

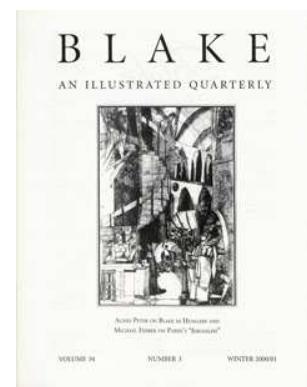
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A R T I C L E

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Michael Ferber

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BY MICHAEL FERBER

Blake's poem "And did those feet," given the title "Jerusalem" since its setting in 1916 by Hubert Parry, is Blake's best known work, except perhaps for "The Tyger." The "second national anthem" of England and Wales, a staple of English hymnals and public schools, the last song of the Last Night of the Proms, it has been sung with equal fervor by suffragettes, Fabians, high-church Tories, Presbyterian missionaries, and American leftists. Having heard it and sung it many times myself and come to love it, I have grown interested in how it came to be written and what groups or causes adopted it—its "reception history"—as well as how it works as a song. The two standard biographies of Parry give the main facts about its inception and early performances, though there is more one would like to know.¹ I have not found any extended discussion of it as a setting, and hence an interpretation, of Blake's text.² Nor have I found much concerning its later history in Britain or America. In this essay, then, I will present what is generally known about its origins and history and discuss it as a hymn. Some of what follows will be sketchy, but I hope it will at least provoke others, especially those with better access to British libraries, to fill in the gaps around this wonderful song.

"Jerusalem," of course, is not Blake's name for it, nor is it part of *Jerusalem/The Emanation of The Giant Albion*. The four-quatrain poem appears untitled at the end of the prose

"Preface" to *Milton* (E 95-96).³ Taken out of that immediate context, the poem's opening is a bit mysterious—"And did those feet in ancient time, / Walk upon Englands mountains green"—for we can only infer whose feet "those feet" are when we are given the next two lines—"And was the holy Lamb of God, / On Englands pleasant pastures seen!"—and invoke the biblical stylistic principle of parallel members, whereby two or three successive verses are variants of the same general meaning. In the prose context there is a clear suggestion, though it is hardly obvious, that those are indeed Jesus's feet, for the last words before the poem are "in Jesus our Lord," while "Christ & his Apostles" have been named a sentence earlier.

On hearing the song for the first time, I imagine, many people must have asked "Whose feet?" as well as "Why feet?" (I remember feeling similarly puzzled over the opening of the second stanza of "America the Beautiful"—"O beautiful for pilgrim feet"—and wondered "Why feet?") Blake took from the Bible and John Bunyan an interest in feet and their symbolism, which has to do with our pilgrimage through this world, our "walk" or way of life, our stance before life's dangers and temptations, and what Bunyan in *Pilgrim's Progress* calls our "conversation" or conduct.⁴ A passage from Isaiah may well lie behind Blake's lines (and perhaps Katharine Lee Bates's line in "America the Beautiful"): "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace" (52.7); the great bringer of good tidings is of course Jesus.⁵ Feet, moreover, or at least one foot, and sandals, or at least one sandal, are central symbols at turning points of Blake's *Milton*, if we may widen the context for a moment. "Then Los took off his left sandal placing it on his head, / Signal of solemn mourning" *M* 8.11-12; Milton "on my left foot falling on the tarsus, enterd there; / But from my left foot a black cloud redounding spread over Europe" (15.49-50); "Milton labourd with his journey, & his feet bled sore / Upon the clay now changed to marble" (19.3-4), but with red clay he builds Urizen, "Beginning at the feet" (19.12).

In the "Preface" Blake argues that Greek and Roman literature was stolen and perverted from the Bible, and set up against the Bible, which is the "more ancient" and inspired work. He calls on the "Young Men of the New Age" to com-

¹ Charles L. Graves, *Hubert Parry: His Life and Works*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1926); Jeremy Dibble, *C. Hubert H. Parry: His Life and Music* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992). I would like to thank Jeremy Brecher, Richard Flacks, David Fuller, Susan Reilly, Judith Sizer, and Phillip Zaeder for helpful tips.

² A recent article by Samuel J. Rogal, "Blake's 'And did those feet' as Congregational Hymn," in *The Hymn: A Journal of Congregational Song* 44:3 (July 1993): 22-25, is disappointing, indeed maddening. It confidently asserts that the "feet" of the first line belong to the Druids (per Stukeley), it thinks it important to track the chariot back to Gray and Milton, and is generally at a loss regarding the text. Worse is a peculiar suggestion that Parry's "hymn tune known today as *Jerusalem*" existed independently of the text: "Blake's 'And did those feet in ancient time,' set to the Parry tune *Jerusalem* . . ."; "Parry's choral song, 'Jerusalem,' accompanying Blake's 'And did those feet in ancient time' . . ." as if Parry had the tune lying around in his notebook and then found that it suited Blake's verses. Rogal may have been misled by the existence of new lyrics to the Parry setting in certain unforgivable hymnals, such as *A New Hymnal for Colleges and Schools*, ed. Jeffrey Rowthorn and Russell Schulz-Widmar (New Haven: Yale UP, 1992), where the "music" to hymn 567 is "Jerusalem" by Parry but the words begin: "O day of peace that dimly shines / through all our hopes and prayers and dreams, / guide us to justice, truth, and love, / delivered from our selfish schemes."

³ The "Preface" (E pl. 1) is lacking in copies C and D, probably the last two of the four extant copies of *Milton*. Though *Milton* is dated "1804" on the title page, the paper of the two copies with the "Preface" (A and B) is watermarked 1808. See Erdman's note, E 806.

