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A

lthough William Michael Rossetti has been
given his due as a major contributor to
Victorian writings on Blake, a number of
unpublished or unremarked details relating to the
preparation, publication and reception of his edition
of the Poetical Works of William Blake (1874) make
his concern with Blake's reputation worth returning
to. As early as 1864, in a letter to Horace Scudder,
Rossetti lamented the public response to Gilchrist
in a way which suggests how much more he considered
needed to be done to secure Blake's fame. Scudder
had recently reviewed Gilchrist in the North American
Review, and Rossetti was acknowledging a copy of the
review.

My dear Sir,

I have to thank you very sincerely for
your note, & the accompanying review of Blake
from the North American Review. However I had
already read the article; having seen it
advertised & strongly suspecting--from my
knowledge of what has taken place on former
occasions where a little openness to new
impressions was needed, & a little boldness of
opinion--that the book would be better estimated
in America than in England. I found my anticipa-
tion more than confirmed, & derived much pleas-
ure from a perusal of the article. It is (if I
may say so to you without impertinence) far
the best I have seen; & I am sorry to say that
it is not necessarily so much a compliment as
I mean it to be, for the English notices, with
one or two exceptions amounting to tolerable,
have been silly, poor stuff which an Englishman
winces & blushes at--or ought to do so, at
least. My brother, who saw your article here
yesterday, joins me in rating that very
differently--as being positively not less than
comparatively a worthy tribute to that very
wonderful genius, the "mad-man" of his discern-
ing countrymen, Blake.

It was almost another decade, however, before
Rossetti was offered the chance to write comprehen-
sively on Blake. Two entries in his Diary, the first
for 8 May 1872 and the second for 6 August 1873,
give a reasonably full account of the origin of his
dition:

Daldy the Publisher called on me, thinking of
including Blake in his Aldine series of Poets; &
he asked me whether I wd. undertake the
editing--including a Memoir of some 30 to 100
pages. He does not wish to insert the Prophetic
Books, but only a complete set of the poems of
an ordinary cast. I replied that I wd. under-
take the work for £50, on the understanding
that I am not to be controlled in anything I may see fit to say; also that I might not find it convenient to commence the work for some 6 mos. or so to come. Daly took leave, saying he wd. consult with his partner Bell. He had in the first instance proposed for either Gabriel or me as editor; but, as I told him, it is practically certain that G. wd. decline.

Mr. Bell,5 of the publishing firm, called on me at Som. Ho., & agreed to the terms set forth under 8 May 1872 regarding an edition of Blake’s poems in his Aldine series. He wd. like the introductory notice to be only about 32 to 48 pp.,6 & the arrangement of the poems mainly chronological. The Prophetic Books wd. not be included: I think however an exception must be made in favour at any rate of the Marriage of Heaven & Hell, if only for the sake of making the vol. of a moderately substantial thickness.7

Unfortunately a considerable gap in Rossetti’s Diary between the second entry and late 1876 makes it impossible to chart the preparation of the volume as thoroughly as we can document his earlier editions of Whitman and Shelley, though a number of his letters to Swinburne and Mrs. Gilchrist offer additional information. We can assume that he worked with his usual steadiness, for on 4 March 1874 he informed Swinburne that “Yesterday I received the first proofs, both of the poems & of my Prefatory Memoir.”8 A copy of the edition (presumably an advance copy) was in Swinburne’s hands by late October 1874,9 and it was listed in “Publications of the Week” in the Spectator of 14 November 1874.10

In his correspondence with Mrs. Gilchrist and Swinburne between August 1873 and March 1874, Rossetti discussed mainly copyright matters and the inclusion of representative Prophetic Books. Initially he anticipated no difficulty over the ten poems from the manuscript book later known as the Pickering MS., nine of which D. G. Rossetti had printed in Volume II of Gilchrist. On 25 August 1873 he wrote to Mrs. Gilchrist that “B[ell] wd. probably succeed in effecting some arrangement with [Macmillan] & P[ickering] enabling B. to reproduce the poems,” though four days later he admitted that “the matter appears to be a little complicated.”11 By 27 February 1874 he had reason to complain to Swinburne about “a provoking claim of copyright,” and his fear that he might have to “miss out” the poems, “thus spoiling the edition.”12 In another letter to Swinburne of 4 March 1874 he reported as follows:

The copyright difficulty—of wh. I foresaw something from the first—is this. You
remember that certain poems by Blake were for the first time published in Gilchrist's book—viz.: those which came from the manuscript belonging to Gabriel & me, & also certain others (Auguries of Innocence, Mental Traveller, &c.) which came from a small MS. then in the hands of Mrs. Gilchrist. The poems from this small MS. are someone's copyright for 42 years from date of first publication (1863), just as the poems from Gabriel's & my manuscript are our copyright. It turns out that the small book was claimed by and returned to Tatham, who sold it to Harvey (bookseller), who sold it to Pickering; & the latter republished these poems in or about 1865, along with the Innocence & Experience. Thus Pickering is the present owner of this copyright; & he, not liking Bell, nor relishing a further republication of the poems, declines to authorize its reissue. This is very annoying. Bell did tell me a fortnight or so ago that he understands Dr. Wilkinson is in possession of a certain Blake MS. containing perhaps these same poems, or most of them, & that Wilkinson would allow their republication from this other MS. Of this I have as yet heard no more, & fear it will prove fallacious. 

Wilkinson's manuscript did not materialize, but Rossetti was able to confide to Swinburne on 9 March 1874 that further probing by Bell had established an interpretation of the ownership of copyright favorable to his edition:

Bell told me the other day . . . that the only poem to which Pickering's copyright really applies is Long John Brown. This is indeed a great satisfaction: for whether L. J. B. is in or out matters hardly at all. I don't however understand why Pickering's copyright is limited to that particular poem. My view of the matter was this: --copyright attached to that whole series of poems for 42 years following date of first publication, 1863: Pickering, at a later date, became the legal owner of the poems, and therefore of the unexpired residue of their copyright. Macmillan . . . was never the owner of the copyright. Mrs. Gilchrist was the owner, as regards the life generally: & it seems each proprietor of poems previously unpublished was owner of the copyright in those same poems. Hence Tatham was in 1863 owner of the copyright in the Pickering poems. I am surprised to learn that he is still the owner; but Bell's letter seems to imply as much. Tatham gave me carte blanche some while ago, in case he had any rights in the matter. 

Although Rossetti obviously had doubts about Bell's understanding of the matter, he finally added the Pickering poems to his edition, excluding "Long John Brown" as D. G. Rossetti had done in 1863. In the circumstances one would expect him to have reproduced his brother's versions, but his practice was sometimes to follow the edition prepared for Pickering by R. H. Shepherd in 1866 and reissued in 1874, at other times to follow his brother, while at the same time introducing emendations of his own. For example, as Sampson pointed out in 1905, Rossetti's text of "The Grey Monk" adopts four of D. G. Rossetti's emendations, but "follows Shepherd
in the number and arrangement of verses, and generally as to text, adopting two out of the three important changes from the MS. Book version. On the other hand, in "The Crystal Cabinet" he adopts freely from both Shepherd and D. G. Rossetti, and introduces substantial punctuation of his own devising. But on the whole he was cautious about offering new readings. Fresh from his editing of Shelley, he had no wish to encounter again the many reviewers who had taken exception to his numerous conjectural emendations of Shelley's poems.

As for the Prophetic Books, Rossetti was not sufficiently enthusiastic to champion them against Bell's dismissal beyond arguing for the inclusion of a sampling. In his Diary for 6 August 1873 (quoted above) he mentions The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, but by 23 August he had decided on Thel, choosing it, he answered Swinburne who had urged him the claims of Visions of the Daughters of Albion, not because it is the best of the Prophetic Books (of course it is far from being such), but because it is short, lyrical in tone & approximately in form, & easily accessible—being printed in Gilchrist's book. The Visions of the Daughters of Albion wd. have had to be hunted up: probably transcribed bodily from some copy in the British Museum. I don't remember it very exactly, but am quite prepared to think it is a finer poem than Thel: I do remember that it is one of the more startling of Blake's moral dithyrambs, & that wd. weight the scale agst. it.

"The prospective publisher is not a known emanation of the giant Albion," he reminded Swinburne later in the letter. Why he included Tiriel as well is not clear, though the unexpected reappearance of the manuscript was the most likely reason. When Swinburne, in acknowledging Rossetti's edition, regretted its "public appearance," Rossetti merely replied that he was "Sorry you are so adverse to Tiriel--wh. I for my part think fully entitled to its place in the book."

At the same time, it should be noted that however ambivalent Rossetti's attitude towards the Prophetic Books was, he favored publication of a letterpress edition. Their exclusion from the Aldine edition, he insisted to Swinburne, "wd. not have been my voluntary choice," and he again excused that "it was obviously the only course likely to be adopted by a Publisher." In the Memoir prefixed to the edition he explicitly called for publication, arguing that "Blake will be but imperfectly known even to his enthusiasts until this is done." Four years later, in a review in the Academy of the facsimile edition of Jerusalem published by Pearson in 1877, he pleaded at length:

We cannot omit the present opportunity of saying that the publication in ordinary book-form, without designs, and without any attempt at facsimile of text, of the Jerusalem and other Prophetic Books, is highly to be desired. Difficult under any circumstances, it would be a good deal less difficult to read these works in an edition of that kind, with clear print, reasonable division of lines, and the like aids to business-like perusal. An index of the mythologic personages of Blake's strangely-named pantheon or pandemonium, with an account of their various and semi-intelligible performances throughout the successive Prophetic Books, would also be a powerful aid to such understanding of the subject as is, in the nature of things, possible. No doubt the compilation of such an index would be rather like attempting to draw a nightmare to scale: but something or other in that direction could undoubtedly be accomplished, with patience and goodwill for the work.

About the possibility of approaching total explication he remained skeptical. In an unpublished passage of his autobiography, written between 1901 and 1903, he observed:

I know most of what has been written about Blake, but have not investigated the elaborate study of his works by Messrs. Ellis & Yeats in their edition of a few years ago. I had a little speech with them on this subject, & learned that they regarded Blake's religious or quasi-religious utterances, usually counted to be chaotic, as cosmical in essence, & in detail interpretable. I presume that this view is to some valid extent justified by their commentary; yet cannot bring myself to think that Blake was in these matters a constructive thinker or an orderly expositor. My impression continues as heretofore—that, while he was a great genius in two arts, there was also a maniacal side to his intellect. Needless to
say that he was not a madman pure & simple: but he was a creative inventor whose ideas & utterances struggled beyond the limits of sanity. This view may be erroneous: it is the one to which my studies of Blake's works have led me.

That Rossetti deleted this passage when he prepared his autobiography for publication in 1906 could, of course, be interpreted as suggesting a waning of confidence in his judgment.

To the reviewers of the Aldine edition in 1874-1875, Rossetti's kind of cautious assessment was (in a word applied to the Memoir by most of them) "sound." Edmund Gosse's two-part review in the Examiner offers the most pronounced indication of critical opinion of Blake in the 1870s. Gosse, a friend both of the Rossettis and of Swinburne, declared that there was a danger "that, after so long a time of disgrace and oblivion, the reaction may be too violent, and the enthusiasm over the new-found wonder be blind and altogether excessive." He confessed that "some such fear as this was in our mind when we began Mr. Rossetti's long, learned, and most interesting memoir; and, though we are of the opinion that in one or two cases his admiration for his subject has led him beyond what the canons of pure criticism permit, we are bound in justice to say that, as a whole, his memoir is as remarkable for clear judgment and good sense as it is for enthusiasm." At the same time Gosse was sharply critical of Rossetti's urging of the publication of the Prophetic Books: "He seems to us to propose one of the most hopeless and ill-advised experiments that the publishing world has ever seen." A similar criticism came from John Dennis in the Spectator, who expressed surprise that, considering Rossetti's opinion that the Prophetic Books "are neither readable nor even entirely sane" (Dennis' words), he should consider it desirable that they be published: "We disagree with him altogether. Blake wrote a great deal of what, had it been the work of a smaller man, would be accounted trash, and the sooner it is forgotten the better for his fame. We venture indeed to think that Mr. Rossetti would have done wisely to omit a good deal contained in this small volume, since there are passages here as free almost from mind and meaning as any combination of words could well be." Only George Saintsbury in the Academy supported publication: "The sooner it is done the better." Yet even Saintsbury was of the opinion that on Blake's madness Rossetti's "inclusions might have been safely stated with much less qualification, that Blake was most undoubtedly mad, unless the meaning of words is to be strangely perverted." Much the same point was made, less sympathetically, by Coventry Patmore in the St. James's Gazette: "Mr. W. Rossetti . . . goes a great way further in his admiration of Blake than reason can be shown for." What these reviews amply demonstrate (and other reviews in such papers as the Daily News and the Sunday Times closely echo them) is that the publishers were clearly right in thinking that the Prophetic Books did not yet have a place in a "popular" edition of Blake's poems, and just as clearly, that Rossetti's qualified assessment of Blake's genius, however tame and wrong-headed it would in time appear, was in 1874 somewhat in advance of the times. The real value of Rossetti's edition, as Saintsbury remarked, consisted in the "increased facilities" it offered for studying a significant portion of Blake's poetry, and of assessing its "certain excellences." This value it retained until its place was taken by the Yeats-Ellis edition of 1893, and, more effectively, by Sampson's one-volume edition of 1905.
Athenaeum, 14 November 1874, p. 642. Both lists give the price as 5/-.


Spectator, p. 1439. Also noted in "List of New Books," Athenaeum, 14 November 1874, p. 642. Both lists give the price as 5/-.

Letters of William Michael Rossetti to Anne Gilchrist, ed. C. Goughes and P. F. Baun (Durham, N. C., 1934), pp. 87, 89.

B. L. Ashle MS. 1446, fol. 91.

It seems Wilkinson has not yet those rumoured Blake poems: but he has referred Bell to a lady who is supposed to possess something of the kind." Rossetti to Swinburne, 9 March [1874].

B. L. Ashle MS. 1446, fol. 93-93v.

It applied also to "Song by a Shepherd" and "Song by an Old Shepherd," published for the first time in R. H. Shepherd's 1874 edition. Rossetti excluded both from his edition.

B. L. Ashle MS. 1446, fol. 93-94.

In early October 1874 he was still discussing the matter of text with D. G. Rossetti, who suggested: "About the Auguries of Innocence etc., it strikes me that a verbatim version of the B. L. Ashley MS. 1446, fol. 92-92v.

It is derived from the account of provenance given by G. E. Bentley, Jr., in The Blake Collection of Mrs. London K. Thome p. 1439. Also noted in "List of New Books," Spectator, etc., it strikes me that a verbatim version of the Blake Collection of Mrs. London K. Thome, ed. 0. Doughty and J. R. Wahl (Oxford, 1965-1967), III, 1314. Williams's review of Shepherd's 1874 edition, Pickering's "fly-sheet attacking the editing of the poems in Gilchrist," and Rossetti's reply in the Academy (see Dorfman, pp. 112-133), all of which appeared between 5 September and 10 October 1874, undoubtedly delayed Rossetti's decision about adopting readings from Shepherd's text.

Cf. G. Keynes's statement (A Blake Bibliography (New York, 1921), p. 271) that in the poems from the Pickering MS. Rossetti "generally" followed D. G. Rossetti. Keynes correctly notes that Rossetti's text of the Poetical Sketches "is derived from Shepherd's edition of 1868 ... and is very accurate," whereas in the case of the Songs of Innocence and of Experience end of the poems from the Rossetti MS. he "followed the very inaccurate versions given by D. G. Rossetti in Gilchrist."


Chief among them was Robert Buchanan in the Athenaeum for 29 January 1870, pp. 154-96.

During the 1860's Rossetti's attitude towards the Prophetic Books, if not overly sympathetic, was at least open. On 25 May 1862 Mrs. Gilchrist requested from him "brief general" decriptions of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, The Book of Ahania, The Song of Los, Asia, and Africa. (Rossetti Papers, ed. W. M. Rossetti (London, 1903), p. 6.) Perhaps it is to these that Rossetti refers in an unpublished passage of his Reminiscences (Boodley MS. Eng. Misc. d. 332, fol. 213) where he records that Remarks by him of a critical bearing were embodied in Gilchrist's Life. That Mrs. Gilchrist's list was extended is suggested by a surviving note on Visiona of the Daughters of Albion, which Mrs. Gilchrist "reduced," certain that Macmillan would reject it, though she considered it "most vigorous and admirable." (H. H. Gilchrist, Anna Gilchrist, Her Life and Writings (London, 1887), pp. 127-28, where the original note is printed. She in fact rewrote it, replacing Rossetti's direct exposition with the statement that inimmutable would questions are opened up through the medium of this allegory. ... But we will not enter on them here." (Life of Blake (London, 1863), p. 108.) Even this statement was omitted from the second edition of it is worth mentioning as well Rossetti's lengthy exposition of "The Mental Traveller," published in Gilchrist, as evidence of his willingness to tackle a difficult text, and his constant support for Swinburne's Blake, of which he wrote to the poet on 2 January [1866] after reading the manuscript: "I should consider its publication the greatest service at present possible to Blake, & hardly inferior to a full critical edition of his writings." (B. L. Ashle MS. 1446, fol. 2r.)
THE FIGURE IN THE CARPET: BLAKE'S ENGRAVINGS IN SALZMANN'S ELEMENTS OF MORALITY

ROBERT N. ESSICK

The attribution of the unsigned plates in the English translation of C. G. Salzmann's Elements of Morality has had a checkered career. In the first edition of his Life of William Blake, Alexander Gilchrist wrote that Blake "illustrated" Salzmann's "pinafore precepts," leaving it unclear as to whether Blake simply engraved the plates, designed them, or both. The ambiguity was corrected for the second edition (1880, I, 91), where the German artist Daniel Nicolaus Chodowiecki (1726-1801) was named as the designer and Blake as the engraver. The change may have been prompted by a brief note by Frederick Locker on "The Illustrations in Mrs. Godwin's 'Elements of Morality,'" which points out that the plates were designed by Chodowiecki with the exception of those numbered 27 and 28. These two plates were exhibited at the Grolier Club in 1905 and described in the catalogue as being of Blake's "own designing." This attribution of pl. 27, at least to Blake as the engraver, can be rejected with a fair degree of confidence because, like the frontispiece to vol. I and pls. 1, 7, 10 (signed W. B. C feat 1790), and 11, it was clearly executed by someone other than the engraver of the remaining forty-five plates and looks not in the least like Blake's hand. In his catalogue of 1912, A. G. B. Russell, exercising his usual skepticism about Gilchrist's casual attributions, lists only fourteen plates as Blake's copy work, including eight "possibly, but not certainly, by Blake." In his great Bibliography of William Blake of 1921, Geoffrey Keynes ascribes sixteen plates to Blake, only ten of which are the same as those listed by Russell. Keynes takes note of the Grolier catalogue attribution of pls. 27 and 28 and comments that "the treatment of the trees and vines in the second of these (pl. 28) certainly suggests Blake's work, but then rejects this idea because both "plates were obviously not engraved by him." Bentley and Nurmi are a bit more generous, crediting Blake with seventeen plates but expressing judicious uneasiness over the whole business of attribution on stylistic grounds. Bentle repeats the same list in Blake Books. None of these authorities indicates how he made his selections; to my eye, all but the six (listed above) by another hand, and possibly pl. 48, are by the same engraver, or at least by a group following a "house style" as in the Novelist's Magazine. A comparison of the English plates illustrating Salzmann with their German prototypes provides new evidence for Blake's involvement. More surprisingly, it suggests that the Grolier catalogue may be right about pl. 28.

