

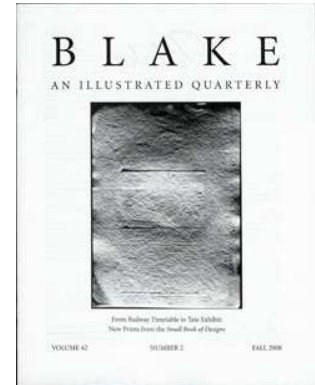
AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY BLAKE

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

“Mrs Chetwynd & her Brother” and “Mr.
Chetwynd”

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that view further by creating the impression that an author is inherently obscure or too complex for many readers.

Admittedly, there is much that will intimidate and discom-bobulate in Blake, and so an assumption that the audience needs help may lead to some extremely valuable insights through explanation and other assistance, as frequently occurs in Stevenson's case. However, it also may lead to the exclusion of material that readers will never otherwise encounter—making Blake accessible by offering only what is easier to handle. I think seasoned Blakeans (and especially editors) do a disservice to fellow travelers, even those only on the bunny slopes of Mont Blake, by directing them to “miss out” on complexity and possible confusion, by smoothing over every rough patch on the path, or by describing the author in ways that make him seem obscure and obtuse.⁶ Possibly influenced in instances such as these, readers might never want to return to Blake and deepen their study of his creations. Call me cruel, but I believe that young readers would benefit from a lot less hand-holding and a lot more exposure to ambiguity and complexity—accompanied by plenty of encouragement to be creative explorers in their studies. Let them each become the child in the “London” illustration, confidently leading a bent old man, rather than the child in the illustration for “The Little Boy Found,” being led by some revered savior-like figure. “Unless ye become as little children”

Nevertheless, I believe Stevenson's labors shine brightly, most especially because their result serves as a sort of hub, convergence point, or intermediary for the many other means by which readers may come to Blake's writings: scholarly complete editions focused on providing a sound text, other selected editions of Blake heavily enriched by outside scholarship (such as the Norton critical edition [2nd ed., 2007] with its supplementary criticism), more general anthologies that include pieces by Blake, and purely interpretive critical works. Consequently, *Blake: The Complete Poems* does an admirable job of serving its intended audience. That primary audience is not the only one that can benefit from having both a *reading* text based on a reliable authority (Erdman) and the fullest body extant of commentary from a longtime Blake scholar (much fuller than Bloom's in the Erdman edition, for example). Seasoned critics, too, likely can use Stevenson's edition for an enjoyable read and, perhaps on occasion, a bit of assistance in their own thinking. While *Blake: The Complete Poems* surely leaves more to be desired, even in its third instantiation, I feel that it manages largely to achieve the goals that the editor sets for it. It becomes even more remarkable by doing so in an attractive, affordable physical object in this age when presses are reducing their material output and electronic alternatives gain popularity—making it a book that should be saved at

6. Stevenson's rhetoric is almost always mild in addressing Blake, but a few times he comes across as a bit sharp or judgmental. For example, “a strange poem, unsatisfactory in its lack of completeness, yet compelling in its dreamlike logic, in spite of its gruesome titlepage” (headnote to *The Book of Los*, 284).

the end of the semester. Every reader should approach every edition, be it from a university library or a big-box bookstore, consciously and critically; Stevenson's is no exception. But I think that, under this editor's reliable eye, it serves as one of the more useful guides through the Blakean universe, and so we can praise Stevenson for undertaking that formidable task once again. Happy birthday, Mr. Blake.