⁴ When Apollyon wounds Christian in head, hand, and foot, Bunyan adds a note explaining that he means "understanding, faith, and conversation."

⁵ As noted in an article by the editors of *The Explicator* 1 (March 1943): no. 38. See Nancy M. Goslee, "'In Englands green & pleasant Land': The Building of Vision in Blake's Stanzas from *Milton*," *SiR* 13 (1974): 105-25 (108). The Isaiah passage is quoted by Paul in Romans 10.15.

bat the "Hirelings in the Camp, the Court & the University," who have promoted these thefts and perversions, the worst of which is the reduction of "Mental" war to "Corporeal" war, brought about by "the silly Greek & Latin slaves of the Sword"—not only Achilles and Aeneas, of course, but also their inventors Homer and Virgil, who were hirelings of kings and emperors. The young men are to fight back with their "foreheads," not corporeal weapons.

The poem neatly echoes and amplifies these two points. In the first half the ancientness and priority of the Bible corresponds to the visit of Jesus to England and the building of Jerusalem there, presumably before the Roman conquest, while the theme of the second half is "Mental Fight," where the list of spiritual weapons culminates in the sword of line 14, which replies to the corporeal Greek or Latin sword that concludes the first paragraph of the prose "Preface."⁶ As Parry rightly shows in making his melody repeat only once, covering two stanzas each time, the poem divides satisfyingly into two equal parts. The first half is a series of four two-line questions each beginning with "And" while the second half is the resolute response. The latter falls into two parts as well, first a command (as if to a squire or valet) to bring the armor and then a vow to fight until Jerusalem is built, or rebuilt, in England. Each half concludes with the building of Jerusalem, while their two locales are set in contrast, the "Satanic Mills" of here and now as opposed to the "green & pleasant Land" of the future.

It is tempting to take the four questions of the first half as "rhetorical," as Nancy Goslee does in the only substantial article on the poem.⁷ Blake certainly makes extensive use of such questions throughout his work. I think, however, that these are not rhetorical in the usual sense, as questions implying obvious answers, as here those answers would be in the negative, and so they would "begin to call into doubt the validity of that vision," as Goslee argues, and generate bitter ironies that I believe are not in the poem. It is better to take them as genuine expressions of amazement at the good tidings—"Can it be true?" or "Was it really so?"—as exclamations as much as questions. They are what Mastronarde calls "apistetic" questions, questions expressing disbelief or shock.⁸ Though it is never safe to rely on Blake's quirky punctuation, it is worth noting that Blake does not end the first two couplets with a question mark; the sec-

ond ends in an exclamation point. These lines are the same exclamations of wonder, and over the same tidings, as those that begin the dedication to Chapter Two of *Jerusalem*: "Jerusalem the Emanation of the Giant Albion! Can it be? Is it a Truth that the Learned have explored? Was Britain the Primitive Seat of the Patriarchal Religion?" (E 171).

From the first to the second stanza the description of England darkens from "mountains green" and "pleasant pastures" to "clouded hills" and "dark Satanic Mills." On Goslee's reading this shift deepens the doubts and ironies. But surely its function is to dramatize the amazement of the speaker. The locale shifts subtly from "Englands mountains green" and "Englands pleasant pastures" to "our clouded hills" and "here, / Among these dark Satanic Mills," almost as if we are not now living in England and will not do so again until we have rebuilt Jerusalem "In Englands green & pleasant Land." The speaker seems to leave the England of ancient time and slide, by means of deictic terms ("our," "here," "these") into the England of the present: How astonishing to think Jerusalem could be here, and now! At a stretch one could take the last question as strictly rhetorical, for a "No" would be a logically appropriate answer, there having been no Satanic Mills in that ancient time, yet as an expression of astonishment it still makes good dramatic and psychological sense. And to end on the Mills, however illogically, serves also to supply the motive for all the weaponry that follows, as opposed to the hammers and trowels that would be called for if the only mission were building, for surely the Mills must first be destroyed.⁹

Parry's manuscript and the first published version (by Curwen) indicate "solo" for the first half and "all available voices" for the second.¹⁰ I have never heard it sung that way, but it is not a bad idea. The series of astonished questions gains poignancy when voiced by one man,¹¹ as if he is alone,

⁶ As Mary Lynn Johnson and John E. Grant point out in a note in their edition, Nehemiah 4 reports that during the rebuilding of Jerusalem half the people stood guard with weapons while the other half worked. In 4:17 we are told that each of the builders "with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon." Blake's *Poetry and Designs* (New York: Norton, 1979) 238. In the end, for Blake, spiritual weapons are constructive tools.

As commonly sung today, even by trained choirs, "these dark Satanic Mills" is altered to "those dark Satanic Mills," as if the shift to "these" is too visionary or threatening. It is "those" in the recordings by the Choir of Winchester Cathedral and the Choir of St. George's Chapel, listed here at the end; it is "those" in *Hymns for Church and School*, which is the fourth edition of *The Public School Hymn Book* (Henley-on-Thames: Gresham Books, 1964), but "these" in the *Church Hymnary* (Church of Scotland and Presbyterian Churches, 1927 and subsequent editions). Paul Robeson; Emerson, Lake & Palmer; and Billy Bragg get it right on their recordings.

¹⁰ Dibble 484; first page of MS reproduced, 505.

¹¹ It does not have to be a man, of course, but given that it is the narrator and not a character speaking it, and that the narrator calls for sword, spear, and other normally male accoutrements, however spiritual or metaphorical, I will use masculine pronouns.