Chodowiecki's seventy designs were first published in Kupfer zu Herrn Professar Salzmann's Elementarwerk nach den zeichnungen Herrn Dan. Chodowiecki, von Herrn Nusabiegel Herrn Penzel und Herrn Crusius Sen. gestocken. Among the forty-five plates not by the "other hand" in the English edition, all but pl. 28 are based closely on Chodowiecki's designs, and were probably copied directly from the German plates. There are, however, some minor but substantive differences between fourteen of the prints. These variations are not significant enough to suggest that another artist was hired to adapt Chodowiecki's designs—they are still very much his—and were no doubt made by the English engraver(s). These changes are listed below, along with speculations on why some were made.

PL 3. The rather elegant floor divided into large squares in the German plate is replaced by a carpet in the English. Both seem equally appropriate since the design shows the drawing room in Sir William's "grand house" (I, 16 in the 1791 edition). I have not been able to find out if English drawing rooms were more frequently carpeted than the Continental variety.
PL. 20. The place setting on the table in the German print has been eliminated in the English, and two children added on the left. The first change follows the text, for the scene takes place "after the cloth was taken away" (II, 48). The text does not specifically place the children in the scene, but they are mentioned (II, 49) in the conversation between the husband and wife pictured in both plates.

PL. 28. The curtain covering part of the back wall in the German plate has been replaced with what looks like patterned wallpaper in the English. There seems to be no textual reason for this, unless wallpaper is more appropriate for the breakfast room setting.

PL. 34 (illus. 1). The German squared floor is replaced in the English copy by a carpet, and the back of the chair has been shortened so as not to cover as much of the boy's legs.

PL. 37. The round knobs on the chest of drawers in the German plate have been replaced in the English copy by handles of the sort more commonly found on eighteenth-century English furniture.

PL. 38 (illus. 2). The German squared floor has been replaced by rough boards and a carpet in the English copy. At least the boards seem more appropriate than the squared floor, for this is the room of a poor and desperately sick family. The wicker basket on the left does not appear in the German plate. It is probably the cradle of the infant at his mother's breast and is reminiscent of the basket-cradles in Blake's "A Cradle Song" (second plate) and "Infant Sorrow."

PL. 41. The German squared floor has been replaced in the English plate by a crosshatching pattern apparently representing boards.

PL. 42. The desk and man's legs visible through the railing in the German plate have been obscured with crosshatching in the English.

PL. 44. The sleigh in the German plate has been replaced by a cart, and the second sleigh on the far right replaced by a horse and rider. Both changes follow the English text, for the family is specifically placed in a "cart" three times (III, 116, 117, 123) and there is no reference to a second cart or sleigh. "The boy who rode on the first horse" (III, 123) probably refers to a servant riding on the lead horse hitched to the cart, but may have prompted the addition far right.

PL. 46. The German squared floor has been replaced by a carpet in the English copy. As in pl. 26, the setting is a breakfast room. (Salzmann was a fore-runner of Oliver Wendell Holmes in the pedagogic uses of the breakfast table).

PL. 48. The back wall, divided into large panels in the German plate, has been made plain in the English copy, and carpet replaces the German squared floor.

PL. 47. The floor and back wall are smooth and even in the German plate; but in the English copy the floor looks rough and uneven, and the wall is cracked with holes in the plaster. The setting is a sick old man's "miserable garret" (III, 161), and thus the changes are most appropriate. The dilapidated wall looks very much like the one in Blake's sixth illustration to Mary Wollstonecraft's Original Stories (J. Johnson, 1791). Both are delineated with etched worm lines that twist and break to picture the holes. The general boldness of etched
patterns in this and other Salzmann plates is similar to those in Original Stories, to which they have been compared by others. 10

Pl. 50. The German squared floor has been replaced in the English copy by smooth boards, and a few decorative swirls have been added to the curtain behind the bed.

The alterations in pls. 20, 38, 44, and 47 show a careful responsiveness to the text which is most unusual for simple copy engravings in a children's book. This fact alone suggests the habits of mind of the engraver of the Night Thoughts and Job illustrations, but it is a seemingly insignificant addition to the English plates that points more directly to Blake.

The carpets added to pls. 3, 34, 38, 41, 45, and 46 bear the same bold swirls, arabesques, and vegetative motifs (see illus. 1, 2). On pls. 26, 29, and 43, the engraver has modified Chodowiecki's original carpets to picture this pattern. The same sort of carpet appears in three plates unquestionably by Blake. In 1788 Blake etched and engraved his fine plate of Hogarth's "Beggar's Opera." The carpet (illus. 3) beneath Macheath's left foot is a larger version of those in the Salzmann illustrations. Except for the swirls in the lower left corner, the pattern is only vaguely suggested in Hogarth's oil painting (Mellon collection). Its specific delination in the print is as much the engraver's as the designer's. That this particular carpet became part of Blake's decorative repertoire is confirmed by its reappearance in two later original graphics: the "Moore and Co's Advertisement" of c. 1797 (illus. 4) 11 and the final plate in Designs to a Series of Ballads of 1802.

The appearance of the carpet pattern—as it were, a Blakean signature— in some of the Salzmann plates lends new credence to the contention that Blake was their engraver. And if we attribute the carpet plates to him, I find it impossible to go through the other forty-five candidates and weed out definite non-Blakes, with the possible exception of pl. 48. There is of course a natural resistance to attributing to Blake's hand all this undistinguished hack-work. That, however, should not stand in our way. By 1790 Blake was a very skilled etcher—engraver (witness the Hogarth plate), but he inevitably modified his style according to the genre in which he was working—and no doubt according to
the fee as well. For example, in 1784 Blake engraved two sophisticated "fancy" stipple prints after Stothard, "Zephyrus and Flora" and "Calisto," and in the same year produced six crude plates for The Wit's Magazine. In each case, the style is appropriate for the subject, and the latter group perfectly suited to the rough humor of their literary context. This Blakean version of eighteenth-century rules of decorum is a persistent feature of Blake's entire career as a graphic artist. For a children's book like the Elements of Morality, the simple mixed-method plates are appropriate for the simple moralistic tales they accompany. The same may be said for Blake's relief etchings in Little Tom the Sailor, for which the artist himself pointed out the principle of decorum: "they are rough like rough sailors." When compared with other prints of the period intended for a youthful audience, such as the Carver & Bowles "catchpenny prints" or those in Banbury chap books, the Salzmann plates seem almost elegant. That they are less accomplished than the Wollstonecraft illustrations, begun in the same year as the last of those for Salzmann, can be attributed at least in part to the fact that in one case Blake was executing signed plates after his own designs, and in the other rapidly producing a good many unsigned copy prints.

Plate 28 (illus. 5) offers the greatest challenge to the chalcographer. At first glance it would seem to be one of the prints executed by the "other hand." But this is only because the smallness of the figure relative to the size of the whole design is similar to the frontispiece to vol. I and pl. 27; in graphic style pl. 28 is strikingly different. Most of the prints throughout Elements of Morality suffer from the horror vacui endemic among eighteenth-century engravers, although those plates most frequently attributed to Blake in the past are less cluttered than the others. Plate 28 is the most open of them all, with the worm lines so much a part of Blake's early style but remarkably little crosshatching. Blake used a similarly open, etched style, deriving from Salvator Rosa, in two plates after Fuseli, "Timon and Alcibiades" and "Falsa ad Coelum" of 1790, and attempted to combine it with more conventional patterns in the Night Thoughts engravings (1796-97) and the illustrations, also after Fuseli, for Charles Allen's New and Improved History of England and New and Improved Roman History, both of 1796. Almost every motif in pl. 28 also has its parallel in Blake's work. The slender tree with arching branches recalls those in "The Lamb," "Night" (first plate), "The Little Girl Lost" (first plate), the title-page of The Book of Thel, and American pl. 7. A much stronger parallel is between the vine on the right margin of pl. 28 and that on the right in the frontispiece to Wollstonecraft's Original Stories (illus. 6), also climbing up a wall next to a portal. The delineation of the leaves is almost identical. The general subject--a child or children before a large doorway--can also be compared to the Wollstonecraft frontispiece, "Nurse's Song" in Songs of Experience, and The Book of Urizen pl. 26. This last example also contains a heavy wooden door as in the Salzmann plate, but the closest parallel for the setting is the water color illustration to Young's Night Thoughts, Night II, p. 7, where Blake also pictures a gigantic door in a curiously free-standing wall. Salzmann's text indicates that William, pictured in pl. 28, is locked

5 Plate 28 in Salzmann, Elements of Morality (1791), II, facing p. 104. First state, 12.5 x 6.8 cm., tentatively attributed to Blake as designer and engraver. Author's collection.
inside a garden, but it seems as though anyone not so caught up by "impatience" could simply walk around the end of the wall, just as in the Night Thoughts design. William's clothes are generally like those of other children in the Salzmann plates, including the unattributed pl. 27, but are more closely fitting and with less distinction between breeches and blouse than the other outfits, and without the usual jacket. In these respects William's clothing is similar to that worn by the boys in Songs of Innocence and of Experience, particularly one in "Nurse's Song" in Experience, and by the shepherd in the Experience frontispiece. Lastly, William's arm and hand gesture is very close to the young woman's in the illustration to Thomas Commins' Blagg Set to Music, designed and engraved by Blake in 1786. Each of these parallels is in itself inconclusive, but taken together they form a remarkably consistent pattern of Blakean styles and motifs. Perhaps Johnson allowed each of his two engravers to contribute one new design to the book, and thus pl. 27 is the other copyist's effort. My tentative attribution of pl. 28 to Blake as both designer and engraver is certainly open to question, but the evidence suggests that, even when hired as a journeyman copyist, Blake found an opportunity to create one small work of original graphic art.

3 Notes and Queries, 1, 6th S. (19 June 1880), 493-94. Locker concludes with the comment that "I trouble you with this as I understand that Mrs. Gilchrist is now engaged on the pious work of re-editing her late husband's book."
7 G. E. Bentley, Jr., and Martin K. Nurmi, A Blake Bibliography (Minneapolis: Unv. of Minnesota Press, 1964), pp. 149-50.
8 Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977, pp. 607-09. As in Bentley and Nurmi, the name of the designer is incorrectly given as "David Chodowiecki."
9 Leipzig, 1785. Locker--and following him the 1905 Grolier catalogue, p. 102, Russell, p. 156, and Keynes, p. 236--point out that the illustrations are in the Leipzig, 1785, edition of the Mercklohes Elementarwerk and do not note the earlier appearance of the plates alone.
10 See the 1905 Grolier catalogue, p. 102, Bentley and Nurmi, p. 149, and Bentley, Blake Books, p. 608.
11 Keynes, Engravings by William Blake: The Separate Plates (Dublin: Emery Walker, 1956), p. 16, dates the plate c. 1790 because of its similarity to the Wollstonecraft illustrations, but David V. Erdman, "The Suppressed and Altered Passages in Blake's Jerusalem," Studies in Bibliography, 17 (1964), 36 n. 34, points out that Moore & Co. is listed only in the London directories of 1797 and 1798 and that the firm apparently had no other names in earlier years.
12 Keynes makes much the same point about the wit's Magazine plates in "Blake's Engravings for Gay's Fables," The Book Collector, 21 (1972), 60.

6 Frontispiece in Mary Wollstonecraft, Original Stories from Real Life, 1791. Second state, 11.7 x 6.5 cm., designed and engraved by Blake. Author's collection.
Blake and The Seaman's Recorder: The Letter and the Spirit in a Problem of Attribution

Christopher Heppner

The attribution of engravings is often a very difficult matter in the absence of definitive biographical evidence. It is especially difficult in an area such as that represented by Blake's commercial engravings, in which the engraver is often following another man's designs, and in which a personal style tends to be submerged in conventions that are not particular to any one individual. An experienced eye and mind may be able to look at a print and arrive at a correct attribution, but such an intuitive solution may be difficult to support in debate without the evidence of some identifiable minute particulars. This brief essay is an attempt to provide a few such particulars in support of a conclusion arrived at, it would seem, by an intuitive process honed by long and committed experience.

Some years ago the six plates signed "Blake" in the three volumes of The Seaman's Recorder were claimed for William Blake in an article written by G. E. Bentley, Jr., though with an acknowledgement that they were "the merest journeyman work."1 This drew a reply from Geoffrey Keynes, who argued that the "plain incompetence" of the etchings made it impossible to attribute them to William Blake, the signatures notwithstanding.2 Bentley, in his recent Blake Books, still regards the plates as William Blake's, but adds the comment that Keynes's case "will be stronger when there is clear evidence that another engraver named Blake was signing plates in the 1820s."3

Such evidence exists, and not too surprisingly is to be found in the Print Room of the British Museum. There, the only item in a folder marked, and catalogued, "E. Blake?" is a proof (JM 1920-9-30-1) of the plate "Lord Byron in a Storm" from The Seaman's Recorder. The cataloguer has obviously not identified the print as deriving from this work, but has added a note (referring to A. G. B. Russell's The Engravings of William Blake) which associates the print, quite correctly in my view, with the E. Blake who etched some of the plates for W. West's Theatrical Characters, of which the British Museum Print Room has a large collection.

A comparison of the signature of the Lord Byron plate (illus. 1) with the signature of the E. Blake who etched some of the Theatrical Characters plates shows a close resemblance in style and form. Two of these signatures are reproduced here, one reading "Blake fc" (illus. 2) and the other "E. Blake fc [Sc?]" (illus. 3);4 the signatures resemble each other quite closely, and there is another plate signed "E. Blake fc" to act as a mediator between the two forms illustrated.5 It is apparent that these two signatures are very close indeed to the signature on the Lord Byron plate. The dates are also entirely compatible; the Seaman's Recorder volumes are dated 1824-1825, while the Theatrical Characters plates from which illustrations 2 and 3 are taken are both dated 1825. I think it is clear that the same E. Blake was responsible for all of these plates.

The standard dictionaries of artists and engravers do not mention an E. Blake, and neither does Keynes or Bentley, who have both written about Blake's other than the William Blake who was both poet and painter.6 He was mentioned very briefly a few times late in the nineteenth century,7 but A. G. B. Russell seems to be the last writer on Blake to refer to him, in dismissing the Theatrical Characters prints from the canon of William Blake.8

It will be noticed that all of the signatures which I am here attributing to E. Blake have a closed upper loop in the "k." This is true both of the rapidly etched signatures already illustrated,
and of the more formal signatures on the other plates signed "Blake" from The Seaman's Recorder, which all follow the pattern of the signature (illus. 4) to the plate representing Flaxman's monument to Nelson, which is the frontispiece to Vol. II, Bentley's Plate No. 2.

These engraved signatures look rather like some of William Blake's, but in fact William Blake never closed the loop of a "k" in this period, though he did do this sometimes in earlier signatures, as on the vignette on p. 21 of The Poetical Works of John Scott Esq. (1782), The Idle Laundress (1788), and Plate 21 for Vol. 3 of The Antiquities of Athens (1791), the last of which is reproduced here (illus. 5). But apart from the plate for Hayley's Life of George Romney (published 1809), on which I think that the imprint and signature are most probably not actually cut by Blake himself, I have been unable to find any engraved or etched signature known to be by William Blake and later than 1800 with a closed loop on the "k."

A perhaps less significant difference is that the signatures in The Seaman's Recorder have a rather more pronounced backwards sweeping head on the "l" and "k" than do the corresponding strokes on William Blake's signatures.

Writers on Blake's commercial engravings have usually been wary of using stylistic evidence as the basis for making attributions, in the absence of supporting forms of documentation. I think this caution is usually justified, but on the other hand Blake scholars have grown accustomed to accepting the evidence of changes in the formation of the serif at the top of a "g" in determining the date of some of Blake's works, and even in the attribution of the map of Hafod in Cumberland's An Attempt to Describe Hafod. Though I have looked only at engraved or etched signatures for this essay, I think that the evidence presented here is specific enough to settle the question of the disputed attribution of the plates signed "Blake" in The Seaman's Recorder, and to outline a
small-scale bibliographic tool which may possibly have further uses. In this instance, a technique—developed by Erdman with the assistance of Bentley—of using the evidence provided by Blake's script can be used to confirm the intuition of Keynes. Here, at least, the letter and the spirit are in concord.


4 This signature is taken from Vol. 2, No. 166, "Mr. H. Kemble, as Massaniello, in the Fisherman of Naples. London, Published March 17, 1805, by W. West, at his Theatrical Print Warehouse, 57, Wych Street. Opposite Olympic Theatre Strand."

5 This is from Vol. 2, No. 136, "Mr. Huntley, as Bagzed. London, Published March 6, 1825, by W. West, etc."

6 Vol. 2, No. 208, "Mr. O Smith—as Malvolax. London, Published May 18, 1827, by W. West, etc."


8 William Archer has a sensible note which casts doubt on previous enthusiastic claims for William Blake's hand in the Theatrical Characters prints, "The Drama in Pasteboard," The Art Journal, N. S. 7 (1867), 105-08, 141-44.


10 This is an opinion based partly on the style of the lettering and partly on the long period of time between Blake's work on the plate (his letter of 11 December 1805 refers to it as very nearly finished) and the actual date of publication; I would assume that the plate had long been out of Blake's hands when the publication date of 14 April 1809 was cut on all the plates in the volume, not only Blake's. It is worth remembering Bentley's warning that inscriptions are not always the work of the original engraver; see David V. Erdman, "Dating Blake's Script: a postscript," Blake Newsletter 10 (September 1969), p. 42.


12 See Keynes, "George Cumberland and William Blake" in Blake Studies, pp. 236-37. The attribution is credited to Erdman. But see Bentley, Blake Books, p. 541, which points out that Cumberland also seems to have used an eccentric, 'sinister g,' so that the Hafod map may very well not be Blake after all. Attribution on purely stylistic grounds remains risky, and the present essay is obviously not exempt from the dangers.


2 Signature on plate of "Mr. H. Kemble, as Massaniello," West's Theatrical Characters.

3 Signature on plate of "Mr. Huntley, as Bagzed," West's Theatrical Characters.

4 Signature on plate of Nelson's monument, frontispiece to The Seaman's Recorder, Vol. II.

The 1931-32 season opened at the Old Vic on 22nd September and this first full season was fittingly introduced by a performance of *Job*, which the Camargo Society lent to the company and for which Vaughan Williams asked only a nominal fee. Dolin repeated his magnificent performance as Satan and the impact of the ballet was instantaneous. The first slight programmes may not have seemed very important, but a work like *Job* at once revealed the power and the creative force of de Valois as a choreographer and the possibilities for serious English ballet.

*Job* was not only a succès d’estime but a popular success as well, and the Vic and Wells were crowded whenever it was given. It has remained in the repertoire of the Sadler’s Wells Ballet ever since and now occupies a very special place in the traditions of the company and in the affections of everyone who has been associated with Sadler’s Wells.