MINUTE PARTICULAR

“M^{rs} Chetwynd & her Brother” and “M^r. Chetwynd”

BY ANGUS WHITEHEAD

IF, as Keri Davies suggests in a recent essay about Blake collector Rebekah Bliss, “every person who bought Blake's work in his lifetime is of significance to Blake scholarship,”¹ the identity of another contemporary female purchaser of the poet-artist's work, albeit on a smaller scale, merits closer investigation. William Blake twice refers to “M^{rs} Chetwynd.” On 30 January 1803 Blake wrote from Felpham to his brother James at 28 Broad Street, Carnaby Market, “I send with this 5 Copies of N4 of the Ballads for M^{rs} Flaxman & Five more two of which you will be so good as to give to M^{rs} Chetwynd if she should call or send for them.”² According to G. E. Bentley, Jr., “Mrs Chetwynd took two copies of the fourth Ballad from James Blake ... and probably had the preceding numbers as well, eight in all (£1.0.0).”³ Eighteen months later, Mrs. Chetwynd, accompanied by her brother, called on Blake at his lodgings and studio at 17 South Molton Street. On 28 September 1804 Blake wrote to William Hayley:

I had the pleasure of a call from M^{rs} Chetwynd & her Brother. a Giant in body mild & polite in soul as I have in general found great bodies to be they were much pleased with Romneys Designs. M^{rs} C. sent to me the two articles for you & for the safety of which by the Coach I had some fears till M^r [William] Meyer obligingly undertook to convey them safe⁴

I wish to thank Keri Davies and Catherine Taylor for their assistance with this note.

1. Keri Davies, “Rebekah Bliss: Collector of William Blake and Oriental Books,” *The Reception of Blake in the Orient*, ed. Steve Clark and Masashi Suzuki (London: Continuum, 2006) 38.

2. E 727.

3. G. E. Bentley, Jr., *Blake Records*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004) [hereafter BR(2)] 153.

4. E 755.

From Blake's two brief allusions to her we may gather that Mrs. Chetwynd was a member of Hayley's circle who shared some interest in the poet and biographer's literary pursuits. She also appears to have been on good terms with Blake during the period 1803-04. Nevertheless, in Blake studies little else is known of either Mrs. Chetwynd or her brother. She is not mentioned in William Hayley's posthumously published *Memoirs* (1823), nor is she referred to in Morchard Bishop's biography, *Blake's Hayley* (1951). Of Blake's numerous biographers, only Thomas Wright, in his *Life of William Blake* (1929), attempts to provide new information concerning Mrs. Chetwynd. Wright describes her as a pretty widow with two daughters from Ham, near Richmond, whom Hayley met about 1800.⁵ According to Wright, Hayley also assisted Mrs. Chetwynd's eldest daughter with her Italian.⁶ No subsequent biographer of Blake has explored or expanded upon Wright's claims. However, in a recent paper that explores Catherine Blake's relationship with William Hayley, Mark Crosby cites what must have been one of Wright's sources, a passage from the manuscript of Hayley's autobiography, excised from the published work presumably by the editor, John Johnson.

In this passage Hayley claims that in 1800, immediately following a disappointment in love, he was indebted to "a young female friend ... for soothing the inquietude of his heart & Mind with a ... tender filial affection."

This young Lady of 15 was the eldest of an orphan family, that having lost a most amiable father by a calamitous skirmish in Ireland, with circumstances of horror & distress, was fortuitously conducted to Felpham in the summer of 1800 by an excellent mother whose shattered nerves required seabathing. The desolate parent & her orphans soon became familiar with Hayley, ever ready to sympathise with the afflicted. The eldest girl Penelope attended him to improve herself in Italian, which she had begun to learn, & her exemplary mother Mrs Chetwyn[d] had such generous confidence in the probity of her new friend that in departing from the coast, she confided her young Penelope to his care. He restored the young Penelope to her mother on Friday the 7 November. Such was his tender esteem & affection that he would probably have made her his wife.⁷

5. During the period 1800-09 Penelope Chetwynd and her children lived in the small village of Ham Common near Richmond. See *Ambulator: Pocket Companion of a Tour around London*, 7th ed. (London: J. Scatcherd, 1810) 103; *Monthly Magazine* (1 August 1809): 104.

