

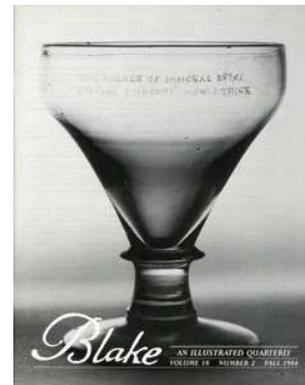
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M I N U T E
P A R T I C U L A R

Two Blakes Reappear and Make Three

Martin Butlin

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by him to send after his death. He was an old and dearly prized friend of mine. He died Sept 25th 1919.

W K Bixby

S Louis 4/15/20

Bixby's references and lack of punctuation here are somewhat confusing, but he probably received the book directly from Anna Hecker Freer (one of several sisters-in-law of Charles Freer) and Katharine N. Rhoades, Freer's secretary, who would have made the request of the two executors of Freer's will: Frank J. Hecker, a lifelong friend and business associate of Freer's, and Charles D. Walcott, Secretary of the Smithsonian. Below this inscription, also in Bixby's hand, is written in pencil:

Wash. Un.
Comps.
W K B

which was Bixby's way of designating those books and manuscripts in his collection that were slated for Washington University with his compliments ("Comps."). The only other notations in the volume are the penciled directive, "As Pattern," on 37E, a variant that appears in only three other copies: I-10, I-11, and I-13; what might be the name of a bookseller or earlier owner—"L [or P] Dawsons"—this signature scrawled upside down in ink on the verso of 43E; and a dealer's price code that reads "x gli sx" and is located on the blank recto of the back marbled endpaper. I have not been able to trace the provenance of this copy further back than Freer, but information might come to light that would help identify eighteenth- and nineteenth-century owners of the book, or associate it with one of the sales catalogue descriptions that has been listed in reference to another copy.

This unrecorded color copy of Young's *Night Thoughts* is the most unusual Blake item in Washington University Special Collections, but there are also several other books with commercial engravings by Blake that are worthy of mention: Robert Blair, *The Grave* (London: for R.H. Cromek, 1808); Erasmus Darwin, *The Botanic Garden* (London: for J. Johnson, 1806); two copies of John Gay, *Fables* (London: for John Stockdale, 1793); C.G. Salzmann, *Gymnastics for Youth* (London: for J. Johnson, 1800); James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, *The Antiquities of Athens*, volume 3 (London: John Nichols, 1794); and Mary Wollstonecraft, *Original Stories from Real Life* (London: for J. Johnson, 1791).

* I would like to thank Donald Finkel, Holly Hall, and Timothy Murray of Washington University, and Ellen A. Nollman, Head Librarian of the Freer Gallery of Art, for their expert assistance in helping me with bibliographical details.

¹ *William Blake's Designs for Edward Young's Night Thoughts*, edited with commentary by John E. Grant, Edward J. Rose, and

Michael J. Tolley; co-ordinating editor David V. Erdman (London: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 52-53.

² G.E. Bentley, Jr., *Blake Books* (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1977), pp. 956-57. For Bentley's description of Young's *Night Thoughts* and full census, see pp. 636-46. See also the earlier studies by W.E. Moss, "The Coloured Copies of Blake's 'Night Thoughts,'" *Blake Newsletter*, 2 (Fall 1968), 19-23, and G.E. Bentley, Jr., "A Census of Coloured Copies of Young's *Night Thoughts* (1797)," *Blake Newsletter*, 2 (Winter 1968-69), 41-45.

³ Grant, Rose, Tolley, and Erdman, p. 61.

⁴ Thomas V. Lange, "A Rediscovered Colored Copy of Young's *Night Thoughts*," *Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly*, 15 (Winter 1981-82), 134-36.

⁵ This copy is, incidentally, listed in the *National Union Catalog Pre-1956 Imprint*, vol. 679, p. 278.

⁶ Lange, 135.

⁷ There have been at least two sound technical explanations for the unusual coloring in 6E. The editors of the Oxford *Night Thoughts*, pp. 58-59, suggest that "a running wet paint" was applied over dry or nearly dry color. Some scholars have also discussed the possibility of pigment decay.