This "Masque for Dancing" had been invented by Dr. Geoffrey Keynes some years previously. An ardent balletomane and a great authority on the work of William Blake, he had felt that Blake’s *Illustrations of the Book of Job*, first published as a series of twenty-one engravings in 1825, unconsciously provided settings which could easily be translated on the stage, while there were "innumerable suggestions in his figures for attitudes and groupings, which cried out for their conversion by a choreographer into actuality and movement." He prepared a detailed scenario for a stage production and persuaded his sister-in-law Gwendolen Raverat (née Darwin) to design backcloths based on Blake’s drawings and to colour small cut-out figures to represent the leading characters in the main scenes and groupings. These designs were prepared for a toy theatre, and when the cardboard figures were assembled they illustrated very exactly the main climaxes of the action as they were eventually to appear in the ballet. Dr. Keynes had completed his scheme for the ballet by 1927 and had persuaded Ralph Vaughan Williams (a cousin of the Darwins) to compose the music. He sent a French translation of
JOB
being Blake's Vision of the Book of Job
A MASQUE FOR DANCING invented by GEOFFREY KEYNES
Music by R. VAUGHAN WILLIAMS
Produced by NINETTE DE VALOIS
Scenery and Costumes designed (after Blake's Illustrations to the Book of Job) by GWENDOLEN RAVENAT
Wigs and Masks by HEDLEY BRIGGS

Scene 1. Job is sitting in the sunrise of prosperity with his wife, surrounded by his seven sons and three daughters. They all join in a pastoral dance. When they have dispersed, leaving Job and his wife alone, Satan enters unperceived. He appeals to Heaven, which opens, revealing the Godhead (Job's Spiritual Self) enthroned within. On the steps are the Heavenly Hosts. Job's Spiritual Self consents that his moral nature be tested in the furnace of temptation.

Scene 2. Satan, after a triumphal dance, usurps the throne.

Scene 3. Job's sons and daughters are feasting and dancing when Satan appears and destroys them.

Scene 4. Job's peaceful sleep is disturbed by Satan with terrifying visions of War, Pestilence and Famine.

Scene 5. Messengers come to Job with tidings of the destruction of all his possessions and the death of his sons and daughters. Satan introduces Job's Comforters, three wily hypocrites. Their dance at first simulates compassion, but this gradually changes to rebuke and anger. Job rebels: "Let the day perish wherein I was born." He invokes his vision of the Godhead, but the opening Heaven reveals Satan upon the throne. Job and his friends shrink in terror.

Scene 6. There enters Elihu who is young and beautiful. "Ye are old and I am very young." Job perceives his sin. The Heavens then open, revealing Job's Spiritual Self again enthroned.

Scene 7. Satan again appeals to Job's Godhead, claiming the victory, but is repelled and driven down by the Sons of the Morning. Job's household build an altar and worship with musical instruments, while the heavenly dance continues.

Scene 8. Epilogue: Job sits a humbled man in the sunset of restored prosperity, surrounded by his family, upon whom he bestows his blessing.

Job ... ... ... ... ... ... JOHN MACNAIR
His Wife ... ... ... ... ... MARGERY STEWART
His three Daughters ... MARIE NEILSON, URSULA MORETON, DOREEN ADAMS
His seven Sons ... WILLIAM CHAPPELL, HEDLEY BRIGGS, WALTER GORE, CLAUDE NEWMAN, ROBERT STUART, TRAVERS KEMP, STANLEY JUDSON
The three Messengers ... ROBERT STUART, CLAUDE NEWMAN, TRAVERS KEMP
The three Comforters ... WILLIAM CHAPPELL, WALTER GORE, HEDLEY BRIGGS
War, Pestilence and Famine WILLIAM CHAPPELL, WALTER GORE, HEDLEY BRIGGS
Elihu ... ... ... ... ... ... STANLEY JUDSON
Satan ... ... ... ... ... ... ANTON DOLIN
(The kind permission of Messrs. JACK BUCHANAN and R. H. GILLESPIE)
The Children of God ... BEATRICE APPLEYARD, FREDA BAMFORD, JOY NEWTON, NADINA NEWHOUSE, PHYLLIS WORTHINGTON, JOAN DAY, WENDY TOYE, MARLEY BELL
Sons of the Morning ... JOY ROBSON, MONICA RATCLIFFE, MOLLIE BROWN, ELIZABETH MILLER
Job's Spiritual Self ... ... ... ... JOHN LOFTUS
The music, originally written for full symphony orchestra, has, for the purposes of this and subsequent stage presentations, been re-scored for Theatre Orchestra by CONSTANT LAMBERT.

Scenery executed by ALICK JOHNSTONE Costs by Eve-MARIE

INTERVAL
the scenario to Diaghileff, who was at that time the only person in a position to produce such a ballet, but the subject did not appeal to Diaghileff and he rejected it as too English and too old-fashioned. Dr. Keynes can probably take credit, however, for having sown a seed in the great man's mind which was later to bear fruit in the production of *Le Fils Prodigue*.

With the formation of the Camargo Society, Dr. Keynes saw another chance of having *Job* produced, and he invited Lilian Baylis and Ninette de Valois to come and see the models and the toy theatre. They were at once interested and it was agreed that de Valois should undertake the production, following the scenario of Dr. Keynes and using Mrs. Raverat's designs. Dr. Vaughan Williams had stipulated that there should be no *pointe* work (which he detested) and that *Job* should not be described as a ballet, so the description "a Masque for Dancing" was adopted. De Valois made a very careful study of the Blake engravings and began to plan her production, while Mrs. Raverat set to work painting scenery at the Old Vic. The production was to be presented by the Camargo Society at its fourth programme and Geoffrey Keynes undertook to finance it, being assisted by several friends, in particular by his brother Maynard and Sir Thomas Dunhill. Constant Lambert rescored the music for a much smaller orchestra and *Job* was produced for the first time at the Cambridge Theatre on 5th and 6th July 1931.
Job won much esteem for both the Camargo Society and the Vic-Wells Ballet. With Job, Edwin Evans used to say, Camargo stepped on the map of Europe. Karsavina said, "The dignity of the greatest tragedy of all ages is nowhere impaired by a mere dance for the dance's sake, and yet this production fully answers the qualification of ballet. The quality of mine in Job is that of the flowing pattern of a well-conceived dance." Perhaps Lydia Lopokova, at first not very enthusiastic but greatly impressed after seeing it performed at Oxford during the Ninth Annual Festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music, put her finger on the most important achievement when she wrote to Geoffrey Keynes: "My chief pleasure was that it differed from the Russian ballet tradition, the most important merit of Job." Ashley Dukes, writing in the American Theatre Arts Monthly about the English theatre in general, said Job was by far the most satisfying achievement of the English theatre that season, representing "the impressive silence in the midst of unimpressive talk."

Job owed no small part of its success to the performance of Anton Dolin as Satan, Blakish and devilish, yet superbly arrogant and physically magnificent in a way that none of his successors have been able to equal, although all of them (and Robert Helpman in particular) have given striking and valid interpretations. At the time of the first Vic-Wells performances Dolin was still appearing in Stand Up and Sing, but Jack Buchanan (to whom all honour) gave him permission to dance at the Vic, and his performance was a major feature of the success of the ballet—although the timing was so close that he had to take his last curtain half-dressed in evening clothes, with a taxi waiting at the stage door to whisk him back to the Hippodrome. Lilian Baylis wrote him her thanks: "Ellen Terry was one of the first great players who gave such practical help to the Old Vic, and you are the first great dancer, and I shall pray and remember you always with very great affection."

1 One benefactor was later taken to a performance by Geoffrey Keynes and his wife. The eminent man sat solemnly through the opening ballet, which happened to be The Jackdaw and the Pigeons, and at the end said politely to Keynes, "Yes, old boy, very interesting. But tell me, which one was Job?"
Photo behind title: backdrop design for Job, Gwendolen Raverat. On deposit at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; reproduced by permission of the owner.

1 Toy theater model for Job, Gwendolen Raverat design. Victoria and Albert Museum.

2 Notebook sketches, Ninette de Valois. Victoria and Albert Museum.


4 & 5 Original production, 5 July 1931. Victoria and Albert Museum.

6 Michael Somes as Job, later production. Victoria and Albert Museum.

7 Studio picture of Anton Dolin for a later Raverat production. Victoria and Albert Museum.

8 Joy Newton, original production. Victoria and Albert Museum.

9 Original production. Victoria and Albert Museum.

10 Robert Helpmann as Satan, later production. Victoria and Albert Museum.
The trends I outlined in my last survey of Blake sales (Blake Newsletter, 10 [1976], 53-59) have continued. A new German interest in Blake—note the purchase of the study of Jerusalem pl. 51 by the Hamburg Kunsthalle—and the improving British economy have added new stimuli to an already active market. The book market, particularly for early facsimiles and volumes with Blake's engravings, remains on its steep upward course. Two young dealers, Donald Heald of London and Edwin C. Epps, Jr., of Columbia, South Carolina, have begun businesses with a special emphasis on Blake. Both bring considerable expertise to the field. Three of Blake's most important series of intaglio illustrations—Wight Thoughts, The Grave, and Job—have increased considerably in price, although their continued availability has held off the sharp rise that will undoubtedly occur as soon as these works become truly rare. Once again, no complete illuminated book came on the market, but several individual pages or fragments did appear. The best drawings and prints have fared well, but the market continues shallow and weak for the less impressive drawings. When none of the half-dozen major dealers or collectors compete for a drawing, its sale price (or frequently buy-in by the seller) is about the same as it would have been five years ago.

The following lists have the same format as the 1974-75 survey, with only minor modifications. All Sotheby, Sotheby Parke-Bernet, and Christie's auction catalogues have been surveyed, as have the catalogues of the major dealers who regularly handle original Blake materials. I have made no attempt to search out every sale of original works, and thus there are no doubt a good many sales of the more common printed items not included here. A few late 1975 and early 1976 sales are also listed.

I wish to thank Martin Butlin, Detlef W. Dörrbecker, Ruth Fine, and Shaunagh FitzGerald of P. & D. Colnaghi & Co. for their assistance in compiling this list.

ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CL</td>
<td>Christie, Manson &amp; Woods Ltd., London</td>
<td>London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNY</td>
<td>Christie, Manson &amp; Woods, New York</td>
<td>New York</td>
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<tr>
<td>cat.</td>
<td>catalogue or sales list issued by a dealer or auction house (usually followed by a number or letter designation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>illus.</td>
<td>the item or part thereof is reproduced in the catalogue</td>
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<tr>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Sotheby Belgravia, Motcomb St., London</td>
<td>London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SH</td>
<td>Sotheby &amp; Co., Hodgson's Rooms, Chancery Lane, London</td>
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I. DRAWINGS, WATERCOLORS, & PRINTED DRAWINGS

"Adam and Eve." Pencil and grey ink, 8 5/8 x 9 7/8 in. CL, 9 Nov. 1976, #78, illus. (£700). Sold (or bought-in?) for 450 gns. in the same rooms, 9 Nov. 1971, #77. Now collection of Colin Hunter.


"Every Man also Gave Him a Piece of Money." Pencil and wash drawing, formerly Robertson collection, 22.8 x 17.7 cm. Colnaghi, Sept. 1976 drawings cat., #83, illus. (£15,000). Stolen on the last day of the Colnaghi exhibition, but recovered in Feb. 1978, and now in the possession of Colnaghi's insurance company. This drawing, a variant of Job pl. 19, was previously sold SL, 21 March 1974, #16 to Colnaghi for £9500.


"The Good Farmer." Pencil, black ink, and grey wash (recto & verso). Early 1780s, 12 3/4 x 18 1/4 in. SL, 18 Nov. 1976, #163, illus. (Bought-in, £1600.) In March 1977, the drawing was seriously damaged in transit between Sotheby's Parke-Bernet, New York and their Los Angeles office. Now restored and in the author's collection. SEE ILLUS. 2 & 3 (photos made prior to damage).


"Pestilence." Water color, 7 1/8 x 10 3/4 in., the second of four known versions, early 1780s. CL, 2 March 1976, #97, illus. (Bought-in at £2400.) Now in the author's collection.


"The Virgin Hushing the Young Baptist as He Approaches Jesus." Tempera, 10 1/3 x 15 in. John Howell Books, April 1976 private offer at $85,000. Now in a private Chicago collection. See Illus. 5.


II. PRINTS

This section includes pages from the illuminated books and commercial book illustrations removed from the volumes in which they originally appeared. Plate numbers and copy designations follow G. E. Bentley, Jr., Blake Books.

2 Blake. "The Good Farmer." Recto, pencil, black ink, and grey wash. Early 1780s, 32.5 x 46.5 cm. Essick Collection.

3 Blake. "The Good Farmer." Verso, pencil, black ink, touch of grey wash. Inscribed in pencil upper left, not in Blake's hand, "The Good Farmer giving his field[s?] / in Famine / both sides." Essick Collection. This working sketch is the transition between the earlier and later groups of the six known versions of the composition. The first two pen drawings (British Museum) have the central figure dressed as on the recto of this drawing (Illus. 2). Like this verso sketch, the later pen and wash drawings (Tate Gallery, University of Texas) show him with two garments, a cloak over a gown, rather than the single gown of the earlier versions. The change from the energetic pose of the central figure and the swirling hem of his clothing to a more restrained and rectilinear composition may have been motivated by the same neoclassical norms also influencing Blake's friends, Stothard and Flaxman, in the early 1780s.
"The Clod and the Pebble" from Songs of Innocence and of Experience copy T, hand colored and numbered 32. Sold with the eighth Virgil illustration designed and cut by Blake (foxed), CL, 26 Oct. 1976, #236 (E1000). Now in the author's collection.


Hayley. Life of Cowper, 1802. Pls. 1, 2, 5 (2 copies), 6 (2 copies), some tears. SB, 3 Feb. 1976, #10 (bought-in).


Hayley. Triumph of Temper, 1803. Pls. only, waterstains lower corners, tear in pl. 2. SB, 3 Feb. 1976, #6 (E30).

"The Hiding of Moses" from Remember Me!, 1825. SB, 3 Feb. 1976, #3, illus. (E130).

Jerusalem. Three hand colored clippings from: pl. 37, top design with top design of pl. 4 on verso; pl. 18, upper design with pl. 19, lines 4-16, on verso; pl. 35, lower design with pl. 28, lines 7-23, on verso. Offered for sale privately by a New York collector, and now in two private New York State collections.

Jerusalem, pl. 47, design only, hand colored, Europe title-page on verso. The "Preston" proof. Colnaghi, March 1977 prints cat., #1, both sides illus., color ($30,000). Now in the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.


"Joseph of Arimathea among the Rocks of Albion," second state, probably a posthumous impression. SH, 12 Nov. 1976, #386 (Heald, E1000). Sotheby catalogued this item with a copy of The Grave and noted this inserted print only in passing. The estimate was E20.

Lavater, J. C. Essay on Physiognomy, 1789. Epps, Feb. 1978 cat. 5, #10 (Pls. 1—$15; 3—$35); #2 (Pl. 2—$50).


"Night," lower design only of the second pl. of the poem in Songs of Innocence. Hand tinted with watercolors, 31 x 65 mm. SB, 5 April 1977, #208 (E420).

Sir Charles Grandison, 1783. Blake's three pls., Epps, Feb. 1978 cat. 5, #3 (Pls. 1, 2--$25 each; 3 [lacking border]--$15; $50 the lot).


Scott, J. Poetical Works, 1782. Epps, Feb. 1978 cat. 5, #4 (Pls. 1--$22.50; 2-4--$27.50 each; $90 the lot).

"The Shepherd," design only from the pl. in Songs of Innocence. Color printed, touched with black ink and watercolors, 71 x 65 mm. SB, 5 April 1977, #210, illus. color (Somerville & Simpson, £2500).

"Spring," the tailpiece design only from the second pl. of the poem in Songs of Innocence. Ragged borders, color printed and touched with black ink and watercolors, 28 x 75 mm. SB, 5 April 1977, #207 (k280). Cut evenly, color printed and touched with black ink and watercolors, 42 x 69 mm. SB, 5 April 1977, #209, illus. color (Somerville & Simpson, £2000).


There is No Natural Religion, 1788. Pls. a3, 4, 6, b3 from copy 1 and pls. a9, b12 from copy 1, formerly Pepiont Morgan Library. SNY, 24 May 1977, #153, pl. a4 illus. (Argosy, $5000). Pls. a4, 6, b3 now in a private American collection; pls. a3, 9, b12 now collection of the author. SEE ILLUS. 7.


Wollstonecraft, M. Original Stories from Real Life, 1796. Final states of the pls. mounted in a small album; from the collection of Sir Geoffrey Keynes. SB, 3 Feb. 1976, #4 (£110).


"Zephyrus and Flora," Blake after Stothard. Printed in black, imprint faint (no. 3 in Keynes, Separate Plates cat.). SB, 3 Feb. 1976, #1 (£75).

III. BOOKS WITH BLAKE'S COMMERCIAL ENGRAVINGS

Allen, C. New and Improved Roman History, 1798. Uncut in original boards. Heald, July 1976 cat. 1, #15 (£150). This copy, now in my collection, contains the pls. printed on a single sheet, folded and bound at the front. A continuous platemark runs across the top and bottom of the sheet, indicating that the pls. were engraved on and printed from a single copperplate. This was a common practice in the 18th and 19th centuries for small book illustrations, but this is the only example I know that definitely indicates that Blake executed his plates this way.


Darwin, E. Collected Works, 3 vols., 1806, with only 17 pls., not specified. George's, May 1976 cat. 625, #1280 ($60).


Blake. "The Gambols of the Ghosts." Pencil, 46 x 31.5 cm. Inscribed "Blake" lower right; "For the Grave" on the verso, not in Blake's hand. For some years on deposit at the Fitzwilliam Museum by a South African collector under the title "An Allegory of Human Life," now destined for the Yale Center of British Art. This is apparently the illustration to Blair's *Grave*, never published, described by Flaxman in his letter to Hayley of 18 Oct. 1805 as "The Gambols of Ghosts according with their affections previous to the final Judgment." Also described by Rossetti in Gilchrist, *Life of Blake* (1863), II, 242, no. 21. On p. 2 of *The Grave* (1808 ed.), Blair writes of "light-heel'd ghosts and visionary shades" performing "their mystic rounds" near a yew tree, but does not associate the scene with the Last Judgment. While frenzied spirits circle about the yew in the composition, more pious types parade into the church at the left. A small figure hovering just above the church door holds an object in his upraised right hand (the lash of Conscience?) and a figure with a lash dominates a group cowering on top of the tomb, lower right. Below, graves open as the "ghosts" of the dead are pulled out—-or pummeled, lower right—by other embodied spirits.


Varley, J. A Treatise on Zodiacal Physiognomy, 1828. Tear in final pl., nicely repaired. SH, 29
June 1977, #122 (Heald, £195). This is the first copy to be sold at a British auction since 1928, according to British Auction Records.

Wollstonecraft, M. Original Stories from Real Life, 1791. First states of the pls., with a duplicate of pl. 1. Seven Gables Bookshop, Blake List Dec.