6. Thomas Wright, *Life of William Blake* (Olney: Thomas Wright, 1929) 1:101. See also 1:108, 111, 114. Sadly, Wright provides no identifiable source for his information. However, in an endnote he refers to William Meyer's letters (2:125). With minimal supporting evidence, Wright identifies Mrs. Chetwynd with the Gwendolen of Blake's *Jerusalem* (see, for example, 1:130, 2:57). About 1803 Hayley appears to have taught Blake Latin, Greek, and Hebrew (BR[2] 681fn; E 727).

7. William Hayley, "Anecdotes of the Family Life and Writings of William Hayley the Biographer of Cowper," 3 vols., General MSS Vol. 352, James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, 2:48-50, cited in Mark Crosby, "The Perfect Helpmeet: Hayley's Catherine," unpublished con-

Two recently published letters of the poet and novelist Charlotte Smith, to whom William Hayley had formerly acted as patron and supporter, throw further light on the identity of Mrs. Chetwynd, and suggest that by early 1801 she herself had become the object of Hayley's affections.

In a letter to the Irish antiquary and acquaintance of Hayley's, Joseph Cooper Walker, dated 14 April 1801, Smith observes,

It is now many months since I have heard of M^r Hayley otherwise than by common report, which says that he is going to be married to a M^{rs} Chetwynd, the widow of a Gentleman who was killed in Ireland in the rebellion & who has five children, none of them quite children.⁸

On 7 October 1801, in a further letter to Walker, Smith writes, "You probably correspond with our old friend M^r Hayley and know the Lady of your Count[r]y with whom he is as I understand soon to be united."⁹ Although Hayley married neither Mrs. Chetwynd nor her eldest daughter, he was certainly in regular contact with Mrs. Chetwynd and her "orphan family" during the early 1800s. The editor of Smith's correspondence, Judith Phillips Stanton, identifies Mrs. Chetwynd as "Penelope Carleton Chetwynd, daughter of John Carleton of Woodside, Co. Cork"¹⁰ As noted by Hayley and Smith, she had recently been widowed. Stanton informs us that Penelope Chetwynd's husband William Chetwynd (1754-98), "grandson of the third Viscount Chetwynd, was killed in action with the Irish rebels near Saintfield, Co. Down, 11 June 1798."¹¹

Crosby's and Stanton's information concerning Mrs. Chetwynd can be supplemented by other sources. The *International Genealogical Index* (IGI) reveals that Penelope Carleton was born near Cork about 1762. She married William Chetwynd, son and heir of Rev. Hon. John Chetwynd, Precentor of Cork, and Judith Piggott, at Cork on 30 May 1783.¹² According to

ference paper delivered at the William Blake at 250 conference, York, 30 July-1 August 2007. I wish to thank Mark Crosby for allowing me to cite his discovery here. Mrs. Chetwynd's eldest daughter Penelope married Thomas Pearson Firmin at Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey, in December 1801 (*International Genealogical Index* [IGI]).

8. Judith Phillips Stanton, ed., *The Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003) 371. I can find no evidence of Mrs. Chetwynd's having a fifth child (see note 23 below).

9. Stanton 384. For a third reference to Hayley's possible remarriage in an undated letter from Smith to Walker, dated by Stanton to late March-early April 1802, see Stanton 416-17.

10. Stanton 372n6. John Carleton was clearly a member of the Irish gentry. "John Carleton, Esq. Woodside" is listed as a subscriber to *The Post-Chaise Companion: or, Travellers Directory, through Ireland. ... To Which Is Added, a Dictionary, or Alphabetical Tables. Shewing the Distance of All the Principal Cities, ... from Each Other* (Dublin: William Wilson, 1788) x. The same volume mentions that, traveling from Cork to Tralee, "Near 4 miles from Cork on the L is Wood-Side, the seat of Mr Carleton" (*Post-Chaise Companion* 354).

