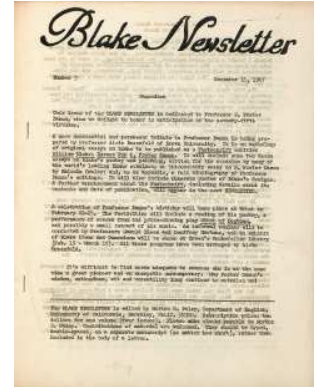


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Blake Newsletter

Number 3

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Damoniana

This issue of the BLAKE NEWSLETTER is dedicated to Professor S. Foster Damon, whom we delight to honor in anticipation of his seventy-fifth birthday.

- A more substantial and permanent tribute to Professor Damon is being prepared by Professor Alvin Rosenfeld of Brown University. It is an anthology of original essays on Blake to be published as a Festschrift entitled William Blake: Essays For S. Foster Damon. It will include some two dozen essays on Blake's poetry and painting, written for the occasion by many of the world's leading Blake scholars; an introductory essay on S. Foster Damon by Malcolm Cowley; and, as an appendix, a full bibliography of Professor Damon's writings. It will also include numerous plates of Blake's designs.
- A further announcement about the Festschrift, including details about its contents and date of publication, will appear in the next NEWSLETTER.

A celebration of Professor Damon's birthday will take place at Brown on February 22-23. The festivities will include a reading of his poetry, a performance of scenes from his prize-winning play Witch of Dogtown, and possibly a small concert of his music. An informal seminar will be conducted by Professors Harold Bloom and Geoffrey Hartman, and an exhibit of Blake items and Damoniana will be shown at Brown's Rockefeller Library (Feb. 15 - March 15). All these programs have been arranged by Alvin Rosenfeld.

It's difficult to find words adequate to someone who is at the same time a great pioneer and an energetic contemporary. May Foster Damon's wisdom, enthusiasm, wit and versatility long continue to astonish us!

The BLAKE NEWSLETTER is edited by Morton D. Paley, Department of English, University of California, Berkeley, Calif. 94720. Subscription price: two dollars for one volume (four issues). Please make checks payable to Morton D. Paley. Contributions of material are welcomed. They should be typed, double-spaced, on a separate manuscript (no matter how short), rather than included in the body of a letter.

3. PUBLICATIONS

A. A. Ansari, Arrows of Intellect: A Study of William Blake's Gospel of the Imagination. Aligarh, Naya Kitabghar (India). 1965. 248 pp.

Frederick W. Hilles, "A 'New' Blake Letter," Yale R, Autumn '67, 85-89.

Alvin Rosenfeld, "Samuel Nomad, Nightmare Cemetery," Books at Brown, XXI (1966), 207-210.

Michael J. Tolley, review of the Erdman-Bloom and Keynes (O. S. A.) editions, Blake Dictionary, Vision and Verse in William Blake (A. Ostriker) and Arrows of Intellect (supra). Southern Review (Adelaide, Australia), III (1967), 269-277.

John E. Grant, reviews of Erdman-Bloom, Blake Dictionary, and Vision and Verse. "English Literature: A Current Bibliography," PQ, XLV (1966), 533-538.

4. MISCELLANEOUS

An expanded version of Kathleen Raine's A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, Blake and Tradition, is scheduled for June publication in the Bollingen Series by the Princeton University Press. The two-volume work includes 194 illustrations, 11 in color. Also of interest to Blake scholars will be Thomas Taylor the Platonist: Selected Writings, edited by Miss Raine and George Mills Harper, and scheduled for summer publication in the Bollingen Series. And Miss Raine informs us that her collection of essays Defending Ancient Springs, just published by Oxford University Press, includes "Yeats's Debt to William Blake."

An unaltered reprint of Swinburne's William Blake: A Critical Study (1869) has been issued by Benjamin Blom, Inc. (4 West Mt. Eden Avenue, Bronx, N.Y. 10452. Price \$12.50).

A second edition of A Blake Dictionary, with some additions, is in the press; also a second printing of Blake's Job.

More Blake courses: Foster Damon will give a graduate seminar on Blake at Brown in the spring '68 semester. Edward Rose teaches a full-year graduate seminar on Blake at the University of Alberta (Edmonton, Ontario) every other year. Morton Paley will give a graduate seminar on Blake's longer poems in fall '68, at Berkeley.

Regarding the copyright announcement on p. 18. It was suggested to us that we copyright the NEWSLETTER in order to protect ourselves and our contributors from the possibility of its being reprinted without our permission at some future time. Reprint companies seem to have become active even in rather remote fields of scholarship, and it does seem to me that if the NEWSLETTER ever should be reprinted, it should realize some of the benefits. (It would be nice to have an occasional photographic reproduction, for example. I promise not to abscond to Golgonooza with the profits.) Writers of articles are of course free to use their material elsewhere.

In the four British Museum copies, the figure in question is clearly an angel with wings. In fact, in the posthumous, uncolored volume it is obvious that the wings were etched on the plate before the color was added. If Grant is willing to generalize from the facsimiles of copies Z and AA and conclude that the figure must be the mother (although it is in no sense clear how he can justify identifying that figure as earthly female as distinct from angelic being) about to take over, is he not falling into the very error that he attributes to us; namely, generalizing from too limited evidence?

Where then does such criticism as Grant offers lead us? Are we to be reduced to countering four winged angels to two figures whose backs are hidden, or a vaudeville Christ who sometimes appears without a beard to a conventional Christ who sometimes appears with a beard, or Blake's conception of busts to Schiavonetti's? Surely the aim of scholarship tends to get lost amidst such carping considerations. We all too readily admit that we have much to learn about Blake's complex art--both from Blake and even from John E. Grant--but we doubt if knowledge is greatly advanced by such arguments as those that have been presented in these pages.

Thomas E. Connolly

George R. Levine

State University of New York
Buffalo, New York

Notes Continued...

How "when" came to be printed for "where" in editions of Blake is not clear. Perhaps Ellis and Yeats started the tradition. Sampson (1905) printed "when," but Sloss and Wallis (1926) reverted to "where." Keynes printed "when" in 1925, but afterwards substituted "where"; the Erdman-Bloom edition has "where." There appears to be no textual authority for any reading but "when."

MDP

QUERY

Martin Butlin (The Tate Gallery, London, SW1) asks for "information about the present whereabouts of 'The Lute Player', with a drawing of a profile of a man on the back, sold 15th July, 1959 at Sotheby's (lot 52), bought by Jacob Schwartz and almost certainly now in the United States. It may have been given by Mr. T. E. Hanley to some educational body."

The fourth issue of the NEWSLETTER is scheduled for publication on March 15. Copy should be received by March 7 in order to be considered.

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