

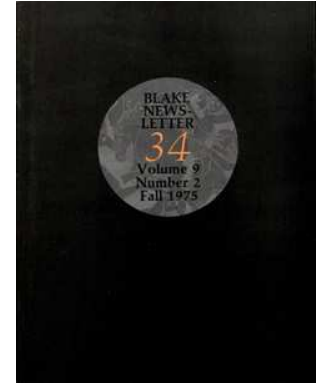
AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY
BLAKE

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

The Influence of Wynne's Emblems on Blake

Judith Wardle

Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly, Volume 9, Issue 2, Fall 1975, pp. 46-47



5 This description of the smoke-filled abyss also parallels several scenes elsewhere in Blake's works; see, for example, "A Memorable Fancy" in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* where "we beheld the infinite Abyss, fiery as the smoke of a burning city" (E 40); *Jerusalem* where the Sons of Albion divide and "Arise as the smoke of the furnace" from "a hideous orifice" (E 222); and in *The Four Zoas*, Night the Third, where Urizen's fall takes place amidst "thunders & thick clouds" and moves into the "smoke" of "The nether Abyss" (E 322-23).

Blake's Beulah & Beulah Hill, Surrey

By Eileen Sanzo

Much is written concerning Blake's nature myth of Beulah, but one important fact which has as yet not been pointed out, is that there is an actual Beulah Hill in Surrey--in Blake's day, located in the countryside adjoining London; today, considered part of the city itself. If the mythic Golgonooza is the "spiritual Four-fold London / eternal"¹ and Jerusalem can be identified also with London, it may be that the mythical, naturally beautiful Beulah also has a parallel in Blake's concrete experience of the suburbs and bordering countryside of the city he lived in.

The actual Beulah Hill, Surrey, is just north of Norwood, which Blake refers to frequently as a kind of southern boundary to greater London.² Roche's Map of 1745 of London and its environs transcribes the spot as Bewley's Farms and Bewley's Woods. The English Place-Name Society records that the name for the spot is ancient, taking the form of Bewley in 1493, Beaulieu Hill and Bulay Hill in 1823, and Beulah Spa in 1836. They write: "The forms are late, but it may be that the name is . . . of post-Conquest origin, from OFr *Be(a)u L(i)eu*, beautiful spot."³ The present-day spelling of Beulah Hill, Surrey seems to indicate that although the spellings were different (eighteenth century and early nineteenth century spellings varied in general), the pronunciation of "Beaulieu" or "Bulay" was like that of Blake's "Beulah." The meaning of the names of the actual locality was the same as the connotated meaning of the Biblical Beulah, as developed by Bunyan--a naturally beautiful paradise.

The actual Beulah Hill may have inspired an identification between Blake's Beulah and the country south of London. This may be indicated by Blake's phrase--"Thames and Medway, rivers of Beulah" (J 4.34); the tributaries of the Thames and Medway rivers watered Surrey. That Beulah was country adjoining the city seems indicated by the lines about--

. . . the Sleeping Man
Who, stretch'd on Albion's rocks, reposes
amidst his Twenty-eight
Cities, where Beulah lovely terminates in the
hills and valleys of Albion.
(J 85.24-26)

Norwood may well have been one of Blake's destinations on his walks south of London, and

the sleep of Beulah may have occurred literally (as well as in the many ways already commented upon, imaginatively) when he rested. We know that Blake took long walks both in London and out into the country surrounding it because he tells us so in his poetry. Thus the mythical Beulah, with its allusions to Scripture⁴ and John Bunyan, may have a special basis in fact and a parallel with Blake's personal experience of London and its countryside. If Jerusalem can be imaginatively identified with London, Palestinian Beulah may also have been identified by him with the London countryside of Beulah Hill, Surrey.

1 M 6.1.

2 M 6.5; J 42.51; J 42.80.

3 J. E. B. Gover et al., *The Place Names of Surrey* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1934), pp. 49-50.

4 In Scripture, Beulah means "married." It represents Palestine--"Thy land [shall be called] Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married" Isaiah 1xii.4. Cited by S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1971), p. 42.

The Influence of Wynne's *Emblems* on Blake

By Judith Wardle

In a footnote on page 9 of the D. V. Erdman and D. K. Moore edition of Blake's *Notebook* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), reference is made to Wynne's *Choice Emblems Natural, Historical, Fabulous, Moral and Divine, For the Improvement and Pastime of Youth . . .* (London: Printed for George Riley, 1772) as a possible influence upon Blake. Some of the details in this note are inaccurate. John Wynne's second name was Huddleston, not Middleton. Emblem 2 is *not* dropped from later editions of the work. It appears in the 2nd edition, 1775 (British Museum). The only later editions I have seen are the 6th, 1788 and 7th, 1792 (Cambridge University Library), and it is also in them. As for other changes between the 1st and 2nd editions: the frontispiece is indeed different. Emblems 12 and 13 are dropped and others substituted, number 47 goes to the end as 53 and 47-52 are new. The only plate which has been re-engraved, as far as I can tell, is Emblem 27, "Of Vain Pursuits." (All have the addition of a bow of ribbon on top, but that is unimportant.) The differences between the 1772 and 1775 plates of Emblem 27 are as follows: the picture has been reversed, the shape of trees and bushes has been changed, the house lacks its chimney, and the area of the boy's shadow has decreased. But none of these seem to me to matter in regard to the question of the emblem's influence upon Emblem 4 of the *Notebook*.