**6** Louis Schiavonetti after Blake. "The Descent of Man into the Vale of Death." Illustration to Robert Blair, The Grave. Etching-engraving, proof before title letters and imprint, c. 1806. Inscribed lower left "Drawn by W Blake" and lower right "Etched by L Schiavonetti" in the plate; lower margin "The Valley of Death" in pencil. Lacking hatching on the rocks and path, with pencil indications in some of these areas for the finishing work to be done. Detlef W. Dörrebecker Collection.

Young, E. Night Thoughts, 1797. With "Explanation" leaf, uncut, the pls. hand colored following the earlier (Group I, 1797) style (as in copy C in Bentley, Blake Books, pp. 645-46); from the Marsden J. Perry and W. A. White collections. CNY, 18 Nov. 1977, #110, title-page to Night the Third illus. color (Witten, $18,150). Certainly a world record price, far above the estimate for this previously unrecorded copy. As of Feb. 1978, in the stock of the bookdealer Laurence Witten, Southport, Conn.

**IV. UNIQUE MATERIALS RELATED TO BLAKE**

deckford, W. See under Malkin, Part III.

D'Israeli, I. Letter to the bookseller G. Dyer asking for a copy of "Blake's Young" and complaining about two portfolios "which he had of him." SL, 13 Dec. 1977, #309 (J. F. Fleming, £65).

Miró, Joan. Relief etching printed in colors of a poem by Ruthven Todd; one of the Miró-Todd plates following Blake's techniques. SNY, 12 Nov. 1976, #366, illus. ($1200); another print by Miró of a poem by Todd using Blake's relief etching method, #367 ($550).
V. BLAKE'S CIRCLE & FOLLOWERS


"The Flood," lithograph, inscribed "original impression from Miss Calvert's Collection." SB, 25 May 1976, #2 (£120).


Flaxman, John. *Self-portrait and study of a sarcophagus*, two pages from a sketchbook, pencil, one inscribed 1779, 4 x 5 in., 5 1/4 x 3 1/2 in. SL, 1 April 1976, #75 (not sold).


"The Tempest," extensively inscribed, and design for a tomb, two wash drawings, 5 1/4 x 7 in. CL, 27 April 1976, #11 (£50).


"La Divina Comedia . . . Composto . . . Flaxman, proofs of all 111 pls., all but the last 23 captioned in pencil. Amsterdam, 1793. A note in an early hand on the cover states that these are first proofs, with the captions by Mrs. Flaxman and annotations by Flaxman on one Purgatorio pl. There are also minor revisions in pencil in some designs corresponding to the plates in later editions. Bentley, *The Early Engravings of Flaxman's Classical Designs*, p. 47, locates only one copy, incomplete, of this first ed. of the Dante pls. SH, 20 June 1977, #292 (Heald, £170). Now in the author's collection.


"The Dream of Prince Arthur from Spenser's *Faerie Queene*," charcoal drawing after Fuseli's print, 44 x 33.5 cm. SNY, 15 Jan. 1976, #98, illus. (price unknown).


Flaxman, John. *Self-portrait and study of a sarcophagus*, two pages from a sketchbook, pencil, one inscribed 1779, 4 x 5 in., 5 1/4 x 3 1/2 in. SL, 1 April 1976, #75 (not sold).


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"The Dream of Prince Arthur from Spenser's *Faerie Queene*," charcoal drawing after Fuseli's print, 44 x 33.5 cm. SNY, 15 Jan. 1976, #98, illus. (price unknown).
There is No Natural Religion, series a, copy G, pl. 3. Relief etching, c. 1788, touched with green watered or in lower design, tiny patches of what may be color printing or blotting in dark brown on tree at right. Platemark 5 x 4.2 cm. Essick Collection. The upper margin of this impression is more clearly printed than in most copies, particularly F (repro. Erdman, Illuminated Blake), and shows several figures among the letters of The Argument not previously described. These are, from left to right, a standing figure with one knee and arm raised and leaning forward against the vertical of the T; a figure, perhaps winged, hovering above the space between the two words; a figure with his left side against the left diagonal of the A and his right arm reaching toward the hovering figure (who may be reaching down to him); a figure with his right arm and leg against the right diagonal of the A, his left leg extended toward the right diagonal of the pi. (pl. 3) soaring (to the right?) above the u and m. That the compositional use of these small figures and lettering style are similar to Songs of Innocence and The Book of Thel suggests that this plate, along with pl. b12, was etched somewhat later than the other plates in There is No Natural Religion.


Gallery, Dec. 1977 cat. 11, #1, illus. ($305).
Third state. CL, 27 July 1976, #281 (£65).
About 140 letters, 1836-81, to George Richmond
and his family, together with letters by Hannah
Palmer and others. SL, 22 June 1976, #172
(Grinke, £1400).
Early autograph manuscript, entitled "How to
Choose Teas" and "Snuff," 2 pp., with address
leaf to Richmond, postmarked 6 Oct. 1823. Heald,
July 1976 cat. 1, #33 (£80).

Richmond, George. 23 early drawings, 1824-30,
13 illus., from the collection of Richmond's great-
great granddaughter. Among the more important are
"Figure of Plague" (#174, £650), "Prospero" (#173,
£340), "Gathering In of the Vintage" (#174, £680),
"The Enchanted Vale" (#181, £420), and a portrait
of Richmond as a boy by his father (#170, not
24 early drawings, 1824-30, 8 illus., from the
collection of Richmond's great-great granddaughter.
The most important are "A Pilgrim" (#25, £340),
"Portrait of a Man Holding a Crook, possibly a
portrait sketch of Blake" (#31, £80), "Portrait
of Welby Sherman" (#32, £800).
Pencil sketch of the artist's wife, inscribed Oct.
27, 1831, 8 1/2 x 7 in. CL, 27 April 1976, #66
(£150).

pencil, 4 1/4 x 2 1/2 in. SL, 18 Nov. 1976, #179,
illus. (£580). The sale catalogue notes that "this
appears to be the first drawing by Welby Sherman to
have come to light."

1976, #316, illus. (£620). There seem to be only
4 known impressions of this plate, one of which is
in the British Museum. Sherman received help from
both Palmer and Richmond in executing the engraving.
After reading E. B. Murray's "Jerusalem Reversed" in *Blake Studies* vol. 7 no. 1, I opened my copy of Blake--conscious of imitating Blake's use of Bysshe--and began reading "The Voice of the Ancient Bard" as "in a mirror, darkly." The result is not the finest poetry, but note the energy of Blake's words is not destroyed and in some cases is enhanced with new meaning: "Her perplex roots tangled / there!" This is not meant as an example of extending Murray's criticism or of promoting a Caballistic dabbling in Blake's good book--just one poet's playful response to England's greatest.

Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate. . .

Hither comes delight of youth, morn opening to see. And born new truth of Image.

Reason of clouds!
And fled is doubt teasing artful, and dispute's dark maze. Endless is folly's way. Her perplex roots tangled there! Fallen have many how dead, the bones over night. All stumble. They care but what not know they feel. And be led, should they? When others lead. Wish. And

Joe Napora

Yet the bridges of London are held up by tawny young giants the colour of Bath stone, and the sky balloons like a tent over Primrose Hill.

The poet's work is done; follow him home into a room contoured like an engraving where Mr Blake's spectacles are oriel windows looking over the architectonics of Jerusalem.

Joe Napora

Through Mr Blake's spectacles the ranked Swedenborgian angels ruffle their wings, as if in an aviary.

Flamingoes shower over Lambeth, and the horses that draw the constellations may be seen sparkling, for the tiles of the roof are translucent.

Through Mr Blake's spectacles intersecting vortices cannonade over a strewn sea. On the orlop deck the suture moans for its lost friend.

Yet the bridges of London are held up by tawny young giants the colour of Bath stone, and the sky balloons like a tent over Primrose Hill.

The poet's work is done; follow him home into a room contoured like an engraving where Mr Blake's spectacles are oriel windows looking over the architectonics of Jerusalem.
The lines in his brow know
that the time of the Tiger must come
before the time of the Lamb,
that there are words other than those
that fill the mines with children
and the colonies with soldiers
in red coats. The engraver's burin
cuts lines in the metal. The contours of the world
are etched in the acid bath, his veins
in the boards of the walls.

Walls around us. Walls
within us. Shut in
we speak to a wall
we speak to a wall
within ourselves.

2.
William Blake’s wife lifts the clothes-iron
from the stove, carries it to the table. Heavily
it slides over the damp shirt
over warm white cloth. His thoughts
are so heavy. They have stuck in the clothes
that are so full of thoughts
that they will never be really clean again.

She comes to him
lies down beside him on the bed.
Their shoes meet under the bed
in front of the china pot
with the green garland of flowers. His sex
presses in between her thighs
among soft curly hairs, presses
into the moist cleft
where the Universe is created, slippery wet walls
becoming tense and then lax. The Universe pulsates
with their movements
from star to star
from darkness to darkness.

Freedom comes flowing in
through their nostrils, opens
doors and shutters, draws the wind
through the chimney
kindling the fire. A gust of wind
goes through the houses, shakes them
so that the pans fall down
from their racks.

Only their heavy breathing
separates them from the darkness
until it too begins to breathe violently
dies and is born again, is filled with light
growing up around them. Another house
where the sky comes flowing blue through the windows
where the clouds glide through the rooms, the floor
greens and is covered with flowers
when his semen falls on it.

Quivers and creaking
from the bed, soft liquid
running between their thighs. For a second
it was they who made the Universe grow,
who made men rise and continue their journey,
press deeper into the earth
for water.

3.
The same grey-headed God
his muscular body covered with silvery down.
The same white Goddess
made pregnant by a flow of stars.
The same rain
between the furrows. The oxdriver's cry
forces the plough through the soil
with the power of brown muscles.

The same sun
chained among the boughs of the trees.
The same face
nailed to the trunk of a tree. The same blood
on the wet clay
making everything move forward
making the new Albion rise
from the sea of Time.

4.
With the shutters wide open
their house is filled with light.
Their brains are burning
like overheated lamps, burning
the air in the room, lighting up
the whole city. Giant cats
come out of the alleys
showing the tattered men
the way home.

It is the beginning of the time of the Tiger.
The cries
of the masses flow in through the windows.

When the walls are falling within you
the walls of the Bastille will fall. When
the walls fall within us
we become a single living force
that rifle bullets cannot harm
not a river but a sea
like time, not a river
but a sea.

Tomorrow or a thousand years from now
we will open the roof hatch
and arise
our faces turned toward the sun, arise
from our houses
as from murky wooden coffins. Tomorrow
or a thousand years from now
we will live the lives
we were meant to live. William Blake
blows out the candle. Tomorrow
we will color the pictures,
he says.

Gunnar Harding
Translated from the Swedish by Gunnel Tottie

THE LAST JUDGEMENT

1.
Sometimes
fishermen haul in their nets,
or an ox tongue curls
to lick a word from its eye, or from the earth
a diaphanous rain
takes flight, Be there
someone says,
so the stars reappear
like hands full of milk, glowing
like barley
thrown on a fire,
like lenticular breasts
gnawing holes
in the sky, through which the summoned dead
slowly walk.

2.
And a book falls open.
Fishermen
sort the load from their nets:
stars
in one basket, the filetable
silver disks in another,
and in a third
light wrung from the moon's
scars, which at night
soothe themselves in darkness.

3.
Christ
is seated on the bronze throne,
and behind Him
the meaning of bread and water,
with the waterbrash odor
of blood, the night unravelling like a scroll.

And the benches
are lined with the bearded elders,
each alike
having lived through death,
having the same opsclonic gaze
of linemen
who, for injury, upholster the bench.
The sun is up.
But a ghost moon rises
from Christ's head, where angels arch their wings
in a P. And there are infants
and virgins
who are the nipple's hope, and lovers who
when they kiss
become clouds touching, they are
I think
in some sense
castaways, always pity
in the luciferin air of fire,
and in the pity
a trumpeteer angel
with lungs, and in the lungs
a psalm
that mingles faith
with blood, that rises and blossoms
with fire.

4.
A garden:
doves peck an apple which is a fist
of wine, the branch
and Man's hematoma.

ELI! ELI!
screams Araunah,
the Jebusite, but a flint
leaps out
against the tongue
of Man, and an angel
with a sword
saws fingers from their hands,
chords
from their silent and bleeding
harps, gouramis
from their tropical waters.
And somewhere
a red sea ebbs in a crater, stumps
tumble down
through the smiling dusk,
then Elä, Elä,
this time rising
in a bubble
of blood, an apple, a plum,
a flame
that in a church
drifts from its candle,
floats
like a scarlet moth
toward the light, then
bursts, an erythematous ounce
of hope, against a brittle and stained-
glass window.

5.
At last
the melanotic once
upon a time,
the day
loping happily off
like a lamb, the fish-souls soaked
and sorted in their baskets:
black bass in
one, salmon and blowfish on the cooling
moon,
which the earth full of sperm
comes to kiss.

And even though
the blind have visions of breasts,
and even though the mute
find loaves of bread in their mouths,
and even if
we cover our eyes completely,
and seal
the vintage blood of the heart
with wax, there would
still be
a virgin
in a pitch pool
digging, burying a key untinted
by blood, and there would still be the book
of Shem & Noah & Japhet,
and Christ
in disgust filling the book
with worms, and with dysphasia
and a tear engraved with I am, even though there's
no one
who isn't.

--from The First Book of Og, King of Bashan, poems
written after Blake's illustrations for Blair's
Grave.

Frank Graziano
There is a contradictory quality in the middle classes which makes them suddenly produce artists, where nothing in the tastes, manners, or aspirations of such well-ordered families might warrant the spontaneous generation of personalities in no way deducible from the characters of parents or kindred. It is as if the moderation, the fear of risk, the clear-cut and well-tried beliefs, the cult of security and solidity in all its forms, were suddenly defied—and mystified—by the daemon of painting or poetry, risen among the abruptly blazed-up flames of a gentle and sleepy hearth. Beings of a singular sensibility, troubled with a restless will to expression, appear in the midst of a tranquil little world, to astonish, sometimes to annoy, and sometimes to win it over. Perhaps this should be seen as the workings of a natural law: an artist is a reaction; responding to the usual with the unheard-of, detecting what is strange in what is common, distilling purity from impurity by a mysterious process which can take place only in the presence of all that is worn out, habitual, conventional, and commonplace. Our daemon’s task is to cheat the law by which habit debases all sensation.

Paul Valéry

Laurence Binyon’s introduction to the Burlington Fine Arts Club’s 1927 William Blake Centenary Exhibition suggested that Blake was at that time respected more as a poet than as a painter. To some extent that situation prevails today, and in his introduction to the catalogue for the exhibition of Blake’s work that he recently organized for the Tate Gallery (9 March-21 May), Martin Butlin indicates that a primary purpose of the exhibition was to focus on Blake’s achievements as a visual artist as distinct from his literary achievements. To do this Butlin assembled Blake’s very best work from forty-five public and private collections plus several anonymous lenders. For the most part, lesser pieces of an essentially historical or curious nature were not included. Butlin’s long years of studying Blake served him well when he was selecting the exhibition. It was extraordinarily beautiful. The clarity which Blake emphasized as the aim of his art in his own 1809 Descriptive Catalogue was apparent throughout. The exhibition demonstrated clearly that Blake’s pictorial achievements may be appreciated even by those who have not yet memorized A Blake Dictionary ("Does he have political overtones, this William Blake?" was a query overheard from one enthusiastic viewer). In fact, Blake’s rich and complex range as an image maker is probably best communicated by the direct and comprehensive visual contact facilitated by an exhibition such as this one. Consisting of 338 works, including one by Blake’s brother Robert and two by John Linnell, the exhibition was hung in
seventeen sub-sections and arranged to make evident
the many facets of Blake's oeuvre.

Given the large number of pieces exhibited, the
many subdivisions, and the visual mix of techniques,
the exhibition flowed very well. Paintings,
drawings, watercolors, prints and book pages were
hung in an integrated fashion with subjects,
concepts, stylistic considerations, chronology, and
technical distinctions all working together to
reveal Blake's truly organic development as an
artist. One could walk through the show and be
carried along strictly by the visual images before
going back to probe the works through their many
layers, attend to scholarly considerations, make
comparisons, etc. The exhibition, installed under
the direction of Ruth Rattenbury (also of the Tate
Gallery staff), was organized in seventeen sections
as follows: Apprenticeship and Early Work, c. 1775-
85; Blake the Neo-Classicist, c. 1780-90; The Early
Illuminated Books and Contemporary Book
Illustrations, 1789-91; The Prophetic Books, 1793-
96; The Large Colour Prints of 1795; The Great
Book Illustrations, c. 1795-98; Blake's First
Works for Thomas Butts: Tempera Paintings of
Biblical Subjects, c. 1799-1800; The Hazards of
1799-1806; Watercolour Illustrations to the Bible
for Thomas Butts, c. 1800-08; Illustrations to
the Book of Job, c. 1805-25; Blake's Exhibition,
"The Last Judgment" and other works, c. 1800-10;
Illustrations to Milton and other Writers, c. 1807-
20; "Jerusalem," c. 1804-20; John Linnell, John Var-
ley and the Visionary Heads, c. 1819-25; Illustrations
to Thornton's Virgil, 1820-21; Late Tempera Paintings
and Other Works, 1921-27; and Illustrations to Dante,
1824-27. The hanging of the exhibition did not
rigidly conform to the dates of these sub-sections,
however, and works of a particular theme from
various periods were often shown side by side. For
example, the five versions of Pestilence: The
Great Plague of London, of which the earliest dates
from c. 1779-80 and the latest from c. 1805, were
all grouped within "Blake the Neo-Classicist,
c. 1780-90."

As Blake's stylistic development was made
clear by instances of thematic hanging, his
proclivity for working within a serial narrative
framework was also to be seen, for example, in
the reunion of the twelve watercolors in the 1808
set to Milton's Paradise Lost ("Satan, Sin, and
Death, Satan Comes to the Gates of Hell" was
represented by a photograph). Blake's poetic
dialogue reveals his personal mythology and is
paralleled in his graphic work by a dialogue of
formal images. The exhibition format encouraged
walking back and forth from section to section,
comparing a composition, a figure, or a setting
in one work with its counterpart in another. Often
great shifts in emotional response were elicited;
for example, it is one thing to cite a relationship
between the figures of Abias (in the c. 1780-85
drawing after a Ghisi engraving from a Michelangelo
fresco) and Newton (in the color print of 1795); it
is another to look at the rather uninspired,
somewhat flaccid figure in the early study and then
encounter the densely formed, powerful Newton,
whose reverberations of meaning within Blake's
written mythology are as important as his pictorial
reverberations within Blake's art.

What one wants to do in writing a review of
an exhibition of this stature is to share, as much
as possible, the experience of seeing it--of
seeing, for example, The Magdalene at the Sepulchre
from the Yale Center for British Art, the Petworth
House Last Judgment, and The Arlington Court Picture
all together under one roof. It is an experience of
particular and unique intellectual, imaginative, and
sensual luxury, not easily or directly translatable
into words. An indirect approach aimed at
accomplishing that elusive end has to suffice;
therefore, the following attempts an overview of
the exhibition within the framework of observations
stimulated while seeing it.