11. Stanton 372n6.

12. See IGI; Charles Mosley, ed., *Burke's Peerage and Baronetage*, 106th ed. (Crans, Switzerland: Burke's Peerage [Genealogical Books] Ltd., 1999) 1:555. *Alumni Cantabrigiensis* reveals that William Chetwynd attended Westminster School and was admitted as a non-resident pensioner at

Henry Edward Chetwynd-Stapleton in his *The Chetwynds of Ingestre* (1892), when 44-year-old William Chetwynd was killed at the battle of Saintfield, he "was a captain in the army but serving as a paymaster of a York fencible regiment commanded by his cousin Granville Anson Chetwynd-Stapleton"¹³ Of Captain Chetwynd's role at Saintfield, John Jones, in *An Impartial Narrative of Each Engagement Which Took Place between His Majesty's Forces and the Rebels, during the Irish Rebellion, 1798*, writes:

The valour of the officers that fell [at Saintfield] deserves to be publicly recorded, but that of the amiable, gallant, and much-loved Capt. C ought not to be passed without particular notice.—This brave fellow, at the head of his men, received no less than nine pike wounds! notwithstanding which, he maintained his position, encouraging by his example his men to fight like loyal soldiers; till alas, two wounds from musquets deprived this hero of his existence, and our country of his future services.¹⁴

On first becoming acquainted with Penelope Chetwynd and presumably her children, perhaps as early as September 1800, Blake probably learned from Hayley that the Chetwynd family comprised the widow and orphans of a celebrated military hero killed during the Irish insurgency of 1798.

G. E. Bentley, Jr., identifies Mrs. Chetwynd's brother, described by Blake as "a Giant in body mild & polite in soul as I have in general found great bodies to be," as the "M^r. Chetwynd" mentioned by the traveler and writer John Carr in a letter to Hayley dated 9 September 1801.¹⁵ Carr writes: "Pray remember me warmly to M^r. Chetwynd. he is a noble Youth—You & Blake

have made a Coxcomb of a wretched untutored Artist[.]"¹⁶ But Mrs. Chetwynd's brother cannot have been the Mr. Chetwynd referred to by Carr. We have now established that Chetwynd was Penelope Carleton's married name. Therefore, in all likelihood, Penelope Chetwynd's brother's surname was Carleton.¹⁷

Penelope Carleton Chetwynd had three younger brothers. Of the eldest, John Barry Carleton (born c. 1771), I can trace no record after April 1791, when he was made freeman of Cork City. His brothers appear in contemporary literature as resident at Woodside, so he may therefore have died some time before his sister's visit to Blake.

The second brother, Edward Mitchell Carleton (born c. 1773), was ordained in 1792, and the following year was licensed to the curacy of the parish of Carrigrohanebeg adjoining Woodside. He married Elizabeth Withers in January 1799, with whom he produced a family of eleven. In early 1804, Edward Carleton became prebendary of St. Michael's, Cork, a position he held until his resignation in 1825. If not the demands of his new post, then the responsibilities of his rapidly growing family may have made a social visit to London in the late summer of 1804 problematic.¹⁸

It therefore seems likely that it was Penelope's youngest brother who accompanied his sister to the Blakes'. Webber (or Weber) Carleton was born about 1777, and although like his brothers he entered Trinity College, Dublin, he did not graduate.¹⁹ However, as a painter of some ability, by 1815 he was an established, if amateur, artist as well as a prominent member of Cork's arts scene. Certainly he was competent enough to have exhibited his work at the first Munster exhibition of 1815. He was a member of the Cork Society for Promoting the Fine Arts from its inception in 1816 until his death in 1832, regularly serving on its committee and exhibiting at the society's annual exhibition.²⁰ The likelihood that Webber

Trinity College, Cambridge, on 29 May 1769 (see John Venn, J. A. Venn, eds., *Alumni Cantabrigiensis: A Biographical List of All Known Students, Graduates and Holders of Office at the University of Cambridge, from the Earliest Times to 1900* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922-54] 2:25). Three years earlier Hayley had spent his final year as an undergraduate at Trinity (*Alumni Cantabrigiensis* 3:25; DNB). Chetwynd was admitted to Lincoln's Inn on 24 June 1771, but at the beginning of October 1771 he migrated to Trinity College, Dublin, where he was awarded his BA in 1775 (*Alumni Dublinenses* [Dublin: A. Thom and Co., 1935] 148).