⁶ For a discussion of the importance of spiritual warfare throughout Blake's work, see Michael Ferber, "Blake and the Two Swords," in Steve Clark and David Worrall, ed., *Blake in the Nineties* (London: Macmillan and New York: St. Martin's, 1999). Goslee connects the spiritual weapons to "the Petrarchan or Ovidian convention of love as warfare" (114), but this is to narrow the meaning of "desire" to the erotic. The primary source is Ephesians 6.11-17.

⁷ Goslee 107, 111. She does not discuss the poem as a hymn.

⁸ Donald J. Mastronarde, *Contact and Discontinuity: Some Conventions of Speech and Action on the Greek Tragic Stage* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1979) 12. Mastronarde distinguishes 10 sorts of "rhetorical questions," of which "apistetic" is one.

cut off from the ancient spiritual community of England that he has just heard tell of. Indeed it is a basic Blakean tenet that it is the very illusion of being alone, no longer a member of Albion's body, no longer a brother in loving contention with brother, that brings about the fall into this dark Satanic world, and that the first step toward restoring the original community is to act in concert with one's fellows in waging spiritual war against all that divides them. With that realization, when the narrator calls for his weapons, all available voices (300 at the first performance) join in. It is true that they sing "Bring me" rather than "Bring us," and one might momentarily note the absurdity of a host of knights all calling on their squires, but then the words become a vow, a collective vow like the oath on the Rütli (painted by Fuseli) but where each must swear in his own name and on his own sword. Then the pronoun shifts to "we" at the climax of the hymn, where Parry wrote "allargando" (slowing down and increasing volume), leading to the highest note of the hymn (high E) on "built," over which Parry wrote "ff," almost superfluously, one would think, for if the chorus or congregation are following the words as well as the melody they irresistibly sing these lines with full throat and heart.

Building a city, after all, can only be a collective act. But these stanzas of demands and vows are also a kind of prophecy: Jerusalem *will* be built in England, again, as it once was. Blake, as we know, dismissed prophecy and prophets "in the modern sense of the word" in favor of what we might call a conditional sense: "Thus / If you go on so / the result is So" (anno. Watson, E 617). So here he may be saying, If we do not cease from mental fight (as I will not), the result is Jerusalem. It all depends on us, and I am ready. This prophetic edge to what is literally a demand and an oath is implicit in the poem alone, I think, but it is brought out by the quotation from Moses that Blake places immediately following it: "Would to God that all the Lords people were Prophets."

The other phrase whose meaning is affected by the context of the poem is the famous "dark Satanic Mills," but here the case may be the opposite of that with "those feet." For almost everyone assumes it refers to the smoke-producing industrial mills that had begun to darken some of the northern cities by 1804 though not yet Blake's London. In fact Blake was not referring to modern factories, at least not directly, but to (1) flour mills of the traditional sort, driven by water, wind, or animals, where they take their place beside plow and harrow in the threefold division of agricultural labor in *Milton*, Satan being the "Miller of Eternity" (3.42); and to (2) "the Starry Mills of Satan" (4.2), the rotating nighttime heaven that stands for the tyranny of supposedly natural laws

dreamed up by Newton and Locke and imposed on mortals to whom "thy Mills seem everything" (4.12). In the prose "Preface" we are warned about "the Camp, the Court & the University" but not the factory. By implication, nonetheless, industrial factories, if not steam factories, can be included under "Satanic Mills" because they are complicated developments of the flour mills and they enslave workers the way Samson was bound to the mill in Gaza,¹² and because they are the outcome of the doctrines of Newton and Locke now inculcated in the minds of the youth: "I turn my eyes to the Schools & Universities of Europe / And there behold the Loom of Locke whose Woof rages dire / Washd by the Water-wheels of Newton. black the cloth / In heavy wreathes folds over every Nation" (J 15.14-17). The common assumption about the "Satanic Mills," then, is not so much mistaken as overly simple, but it gives a satisfying reading, and who is to say Blake would not have endorsed it in 1916?

Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848-1918) was a prolific and much admired composer, held in his day to rank with Purcell and Elgar. He was knighted in 1895 and appointed Professor of Music at Oxford in 1900. He wrote an immense number of choral settings, hymns, part-songs, unison songs (of which "Jerusalem" is one), solo songs, canticles, and anthems, as well as five symphonies, a piano concerto, an opera, theatre music, chamber music, and piano and organ solos.¹³ He set texts from the whole history of English poetry from Skelton to Robert Bridges, including *Scenes from Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound"* (1880) and his best-known piece (after "Jerusalem"), *At a Solemn Music: Blest Pair of Sirens* (1887), a choral setting of Milton's poem. Among the romantic poets he set five poems by Shelley, one by Coleridge, four by Scott, two by Byron, and two by Keats, but nothing else by Blake. Blake must nonetheless have been a part of Parry's literary culture, for one of his longtime friends was William Blake Richmond (1842-1921), an artist who was steeped in Blake; he was the son of George Richmond, who admired Blake in his later years and was present at his death.¹⁴

The impulse to set Blake's "And did those feet" came from Parry's friend Robert Bridges, then the Poet Laureate, whom he had known since their days together at Eton and Oxford. They had collaborated on at least seven of Bridges' own poems from 1895 to early 1916, and Parry set another later that year. For his part Bridges had a deep interest in music, and had worked with Edward Elgar, Gustav Holst, and Charles Villiers Stanford as well as with Parry. *Eden*, an ora-

In *Parry before Jerusalem* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997), Bernard Benoliel says that "Parry intended the first stanza of *Jerusalem* to be sung by a solo female voice" (134), but the manuscript does not specify the sex. No doubt at some women's rights rallies it was sung that way.

¹² Northrop Frye, *Fearful Symmetry* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1947) 290.

¹³ I am using the categories in Dibble, Appendix 2.

