Correction to “A (Self?) Portrait of William Blake”

Robert N. Essick

Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly, Volume 39, Issue 4, Spring 2006, p. 182
The Separate Plates of William Blake: A Catalogue


Pp. 111-22, "George Cumberland's Card." For two previously unrecorded impressions, see under Separate Plates and Plates in Series, above.


Pp. 198-99, "Mrs Q." On 198 I state that the publisher of the plate "was either the J. Barrow who exhibited enamels and miniature portraits in London from 1797 to 1836, or John Barrow, who exhibited portraits at the Society of Artists from 1812 to 1816." Some years ago, David Worrall offered good evidence that the publisher was the former; see his "The Mob and 'Mrs Q': William Blake, William Benbow, and the Context of Regency Radicalism," Blake, Politics, and History, ed. Jackie DiSalvo, G. A. Rosso, and Christopher Z. Hobson (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998) 169-84. Worrall shows that the miniaturist lived at the same address as that given for the publisher on the plate ("Weston Place, S. Pancras"), and — more surprisingly — that this John Barrow lived at a later time at Fountain Court, Strand, where Blake lived from 1821 to the end of his life (see Worrall, 180n1). In "I also beg Mr Blake's acceptance of my wearing apparel: The Will of Henry Banes, Landlord of 3 Fountain Court, Strand, and the Last Residence of William and Catherine Blake," Blake 39.2 (fall 2005): 78-99, Angus Whitehead confirms Worrall's identification and provides a wealth of information about Barrow and his friendship with Henry Banes, Blake's brother-in-law and landlord. Banes was very probably instrumental in acquiring the engraving commission for Blake.

On 198 of the separate plates catalogue, I suggest that, since Blake is not known to have ever used mezzotint, the mezzotint on "Mrs Q" may have been added by George Maile, the engraver of the companion print, "Windsor Castle." As his illus. 9 on p. 95 of his essay, Whitehead reproduces a mezzotint dated 1813 and signed "Drawn & Engraved by J. Barrow." This opens up the possibility that the mezzotint on "Mrs Q" is the work of its publisher, John Barrow, and not Maile.

Pp. 214-19, "Christ Trampling on Satan," Butts after Blake. The original copperplate was acquired in 2002 by the Pierpont Morgan Library, the gift of Gertrude Weyhe Dennis, accession #2002.62:1. The gift also included 2 previously unrecorded impressions, accession #2002.62:2. 3. On 218 I speculate that the copperplate may have been in the possession of the New York print and book dealer E. Weyhe between c. 1925, when the plate was sold at auction, and c. 1983. This indeed appears to have been the case, for the Morgan Library catalogue indicates that the plate was owned by Erhard Weyhe, New York, and passed by descent to his daughter, Mrs. Dennis.

William Blake's Commercial Book Illustrations


CORRIGENDUM

BY ROBERT N. ESSICK

In "A (Self?) Portrait of William Blake," Blake 39.3 (winter 2005-06): 137, I claimed that the "Meyer" to whom Hayley refers as having helped Blake learn miniature portraiture in 1801 was "probably ... Jeremiah Meyer." He died in 1789, and thus Blake's instructor must have been Jeremiah's son, William, also a miniaturist.