13. Henry Edward Chetwynd-Stapleton, *The Chetwynds of Ingestre; Being a History of That Family from a Very Early Date with Illustrations by the Author* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1892) 251.

14. [John Jones], *An Impartial Narrative of Each Engagement Which Took Place between His Majesty's Forces and the Rebels, during the Irish Rebellion, 1798. ... Carefully Collected from Authentic Letters, by John Jones. Embellished with Engravings of the Battles of Arklow and Tara-Hill*, 4th ed. (Dublin: John Jones, 1800) 1:58-59. See also *A History of the Irish Rebellion, in the Year, 1798* (Dublin, 1799) 86.

15. BR(2) 109; see also James King, *William Blake, His Life* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991) 149. In the index to BR(2), John Carr's reference to "M^r. Chetwynd" and Blake's reference to Mrs. Chetwynd's brother are listed under the heading George Chetwynd. A George Chetwynd revised Richard Burn's *The Justice of the Peace, and Parish Officer* (1825), a work Bentley cites in a discussion of Blake's entered plea of "not guilty" to the charge of sedition at the Michaelmas Quarter Sessions, Petworth, 4 October 1803 (BR[2] 170). See BR(2) 108-09, 857n117.

16. BR(2) 109. In suggesting that Hayley and Blake had "made a Coxcomb" of Chetwynd, Carr seems to be joking, perhaps alluding to both Blake's and Hayley's possibly over-generous praise of Mr. Chetwynd's artistic efforts. Carr's words may echo a passage in William Cowper's letter to John Johnson, 23 March 1790, with which Hayley, Blake, and Carr would have been familiar from Hayley's recent editing of Cowper's correspondence: "If you should ever prove a coxcomb, from which character you stand just now at a greater distance than any young man I know, it shall never be said that I have made you one." See William Cowper, *The Letters and Prose Writings of William Cowper*, ed. James King and Charles Ryskamp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979-86) 3:363-65. In his journal for Friday, 26 June 1801, John Marsh wrote: "we drove to Felpham & drank tea with M^r. Hayley where we met M^r. Blake y^e artist & young M^r. Chetwynd ..." (BR[2] 108).

17. Conversely, Bentley may have assumed that Mrs. Chetwynd was single and that, in referring to her so, Blake was using the title "Mrs." as an honorific applied to single women of sufficient age, rank, and wealth.

18. However, Blake's reference to Mrs. Chetwynd's brother as "mild & polite in soul as I have in general found great bodies to be" may just possibly refer to the eminent Cork clergyman Edward Mitchell Carleton.

19. See *Alumni Dublinenses* 134. His elder brothers graduated in 1789 and 1791 respectively.

20. Peter Murray, "Cork Art History," Crawford Art Gallery, Cork, accessed 12 April 2008 <<http://www.crawfordartgallery.com/1800-1825>>.

Carleton, amateur Cork artist, visited the Blakes provides an intriguing context for Blake's observation to Hayley that both Penelope Chetwynd and her brother "were much pleased with Romneys Designs" that Blake had borrowed from various sources to engrave for Hayley's *Life of George Romney*.

The "M^r. Chetwynd" who, according to John Carr, was taught painting by Blake and Hayley at Felpham in September 1801, can now be identified. Catharine Kearsley, in her *Kearsley's Complete Peerage, of England, Scotland and Ireland* (1794), writes of "William [Chetwynd] who married Penelope Carleton, by whom he has issue, a son and 3 daughters"²¹ According to Hayley (cited above), Penelope Chetwynd's eldest child Penelope was aged fifteen in 1800. She must therefore have been born about 1785, a year or two after her parents married. Penelope Chetwynd's only son, John, can therefore have been no younger than eight and no older than fifteen in 1801.²² John Chetwynd was therefore old enough to be "M^r. Chetwynd," the "noble Youth" referred to by Carr. Hayley and Blake taught painting not to Penelope Chetwynd's brother, but to her orphaned son, young John Chetwynd.²³