¹⁴ George Richmond (1809-96) made one of the "Ancients" with his friends Samuel Palmer, Edward Calvert, and Frederick Tatham; he married Tatham's sister Julia; William was their second son.

torio based on *Paradise Lost*, was set by Stanford and dedicated to Parry.¹⁵ He was particularly devoted to hymns: he was a precentor of a church choir for nine years, compiled a hymnal, and regularly spent Sunday evenings with his family singing hymns around the piano.

Bridges knew Blake's poetry, and some tenuous influences might be detected beneath the much stronger impact of Milton, Shelley, Keats, and the classics. Albert Guerard plausibly suggests that his sonnet "Democritus" (1919) echoes Blake's "Mock on Mock on Voltaire Rousseau."¹⁶ One wonders about Bridges's appreciation for Blake, however, when one considers his "translation" of Blake's early sonnet "To the Evening Star" into four alcaic quatrains. Bridges had a lifelong interest in prosody, particularly classical prosody, and wrote several essays on it; this translation is one of his many experiments. To expand a sonnet into alcaics demands some padding, but there is something excessively bookish and fastidious in the circumlocutions that smother Blake's simple diction. Blake's two adjectives for "dew," for example, are decorative enough ("silver" and "sacred"), but Bridges seems to regard "dew" itself as too vulgar for alcaics, so we get "Silently dost thou with delicate shimmer / O'erbloom the frowning front of awful / Night to a glance of unearthly silver," whatever that means.¹⁷ It is hardly in Blake's spirit. Still, we can pardon it for the brilliant idea to have Parry translate "And did those feet" into a unison song, into "suitable, simple music," as Bridges put it, "that an audience could take up and join in."¹⁸

What cause at length moved Bridges to this unexampled deed? Alas, a campaign called "Fight for Right," founded by General Sir Francis Younghusband to counteract German propaganda, which he apparently believed was a threat to the British war effort in 1916.¹⁹ He or his organizers enlisted

Bridges, who had been Laureate since 1913, and several musicians, including Elgar and Parry's former student Walford Davies, to help with a concert for a rally at Queen's Hall on 28 March 1916.²⁰ Parry, a man of liberal political views, was no jingoist, and had doubts about "Fight for Right."²¹ Perhaps he was visited in his dreams by Blake, who reminded him that in nearly all his work, and in *Milton* in particular, he had set his forehead against corporeal war, that General Sir Francis was a hireling of the camp, that "Mental Fight" is the opposite of artillery barrages, barbed wire, machine guns, and gas. Perhaps Blake prophesied the Easter Rising in Erin's green and pleasant land less than a month later, and warned against corporeal retribution. Nonetheless Parry gave the hymn to Davies the day after he wrote it and it was performed at Queen's Hall under Davies's direction with 300 voices from several London choirs. If Blake's ghost stalked the Hall that day so did William Morris's, for Elgar presented a setting of a part of *Sigurd the Volsung*.

Parry's "Jerusalem" was a rousing success, and Davies got it published right away. It quickly caught on. The original version was scored for organ or piano accompaniment, but Parry soon orchestrated it, and it was performed everywhere in Britain at concerts and rallies. (Elgar's more elaborate orchestration, first performed at the Leeds Festival of 1922, has displaced Parry's version in nearly all performances since then.) "Fight for Right" was happy with it, but Parry soon grew unhappy with "Fight for Right," and in May 1917 he wrote to Younghusband withdrawing his support for it.²² He was delighted, however, that the women's suffrage movement took it up, and on 17 March 1917 he himself conducted it for the Women's Demonstration meeting. A year later it was sung at a Suffrage Demonstration concert, after which Millicent Garrett Fawcett, for many years the president of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies and an old friend of Parry's, wrote to thank him for it and propose that it become the Women Voters' hymn.²³ Parry

¹⁵ I am drawing mainly on Catherine Phillips, *Robert Bridges: A Biography* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992).

¹⁶ Albert Guerard, *Robert Bridges: A Study of Traditionalism in Poetry* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1942) 288. "Mock on Mock on" might have made an interesting unison song had Bridges suggested it to Parry.

¹⁷ "Evening: From Wm. Blake," *Poetical Works of Robert Bridges* (London: Oxford UP, 1936) 437. He has another alcaic translation of Blake ("To Morning") in his *Demeter: A Mask* 656-63 (71).

¹⁸ Letter from Bridges quoted in Graves, 2: 92; Dibble 483. Bridges had long disliked both the words and the tune of "God Save the King" and hoped Parry's "Jerusalem" might replace it, as it very nearly has. In April 1918 Bridges was asked to write new words for the second and third stanzas of the national anthem; he did so, but they were rejected as "not simple enough" (Phillips 264).

¹⁹ Francis Edward Younghusband (1863-1942) had a remarkable career as a soldier and explorer in India, the Himalayas, Manchuria, and the Gobi Desert before retiring to England 1910. He was also a devout Christian and a mystic who studied Hinduism and Buddhism. He wrote a dozen books of travel, mysticism, and memoirs. His biographer gives half a page out of nearly 400 to the "Fight for Right" society, and nowhere explains why Younghusband felt called upon to organize it. See George Seaver, *Francis Younghusband: Explorer and Mystic* (London: Murray, 1952) 292.

²⁰ Dibble 483. Sir Henry Walford Davies (1869-1941) studied composition with Parry. After a career as a church organist he became an organizer of concerts for the troops; in 1918 he was appointed musical director to the Royal Air Force. In 1934 he succeeded Elgar as Master of the King's Music.

