in Quaritch's form; the volume also lacks that firm's usual collation note. Sessler's cost code, written by Mabel Zahn but now erased, can also be clearly read.

This newly-located copy of *Night Thoughts* is textually complete with all engravings colored and printed in their correct locations. Neither "JC" monograms nor any other notes appear on the plates. The coloring of this copy of *Night Thoughts* has been compared with that of copy I-13 (New York Public Library, Print Room of the Art, Prints, and Photographs Division), and has been found to be reasonably consistent. The only notable difference (other than predictable variations in intensity) is found on the figure of Death on the titlepage to the Second Night. In the NYPL and in other copies, the long flowing beard and shoulder are clearly visible; in this newly discovered copy that figure has been overpainted with a black hood and cloak, obscuring both hair and shoulder. Copies I-8 and I-11 seem to have this same feature. The engraving of this plate is, as usual, in the later state with added work.⁶

The question of placing the Tonner-Lutheran Church copy of *Night Thoughts* correctly in the census prepared by Grant, Rose, Tolley, and Erdman, is somewhat problematical since those editors are themselves inconsistent and somewhat arbitrary in their arrangement. They note, "There is no indication as to whether [this newly-discovered copy] is a White or Green Death copy. If it is of the former type and should prove not to have been tinted by Blake, it will fit well enough as copy I-16, yet

stand somewhat apart since it uniquely contains the 'Explanations' sheet unbound, whereas all other coloured copies that include this sheet have it bound in one of three positions." Now that it is recognized that this copy does *not* contain the Explanation leaf, it cannot be located as copy I-16. Even if it *did* contain this leaf it would not, according to the editorial criteria presented on pp. 60-62, be appropriately placed as copy I-16 since the surrounding copies, I-13 through I-15, are all seriously imperfect in one regard or another.

Copies I-2 through I-14 have been arranged together by Grant-Rose-Tolley-Erdman, since all those copies contain what the editors have optimistically labeled "grotesque colouring" or "grotesque painting"⁷; within this group copies I-2 through I-7 are arranged together since they contain the leaf of Explanation bound after p. 95. These copies are further arranged "according to the earliness of provenance that can be established with some certainty." Copies I-8 to I-10 have the Explanation leaf bound after the Advertisement, and copies I-11 and I-12 lack the Explanation leaf entirely. Copies I-13 through I-15 also lack that leaf, and are further deficient in lacking either text or colored engravings. The newly-discovered copy of *Night Thoughts* cannot be placed as copy I-16 since that would put it in the midst of seriously defective copies. Since it contains "grotesque colouring," lacks the Explanation leaf, and has demonstrable provenance closest to copy I-12, this new copy can best be located as copy I-12A. It must be pointed out that the editors of *Night Thoughts* are inconsistent in the arrangement by earliness of provenance, and one might at the same time question the wisdom of organizing a census in part on such slight grounds as the binder's location of the Explanation leaf.

It may well be that this colored copy of *Night Thoughts* has escaped the notice of Blake bibliographers since it appeared in the Bishop sale under Young's name at the very end of the last catalogue volume, and was not mentioned under the general Blake heading. When one considers the prices fetched by other Blake works at that sale, it seems that this copy of *Night Thoughts* might well have brought more if catalogued with the other Blakeana earlier in the sale.

¹ William Blake's Designs for Edward Young's "Night Thoughts," edited with commentary by John E. Grant, Edward J. Rose, Michael J. Tolley, co-ordinating editor David V. Erdman (Oxford Univ. Press, 1980).

² W. E. Moss, "The Coloured Copies of Blake's *Night Thoughts*," *Blake Newsletter*, 2 (1968), 19-23; G. E. Bentley, Jr., "A Census of Coloured Copies of Young's *Night Thoughts* (1797)," *Blake Newsletter*, 2 (1968), 41-45.

³ "The Blake Collection of Mrs. William F. Tonner," Philadelphia Museum of Art *Bulletin*, 67 (July-September 1972), 5-31.

⁴ I am grateful to Mr. Donald Trued, Lutheran Church in America (New York), for permission to publish this note. Inquiries concerning this volume should be addressed to him at 231 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

⁵ It is possible that this leaf was printed to complete this copy of the book, and that it is not therefore otherwise recorded.

⁶ It is perhaps worth mentioning that plates vary from copy to copy in the presence or absence of engraved imprint lines, a point mentioned by Easson and Essick. Grant-Rose-Tolley-Erdman are right to suggest that uncolored copies exist in which the engraved titlepage to the Second Night appears in the earlier state; one such copy was presented to The Pierpont Morgan Library by Miss Louise Crane in memory of her mother, Mrs. W. Murray Crane, and I have examined two further copies in private collections.

⁷ The explanation of this phenomenon will be discussed in a future article in *Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly*.

MARS AND THE PLANETS THREE IN AMERICA

Michael Ferber

We are still very far from understanding the passage about Mars in plate 5 of *America*, despite the recent proposal, put forth by Rodney M. and Mary R. Baine in *English Language Notes*, 13 (1975), 14-18, that Swedenborg is behind it. I have been puzzling for several years over the Swedenborg quotations they offer, but I cannot see their bearing, however interesting they may be in themselves, on the meaning of the *America* passage. The idea that the spirits of Mars are the best spirits, the notion that Mars represents a balance of intellect and emotions, and the other odd Swedenborgian speculations seem at best only vaguely relevant and at worst quite contrary to the tenor of the rest of the poem. They come up first against our inevitable association of Mars with warfare, an association Blake gives no suggestion we should break. As the Baines admit, moreover, Swedenborg cannot account for "the planets three." Even, finally, if we somehow knew that Swedenborg's *Earths in our Solar System* were the "source," we would still be faced with the problem, worse than the one we had before, of how its meanings fit together with the rest of the poem.

In any case, I have a few tentative suggestions about the passage. I cannot make it all cohere, but the connections I offer are the sort of thing we ought to do to it; someone with a fresher eye will doubtless recast these suggestions to make better sense of the passage.

When the wrathful Prince of Albion arises dragon-like at midnight, he "flam'd red meteors" (3:14-16); this alone would make him resemble the red planet with its terrible wandering comets (5:2-3). When Albion's Angel sees the terrible Orc rising over the Atlantic, Orc first seems a comet and then seems the red planet Mars which once enclosed such terrible comets in its sphere. At that time "the planets three" flew round the crimson disk. I take it that Blake is not distinguishing comets from planets, except for the planet red itself; the terrible comets are "wandering," after all, and "wanderer" is what