Drawings comprised much of the early-
apprenticeship section, including several, drawn
from Westminster Abbey monuments, not heretofore
exhibited as part of Blake's oeuvre. Apart from
these earliest studies, among the drawings, the
broadly conceived, rapidly done, freely worked
drawing, Young Woman Reclining on a Couch, and the
more incisive Fall of Fair Rosamund, could be seen
in contrast to such highly developed works as the
exquisitely delicate Resurrection of the Dead, or
the rather meticulous visionary heads of Blake's
late years. Of particular interest were the pencil
sketches for Pity and Hecate which, although
broadly drawn, have many of the qualities of
expressive totality and tautness of structure
that characterize the large color prints developed
from them. Perhaps the most powerful drawing
was the Free Version of the Laocoön, which acted
both as an accumulation and as a culmination of
features of the other drawings--the very sparsely
described serpents, and the more fully formed
figures of Adam and Satan, building up to the most
explicit and highly worked figure of Urizen/Jehovah
whose sensuous robes flow around his strongly
modelled form. The three figures become a unit
with icon-like power.

Among the early prints was Blake's relief
etching based on his brother Robert's compelling,
if almost humorously naive, drawing known as The
Approach of Doom which hung near The Complaint of
Job and The Death of Enedklet's Wife. These two
Biblical subjects, engraved in the conventional dot
and lozenge technique of the period, are composed
of carefully modelled figures, with gestures and
gazes of utmost importance to their powerful
expressive qualities. The figure compositions are
relief-like and placed within an explicit space of
Neo-Classical origin. The Approach of Doom print is
also a highly charged image but its drama is
expressed mainly through the totality of the
composition. With its more generalized form and
implied spatial infinity, the relief etching stood
in startling contrast to the Enedklet and Job
engravings.

The subject of Job became the focus of a later
section of the exhibition that included six of the
twenty-one engraved Illustrations of the Book of
Job, 1823-26, and eight related watercolors of
various dates, among them two versions of Job and
His Family Restored to Prosperity. Three of the
engravings corresponded to watercolors on exhibition
while others did not, thus presenting ten of the
twenty-one subjects, as well as an idea of the
close relationship between the watercolor series
and the engravings. The Job engravings represent
the heights of Blake's work in this medium. With
Durer as his measure, Blake wielded his burin with
a sureness of hand and clarity of mind yielding
solidly formed images, bathed in luminosity. The
narrative series ranks among the most important
sequences in the history of engraving.

In addition to splendid engravings like the
Job series, Blake's output as a commercial engraver
was voluminous, a part of his oeuvre which was
rarely considered in the exhibition. His own

Lessing J. Rosenwald views the exhibit.
designs for conventional book illustration were seen in the four pen and wash drawings for Mary Wollstonecraft's *Original Stories*. The stipple engravings after Watteau, *Morning Amusement* and *Evening Amusement*, indicate his skill as a reproductive engraver within the confines of that tradition, as do three engravings from his own designs for the second, 1805, edition of Hayley's *Ballads*. These were placed among the "Hazards of Patronage" along with Mrs. Butt's charming needlework, *Hares*, the design of which is attributed to Blake. Caprices of patronage were also responsible for Schiavonetti's engravings after Blake's designs for *The Grave*. In a comparison of the unique impression of Blake's interpretation of his design for the "Death's Door" plate and the published one by Schiavonetti, what became most apparent was Blake's belief in the strength of his image. Blake's heroic sense of form and the gestures of his personal handwriting (the descriptive marks that were peculiarly his) developed the large figural tensions on which the impact of his own version is dependent. The drama is heightened by the rich black areas produced by relief printing a plate that had broad areas of unengraved surface. "Drama" and "impact" are not really appropriate terms to use in describing Schiavonetti's interpretation. In contrast it is a rather schematic and conventional engraving of an intriguing image, but one with few dramatic formal properties.

Historically prints have offered particularly rich possibilities for comparative study, a point repeatedly demonstrated by the prints on exhibition. Some were seen in more than one state (*The Complaint of Job*); some were seen as studies on which Blake worked to develop, rethink, and extend his ideas (three of the four known and greatly differing touched proofs of the *Europe* title page, which were hung adjacent to the published version); some were seen as the pages of illuminated books, used as a base to which watercolor and color printing were applied with great variety of approach (pages from *The Book of Urizen* and the same images from *The Small Book of Designs*). Progressions like these, along with the sketches and drawings related to more finished prints and paintings (two preliminary drawings, a trial print, and one of two known finished versions of *Pity*), and the instances of works in more than one version (*The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgin*), added up to an exhibition that was didactic almost in spite of itself. The mind of the artist at work is always best studied through this kind of material.

While patronage did have its hazards, the positive importance of both Thomas Butts and John Linnell is evidenced by Blake's prodigious output during the years of their support. The Tate exhibition included seven temperas painted for Butts during the 1799-1800 period. Mainly of Biblical subjects, many of them, unfortunately, are irretrievably darkened because of Blake's peculiar use of carpenter's glue as a binder for his pigment. Still quite bright, however, is the very gentle *Our Lady with the Infant Jesus Riding on a Lamb*. Like many of Blake's paintings of the period, it is characterized by a planar, frieze-like grouping of figures set before a deep landscape space.

There was only one true landscape in the exhibition, the lovely watercolor, *Landscape near Felpham* (with sunlight, the light of poetic inspiration, to be sure, shining down on Blake's cottage), but Blake's response to the landscape could be repeatedly observed, notably in *Ruth*, the *Dutiful Daughter-in-Law* and the striking, moonlit night scene of *Malevolence*. Blake's landscapes were far closer to the pastoral tradition of Claude, whom he admired, than that of the heroic or sublime landscape of, for example, his contemporary De Lhoutherbourg. Often, as in the freely laid-in setting for the *Ruth* subject, the landscapes appeared to be generalized descriptions of particular places with a focus on mood; in other instances, perhaps most pointedly in the abundant landscape elements in the Milton *Paradise Lost* watercolors, Blake made particularized depictions of generalized natural forms.

*Songs of Experience* and *The Book of Urizen* preceded Blake's large color prints of c. 1795. With *The Book of Urizen*, which contained several full-page images, designs gained importance in relation to text, and Blake became immersed in his color-printing technique. The reticulated textures of Blake's color printing imply weight and density, pictorial qualities that are indeed sympathetic to Blake's growing pessimism. These qualities were reduced or amplified depending upon the luminosity of particular colors, the thickness of the color layer (in this monoprint-related technique the earliest of several impressions of an image would have the thickest layer of pigment), and the number of layers of colors. Of additional importance was the way colors were placed in proximity to one another. For instance, in * Elohim Creating Adam* the forcefulness of the image is heightened by the rich blues which describe the background space and press the figure grouping forward. All of the color prints have additional work in watercolor and pen and ink. How much work
1 Satan Calling up his Legions. c. 1805. H. M. Treasury and the National Trust, Petworth House, Sussex.

2 Satan Calling up his Legions. c. 1800-09. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.


is added varies from image to image and within the different versions of an image. The variables were clearly to be seen in the three impressions of God Judging Adam. The watercolor washes, sometimes transparent, but often made translucent or opaque by the use of body color, were used for various purposes, such as adding solidity to large scale forms by gently modelling them, and to soften distinctions between areas of the image. For instance, watercolor was used in Elohim Creating Adam to give greater unity to Adam's leg and the worm that entwines it. Lines in watercolor and pen and ink were used in finishing the color prints to refine and enhance form in much the same way that Blake used the pen to further define aspects of his watercolors. To use the same work as an example, linear elements particularized forms and made them more incisive, as with Elohim's hands, facial features, beard, hair, etc. As a group, the large color prints are intensely dramatic, the power of the images consistently reinforced by eerie qualities of light.

At least one version of each of the twelve subjects was included in the exhibition, and in them the intense pessimism expressed in Urizen is given full visual form. They repay lengthy and careful scrutiny: color printing thickly and thinly applied; numerous layers of color reworked with transparent or opaque watercolors; accents of painted and/or drawn lines; textures which vary in density; highly modelled forms placed next to flat areas of color; pictorial space implied and denied; generalities of a Neo-Classical nature juxtaposed with very personalized conceptions; layered compositions layered with meaning. This rich visual world becomes hideously diluted when discussed in terms of technical analysis; and, in fact, Blake was certainly to reach equally expressive heights with far less technical complexity in the Dante watercolors of his last years.

Two major watercolor projects closely followed the large color prints. Seven of Blake's 116 illustrations to Gray's Poems were on view, with the satirical, humorous third illustration to "Ode on the Death of a Favorite Cat" a high point. This set was commissioned by John Flaxman for his wife, both apparently admirers of Blake's illustrations to Edward Young's Night Thoughts. Twenty-one of the 537 watercolors (about one-fourth of Blake's known oeuvre) for that aborted project (only forty-three were actually engraved by Blake) were on view. The range of Young's subject and mood was extended to express Blake's own world view, one which was far more interesting and expansive than Young's. One Night Thoughts illustration refers back to the drawing Warring Angels: Michael Contending with Satan of the 1780's, and another, the title page to "Night the Eighth," foretells the Apocalypse watercolor of 1809, or "The Harlot and the Giant" in the "Purgatorio" illustrations for Dante. Death mowing down an assembled throng, rebirth symbolized by the butterfly and the cocoon, Christianity symbolized by the vine, and the serpent of materialism, were all to be found as well. The transparency of watercolor at its most fluid and luminous was seen in "The Queen of Heaven walking in brightness," in contrast to the watercolor layers of darker-hued, more dryly applied paint that added up to form "The Whore of Babylon astride the Seven Headed Beast." Fanciful in the context of Blake's art, these illustrations give clues to his witty and satirical nature. They also show his developing powers as a watercolorist.

One was able to see individual figures and entire compositions developed, revised, and refined throughout the exhibition, an exhibition being the best vehicle for making such things apparent. Blake's all-encompassing themes repeatedly
reappeared—The Creation, The Fall, Judgment, Salvation, War, Death, to name just a few. His vocabulary, his signs and symbols, were encountered again and again—the flames of eternal fury or of inspiration, the Egyptian pyramids of materialism, the worm of mortality, the musical instruments of creative activity. Compositional structures repeatedly recur—icon-like, emblematic, vertically symmetrical formats; layered horizontal bands; compartmentalized compositions which become mosaics of images; or schemata that depend on an open swirling gesture. The figure of the Bard, himself, reappears in many guises.

Blake made illustrations for Miltonic and Biblical themes throughout his career. Comparison of early and late versions of Paradise Lost subjects, or The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, made clear some of the changes that took place in his style. In later versions less emphasis was placed on overly dramatic and schematized facial expressions; compositions focused less on particular figures or groupings; color harmonies tended to be less delicate and/or monochromatic. Rather, the power of many of the later images comes from their more integrated compositions, organized by means of a flickering quality of light that fractures and activates forms modelled

with rich, densely painted areas of color. Generally Blake's later drawing style is freer and more open.

Also shown were pages from both the unique complete colored Copy E and Copy B of Jerusalem, Blake's last and longest illuminated book. The unique impression of the frontispiece before he deleted the inscriptions, and the published state of this plate, encouraged comparisons. Blake's illuminated books were colored throughout his lifetime. Those colored in his later years (regardless of when the plates were actually made) are far more elaborate than the earlier ones. In late versions, as in his late watercolors, he used more complex color relationships, usually composed of small patches of rich color, as distinct from the broadly applied, delicate washes of the earlier work. Colors within the areas of text more fully integrated the text with the illustrations, and gold was sometimes employed for increased sumptuousness. This could be vividly seen in the title page of Jerusalem Copy E.

The exhibition closed with nineteen of Blake's 102 watercolors to Dante, as well as two of the seven engravings from them. The ten watercolors for the "Inferno" were generally the most highly finished and dramatic; seven for "Purgatorio" were shown, and four for "Paradiso," which as a group were the most freely sketch-like, with pronounced broad linear structures, at times like a kind of suggestive shorthand. The freedom with which Blake used color in these watercolors was heightened by his use of line. In earlier works, such as the 1808 Paradise Lost series, lines essentially functioned to confine color. In these late pieces, its role became increasingly complex, creating pathways on many levels through the compositions. Blake's Dante watercolors which illustrate, parallel, and comment on The Divine Comedy are also
a summation of his own visual dialogue, the summation of his "cycle of spiritual experience," to use a phrase of Albert S. Roe's. Contraries, so important to Blake, abound: stasis and activity, tenderness and terror, implication and finish. The ecstasy of an imagination fully liberated after years of trying to give it definition is apparent throughout the series. Sweeping lines define compositions and then accumulate to become form; patches of color, freely washed in, behave similarly. In some of the more finished examples, a stipple technique builds to a density similar in effect to the reticulated surfaces of the earlier large color prints. The settings, the situations, and then the details work together to evoke various expressive moods. These watercolors must have been a culmination for Blake just as, 150 years later, Matisse's late cutouts were a culmination of his own work. In both instances, ideas of a lifetime were summarized and reflected upon, and new ones were introduced. Descriptions of each of these two masters spiritedly at work in his sick-bed have marked similarities.

An obvious advantage of having this Blake exhibition at the Tate Gallery was that in the permanent collection one could study paintings by Fuseli, Stothard, Flaxman and Mortimer, and also additional works by Blake and his followers. Directly outside of the Blake exhibition itself was a display of works by his contemporaries, including Stothard's version of Chaucer's Canterbury Pilgrims, and works by the younger circle of Blake's admirers, as well as later English painters and printmakers, some of whom, such as Paul Nash and Cecil Collins, at least in the examples presented, seemed to be out of place.

Every exhibition reflects to some extent the taste and biases of the person who selected it; everyone else who sees the exhibition probably draws a desiderata list of what they'd have included. One can be rather certain in this instance, however, that many works one missed were missing because of institutional lending policies, as in the case of works from the Huntington Library, or restrictions attached to certain collections such as works from the Grenville Winthrop Collection at the Fogg Museum. Other loan requests would have been turned down for any number of reasons. For example, many of the tempera paintings are too fragile to travel, presumably the reason for a particularly sad lacuna, the tempera of Chaucer's Canterbury Pilgrims in Pollok House, Glasgow. This subject was included in a unique hand-colored first state impression of Blake's engraving from it. The Tate actually was extremely fortunate to assemble eleven temperas in addition to the nine shown from their own collection. Several of the latter were cleaned especially for the exhibition (late ones like The Body of Abel Found by Adam and Eve were brilliant in their luminosity but earlier ones like The Spiritual Form of Pitt Guiding Behemoth were cleaned with far less success because of Blake's use of fugitive materials).

Given what Martin Butlin aptly refers to as the flood of Blake literature, one can sympathize with his decision to avoid crowding the entries of an exhibition catalogue directed to the general

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public with specialized scholarly information available elsewhere (exhibition history, listings of all related works, full provenance, etc.). His well organized bibliography was selected with an acute awareness of the most useful literature, including his own comprehensive catalogue of Blake's paintings, drawings, and separate color prints which is to be published by Trianon Press for the William Blake Trust (which co-sponsored the Tate exhibition) later this year. This publication will undoubtedly provide a new standard of reference to these aspects of Blake's oeuvre. In his cogent introductory essay, in the overviews that precede each section of catalogue entries, and in the entries themselves Butlin gives a splendidly complete picture of Blake's art. The entries were brief and clear enough to be read by scholar and non-scholar alike while viewing the exhibition, as well as re-read and mulled over afterwards. Most of the longer entries contain relevant quotations from Blake's own descriptive writings or from his poetry. Butlin was able to weave together a wealth of information of endless variety—bibliographical data, the social history of England, Biblical and literary synopsis, Blake's life, his mythology, the complex relationships between his writing and his visual art, technical information, stylistic analysis, reasons for dating, especially interesting provenances, the history of collecting in England and America, issues of scholarly disagreement, and so forth, developing as he went along a rich body of references between works of art, just as the exhibition itself did.

The catalogue reproduces everything in the exhibition as well as twenty-one illustrations of other works of art which supplement the text and help to demonstrate Blake's relationships with contemporaries (e.g. Romney, Hamilton, West), as well as to some degree, the range of Blake's art-historical connections (e.g. Poussin, Raphael, Dürer). Given the small scale of the reproductions (about 2 x 2 1/2"), they are for the most part quite clear, and one can assume that the variation in quality depended on the variation in photographs available for reproduction from lending institutions. There are also sixteen full-page color plates, and it is especially pleasant to note sensitivity to the scale of the works of art—the color plates of Blake's book pages are not blown up to fill the catalogue pages, a recent practice which destroys the delicacy and clarity of such small images. Reproductions of verso images would have been a splendid addition to the catalogue (especially as the forthcoming William Blake Trust catalogue will not be comprehensively illustrated), but presumably there were just too many of them for this to have been given serious consideration. Although the price inevitably is to go up after the close of the exhibition, the catalogue is, and will probably remain, the book bargain of the year. At the exhibition it sold for £1.80, softcover, and £3.00, hardcover.

There was one printing mix-up; the catalogue entry for #67 was repeated for #68. The latter should read:
WILLIAM BLAKE 1757-1827
Special Lecture Series

Wednesday, 20 March
How to Read Blake’s Pictures
by Morton Paley
Professor of English, University of California

Monday, 10 April
Blake’s Songs from Manuscript to Illuminated Plate
by Michael Phillips
Department of English, University of Edinburgh

Wednesday, 19 April
Blake and the Illustrated Book Publishers of his Time
by G.E. Bentley
Professor of English, University of Toronto

Wednesday, 26 April
Blake’s Pastoral Vision
by William Vaughan
Department of Art History, University College London

Wednesday, 10 May
Blake and Engraving
by David Bindman
Department of Art History, Westfield College, University of London

In the Tate Gallery Lecture Room at 6.30 p.m.
Admission free. Seat reservations may be made on application to the Tate Gallery Education Department, Millbank, London SW1P 4RG.
Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope.
68 God Creating the Universe (‘The Ancient of Days’) c.1794/1824 or ? (?)
Relief etching finished in gold, gouache and watercolour. 9½ x 6½
(23.4 x 16.8).
Signed ‘Blake 1824’ [? or a clumsy ‘inv’; the end of the inscription is smudged]
Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester
This copy of the print is generally identified as that which, according to J. T. Smith and Frederick Tatham, Blake coloured for Tatham on his deathbed. It is however exceedingly difficult to read the last digit of the date. Indeed it is a date, as a seven. The print is nevertheless typical of Blake’s late rich elaborate colouring, including the use of gold. It seems to be from the later state of the engraving, that actually used in copies of Europe.

Needless to say, all of the old questions about Blake’s art are not answered with the exhibition, and new ones are raised. For example, the three versions of God Creating The Universe, The Ancient of Days do indeed make one wonder if they all could have been printed from the same plate, the relief-printed lines of the clouds so differed from impression to impression; and one does have to be curious about the rather meticulous watercolor study of a serpent which, as Mr. Butlin indicates, corresponds to none of Blake’s serpents. Neither does it seem to correspond in style to any of Blake’s other studies.

