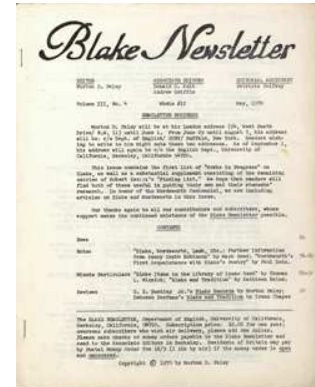


AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY BLAKE

N E W S

Blake and Calvert's illustrations sold, Newsom on Blake and Shaw, Bentley publishes unknown Blake engravings

Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly, Volume 3, Issue 4, May, 1970, pp. 75-76



Introductory Essay by Sir Geoffrey Keynes. Princeton University Library, 1969/ exhibition held December 1969 - February 1970/ 61 pp. / pp. i-ix. Preface by Charles Ryskamp.

From The Times, January 9, 1970, p. 12:

A set of Blake's "Illustrations to the Book of Job," not of outstanding quality, made £1,100 (Western Australian Art Gallery) but a set of engravings by his follower, Edward Calvert, underlined even more forcibly the present interest in Blake and his circle. Comprising 11 tiny engravings of mysterious charm, the set was sold for £680 (Folio Fine Art Society); the price was particularly remarkable since the set was a reprint of 1904.

The Independent Shavian vol. VIII, No. 2 (Winter 1969-70), p. 31, reports a talk by Barbara Newsom - "Tracing the Origins of Heartbreak House: William Blake's Influence on Shaw":

In her talk, Mrs. Newsom pointed out the strong parallels between the characters and the atmosphere of Heartbreak House and Blake's Four Zoas. Not only were both works written during similar periods of crisis in the authors' lives, but Shaw seems, according to Mrs. Newsom, to have drawn his themes and even the title for Heartbreak House directly from the Four Zoas. Captain Shotover has his watery, delusive counterpart in Blake's Tharmas; Hesione Hushabye follows the seductive pattern of Blake's daughters of Beulah; and the labyrinthine figure that is so common in Blake's myth provides the clue to Shaw's own choice of Ariadne for the name of the Heartbreak House heroine who leads Hector out of that "palace of evil enchantment."

It was Mrs. Newsom's contention that passage after passage in Heartbreak House has been translated from The Four Zoas into what Shaw once referred to as the dialect of his own time. Shaw's title itself has its origin, according to Mrs. Newsom, in Blake's repeated reference to Enitharmon's "broken Gates" of her "poor broken heart," "her heart gates broken down," "the broken heart Gate of Enitharmon."

Mrs. Newsom concluded that a study of Blake's work is crucial to an understanding of Heartbreak House and that Blake was an important source of inspiration for Shaw. To discover that Shaw drew so obviously on the work of a poet like Blake, she said, indicates that it is time for serious Shaw critics to go beyond psychic, sexual, and political dissection to the more rewarding study connecting Shaw to the "whole mythopoeic content of English art."

An article by G. E. Bentley, Jr. on "Byron, Shelley, Wordsworth, Blake, and The Seaman's Recorder," forthcoming in the next issue of Studies in Romanticism (IX.1, Winter 1970) should be of special interest in that the article includes six hitherto unknown engravings by Blake.

A new newsletter, THE WORDSWORTH CIRCLE, is being edited by Marilyn Gaull and Charles Mauskopf (Dept. of English, Temple University, Philadelphia, Penn.) The subscription price is three dollars for one year (four issues).

M. Cormack informs us that the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, intends to publish a catalogue of their extensive Blake collection, edited by David Bindman, sometime in the autumn, provisionally to be in early October. It is intended to mark the publication of the catalogue (which will have 72 plates) with an exhibition of their Blake collection, and a small subsidiary exhibition of portraits of Blake.

The Royal Ballet (Touring Section) has revived the ballet Job, based on Blake's designs, and will give six performances of it at Covent Garden this Spring.

And the tabloid Express ran a picture article on London graffiti several months ago, with photographs and comments by passers-by. On a wall in Notting Hill Gate - THE ROAD OF EXCESS LEADS TO THE PALACE OF WISDOM. A "Warehouseman, about forty" says: "...I'm sure it's filth. It's best to look the other way in this district. You're not safe anywhere nowadays." While someone identified as "Irishman who declined to give his name" comments: "If it's true, I'm in the palace of wisdom all right."

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NOTES

1. Blake, Wordsworth, Lamb, Etc.: Further Information from Henry Crabb Robinson

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A significant link in the literary correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson with Edward Quillinan, the widowed son-in-law of revered friend Wordsworth, as presented in Edith J. Morley's Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson with the Wordsworth Circle (London, 1927) is supplied by the following letter at the Dove Cottage Library. These comments from the barrister to Quillinan, who was still an intimate of the poet's household, include revealing remarks on the