NEWS

Works in Progress

Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly, Volume 5, Issue 3, Winter, 1971-72, p. 165
subscribers. Manuscripts—accompanied by a stamped
and addressed envelope for return—and subscriptions
($4) may be addressed to Janet Todd / Department of
English / University of Florida / Gainesville, Flor-
da 32601.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Hoover, Suzanne (Sudbury, Mass.): a group of essays
on unexplored aspects of Blake's reputation in the
nineteenth century. Mrs. Hoover will be in England
as an NEH Fellow for the academic year 1972-73 to
study British art and literature with particular
reference to Blake.

Mills, A. C. (Newnham College, Cambridge): a de-
tailed study of the illustrations to Jerusalem,
their imagery and their relation to the text and to
other of Blake's works.

Paley, Morton D. (University of California, Berke-
ley): a book on Jerusalem. Paley has been named a
Guggenheim Fellow for the academic year 1972-73 in
order to enable him to complete his book.

Peterson, Jane E. (Dallas, Texas): a Ph.D. disserta-
tion, "William Blake: Experimentation in Form and
Structure in the Works of 1788-95, Excluding the
Manuscript Poems," directed by T. C. Duncan Eaves
at the University of Arkansas.

AULT LEAVES NEWSLETTER

After this issue, Donald Ault leaves our editorial
board in order to devote more time to his own work.
We are grateful for the help he has given us as As-
sistant Editor during the past two and a half years.

NOTES

JOHN BEER: PETERHOUSE, CAMBRIDGE

Blake's "Donald the Hammerer"

In Blake Newsletter 15 (Winter 1971, pp. 75-77)
Robert Essick describes the pencil-and-ink drawing
known as "Donald the Hammerer" in the UCLA Library,
and states that he has been unable to trace its
subject, though he thinks that Blake might be
illustrating a scene in a book.

I think that Donald himself is to be identi-
ified with a character mentioned very briefly in
Scott's The Abbot (1820), ch. xxxiv. Roland
Graeme, explaining how he comes to have the skills
of a metal worker, says,

My patron the Knight of Avenel used to
compel the youth educated in his household to
learn the use of axe and hammer, and working
in wood and iron—he used to speak of old
northern champions, who forged their own
weapons, and of the Highland Captain, Donald
nan Ord, or Donald of the Hammer, whom he
himself knew, and who used to work at the
anvil with a sledge-hammer in each hand.
Some said he praised this art, because he was
himself of churl's blood...

The appearance of two hammers in Blake's design
reinforces the identification with "Donald of the
Hammer."

What was not at first clear to me was whether
Scott had here created a character for his own
purposes or was adding a touch of veracity to his
narrative by referring to an actual historical
figure. Reference to Scottishish records failed to
solve the mystery. In the end, however, I con-
sulted Dr. James Corson, Honorary Librarian of
Abbottsford and an authority on Scott, to whom I am
most grateful for looking into the matter and
discovering that Donald the Hammerer was in fact a
real person. I quote from his letter to me:

Donald nan Nord was Donald Stewart of the
Invernahyle family, a younger branch of the
Stewarts of Appin.

In 1817 Joseph Train presented to Scott a
manuscript called "An authentic account of the
Stewarts of Invernahyle." The manuscript is
still at Abbotsford. In 1818 Gale and Fenner,
the London publishers, asked Scott to edit a
new edition of Edward Burt's "Letters from a
gentleman in the north of Scotland." This
book was one of Scott's great favourites and
he used it extensively in The Lady of the Lake
and in Waverley. He declined, however, to
edit it and passed the task on to Robert
Jamieson. This edition was called the 5th
and was issued in 1818 and also in 1822 when
it was still called the 5th. To this edition