For the most part, Blake’s works are small in scale. He not only hovers between the worlds of literature and art, but, within the world of art, suffers because so many of his best, or best known, works are printed. This fact often eliminates an artist from standard art-history surveys, to be included only in studies of the history of prints at one time considered by some to be second-string art history. The catalogue for the 1939 Philadelphia Museum of Art’s Blake exhibition introduced the paintings section as follows: “Blake was not a painter in the accepted sense of the term since he never really mastered the technique of oil painting.” “Accepted,” of course, is the operative word.

Developments within the contemporary art world have made Blake more palatable and perhaps more accessible. Boundaries are by necessity being broken down between categories, making color-printed drawings more easily “acceptable” to an art public. None of this alters Blake’s work, but rather presents the possibility that a Blake exhibition in the year 2027 won’t have to be introduced again with the proposition that it aims to demonstrate Blake’s importance as a visual artist. To use the last sentence of Martin Butlin’s introduction, “Of his [Blake’s] greatness as a complete man there can be no doubt; nor, it is here claimed, should there be any doubt about his greatness as an artist.”


Reviewed by Martin K. Nurmi

The essential argument of John Howard's monograph on *Milton* is given on p. 13:

> It is with Blake's view of the process of [the psychic fall and redemption characteristic of long Romantic poems] that we are concerned here. Blake's vision of the fall and redemption offers a way of talking about the individual's "spiritual" makeup, a way of mapping out the architecture and landscape of the personality. Blake describes how the personality permits its own instincts of fear to imprison its creativity in delusion, an imprisonment that lasts until its creativity reasserts itself in a defiant act of self-annihilation. This imprisonment and subsequent freedom are embodied in his vision of the fall and redemption in *Milton*. ... The imprisoning instincts he called the selfhood, which is a false covering over the immortal spirit. Blake saw the selfhood as survival-oriented, manifesting itself as a hold-fast defense mechanism toward exterior reality as well as repressive enchainments of the creativity within. But Blake's view of the selfhood encompassed even more. Because he believed that the exterior world is an emanation of the immortal, creative part of personality, his concept of the selfhood also encompassed all the defensive structures of society and man's history.

The psychological orientation of Howard's study produces some fresh insights into some of the individual passages he comments on, but I think on the whole it is limited by an assumption that comes perilously close to saying that Romantic poetry, which wanted to express the conflict between the imprisoning selfhood and the impulse toward free creativity and full realization of the integrated personality, might not have been written at all—or at least would not have taken the form it did—if the age had developed a psychological language adequate to express this conflict: "The psychological language necessary to express the conflict between these two forces of personality had not yet been created, and only in the imaginative analogies of poetry could a successful vehicle be found. But the age certainly had a need for such language. Without it, the writer could only project his undelineated feelings onto exterior phenomena, and describe those phenomena in a way that reflected his but semi-conscious feelings" (pp. 13-14). Specifically concerning Blake in this context, Howard adds: "Though Blake had no ready-made language to reveal how these objective symbols [that projected the semi-conscious feelings] were reflections of interior states of mind, he had certainly become aware of the phenomenon, and his task was to put together a language and poetic structure that could express what he saw. He called it *sublime allegory*" (p. 14). Poetry in
Howard's esthetic is very much in the service of "concept" or idea, which could be expressed more directly if only an adequate language had been developed for it. And Blake's "tool" for expressing his "concept of reality" was the symbol (p. 15).

Howard's conception of Blake's myth as expressing the conflicts within an individual personality I find disturbingly limiting and misleading, and this is not really compensated for by his effort to expand the idea of selfhood to society and its institutions in his notion of the "exterior" selfhood. To be sure, the idea can be supported by selection from among the most condensed utterances from Blake's text. But it seems to me that the things that crystallize and institutionalize the selfhood are not identical with the selfhood but extensions of it, results of its operation. And the opposite of the selfhood is not, as Howard suggests, creativity but an opening out of the self into relationship and full identification with humanity and divinity, which may be brought about by the creativity of apocalyptic and visionary art like Blake's and which would create the conditions for the continued production of art that expresses the whole life of man. But I think in this context that the much abused term "creativity" is not very useful or accurate. Though by the time he wrote and designed Milton Blake had greatly expanded his earlier idea of the selfhood, it still seems to me that it is consistent with its appearance in poems like "The Clod and the Pebble" and the opening chapters of The Book of Urizen. As elaborated, I'm not sure Howard's always is. After many years of acquaintance with Blake, I still find afresh, in various personal difficulties, psychological illuminations that are simply amazing. But I think it is wrong to posit that the whole of Blake's myth expresses a "landscape and architecture of the personality."

Fortunately, when Howard works with specific passages in the text, the power of Milton usually overpowers his esthetic, and he talks about the poetry in a way that doesn't reflect the limitations in his theory. But he does talk about the poetry only, and in the general context of its ideas.

This is a book which might have been written two or three decades ago, before Blake criticism began fully to direct attention to the illuminated books as composite art. It is still possible to focus critically on Blake's text alone, especially in the lyrics, without at every point in the discussion bringing in the designs, especially when they do little more than illustrate. Or on the designs alone. But in 1976 a full scale critical study of a gorgeous and pregnantly illuminated work of composite art like Milton, even one giving special attention to a theme as this one does, must not ignore the total form in which Blake developed his theme. A reader of this book who knew nothing else about Blake would be quite astonished to discover what kind of work Milton really is.

Though Howard's study in general follows the pattern of the fall and redemption and hence the overall pattern of the narrative of Milton (with chapters on "The Spiritual World," "Fall into Selfhood," "The Blossoming of the Selfhood," "Regeneration," "The Journey: Background," and finally "The Journey"), it is not a paratext reading or critical commentary on it. It is really a study for someone who already knows the work pretty well and would, I think, be quite confusing to the uninitiated.

A pair of characteristically vigorous articles by Karl Kiralis and John E. Grant, both deriving from papers at the 1975 MLA meeting, consider, respectively, Blake's illustrations for Milton's L'Allegro and Il Penseroso and plates 42, 48, 49, and 50 of Milton. The articles are included in a Festschrift for Arthur E. Barker. Kiralis, in "Blake's Criticism of Milton's L'Allegro and Il Penseroso and of Its Author" (pp. 46-77 of the volume, with twelve plates), disagrees with other critics in arguing that in these illustrations Blake shows that Milton was still "too indoctrinated by society's rational forces to the false ideals of the Female Will, especially Deism, and too sexually repressed to search for true experience . . . for Blake yet to hope for Milton's salvation and consequent prophetic writing" (p. 77). Buttressing the discursive argument is a commentary that reads the meaning of the illustrations--plausibly, I think.

Grant, in "The Female Awakening at the End of Blake's Milton: A Picture Story with Questions" (pp. 78-99, with three plates), first raises some theoretical "alignments" in relationships between "a poet and a visual artist," "the writer Milton and the writer and visual artist Blake," "of Blake as designer of Milton: A Poem and as illustrator of John Milton's poems," and "the writer Blake and the visual artist Blake in a poem entitled Milton," and then goes on to ask a number of suggestive questions about the plates intended to evoke a reading of the sequence of plates that makes coherent sense, as he thinks Blake's plates do if responsibly examined. The article ends with some briefly suggested answers.
The Romantic Period was less an age of feeling than the reaction against an age of feeling. By 1790 the case for sensibility had been made all too well. The Romantics may have talked about poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling" and "the lava of the imagination whose eruption prevents an earth-quake," and they may have dreamt of "a Life of Sensations rather than Thoughts," but what they did was turn back from the heart to the mind. The masterpieces of the first quarter of the nineteenth century—\textit{The Prelude} and \textit{Don Juan}, \textit{Pride and Prejudice} and \textit{Waverley}—speak to people who think as deeply as they feel. Perhaps the Imagination itself appealed to the Romantics because with it they could close up the rift that had opened in the eighteenth century between intellect and emotion: the Imagination was preeminently a faculty of the active, creative mind.

In the last decades of the eighteenth century, already dissatisfied or just bored with the cult of feeling, writers of differing intentions and sympathies struggled with the problem that the Romantics later solved triumphantly. The sentimental had reached a kind of apogee in Fanny Burney's \textit{Evelina} (1778): reunited with the father who had deserted her and her mother when she was an infant, Evelina falls weeping to her knees five times in a single conversation, and her repentant father, also in tears, kneels three times and stays down longer. A few minutes of crying can atone for sixteen years of neglect. In \textit{Northanger Abbey} and \textit{Sense and Sensibility} Jane Austen attacks this kind of absurd sentimentalism, and in \textit{The Prelude} Wordsworth acknowledges the temporary attraction of a system of values that resembles Austen's at its simplest: "the philosophy / That promised to abstract the hopes of man / Out of his feelings" (1805 text, X.807-09) appealed because it substituted reason for emotion. The writers of Gothic fiction—"Monk" Lewis and Ann Radcliffe, in particular—found a different escape from sensibility: they gave their readers the horrors of Catholicism and superstition, but created characters with enlightened Protestant intelligences to experience, analyze, and often even explain the terrors. Another group of novelists, the English Jacobins, wrote fiction with sensational plots in order to reach their readers' heads through their hearts.

We must see Mary Wollstonecraft in this context, as a writer and thinker trying to patch up the split between mind and heart, and succeeding, like most of her contemporaries, only partially. Neither her character nor her background did as much to shape her ideas and her work as the intellectual climate she lived in. It is not a criticism to say that she was a creature of her age; so were Fanny Burney and Ann Radcliffe, William Godwin and William Blake. Like them, Wollstonecraft was challenged by the artificial separation of thought and feeling. The new editions of her work reveal both what she achieved and what she struggled against. The

\textit{RECENT WOLLSTONECRAFT}


Reviewed by Marcia Tillotson

confusions of her less successful efforts make them interesting even in failure.

*Mary, A Fiction* (1788)--actually a glamorized autobiography--was Wollstonecraft's second publication. (The first was *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters*, published in 1787.) With no real interest in characterization or setting, dialogue or action, she pushes her story along in short chapters of flat, undeveloped narration. The heroine is supposed to have "thinking powers" (p. xxxi), but after every effort to act according to considered principles of virtue and humanity, she collapses into self-pitying grief. Separated from a despised husband, deprived by death of the woman and man she most loves, Mary settles in the country to practice "benevolence and religion," and to take comfort in the knowledge that "[h]er delicate state of health did not promise long life" (p. 68). Having inherited the values of her age, Wollstonecraft may have feared that Mary would lose the reader's sympathy if she thought a little more and felt a little less.

The same weakness damages *The Wrongs of Woman:* or, *Maria,* the novel that Wollstonecraft was working on when she died and that her husband William Godwin published in her *Posthumous Works* (1798). *Mary* had been written just before she lost her position as a governess and began to support herself by writing; *The Wrongs of Woman* was written nine years later, at the end of her career. *Maria* is stronger, braver, and wiser than the miserable *Mary.* The writing is more skillful, too, with a group of first-person narratives giving some life to the single-minded pursuit of didactic points. And the novel's scheme is far more ambitious: drawing not only on her own experiences and her family's but also on a wide range of reading, Wollstonecraft shows how men legally rob women, tyrannize over them, force them into prostitution, take away their children. She tries to shock her audience, and to a certain extent she succeeds. The heroine defends her lover when he is tried for having seduced her; she argues that no adultery took place because her husband by his cruelty, degeneracy, and greed had forfeited his right to her loyalty. But there are suggestions that Maria's passion for her lover is not the virtuous impulse of a generous heart but only sentimental self-delusion: "... pity, sorrow, and solitude all conspired to soften her mind, and nourish romantic wishes, and, from a natural progress, romantic expectations" (p. 98). One version of the notes for completing this unfinished work reads: "Divorced by her husband--Her lover unfaithful--Pregnancy--Miscarriage--Suicide" (p. 202). But a conclusion along these lines would have made Maria entirely the victim of men's deceit. Wollstonecraft was too much a product of the Age of Sensibility to create a heroine who was blameable for letting her heart control her head. Maria's emotional susceptibility was, like *Mary's,* an essential part of her virtue. In her fiction Wollstonecraft could not find a substitute for the
sentimental belief in the value of feeling for its own sake. Mary and The Wrongs of Woman thus have less interest for readers of fiction than for students of the social and intellectual history of the late eighteenth century. What is striking about both works is the way in which Wollstonecraft willingly sinks her heroines in a morass of feeling.

Letters Written during a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark (1796) is similarly interesting for what it is not. The most impressive thing about the volume is probably its origin in the journey to Scandinavia that Wollstonecraft made, accompanied only by her one-year-old daughter and a French nursemaid. She went on business for her American lover, Gilbert Imlay, the baby's father. His infidelity had driven her to attempt suicide in the spring of 1795, and he sent her to Scandinavia that summer as a distraction. His plan didn't work, for soon after her return she made a second attempt and very nearly succeeded.

The Letters from Sweden were addressed to Imlay but written for publication. The book reveals Wollstonecraft at her worst, trying to impress two different audiences--her lover and the book's buyers--with two different things, her sensibility and her intelligence. She struggles to show how seriously she thinks and how tenderly she feels: "Amongst the peasantry, there is . . . so much of the simplicity of the golden age in this land of flint--so much overflowing of heart, and fellow-feeling, that only benevolence, and the honest sympathy of nature, diffused smiles over my countenance when they kept me standing, regardless of my fatigue, whilst they dropped courtesy after courtesy" (p. 12). This letter, written the day after her landing, shows her straining to utter universal truths about the "peasantry"; at the same time she expresses the warmth of her disposition, thus letting Imlay know what a loving heart he is throwing away. At one point she announces, "I am persuaded that I have formed a very just opinion of the character of the Norwegians, without being able to hold converse with them" (p. 78), and she smugly consoles herself for not knowing the language: "As their minds were totally uncultivated, I did not lose much, perhaps gained, by not being able to understand them" (p. 79). She seems to be a combination of Marianne Dashwood and Elizabeth Bennet's priggish piano-playing sister Mary. On the occasions when she forgets to be at once an unusual woman, who reasons vigorously, and an ideal woman, who feels strongly, she writes better: "A mistaken tenderness . . . for their children, makes them, even in summer, load them with flannel; and, having a sort of natural antipathy to cold water, the squalid appearance of the poor babes, not to speak of the noxious smell which flannel and rugs retain, seems a reply to a question I had often asked--Why I did not see more children in the villages I passed through" (p. 33). But the letters do not often give us what they give us here, a vivid impression either of what she saw in Scandinavia or of the person who saw it.

A more interesting woman emerges from the private and unpretentious correspondence published in Godwin & Mary. Of the 151 letters--106 published whole or in part for the first time in this edition,
that the strongest affection is the most involuntary" (p. 40). In these letters we can see the intelligent woman she must have been. Godwin's criticism of her writing at first hurts her into defensiveness: "I am compelled to think that there is some thing in my writings more valuable, than in the productions of some people on whom you bestow warm eulogiums—I mean more mind . . ." (p. 28). Eleven days later she gives in: "... yet now you have led me to discover that I write worse, than I thought I did, there is no stopping short—I must improve, or be dissatisfied with myself---" (p. 35). Energy, independence, professionalism, come through in these letters, for Wollstonecraft was sure of her own voice and of her audience; she felt no compulsion to parade either her intelligence or her sensibility.

And that, finally, is the reason for the success of her masterpiece, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792): she had a clear sense of herself and of her audience. Repetitious and unsystematic the work may be, but it is also compelling. The very evidence that she wrote it rapidly is proof of the strength of her mind as well as of her feelings; as she said in the Lettera from Sweden, "we reason deeply, when we forcibly feel" (p. 160). Her rhetorical ploy works: "... frankly acknowledging the inferiority of women" in their oppressed condition, she argues "that men have increased that inferiority" (p. 119), making them unnecessarily weak, stupid, and frivolous. After attacking Rousseau and others who theorized about women's education, she sets forth her own notions: that
women should exercise their minds and bodies in youth as boys do, and should share responsibility for the management of their homes in adulthood. The latter argument is not unliberated, for she believed domestic occupations offered men as well as women the best chance to be happy and virtuous. She tried not "to leave the line of mediocrity" (p. 138) and therefore talked about the lives of ordinary people, believing that the talented of both sexes would seek other kinds of achievement if they were free to do so. In *The Rights of Woman* she does not over-simplify as she does in *The Wrongs of Woman*: if women are the victims of men, whose bad laws, bad education, and bad religion stifle them, women are also more or less willing collaborators in their own degradation.

Only near the end of the work does Wollstonecraft mention political equality: "I may excite laughter, by dropping a hint, which I mean to pursue, some future time, for I really think that women ought to have representatives, instead of being arbitrarily governed without any direct share allowed them in the deliberation of government" (pp. 259-60). Energetic and confident in developing the arguments that interest her, she sounds uncharacteristically weak, hesitant, and apologetic here. In fact, she was more concerned that women should learn than that they should vote, and she was more eager to see them increase their power in the family than in the state. She was wiser than she could have known, for the equality she cared about turns out to be the equality that matters, and the right to vote has not been the answer that women hoped it would be.

The *Vindication* remains readable because Wollstonecraft saw the problem so clearly; she recognized that political inequality oppressed women less than the belief in what she called "sexual virtues" (p. 139)—qualities, like delicacy or courage, that are considered merits in one sex but faults in the other. Virginia Woolf's opinion of the *Vindication*—that its "originality has become our commonplace" (The Second Common Reader, pp. 143-44)—is probably wrong. The work retains the freshness of an active mind's enthusiastic encounter with a brand-new idea; the chance to say something truly original freed Wollstonecraft from sensibility, at least temporarily.

The *Vindication* is worth reading, and this new edition is welcome. Miriam Brody Kramnick provides a helpful introduction that places Wollstonecraft's achievement in its various historical contexts; the notes, by contrast, are only adequate. Gary Kelly, editing the two pieces of fiction for the Oxford English Novels, supplies the full and enlightening notes we have come to expect from that series, and his introduction makes the best possible case for both works. Without minimizing their limitations, he sees what Wollstonecraft's intentions probably were and suggests that the stories have a coherency of purpose, whatever they lack in execution. The editor of *Godwin & Mary*, Ralph M. Wardle, published a biography of Wollstonecraft in 1951. His beautifully meticulous handling of the letters transforms these fragmentary materials into a satisfying, readable whole; there is an excellent, brief introductory essay as well as full and enlightening notes and even a fine index. The Scandinavian
letters are not so well edited. Carol H. Poston's introduction exaggerates the merits of the letters themselves, and her notes are more often gratuitous than useful. She includes a map of the itinerary but makes no further effort to sort out the jumble that Wollstonecraft's topographical and chronological vagueness creates. While the book is nicely illustrated with engravings that were not in the original edition, these are not identified.

Wollstonecraft's life was eventful enough to be interesting if she had written nothing. She rescued--or kidnapped--her sister from the sister's husband, leaving behind a five-month-old baby that died within the year. She traveled alone across winter seas to Lisbon to be with her friend Fanny Blood at the childbed that turned into a deathbed, then sailed back to London in worse weather, compelling the captain to rescue the crew from a foundering French ship. She fell in love with the painter Henry Fuseli but was turned down when she tried to persuade his wife to let her live with them, so she went to France in December 1792, in time for the King's trial and execution, and stayed on through the Terror, an enemy alien but Imlay's mistress finally returning to London in April 1795. She struggled from the age of eighteen on to support, at different times, her two sisters, her younger brothers, Fanny Blood, and Fanny's family; her eldest brother, a lawyer who had inherited property from their grandfather, did almost nothing for any of them. At twenty-five she started a girls' school in which she, her sisters, and Fanny worked, and when it failed, she went to Ireland as a governess in an aristocratic Anglo-Irish family, before she finally settled in London, writing, reviewing, and translating. She did not always live by the principles of sense, discipline, and duty that she laid down in the Vindication; her two attempts to kill herself when she had a baby who was dependent on her violated the rules that she said women should live by if they were to act like rational creatures.