²¹ See Dibble 470-71 for an account of Parry's opinion of Germany: he held it to blame for the war, but confessed to have been a "pro-Teuton" for its music, philosophy, and literature. Schumann, Wagner, and Brahms were major influences on his work.

²² Dibble 485. Seaver, *Younghusband* 292, says Parry gave "Fight for Right" the copyright to "Jerusalem."

²³ Millicent Garrett Fawcett (1847-1929) was a member of the first women's suffrage committee in 1867 and helped found Newnham College, Cambridge. She became the first president of the National Union in 1897 and remained tirelessly active in that role until she resigned shortly after Parliament passed a limited women's suffrage bill in early 1918.

Parry's wife, the former Maude Herbert, was an active campaigner for women's rights, and a friend not only of Fawcett but of the more militant Pankhursts. See Benoliel 23.

replied, "Thank you for what you say about the 'Jerusalem' song. I wish indeed it might become the Women Voters' hymn, as you suggest. People seem to enjoy singing it. And having the vote ought to diffuse a good deal of joy too. So they would combine happily."²⁴ It was soon adopted as the national hymn for the Women's Institutes.

It is hardly surprising that the women's movement should want to make the song its own, as indeed nearly everyone seemed to enjoy singing it, and felt stirred by both its words and melody. The biblical imagery of spiritual warfare captures echoes of several intense eras and movements in British history from the seventeenth-century sects to nineteenth-century Anglican reform movements, the "Satanic Mills" and the building of Jerusalem make it attractive to laborers, and its wondrous claim that Jerusalem can be built or rebuilt here in England make it seem both patriotic and revolutionary, and even restorationist. In 1916, however, the imagery of spiritual weaponry culminating in the sword may have struck home, as it were, particularly in the women's movement, for that movement, or some branches of it, had made great use of it. A poem printed in *Votes for Women* in March 1912, for instance, reads "Woman! Arise! And take thy fitting place, / Amid the armies of the human race. / Gird on thy sword of justice and of right, / Nor rest till victory crowns the valiant fight." *The Suffragette* of June 1913 carried a cartoon of a woman walking out of Holloway Prison, still shackled, bearing a flame and a flaming sword labeled "Spirit."²⁵ For some factions of the women's movement the sword was less a metaphor than an archaic synecdoche, for they were using literal weapons such as explosives in their campaigns. As Millicent Fawcett firmly disagreed with their tactics, her enthusiasm for Parry's song may have been due to its subsuming of warrior imagery under strictly "mental fight."

Parry died in October 1918, a month before the armistice that put an end to the war that he had watched with despair. A tablet to his memory is mounted in Gloucester Cathedral, with an inscription by Bridges. For his part, Bridges celebrated the Allied victory with a truly awful poem called "Britannia Victrix," which belongs in a select anthology with Wordsworth's "Thanksgiving Ode" of 1816.

Blake's poem is a four-square structure: four quatrains of iambic tetrameter, with half a dozen trochaic inversions but consistently octosyllabic (except possibly line 7, if one gives "Jerusalem" four syllables). In an actual recital of the poem, of course, one will give some syllables intermediate stresses: "those" will take more weight than "And" or "in," for example, while "Shine" might take a stress almost

equal to "forth." To my ear the poem is metrically interesting throughout, for it escapes sing-song monotony through just enough inversions and semi-stresses. The final stanza, for instance, is perfectly regular except for the inversion in the third foot of line 14, putting the stressed "sleep" next to "sword," a striking effect that brings out the suggestion that the sword is not only spiritual but conscious.

Once Parry decided to couple the stanzas and compose an eight-line melody, he was faced with certain difficulties, for neither as quatrains nor as octets are they metrically equivalent or "strophic." The four "Bring me" lines match only the second line of stanza one. The phrase "pleasant pastures" is a more substantial phrase than the corresponding "chariot of," though in metrical schema they are the same. Some inadequacies in the resulting setting seem to be due to the compromises required to fit the tune to two somewhat different metrical patterns; thus "chariot of" gets an almost absurd weight. I think too that Parry planned the melody of the sixth line to fit line 14 of the original, not line 6, for it is perfect for "Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand" ("sword" and "sleep" each receiving a full beat), but too portentous for "-on our." But there are few of these awkward moments. The tune seems right for the text in so many ways that it is difficult to return to the text alone without hearing it in the mind, and I have had students who think Blake wrote the music himself.

Parry's setting is in D major and three-four time. That it is in triple meter might be surprising when one thinks of the four beats and eight syllables of the poem, but musical rhythm, of course, is much less dependent on stress than on time or interval; it is quantitative rather than qualitative, to use the terms of classical metrics. The analysis will be a little easier if we think of the three quarter notes or crotchets as six eighth notes or quavers, whereby an eighth note gets one count or beat and there are six counts per measure. Since the quantitative equivalent of an iamb is three beats—one beat for the "short" and two for the "long"—it then should not be a surprise after all that Parry gives two measures (12 beats) to each line. On the other hand he seldom distributes two beats to the originally stressed syllables and one to the unstressed; that would have been unbearable. Instead, after pondering what to do with feet and time, he gave "feet" three beats and "time" four, while to the other two stressed syllables, "did" and "an-," he gave only one beat. The result sounds natural semantically, since "feet" and "time" are more significant than "did" and "an-" (the latter gaining semantic weight with its second syllable, to which Parry wrote two sixteenth notes). As he begins each line in mid-measure, "feet" and "time," along with "Eng(land)," "green," "ho(ly)," "God," and so on, fall on the opening beat or downbeat of the measure.

As an experiment I have tried to convey to those who do not read music the rhythmical structure of the setting by writing numbers above the syllables. This is how one would

²⁴ Graves 2: 93; Dibble 485.