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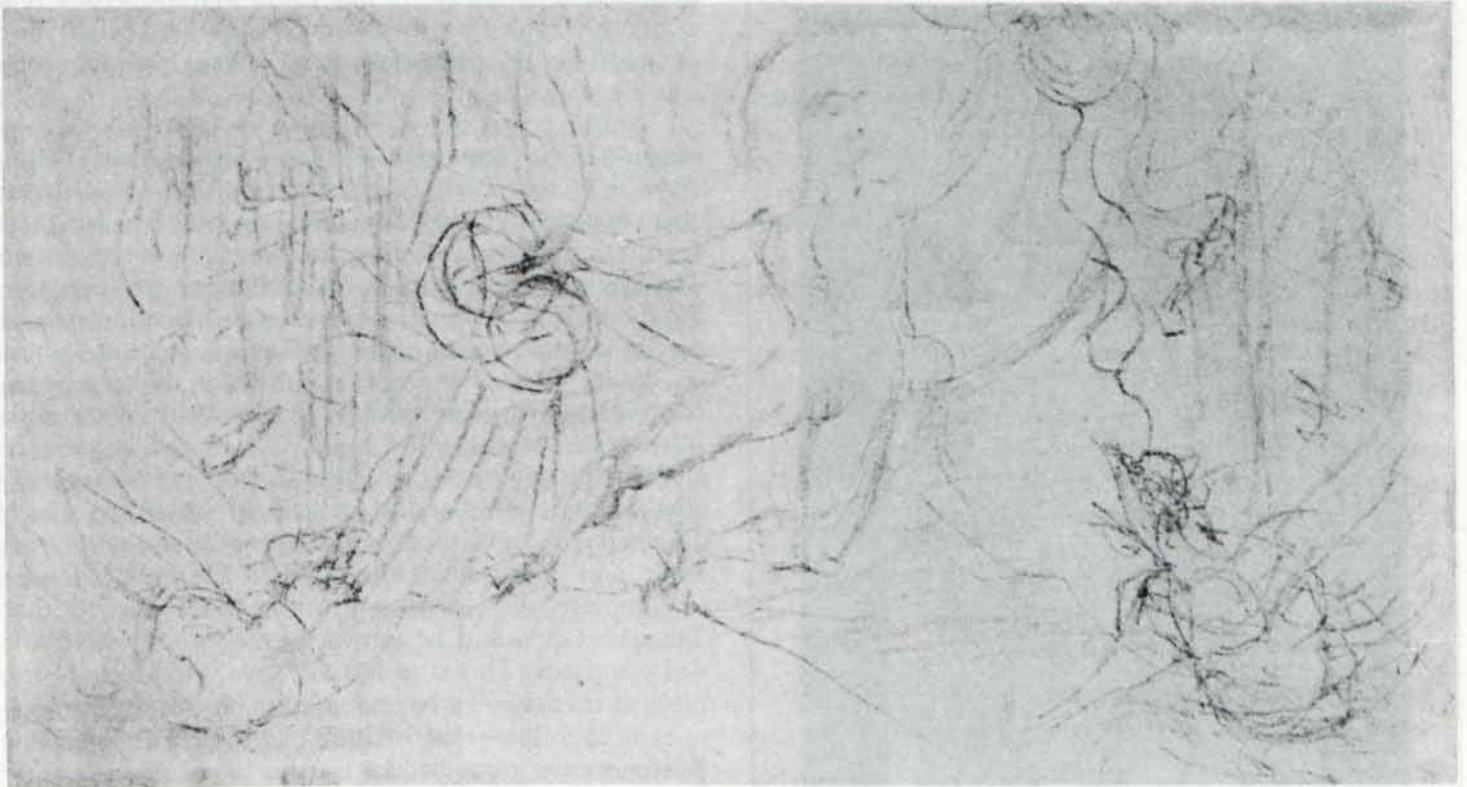
Two Blake drawings listed in my *Paintings and Drawings of William Blake*, 1981, as untraced since 1949 have now reappeared in the United States. They are my no. 177, "Head of a Bearded Man in Profile, possibly from the Antique" (reproduced as Butlin pl. 214), and no. 592, "Satan between Two Angels (?)" (Butlin pl. 828). My last record for these drawings was that they were bought by the London booksellers Maggs at the Graham Robertson sale at Christie's on 22 July 1949. It now appears that they were in the collection of the late Edward Dickinson of New York State whose widow sold them to Giuliano Ceseri; "Satan between Two Angels (?)" still belongs to him, while the other drawing has passed to his associate Joel L. Fletcher, also of Lafayette, Louisiana.

The exciting news is that when the later drawing was removed from its old mount a further drawing, similar in general composition but with the main figure in reverse, was found on the back. Unfortunately this new discovery does not help the present writer towards any closer identification of the subject, save that it does perhaps reinforce my first thought that the central, Orc-like figure is holding vials rather than the sun and the moon; some force or element seems to be projected from each of these towards the possibly demonic figures in the lower corners of the composition. Besides the parallels given in my catalogue entry there seem to be

similarities with certain of the illustrations in *Jerusalem* and also to those of the unfinished illuminated copy of the Book of Genesis in the Huntington Library.

Thanks to fresh measurements given me (in cen-

timeters) by Fletcher I am able to give slightly revised dimensions for the two drawings. No. 177 is $5\frac{11}{16} \times 5\frac{3}{16}$ in. (14.5 × 13.2 cm) and no. 592 is $4\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ in. (11.4 × 20.6 cm.).



William Blake. Verso of "Satan between Two Angels(?)." (c. 1815–20?). Courtesy of Giuliano Ceseri.