Claire Tomalin had a good story to tell, and she tells it sympathetically but critically in The Life and Death of Mary Wollstonecraft. It has been told before--several times quite recently--but this life is the most comprehensive. Tomalin tells us a great deal about the people who surrounded Wollstonecraft in England and France, fills in the political and social background fully and vividly, and discusses Wollstonecraft's influence after her death. This breadth allows Tomalin to give convincing factual explanations of Wollstonecraft's actions and feelings, and to avoid psychologizing. Tomalin seems to tell all that can be known about Wollstonecraft's life. There is one issue that Tomalin does not discuss, however: the suggestion made by Robert R. Hare that Wollstonecraft and not Imlay wrote the two books published as his. If the works were actually hers or collaborations between her and Imlay, that would not only affect the chronology of their relation but also alter our view of both of them, making him a still less significant character and her the author of a third novel and a successful travel book. Hare's arguments deserve to be answered, and Tomalin's opinion would be worth having.
Wollstonecraft was thirty-eight when she died. Tomalin makes us feel the loss of this woman who was important not simply as the mother of feminism or of Mary Shelley but also as a writer, thinker, and observer. She was, after all, the friend as well as the wife of William Godwin; she had been encouraged and helped by Dr. Richard Price, the Dissenting minister whose sermon on the French Revolution provoked Blake to begin his Reflections; she was the protégée of Joseph Johnson, the Radical publisher, who got Blake to illustrate two of her works; she was read by Blake and Southey, and her conversation impressed Coleridge and Lamb. She achieved a great deal in a working life that was shortened at one end by poverty and lack of education as well as at the other by early death. She was prevented from achieving more by her sex, which limited her activity to writing although her real talents were probably for some other field--politics, education, medicine--then closed to her. Yet she managed to write a book that was nearly two hundred years ahead of its time; not many men or women without her weaknesses or disadvantages have done that much.

Hare presented his case at length in "The Base Indian: A Vindication of the Rights of Mary Wollstonecraft" (M.A. theses, Univ. of Delaware 1957), and later summarized his arguments in the introduction to his facsimile edition of the novel, The Emigrants, which he published with both Wollstonecraft's and Imlay's names on the title page (Gainesville, Fla.: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1964).

Reviewed by Jean H. Hagstrum

This book grew out of David Bindman's 1971 doctoral dissertation at the Courtauld Institute. Its aim is to take "an analytical view of Blake's art with particular emphasis upon its relationship to English art of his own time" (p. 9). Blake's achievement is broadly enough conceived to include all the illuminated books as well as Blake's paintings and engravings in all media, including the illustrations of the Bible, Milton, Bunyon, Gray, Young, and others. The "seemingly more conventional designs" (p. 9)--that is, those that do not accompany Blake's own words--Bindman properly sees as an end in themselves to which the decorated poetry contributes meanings and motifs. Most literary scholars have it the other way round, making what Frye once called the canonical works the center of their attention; but Bindman does not see these as "self-contained" (p. 9). Following in the footsteps of his teachers, Blunt and Butlin, he uses, for the most part, the methods of an art historian, analyzing the visual elements of Blake's œuvre and their relation to contemporary and antecedent art. He defines his
task in such a way as to require more attention to Blake's artistic friends and contemporaries than to the grand examples of Dürrer, Raphael, Michelangelo, and the Mannerists. Even so, Bindman does not give a sufficiently detailed account of Blake's relations to Fuseli, Flaxman, Banks, Romney, West, Barry, Mortimer, all of whom are mentioned and some of whom are discussed with penetration. One would have to say that the iconographical and stylistic relations of Blake to English art need still to be studied, since Bindman subordinates this important scholarly task to his chronological plan of analyzing each important work of Blake as it appeared, concentrating on its meaning and value. The author has thus given us not so much a new work of intellectual synthesis or of scholarship as another introduction to Blake's chief works with incidental comments on their personal and traditional contexts.

What point of view about Blake's ultimate place in art history prevails? Boldly but disarmingly, Bindman derives his perspective from none other than Reynolds, whose characterization of the "original or characteristic style" he applies to Blake (pp. 9-10). That style the president of the Royal Academy had regarded as inferior to the grand style though it was produced by his "of lively and vigorous imagination," but he found it valuable because it reveals internal coherence and harmony even when irregular, wild, and incorrect. It can be admired as the faithful picture of a mind, and it commands attention for its consistency even though it does not rise to elevation. This use of Reynolds at the very beginning of the book is, in its way, refreshing; it seems to give Bindman his perspective, leading him into commentary that is central and commonsensical. He honors his subject and is capable of enthusiastic appreciation, but one never has the feeling that Bindman confuses Blake with Michelangelo or Rembrandt.

Since this book confronts all of Blake's visual and visual-verbal works, the literary scholar will be curious to know how well the "readings" come off. Very well, indeed, in my view. The mastery of modern scholarship is impressive, the knowledge of Blake's visual and literary contexts exemplary. The criticism of particular works is more effective for being organized and for being related to developing topics that run all through the study. Sometimes, to be sure, Bindman, like so many of us, runs to mere description; but it is gratifying to notice that more often than not the elements treated are properly subordinated in an analysis and that a real effort has been made to arrive at interpretation. The readings are "prophetic"—that is, Bindman knows and uses Blake's myth and is therefore not content with surface meanings or traditional iconographic interpretation. In discussing, for example, the colorprint of 1795 entitled Pity, Bindman sees it, along with its companion Hecate, as an expression of the Female Will. The child is Orc, the son of Enitharmon, who lies prone on the ground. In the same series, the Good and Evil Angels is seen as a continuation of the story of Orc in which a jealous Los (and here there is a recollection of his role in The Book of Urizen) reaches out to restrain the revolutionary boy (p. 99).

Most "readings" are similarly "prophetic," and Bindman is a good guide to the essential meanings of both word and figure. But one does have reservations, and some of these are important enough to divulge. Although the description of the Vales of Har in Vindel (pp. 44-46)—and that particular spot of Blakean spiritual geography I myself find to be of the highest importance—is very good, one is tempted to ask, Where is the horror? The horror, that is, of a mature woman and a white-bearded man sleeping together like infants and, awake, panting out puerilities. Bindman's description of these Vales as being "lyrical" or as being a prefiguration of Beulah obscures their qualities of regression and arrested development. Other commentary reveals the same critical fault: it is sound and central but not sufficiently emphatic and so, through excessive caution, dissipates some of Blake's power of expression and blunts his often dismaying originality. The analysis of The Book of Thel contains one serious confusion. Can Thel be said to confront Experience when she encounters the Lily, the Cloud, the Worm, and the Clod of Clay, all of whom are surely denizens of Blake's Innocence, enjoying its uninhibited freedom and displaying its love and charity with unselfconscious ease? The world of Experience seems to me to be confined to the last plate; it is from that vision of social and psychological perversion which Thel flees at the end, not from the joyous portrayal of natural life.

Rather than pausing to note such qualifications as these all the way through the book, perhaps it would be wise to concentrate on the interpretation of one important illuminated work. In commenting on Europe (pp. 79 ff), that beautiful, resonant, and complex Lambeth prophecy, Bindman perceives why the incarnation of Christ is so important at this historical moment, why Urizen appears on the frontispiece, why the title-page serpent is so energetic (though something should have been said on how it is related to the similar serpent on plate 10 and to the whole matter of revolutionary versus counter-revolutionary serpents), why the inquiring man is Blake's Mental Traveller, why Enitharmon holds the veil over the sleeping youth (she is covering and not unveiling him), and why the spiderweb is the net of religion (is it not, however, woven primarily by Urizen and not by Albion's Angels?). And yet, good though it is, the commentary does not confront the truly difficult cruxes. What is the meaning of the nameless shadowy female, who brandishes her snaky hair? Why does Newton blow the trumpet? Blake evidently perceived that when revolutionary forces are unleashed a fecund nature will utter uninhibited and chaotic cries against all order, even the artistic. He also saw that the possessor of a great genius that had been perverted to mischievous cultural and intellectual ends might well fill the cup of iniquity to overflowing and so precipitate both revolution and counter-revolution.

The analyses of the purely visual works are usually excellent. Bindman sees the prophetic potential in Blake's early "neo-classical" works (observe his perceptive comment on the significance of Joseph in Egypt, pp. 34-35). Very often he adduces original materials which help interpret the works in question; and he alerts us to what is
often neglected or may surprise us, Blake's admiration of Claude (p. 203) or a possible recollection of Rembrandt (p. 126). But even in the realm of the purely visual, where Bindman is more thoroughly trained than most Blake commentators, we find that his plan of covering everything forces him to be excessively brief and general at crucial moments. For example, although he is fully aware of the superiority of the Boston **Paradise Lost** illustrations to those in the Huntington, he misses an opportunity to show in precise detail the superiority of one version of Adam, Eve, and Raphael over the other (pp. 190-191 and plates 152, 153). In the Huntington version the profiles of Adam and Eve are simply drawn and as expressions are undifferentiated. In the Boston version the facial lineaments of our first parents are subtly drawn and express profound meaning; Adam seems to be confused and disturbed by what he hears and Eve responds delicately, wonderingly and submissively to his confusion. The bodies of the first pair are also more powerfully modeled, and the angel looks less like a worried human being and more like a royal, though slightly surprised, heavenly monitor. The centrality of Eve's standing position in a later version not only provides the beautiful female form at the focus of our attention, not only shows her separated from Adam, but may also point to her central role in the Fall and perhaps even ultimately in the redemption of man. Blake was certainly not the master of facial expression that the very greatest portrait artists were; but faces and particularly eyes are extremely important, as the superiority of the Boston version of *Comus* over the Huntington also expresses. Bindman is extremely good in showing the formal superiority of the later version of *Comus and his Revellera*, for example (p. 186 and plates 146, 147), but he says nothing of the greater richness and humanity of the Boston lady over the rather flat, simple, one-dimensional San Marino virgin. Similarly, on page 115, in an otherwise excellent analysis of a watercolor entitled *Malevolence*, Bindman seems to miss the importance of the youthful father's gaze, which is directed at Malevolence (plate 96), showing that the hideous psychological states portrayed can be seen as being *caused* by merit ("He hath a daily beauty in his life that makes mine ugly"). In the same painting the father's calm gaze is returned by the two fiends, each staring back in his own malign way while the wife and child fix their gazes upon the father. In fact, one of the most striking features of this powerful work are the lines of force and meaning that are generated by the eye-contacts of five people. Surprisingly, such matters are usually met with silence by Bindman, who apparently is not often impressed with the importance in Blake of eyes and glances.

To turn to an important matter involving Blake's artistic background, one wishes that Bindman had been a little bit fuller on the influence of Raphael. It is not that he neglects the prince of painters or that he would not acknowledge that Raphael is one of Blake's culture heroes. It is rather that his several references are not pulled together into a coherent whole, and we are therefore not allowed to see what is one of the most powerful, consistent, and uninterrupted influences upon Blake by any antecedent painter. I shall not repeat the case I made for Raphael's influence in *William Blake Poet and Painter* (pp. 41-43 and plates XIXA, XIXB, XX, XXI). Here I would only like to disagree with Bindman's finding that in The Book of Urizen it is Michelangelo's God the Father in the Sistine Chapel who chiefly presides over Blake's imagination (pp. 89-95). I find, instead, that it is the God of Raphael's Bible, as engraved by some of his followers, whose body, hand-positions, and activities are precise anticipations of Blake's creator-god. I do not wish to deny that Michelangelo and the Sistine Chapel may indeed be present in Blake's imagination (they almost always are), but I wish to suggest that, in terms of context, the Genesis of Blake's Bible of Hell is a direct and forceful inversion of Raphael.

I have praised the centrality and soundness of Bindman's commentary. That praise is meant to embrace his perception of what is revolutionary and revisionist in Blake's religion. More than once Bindman reveals that he is aware that his subject possessed a radical, inquiring, restless mind, not content to dwell comfortably in the house of conventional platitude, however beautiful. Nevertheless, all the way through the book the author displays a tendency to use Christian and Neoplatonic truisms to describe Blake's essential vision, often omitting the specific details, the alterations of convention, even the subversions of meaning that give it originality, force, and revolutionary energy. A few examples will show the "piety" that tends to prevail and that appears in language which is too close to Blake's own phrasing to be illuminating and which can obscure Blake's radical originality. Thus the designs and texts of *The Songs of Innocence* are said to pertain primarily to the idea of man's salvation (p. 62). The caves that entrap Oothoon are "materialistic" (p. 74). The cage that imprisons the soul is the body in the lovely early poem, "How Sweet I Roam'd" (p. 86). Albion's dance is a paradigm of "regeneration," which is here called "the true religious ecstasy" (p. 97). A lonely woman in the moonlight of one of the Young Illustrations (p. 112) is "the soul seeking the aid of truth"—an "ineffable resonance" (p. 112). And Paul's posture in *St. Paul Preaching at Athens* suggests the "timeless operation of the spirit" (p. 138). But if we look more closely at these examples—and several others might have been chosen—we see that Bindman has caught Blake's meaning in a conventional net and that the complex, troubled emotion of the original has been rendered somewhat complacent by the commentary. The rigidity of Paul's form and position, the excessive symmetry of the composition, the expression on his face, and his relation to his relation to this might make the Apostle at best an ambiguous figure. One wonders if the young female asking the way of two nightwatchmen by moonlight may not be a young woman like Lyca of *Innocence and Experience*, encountering a young man and an old man in the deserts of sexuality, rather than the soul ineffably seeking the truth. Albion's dance, by Blake's own word, is the "dance of Eternal Death,"—can it therefore be called a "key Image of Regeneration" (p. 9)? The image is more often that of love and marriage in Blake than of the body, and the lovely words of "How Sweet I Roam'd" are more erotic than Neoplatonic. Oothoon's
cave is rather marital and sexual than materialistic. And Christ is present in \textit{Innocence} more as a sanctioner of sexual joy and uninhibited play than of other-worldly salvation. Bindman may be a little too determined to see divine light in Blake, a light which he usually interprets as supernatural. But, as Blake said in concluding \textit{The Auguries of Innocence}, God is light primarily to those who dwell in unvisionary night but displays a human form to those who live in realms of prophetic daylight.

It should perhaps be noted that something has rather frequently gone wrong with references to the plates. I have noted the following mistakes: plate 39 on page 55, pl. 60 on p. 78, pl. 85 on p. 99, pl. 124 on p. 164, pl. 140 on p. 178, pl. 165 on p. 204, pl. 169 on p. 210. In each of these instances, the number refers to a work other than the one that appears on the designated plate. In some cases the proper work appears elsewhere in this volume, on another plate; occasionally it does not appear at all.

I do not wish to end negatively. Bindman's book is an example of good scholarship and trained, intelligent perceptions.
"BLAKE, WILLIAM" IN THE NEW AMERICAN CYCLOPEDIA (1861)

Raymond H. Deck, Jr.

A n article about William Blake which was one of the most widely circulated American accounts of his life and works in the later pre-Gilchrist years and for at least a decade thereafter should be added to the extensive pre-Gilchrist bibliographies of G. E. Bentley, Jr.'s Critical Heritage and Blake Books. The sketch appears in volume III of the New American Cyclopedia, published in 1861 but copyrighted in 1858; the discrepancy between the dates of publication and copyright is explained by the editorial preface to volume I (publ. 1860, copyright 1857), which notes that the actual publication of the first volume was undertaken only when the entire project was in "an advanced state of preparation for the press."

The article, about 550 words long, seems to depend almost entirely upon Cunningham's Lives for biographical and bibliographical information as well as for a judgment of Blake and his works; in fact, numerous parallels (for example, 1828 as the date of Blake's death) make it plain that Cunningham is quoted silently, repeatedly, and often pretty carelessly. Several of Blake's works are mentioned specifically, and, after Cunningham, the "inventions for the Book of Job" are judged "his best production." Likewise, Blake's visionary qualities are emphasized:

He wrote songs, composed music, and painted at the same time; but in the excitement of his labors, he began to conceive that he was under spiritual influences; and as external prosperity was wanting, he grew more and more abstracted and retired, until the visionary tendencies of his nature dominated his life. Among his friends he gave out that the works on which he was engaged were copied from great works revealed to him, and that his lessons in art were given him by celestial tongues. An original and beautiful method of engraving and tinting his plates he ascribed to the dead brother of his wife, Robert.

The error in the last sentence suggests a careless reading of Cunningham, as do the statements that Poetical Sketches contains a "drama" (Cunningham says "a dramatic poem") and that Blake made "12 'inventions'" for the "Canterbury Pilgrims." Curiously, however, the article states correctly a few details not included in Cunningham's Lives: 1789 is given as the date of the Songs, and the "Canterbury Pilgrims" (correctly named in contrast to Cunningham's "Canterbury Pilgrimage") is described as a "water-color painting" whereas Cunningham simply mentions that it was painted. Possibly the article-writer was familiar with Robert Balmanno's copy of Innocence, which gives "1789" clearly on the title page; that this same copy, Innocence (U), had bound with it a print from Blake's engraving of the "Canterbury Pilgrims" may also explain why the article-writer gives a correct version of Blake's title, although the accurate observation that Blake's larger version was a "water-color painting," or at least not an oil, remains of mysterious origin. 3

The New American Cyclopedia article probably was written by Charles Dana, the city editor of The New York Tribune. Dana and George Ripley, the newspaper's literary critic, were the two editors of the New American Cyclopedia (whose list of contributors does not include anyone else known to have had an early interest in Blake), and in 1857 Dana had edited the Household Book of Poetry, in which he included four of Blake's Songs and "My Silks" from Poetical Sketches.

Although Dana's contribution to Blake's fame occurred late in the pre-Gilchrist years, his two publications mentioned here are especially important to Blake's American reputation because they were widely read and respected. Dana judged the Household Book of Poetry to include "within the bounds of a single volume whatever is truly beautiful and admirable among the minor poems of the English language," and the American public seems to have enthusiastically supported his critical judgments, for the anthology (with the addition of yet another of Blake's Songs in the 1858 and subsequent editions) went through dozens of printings in the nineteenth century and four more in the twentieth. Dana's biographer seems correct in describing the New American Cyclopedia as "the principle American work of its time"; in sixteen volumes the most extensive nineteenth-century American reference work (the only competition was the even earlier but slightly smaller Encyclopaedia Americana), the New American Cyclopedia passed through more than a dozen printings in fifteen years and included extensive annual supplements issued from 1876 to 1887.


ANOTHER EARLY PRINTING OF BLAKE'S "NIGHT"
Raymond H. Deck, Jr.