²⁵ Both examples from Cheryl R. Jorgensen-Earp, "The Transfiguring Sword": *The Just War of the Women's Social and Political Union* (Tuscaloosa: U of Alabama P, 1997) 91. This book deals mainly with British women who took up violence for the cause.

count it if each eighth note had one beat, with the symbol "&" representing a half-beat (sixteenth note).²⁶

(3 1/2 measures of accompaniment)

4 5 6	123 4 5 6	1234
And did those	feet in ancient	time
5 6	1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3
Walk upon	England's mountains	green?
4 5 6	123 4 5 6	123
And was the	ho - ly Lamb of	God
4 5 6	1 2 3 4 5 6	123
On England's	pleasant pastures	seen?
4 5 6	123 4 5 6 &	123
And did the	countenance di-	vine
4 5 6	123 4 5 6	1 2 3
Shine forth up-	on our clouded	hills?
4 5 6	12 & 3 4 5 6 &	123
And was Je-	ru-salem builded	here
4 5 6	1 2 & 3 4 5 6	1234
Among these	dark satan - ic	mills?

(2 2/3 measures of accompaniment)

3 4 5 6	123 4 5 6	1234
Bring me my	bow of burning	gold
5 6	1 2 3 4 5 6	123
Bring me my	arrows of de-	sire!
4 5 6	1 2 3 4 5 6	123
Bring me my	spear! O clouds un-	fold!
4 5 6	12 & 3 4 5 6	123
Bring me my	chari- ot of	fire!
4 5 6	1 2 3 4 5 6 &	1 2 3
I will not	cease from mental	fight,
4 5 6	1 2 3 4 5 6	123
Nor shall my	sword sleep in my	hand,
4 5 6	1 2 3 4 5 6 &	123
Till we have	built Je - ru - sa	lem
4 5 6	1 2 3 4 5 6	123456 12
In England's	green and pleasant	la----- -nd.

(1 2/3 measures of accompaniment)

Though Bridges insisted that it be "suitable, simple music to Blake's stanzas—music that an audience could take up and join in," the setting is a good deal less simple than that of most congregational hymns. The organ or piano accompaniment is more elaborate than normal, with a three-and-a-half-measure prelude, a somewhat shorter interlude (or prelude to the second half), and a postlude of one and a half measures. There is enough going on in the harmony that even an experienced sight-reader of hymns will need to practice it carefully. In part to accommodate the different pat-

²⁶ Text from *The Church Hymnary*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1973) (1st ed. 1927).

terns of emphasis of the two halves, it is to some extent "through-composed" like a Lied or art-song, that is, it is not perfectly strophic like hymns in a hymnal, where each stanza has the identical music. Parry altered the "left-hand" accompaniment here and there, and the dynamic markings, but, more important, he varied the melody, or rather the rhythm of the melody, at three significant points.

Most of the lines begin, as the "counting" text shows, at the second half of the measure, that is, on the fourth beat (at six beats per measure); the exception in each half is the second line, which begins on the fifth beat ("Walk upon" and "Bring me my"), the words that end the preceding lines ("time" and "gold") having each taken four beats. So far they are perfectly parallel strophically—even to the falling of the sixth beat on two syllables ("upon" and "me my"). But the opening word of the second half ("Bring") begins one beat earlier in the first measure and lasts for two beats, the "O" of the third line does the same thing in the second measure, and the "sleep" following "sword" does the same thing in the second measure of the sixth. In all three cases Parry jumps the gun and slightly throws off the rhythm as established in the first half, but to good effect: the early arrival of the first "Bring" expresses its urgency (softened a little by its falling nearly at the bottom of the melodic range), as if the speaker cannot wait another beat to take up his bow, and so with the "O" on high D, an octave above the "Bring," as if he can no longer contain himself. (All the more effective, I think, since the "O" is unstressed, or only lightly stressed, in the verse scansion.) As for "sleep," also on high D, the melody seems made for it, as I suggested, and it gives proper weight to the metrical inversion of Blake's original poem.

Walford Davies was the first to see the setting, the day after Parry wrote it, and they discussed it at length. A few years later Davies remembered:

One momentary act of his should perhaps be told here. He ceased to speak, and put his finger on the note D in the second stanza where the words "O clouds unfold" break his rhythm. I do not think any word passed about it, yet he made it perfectly clear that this was the one note and one moment of the song which he treasured.²⁷

As it is often printed in hymnals, in strophic form, the two stanzas lineated one above the other between the bass and treble clefs, the moment Parry treasured is obliterated, along with the comparable "Bring" and "sleep." The second stanza is assimilated to the rhythm of the first, so "Bring," "O," and "sleep" all begin on the fourth beat and last half as long. No doubt the hymn is easier to sing that way, and it certainly takes up less space in the hymnal, but the result is a diminished thing. Two recordings, by Emerson, Lake and

²⁷ Letter from Sir Walford Davies to *The Times*, 27 August 1927, quoted in Dibble 484.

Palmer in 1973 and by Billy Bragg in 1990, though they are both effective and interesting renditions (the former adding many syncopations and fermatas to the rhythm), are weaker than they should be because they depended on a strophic text.

The first hymnal to include "Jerusalem" was *A Students' Hymnal*, published by the Student Christian Movement in 1923 (illus. 1 and 2-6). Founded at Cambridge in 1892, the SCM encouraged students to practice the Christian life and recruited them as missionaries.²⁸ Hence it was exactly the right hymn to conclude the movie *Chariots of Fire* (1981), which deals with a Scottish Christian athlete called to be a missionary after he competes in the 1924 Olympic games. Probably through SCM the *American Student Hymnal* carried it in 1928, while the *Church Hymnary* (Church of Scotland and Presbyterian Churches) included it in 1927. The Church of England followed suit with the text but not the music in the 1933 revision of *The English Hymnal* (orig. 1906). The hymn is now very common in English public schools and American private schools.