I wish now to consider the question of whether Wynne's emblems did influence Blake's, and if so which edition. I do not think there is any evidence for choosing one edition rather than another, from the 1st to 6th (the 7th being too late). All the

emblems which may have influenced Blake appear in all the editions I have seen, and since the 6th has more emblems than the 2nd but has not deleted any, I suppose that the relevant emblems are to be found in the intervening editions. The comment on the 1772 frontispiece in Erdman's footnote reads: "The frontispiece, a woman instructing children in the cultivation of 'the Human Plant' and in the importance of tree to vine, is a useful approach to the educational symbolism in the frontispiece to *Songs of Innocence*." Wynne's frontispiece shows a boy holding a book under his arm and a woman standing with her arm round a girl and pointing towards a tree supporting a vine. The lines beneath the text are the moral from Emblem 21 "Of Education":

This prudent care must rear the Youthful mind,
By Love supported and with Toil refin'd,
'Tis thus alone the Human Plant can rise,
Unprun'd it droops, and Unsupported dies.

The frontispiece to *Songs of Innocence* has a woman seated with a book in her lap, two children at her knee, and a tree with an unidentifiable twining plant. Blake's sketch for this *Notebook* 55 shows the woman with one child. The standard image of Education in, for instance, Ripa's *Iconologia* has a seated woman teaching a child to read, and a young tree supported by a pale. There are, therefore, many pictures graphically closer to Blake's than Wynne's frontispiece (the closest I have seen being in J. B. Boudard's *Iconologie* [Parma: Philippe Carmignani, 1759], but I have no evidence that Blake knew this work).

To me the strongest evidence for supposing that Blake had seen Wynne's emblems seems to be the appearance in the illustration to the "Argument" of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* of the unsupported vine from Emblem 21, a detail which Erdman mentions elsewhere as belonging to the emblem tradition.¹ Daphne as an emblem "Of Chastity" (Emblem 35) is a commonplace with little graphic variation. I can see no thematic reason for connecting Emblem 2, "Of Silence" (a nude man standing, hand to lips, before a pyramid and obelisk) with *MHH* 21, in spite of the visual coincidence. Pyramids are a standard symbol of the glories of this world (or, in Ripa, of the Glory of Princes). The traveller in "Of the Use of Self-Denial," Emblem 24, does not move "in the manner and direction" of Blake's in *Notebook* 15, and many another pilgrim is depicted dressed like Blake's traveller. Only the serpent around the leg of Wynne's figure seems a possible influence--on Drawing 13a.

There is an emblem graphically closer to the *Notebook* Emblem 4 (later *GP* 7) than Wynne's "Of Vain Pursuits." Wynne's picture is based on Emblem 22 of Bunyan's *Divine Emblems: or Temporal Things Spiritualized. Fitted for The Use of Boys and Girls*,² entitled "Of the Boy and Butter Fly," as Wynne's emblem is in his Contents list. The only significant difference is the one that establishes the connection with Blake: Wynne's boy has his hat on his head, whereas in the Bunyan emblem the boy is using a hat, like the Blake one, to chase the butterfly.

I should add that what I have said about the Education motif involves no criticism of Erdman's view that Blake was considering from early in the *Notebook* an emblem book for children--indeed Blake's work counters the current vogue for rationalistic, moralistic, educational books for children by offering a very different concept of education. Also interpretative conclusions about *Gates of Paradise* 7, based on the assumption that the small figures are personified butterflies, are in no way changed by my citation of a different source, especially since Bunyan's and Wynne's themes are the same.

1 "Reading the Illuminations of Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*," in *William Blake: Essays in honour of Sir Geoffrey Keynes*, ed. M. D. Paley and M. Phillips (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), p. 169.

2 This is the title of the illustrated editions of this work. The "9th edition," 1724, is the first extant one with illustrations, though the 3rd edition of 1707 was advertised as being "ornamented with cuts." This edition has crude illustrations lacking in detail. The edition I have used for comparison with Wynne is the "10th edition," 1757. I have not yet located copies of the editions of 1732 and 1770 listed in *CBEI*.

Blake, Locke, & The Concept of "Generation"

By James C. Evans

The concept of "generation" as a level of existence in Blake's poetry has been related to its use both in the Neoplatonists and in Swedenborg. In both instances, the term generally implies a world of generative being in a material sphere as opposed to a world of continuous being in a spiritual one.¹ There is, however, another possible source as undeniably central in Blake's reactions to his philosophical milieu as any, John Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding*, and about which Blake stated he felt "the same Contempt and Abhorrence" from first reading it "when very Young" onwards.²

The particularly relevant passage in the *Essay* occurs amidst Locke's speculations about the perception of cause-effect relationships. Having defined a cause as that which operates to produce an idea or collection of ideas, he proceeds to divide effects into two categories. The first is "creation," an effect "wholly made new, so that no part thereof did ever exist before." The second category, however, is extremely interesting in the light it throws on Blake's choice of terms for a world barely human.

When a thing is made up of particles which did all of them before exist, but that very thing, so constituted of pre-existing particles which, considered all together, make up such a collection of simple ideas, had not any existence before as this man, this egg, rose, or cherry, etc. And this, when referred to a substance produced in the ordinary course of nature by an internal