Blake's "Night" from *Innocence* appeared in the New Church Advocate for 16 May 1843 (1, no. 26, 208). I should have noticed this printing in preparing my article, "New Light on C. A. Tulk, Blake's Nineteenth-Century Patron" (Studies in Romanticism, 16 [1977], 217-36), which included discussion of Tulk's responsibility for the insertion of Blake's "The Divine Image" in the New Church Advocate for 1 December 1844. My arguments about Tulk's role in the publication of "The Divine Image" apply equally about the probability that he was responsible for the insertion of Blake's "Night" more than a year earlier. The text of Blake's "Night" in the New Church Advocate is followed by the citation, "Blake's Songs of Innocence" and, most notably, differs in more than a half dozen particulars of punctuation and spelling from that given by J. J. Garth Wilkinson in his 1839 edition of the Songs, thus suggesting that the text of Blake's "Night" was provided by someone who, like Tulk, had access to one of Blake's original copies.

THE FIRST PRINTED REFERENCE TO THE PUBLICATION OF *JOB*: DISRAELI (?) IN THE STAR CHAMBER (1826)
G. E. Bentley, Jr.

Professor William S. Ward has generously drawn my attention to a previously unrecorded reference to Blake's *Job* in the obscure and short-lived satirical political weekly The Star Chamber for Wednesday 3 May 1826:

Mr. William Blake, whose illustrations in outline of Young, Gray, and other poets have long been before the public, has completed his designs for the Book of Job. Some of the engravings which are full of that remarkable wildness and singularity of conception, for which Blake is so well known. The emblazoning of the pages inflicted on Job by the Almighty; the personification of a Night-mare, and the figures of the creation,1 are wonderful, although we do not think them equal either in point of originality or skillful execution to some of the earlier productions of this extraordinary artist.2

The account is interesting for a number of reasons. For one thing, it displays a surprising knowledge of Blake's works. The "illustrations in outline of Young" refer to course to Young's *Night Thoughts* (1797) with forty-three plates designed and engraved by Blake. The "Gray outline" can scarcely refer to the series of watercolors Blake made in 1797-98 for Flaxman in illustration of Gray's poems, for these were not "before the public" in 1826 (they were first published in 1822); "Gray" is probably a mistake for *The Grave* by Robert Blair with twelve designs by Blake etched by Schiavonetti published in 1808 and 1813, for this was Blake's best-known work. The "earlier productions of this extraordinary artist" seems to refer to Blake's works in Illuminated Printing, and since very few copies were printed they were known only to few. The Star Chamber author seems to have been surprisingly well informed about Blake's works.

He is also strikingly up-to-date in his information about the publication of *Job*. Subscriptions for it had been taken since 1823 (Blake Records [1969], 598), but the label is dated "March 1826," and the first completed copies were distributed at the end of that month (ibid, p. 327). It was not, however, published in the ordinary way, apparently no review-copies were sent to journals, and no review of it is known. Indeed, not only is the Star Chamber paragraph the first known printed reference to the publication of *Job*, but it seems to be the only such reference during Blake's lifetime. Even the obituaries of Blake failed to mention *Job* except for that in *The Literary Gazette* (1 November 1827), and the only other account before 1830 was in J. T. Smith's *life of Blake* (1828). The Star Chamber account is important, therefore, as the only printed reference during Blake's lifetime to the publication of his greatest finished series of line-engravings.

The Star Chamber is a jocular sixteen-page weekly published by W. Marsh which began 19 April 1826 and ended with No. 9 on Wednesday 7 June 1826. It includes reviews, attacks on politicians, "The Dunciad of To-day," and news of the arts, particularly exhibitions; it is in the untitled art section that the Blake reference comes. The periodical seems to have been founded by Peter Hall (who gave a copy to Bodley) with various assistants. Benjamin Disraeli was accused of having been the first editor, but he expressly denied this in *The Times* for 3 November 1871 and *Leisure Hours* for 4 November 1871.3 However, his authorized biographer concedes that Disraeli did contribute some fables called "The Modern AESop," a review, "and perhaps other matter," and it is not unlikely that he was responsible directly or indirectly for the notice of Blake's *Job*. At any rate, he was peculiarly well situated to know of Blake's more "original" and "skillful" "earlier productions," for his father Isaac (d. 1848) owned *Thet* (F), *Visiona* (F), *Marriage* (D), *Urizen* (B), *Songs* (A), *Europe* (A), and *Song of Los*, and these works of course later came into Benjamin Disraeli's hands. And we know that Benjamin himself was interested in Blake, for he tried to get The British Museum to buy Blake's 537 watercolor designs to Young's *Night Thoughts* in 1875,4 over fifty years before they eventually reached the Museum. It is at least a plausible guess that Benjamin Disraeli is the

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1. Ibid., p. v.
3. ibid., p. v.
4. ibid., p. 327.
5. Ibid., p. 327.

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References:

- Blake's "Night" from *Innocence* appeared in the New Church Advocate for 16 May 1843 (1, no. 26, 208).
- The account is interesting for a number of reasons. For one thing, it displays a surprising knowledge of Blake's works.
- The Star Chamber account is important, therefore, as the only printed reference during Blake's lifetime to the publication of his greatest finished series of line-engravings.
author of the only contemporary printed reference to
the publication of Blake's *Job*.

1 The three *Job* plates referred to are presumably pl. 6,
"And smote Job with sore boils"; pl. 11, "With Dreams upon my
bed thou scarest me"; and pl. 13, "Behold now Behemoth which I
made with thee."

2 The Star Chamber, No. 4 (3 May 1826), 73.

3 William Flavelle Monypenny. *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli*
Earl of Beaconsfield, 1 (1910), 84n. Robert Blake, *Disraeli*
(1966), p. 44, finds it "difficult to avoid the conclusion that
Disraeli was the moving spirit."


**THE SELLING OF BLAKE'S**
**NIGHT THOUGHTS DESIGNS IN THE 1870s**

G. E. Benfley, Jr.

The most extensive series of illustrations Blake is
known to have made was for Young's *Night Thoughts*--
537 large water colors preparatory for the Richard
Edwards edition of 1797. When that publication proved
to be an incubator baby, requiring peace and seclusion
from the world for over a century before reaching full
growth in public esteem and commercial price, the
drawings too were largely forgotten. They passed
from Richard Edwards to his brother Thomas, who
offered them at £52.10.0 in 1826 and 1828, but even
praise comparing them favorably with the work of
Michael Angelo could not lure a collector to venture
so large a sum.¹ They therefore retreated into the
bosom of the Edwards family, and their whereabouts
was almost completely unknown for some fifty years.
In his *Life of William Blake*, "Pictor Ignotus" (1863)
which revived Blake's flickering fame, Alexander
Gilchrist supposed erroneously that the *Night Thoughts*
drawings had gone to "one of the royal collections"
(Vol. I, p. 140). A few new facts have recently
turned up which throw light on the history of the
drawings in the 1870s.

About a decade later, the interest in Blake which
Gilchrist's book had aroused fostered the emergence
of the *Night Thoughts* drawings again, and by the above
passage in Gilchrist one reader wrote:

No, I saw these drawings, over 500 in number,
at [the bookseller] Rimell's in Oxford Street,
in May 1874. They were then the property of
the Edwards family, and for sale.²

Something of the background of the re-emergence of
the *Night Thoughts* drawings is given in the diary
of Louisa Bain, whose uncle James was one of the
chief antiquarian booksellers of the time. On 18
June 1874 she wrote that she went

To the Haymarket [where the Bain shop was
located] and looked at the two volumes of
Young's *Night Thoughts* with original illustrations
by William Blake, which James has lately
met with [at Rimell's], and thinks himself
extremely fortunate to have secured at the price of
£425. He considers it a perfect treasure,
and people who are considered judges flock to
see it, and speak highly of it. I do not like
it, but then I am no judge of its merits.³

A year later, on 13 June 1875, she wrote again:

James has spoke of his *Blake* to Mr. Disraeli who
advises his writing to the British Museum authori-
ties, and allows him to use his name, which we
hope will have great weight, both as Prime
Minister and also as a member of the British
Museum Committee. James has written accordingly
and they have sent for the book, which is there
now to be inspected. [P. 76]

They had another reason to think that Disraeli's
opinion might bear some weight, for he had inherited
from his father one of the most notable early
collections of Blake's books and therefore was in a
good position to judge Blake's merits. However, what
Disraeli did was fairly minimal. The bookseller
wrote to the British Museum:

James Bain
1 Haymarket
London (SW)

7th June 1875

Sir,

I am desired by Mr. Disraeli to bring under
your notice some original drawings by William
Blake now in my possession.

The designs illustrate Young's *Night Thoughts*
and are drawn upon the enlarged margins of the
original quarto text.

They form the most extensive series of
designs done by this Artist and tho' unknown to
his later biographers may be regarded as the
'great work' of his life. As such it seems
desirable that they should find an appropriate
place in the National Collections. My price is
£2,000. (Two Thousand Pounds).

Your obedient servant
(signed) James Bain.

The sponsorship of Disraeli was given through his
Parliamentary Secretary as follows:

10 Downing Street
Whitehall

June 9 1875

Dear Sir,

Mr. Disraeli desires me to send you the
enclosed letter left here today by Mr. Reid
[keeper of the Department of Prints and Drawings
in the British Museum], and to tell you that on
being asked by Mr. Bain in what way he could
bring the drawings referred to to the notice of
the authorities of the British Museum Mr.
Disraeli advised him that the best course would
be to write to you on the subject and gave him
authority to make use of his name in the matter.

Yours faithfully,
(signed) James F. Daly.

J. Winter Jones Esq.
The discrepancy between James Bain's expectations and Disraeli's performance is striking, and one does not know whether to admire the slipperiness of the politician or the discretion of the statesman, struggling to avoid appearing as both advocate and judge in the same cause.

On receipt of this letter, the Museum authorities sought the opinion of George William Reid, the Keeper of the Print Room (1866-83), and he replied on the same day:

Department of Prints and Drawings
June 9th, 1875

Mr. Reid has the honour to report to the Trustees that he has carefully examined the 2 volumes of Blake's designs offered to the Trustees for the sum of £2,000 [or about £5.16.0 each], and finds the series very interesting but somewhat dear.

The 2 volumes offered by Mr. Bain, if the purchase were entertained, could only be acquired by the aid of a special grant, which Mr. Reid has ascertained by Mr. Montagu Corry [a treasurer official] to be quite out of the question at the present moment.

G. W. Reid

This reply was of course decisive, and the Minutes of the British Museum Standing Committee for 12 June 1875 (pp. 13292-93) record:

Read a letter from Mr. James Bain, dated the 7th of June, offering, for £2,000, William Blake's original drawings, in two volumes, in illustration of Young's Night Thoughts; also a letter from one of the Secretaries of the First Lord of the Treasury, and a report from Mr. Reid, both dated the 9th of June.

Resolved, that Mr. Bain's offer be declined.

The conclusion was forwarded to James Bain, whose niece wrote in her Journal for 17 June: "The British Museum declines to take the Blake; I am so sorry" (p. 75).

Scholars of Blake and lovers of art had cause to be sorry too, for the drawings remained in private hands for another fifty years. In the Bain family, "the book was looked upon as a white elephant for twenty years or more" until it was sold for £1,500 to Marsden J. Parry (p. 187), from whom it passed to W. A. White a few years later, and the first partial publication and exhibition of the drawings were in 1927. Somewhat ironically, they returned to The British Museum Print Room by the munificent gift of W. A. White's daughter Frances White Emerson in 1929. Had they entered The British Museum Print Room in 1875, they might not still be largely un reproduced and little known.

1 Blake Reovida (1969), 330-31, 368.

2 Quoted from the extra-illustrated copy of Gilchrist recently acquired (1976) by the McGill University Library. The annotator may have been the Laurence Aurrin (?) whose bookplate is in the volumes.


4 Quoted from the British Museum Print Room's "Original Letters and Papers," June 1875, Reg. no. 2720.

5 ibid. Reg. no. 2821, quoted by courtesy of H. M. Stationary Office.

6 Quoted from "Original Letters and Papers," June 1875, Reg. no. 2822. The grant would presumably have come, at least indirectly, from the First Lord of the Treasury.

7 The Clarendon Press is apparently about to publish a black- and-white set of reproductions of the whole, with extensive commentaries by Michael Tolley, John E. Grant, Edward J. Rose, and G. V. Erdman.
NEWSLETTER

LEVINE'S BLAKE CARICATURE

Just after printing and mailing Blake 44, Spring 1978, we noticed that the credit for reproducing David Levine's caricature of Blake (on our cover) had somehow slipped from column four of the inside-cover spread. The credit should have read: "Drawing by David Levine. Reprinted with permission from The New York Review of Books. Copyright © 1970 New York Review, Inc.

The New York Review

A CONTRIBUTOR IDENTIFIED

We inadvertently omitted from the Notes on Contributors in #44 Michael Fischer, who reviewed Northrop Frye's criticism in its Blakean relations. The note should have read: Michael Fischer teaches critical theory at the University of New Mexico. He is writing a book on the defense of poetry in modern criticism, excerpts from which are appearing in Centennial Review and Southern Humanities Review.

HIGHER PRICES

Subscription prices for Blake have been raised considerably, as you will have no doubt noticed. The following explanation and apology was mailed with this year's bills:

Dear Subscriber

With your annual bill for another year's subscription to Blake, we would like to offer an apology for contributing to the increases in your cost of living.

You will notice that the price of a subscription has increased to $10 for individuals, $12 for institutions. We hope you have also noticed that the number of pages in an average issue of Blake has increased proportionately during the past year. Our issues have been running about 80 pages. When we were the Blake Newsletter, issues averaged 24-44 pages. We hope you have also noticed that Blake gets a lot of text on a single page, much more than the average 6 x 9 scholarly journal that prints 1 column per page. And finally, we don't think you could have missed the illustrations, which are very expensive to print, but which we think make Blake especially useful to you as a scholar.

We would also like to assure you that we take every economy to keep the cost of our issues as low as possible. All the layout and pasteup of our journal is done by unpaid volunteer editorial assistants, for example. That is extremely unusual for a scholarly journal, if not unique. If that work were turned over to professionals, the cost of Blake would soar.

And, despite the economies, despite the increase in your subscription price, the cost of Blake is still heavily subsidized by the University of New Mexico. The subsidy has, in fact, just been increased.

Finally, we hope that you will take a moment to consider that the fat issues of Blake are costing you only about $2.50 each—even at the $10 per year price.

Thank you in advance for your patience. Yours truly, The Editors.

FOUR ZOAS FOR FALL

The fall issue, #46, will feature a number of essays on Blake's Four Zoas, including a series on the editorial problem of the "two" Nights Seven, a pair of articles on the text of Night I, and interpretive articles on the influence of the Cabbala, on "atmospheres", and on the spectrous embrace in Night VII. In addition to the material on The Four Zoas, there will be several reviews and the annual checklist of Blake scholarship.

DISCUSSION

(with intellectual spears & long winged arrows of thought)

We received the following letter from Erica Doctorow and Donald Wolf and solicited the reply from Ruth E. Fine that follows it in turn:

To the Editors: 1 June 1978

This may seem like a tardy reply to Ruth Fine's review (Blake 42, fall 1977) of the Blake exhibition at Adelphi University, but the review itself appeared six months after the exhibition closed, and it raises some interesting questions.

To begin with, Miss Fine writes that it is a "disservice to late 18th-early 19th century England" to suggest that Blake confronted neglect and indifference. Isn't it an even greater disservice to Blake to imply that he may actually have received the recognition he deserved?

Miss Fine's review also does a disservice to the catalog, a reading of which can hardly justify her remark that it is "more spirited than informative," especially if one keeps in mind that it was intended
to be an introduction to Blake. Miss Fine notes this purpose but recalls it only fitfully.

"The crow wish'd every thing was black, the owl that every thing was white." Miss Fine wishes that the exhibition had made a major point of the fact that original prints and drawings are superior to reproductions. At least, that seems to be what she means when she says that it should have demonstrated "the differences in the tactile life of printed surfaces and their effects on one's responses to works of art." (Her style is definitely not spirited.) Adelphi focused on the content of Blake's art. Would it not have been a disservice to our students to teach them that they were doomed to inferior esthetic experiences by the unavailability of the original prints, which, as Miss Fine puts it, must remain in repositories like the Alverthorpe Gallery for the sake of "persons"—she seems to mean scholars--"who travel great distances and at great expense in anticipation of viewing particular works"? Apparently she is as content for Blake to belong to the few, not the many, in the present as in the past. As it happens, the exhibition itself contradicted her premise, thanks to the generosity of other institutions and private collectors who lent Adelphi many original works.

It is also a disservice to readers of Blake, An Illustrated Quarterly to permit the implication to stand, as Miss Fine does, that she attended any of the events related to the exhibition—in particular, the opera, "Auguries of Innocence," and the dance, "Eternity in an Hour." Since she did not, it does not much matter that she seems to find them praiseworthy. On the other hand, she does not mention that the exhibition opened with a talk on Blake's methods of printing; but she does criticize Adelphi for giving no attention to the matter.

Given a different tone, Miss Fine's criticisms might be understood as the opposition of true friendship. As it is, our reaction is better suggested by another of Blake's proverbs: "He whose face gives no light shall never become a star."

Erica Doctorow Donald Wolf
Fine Arts Librarian Professor of English
Adelphi University Adelphi University

Ruth E. Fine replies: 27 June 1978
Ms. Doctorow and Professor Wolf were sent a copy of the Blake exhibition review manuscript, published in the fall 1977 issue of Blake, well in advance of its publication, a gesture to which they never responded; the elliptical implication of the sorrows of time passed with which they open their letter thus leaves a mysterious question as to motivation in writing now.

It remains extremely disturbing that the difference between reproductions and original works is a matter of such casual inconsequence to the organizers of a Blake exhibition. This, however, may account for the lack or superficiality of the descriptive material regarding such differences.

So far as viewing original material is concerned, Alverthorpe Gallery, as the review accurately stated, is open to "persons"—any person who will write or call and who shows genuine interest in examining the collection. Hundreds do. The inference drawn by Ms. Doctorow and Professor Wolf that access to the collection is restricted to "scholars" (with no suggestion of what standards they would assign to that category) is inaccurate; it is also unscholarly since the truth of the matter could easily have been determined before it was committed to paper.

This is only one inaccuracy of several in their defensive response to my review, but it would be tedious beyond decent patience to refute them further. Ruth E. Fine Curator Alverthorpe Gallery

**ARTHUR FARWELL**

Readers will recall that #42 featured an essay by Brice Farwell about the music of his father, Arthur Farwell, who was strongly influenced by Blake. A recent issue of the Musical Heritage Review (3 July 1978) announced the release of a new recording of Farwell's Piano Quintet in E minor, Op. 103.

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Jerome C. Christensen, The Genius in the Biographia Literaria

Charles Sherry, Wordworth’s Metaphors for Eternity: Appearance and Representation

Studies in Romanticism continues to solicit general submissions in the area of Romanticism as well as essays for our next special issue Structuralism and Romanticism. Less immediately, we are proposing the following rubrics: German Romanticism, The Dramatic Imagination under Romanticism, Romanticism and History (especially essays on the theme of progress and the problems of writing Romantic epic), and Romanticism and the Spirit of Place (including Wordsworth, Crabbe, Clare; The City in Romantic Writing).

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