Since its first appearance in an American hymnal, unfortunately, it has often been Americanized. The version in the *American Student Hymnal*, edited by H. Augustine Smith, begins:

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon Zion's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God
In Zion's pleasant pastures seen?

It would have been all right to substitute "America" for "England" if the meter had permitted, but to insert "Zion" is to destroy the point of the whole stanza and make the speaker into an idiot. Of course Jesus walked in Zion! So what?

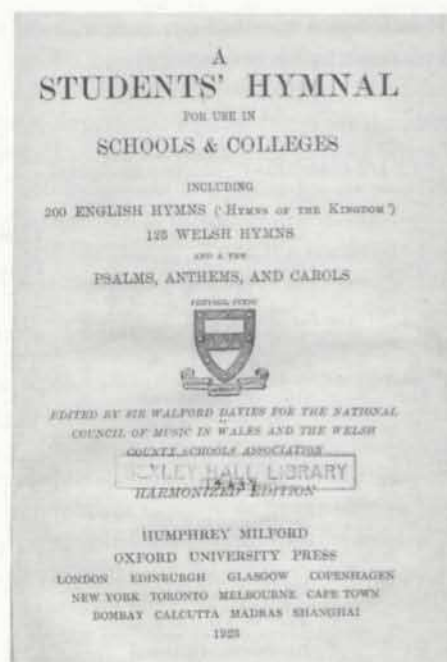
There are several other tamperings that drain sense out of the text:

And could that countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And could Jerusalem arise
Among these dark satanic mills?

What is the motive for denying that Jerusalem is built like any other city? The editor might have substituted "And could they build Jerusalem," which would have paralleled line 15 and eliminated the weak "builded here"; instead he gives us the even weaker, almost unsingable, "arise," with two beats on "a-." Apparently he felt uneasy at the illogical slide from ancient time to the present and so substituted the conditional "could." But it saps the dramatic tension, the sense of astonishment, while making it only a little more logical.

This version ends not with "Zion" again, which would be too absurd even for Mr. Smith, but with

²⁸ Rogal 23-24.



1 Cover of *A Students' Hymnal* (1923), the first hymnal to include "Jerusalem."

Till we have built Jerusalem,
In every green and pleasant land.

We might have thought that the point was to build Jerusalem (or make it arise) here—in America. He might have written "In this our green and pleasant land."²⁹ But as it stands it is certainly well adapted for recruiting overseas missionaries.

One would think the labor movement would have adopted the song right away. Several historians of the period have told me they thought "Jerusalem" was sung by miners and other workers during the great General Strike of 1926, but I have been unable to confirm it. We do know that when the Strike came to an end on 12 May in a defeat for the miners, Prime Minister Baldwin made a radio broadcast to the nation, which was followed by a BBC "valedictory." It concluded: "In going back to work to-morrow, or the next day, can we not all go as fellow-craftsmen, resolved in the determination to pick up the broken pieces, repair the gaps, and build the walls of a more enduring city—the city revealed to the mystical eyes of William Blake when he wrote:—" and then followed all four stanzas. This is powerful rhetoric, though how much it moved the workers, who won nothing from the largest strike in British history, is another matter. It is possible that the song had been widely sung by the workers, in which case the BBC tried to co-opt it, perhaps as

²⁹ A Connecticut friend tells me he often substitutes "New England" for "England." In Wales, apparently, "Jerusalem" is sung enthusiastically in Welsh, with "Cymru" replacing "England." G. V. Barton, "Blake's 'Cymru,'" *Independent* [London], 23 May 1996, 19.

Lyndon Johnson announced "We shall overcome" in 1965, but since for 10 years the song had been circulating widely among many groups it does not seem likely that the labor movement had made it distinctively its own.³⁰ It may have done so in 1945, however, for it was sung outside Transport House, the Labour Party headquarters, after the Labour electoral victory.³¹ In America labor unionists and leftists have often sung the song or had it performed at rallies. It was Walter Reuther's favorite hymn.³² Paul Robeson sang it often and recorded it. Its manifest Englishness may have limited its appeal, but the American left has been strongly internationalist and has often sponsored concerts and published books with songs from around the world. At least the left has not, as far as I know, been guilty of rewriting it.

Two important motion pictures have drawn heavily on the hymn. It is the theme music to *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner* (1962), directed by Tony Richardson, and based on the novel by Alan Sillitoe. The film tells of a young man (played by Tom Courtenay) in a reform school whose talent for long-distance running is exploited by the headmaster (Michael Redgrave) for the glory of the school. We hear instrumental variations of the melody during the boy's long runs, and in one painful scene the boys sing the hymn in assembly while a captured runaway is beaten with a strap in an office. The bitterness of the irony here relies on the hymn's revolutionary or reformist provenance. The other, as we noted, is *Chariots of Fire* (1981), directed by Hugh Hudson. Though the title is drawn from the hymn, the hymn itself is not heard until the final scene in a church. Most viewers of the film remember the music of Vangelis Papathanassiou, but, unless I am imagining things, the evocative main theme of his music is reminiscent of Parry's melody. Yet here the associations of the hymn seem the contrary of those in the earlier film: idealistic, no doubt, but more concerned with missionary work and personal moral courage—the earliest context for the imagery of spiritual warfare, after all (Ephesians 6.11-17)—than with social reconstruction.

It is not surprising, then, that the socialist singer Billy Bragg has run into opposition in his championing of the song. "My belief that 'Jerusalem' is a left-wing anthem has got me into arguments with public schoolboys at Eton and

Trotskyist newspaper sellers in Trafalgar Square. I remain convinced that the song does not belong alongside 'Rule Britannia' and 'Land of Hope and Glory' at the last night of the Proms."³³ I agree with Bragg about "Jerusalem," but I think we should encourage the patriotic bourgeoisie to come and sing it anyway. It will do them good.

Discography

The song has been recorded too many times to make a thorough list possible or necessary. Here are some examples on CD:

Jerusalem, with the Choir of Winchester Cathedral, the Waynflete Singers, and the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (Argo D102372); orchestral version by Elgar. Includes "Blest pair of Sirens," "I was glad," and two more songs by Parry, as well as several by Stanford and Elgar, among others.

I Was Glad: Cathedral Music by Parry, with the St. George's Chapel Choir, Windsor (Hyperion CDA66273); organ accompaniment. Includes "I was glad," "Evening Service in D," "Songs of Farewell," and "Hear my Words, Ye People."

Allegri: Miserere, with the Choir of Trinity College, Cambridge (BMG/Conifer 16851). Includes Parry's "I was glad" and a song by Walford Davies, as well as works by Allegri, Schubert, Barber, Bach, Mendelssohn, et al.

The Last Night of the Proms, with the BBC Chorus, Choral Society, and Orchestra, recorded live at the Royal Albert Hall, directed by Sir Colin Davis (Philips 420-085-2); orchestral version by Elgar. Includes pieces by Elgar, Berlioz, Wagner, Mendelssohn, and Handel, and of course Arne's "Rule Britannia."

Paul Robeson, *Ballad for Americans* (Vanguard B000000ECS); and *The Odyssey of Paul Robeson* (Vanguard Classics B00000239N).

Emerson, Lake and Palmer, *Brain Salad Surgery* (Rhino R2-72459). This is an acid-rock "trip-music" version with heavy synthesizer overlay and echoey voice. According to Greg Lake, however, "The lyrics are very bland except for one line, 'Bring me my bow of burning gold / Bring me my arrows of desire.' The rest of the song was all waffle. But when it came to that line, it was a moment that you had to sing the song for" (liner notes).

Billy Bragg, *The Internationale* (Utility/Wea/Elektra 60960-2); Bragg also has a CD called *William Blake*, but there is nothing by Blake on it.

³³ Liner notes to Bragg's *The Internationale*.

³⁰ Alfred Havighurst, *Twentieth-Century Britain*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper, 1962) 198-99, seems to say that Baldwin himself quoted the poem. For the text of the BBC statement, see R. Page Arnot, ed., *The General Strike: May 1926: Its Origin and History* (London: Labour Research Dept., 1926; rpt. New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1967) 228-29.

³¹ "Scholars will assert that the famous 'Jerusalem' hymn is crypto-Anglo-Israelitism or what not; but when it was sung in front of Transport House at the Labour victory of 1945 the singers showed that they understood it far better than such scholars did." Northrop Frye, "Blake After Two Centuries," *University of Toronto Quarterly* 27 (1957), rpt. in Frye, *Fables of Identity* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1963) 140.

³² I owe this fact to Frank Wallick, editor of the United Auto Workers newsletter, in a personal conversation, June 1981.

11. And did those feet in ancient time

(JERUSALEM. 8888. 8888)

Doh = D.

Slow, but with animation.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 3/4 time signature. The first system shows a vocal line with a whole rest followed by a colon, and a piano accompaniment starting with a fortissimo (ff) dynamic. The second system continues the piano accompaniment with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic and a crescendo (cres.) marking. The third system introduces a vocal solo (SOLO. mf) with the lyrics 'And did those feet in an - cient'. The piano accompaniment continues with a fortissimo (ff) dynamic and a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The score concludes with a final chord in the piano part.

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p

{ | s :- :l .s .f | s .m :r :d | l :- :d :m .s }
time Walk up-on Eng-land's moun-tains green? And was the

{ | l :- :d' :t .l .s | l :- :l :t .m | s .fe :m :r }
Ho - ly Lamb of God On England's plea-sant pas - tures

mf *poco cres.*

{ | s :- :r :r .m | f :- :l :s .r | f :- :r :f .s }
seen? And did the Coun - te-nance Di - vine Shine forth up-

mf *poco cres.*

f

{ | 1 :- .d' :ta .s | 1 :- .f :l .d' | r' .d' :t :t .l }

on our cloud-ed hills? And was Je - ru - sa - lem build - ed

poco rit.

{ | s :- .s :d' .l | s .l :m :r | d :- : }

here A-mong those dark Sa - tan - ic mills?

poco rit.

f

ALL AVAILABLE VOICES. *mf*

{ | : : : : : | :d :m .s }

Bring me my

f *mf*

{ | l :- d' : l .s, f | s :- : l .s, f | s .m : r : d }

bow of burn-ing gold! Bring me my ar-rows of de -

{ | l :- d : m .s | l : d' : t .l, s | l :- l : t .m }

- sire! Bring me my spear! O clouds un - fold! Bring me my

{ | s ., fe : m : r | s :- .r : r .m | f :- .l : s ., r }

Cha - ri - ot of Fire! I will not cease from men - tal

Allargando.

{ f :- r :f .s | l :d' :ta .s | l :- f :l .d' }

fight; Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand Till we have

ff *rit.*

{ r' :- .d' :t .l | s :- .s :d' .l | s .l :m :r }

built Je - ru - sa - lem In England's green and plea - sant

ff *rit.*

{ d' :- :- | :- : :- | :- : :- || }

land.

8

28