In the light of the new information concerning Penelope Carleton Chetwynd discussed in this note, it is clear that Mrs. Chetwynd is of significance to Blake studies. As a female member of the gentry she, like Rebekah Bliss, challenges the commonplace view of Blake's audience as male, radical, and dissenting. Her nationality is also important. Previously, the only identified Irish customers for Blake's work were Martin Archer Shee (of Dublin) and Sir Richard Newcomen Gore-Booth (of Sligo), subscribers to Robert Hartley Cromek's edition of Blair's *Grave* in 1808.²⁴ Even more significantly,

html>; see also Richard Sainthill, *An Olla Podrida; or, Scraps, Numismatic, Antiquarian and Literary* (London: Nicholls and Son, 1844) 227. Blake's fellow printmaker and artist James Barry also hailed from Cork.

On 2 April 1816 the *Limerick General Advertiser* reported that on "Tuesday [26 March] morning a duel took place at the Dublin Turnpike, near Cork, between Walter Croker Esq and Webber Carleton Esq and after exchanging shots without injury to either party, the business was adjusted." Webber's involvement in this potentially fatal conflict sits strangely with Blake's estimation of Penelope Chetwynd's brother as a man "mild & polite in soul."

21. Catharine Kearsley, *Kearsley's Complete Peerage, of England, Scotland and Ireland; Together with an Extinct Peerage of the Three Kingdoms* (London: C. and G. Kearsley, 1794) 397.

22. See Burke's *Peerage and Baronetage*, 92nd ed. (London: Burke's Peerage Ltd., 1934) 528.

23. As Marsh's and Carr's allusions to Mr. Chetwynd are dated June and September 1801 and Charlotte Smith's references to Mrs. Chetwynd date from April and October 1801, we may infer that Penelope Chetwynd's son John Chetwynd was staying with his mother and sisters Penelope, Lucy, and Emily near Felpham, c. April-October 1801. John and his three sisters are listed in John Debrett, *Debrett's Peerage of England, Scotland and Ireland* (London: William Pickering, 1840) 156.

In a letter to Hayley dated 19 August 1800, John Flaxman writes of Blake's projected move to Felpham: "I see no reason why he should not make as good a livelihood there as in London, if he engraves & teaches drawing, by which he may gain considerably ..." (BR[2] 94-95).

24. See BR(2) 214; Robert N. Essick and Morton D. Paley, *Robert Blair's The Grave Illustrated by William Blake: A Study with Facsimile* (London:

we now know that Blake was in touch with someone personally affected by the "horror & distress" caused by the recent troubles in Ireland. Blake's relationship with Mrs. Chetwynd therefore provides a new perspective for his numerous references to Ireland in his later illuminated books, including his writing of "the majestic form of Erin in eternal tears."²⁵ Mrs. Chetwynd's social position is also telling. In *The Everlasting Gospel*, A. L. Morton suggests that "because Blake was a working man he never lost his class passion or his faith in a revolutionary solution."²⁶ More recently, E. P. Thompson has suggested that a politically radical and dissenting Blake maintained a "conscious posture of hostility to ... polite culture."²⁷ However, Blake's brief account of his meeting with Mrs. Chetwynd and Mr. Carleton in 1804 suggests that the poet-artist was at ease with members of the gentry. The class distinctions Morton and Thompson look for seem curiously absent in Blake's encounter. Finally, Blake's finding a buyer for his work in William Hayley's intimate friend Mrs. Chetwynd continues the revision of Blake scholarship's perception of Hayley. Even when making love to "M^r C.," Hayley appears to have been looking out for Blake.

Scolar Press, 1982). Shee's student Martin Cregan of County Meath visited the Blakes at 17 South Molton Street in 1809 (BR[2] 281). However, there is no evidence of his purchasing any of Blake's works.

25. E 245. Rather than Wright's identification of Penelope Chetwynd with Gwendolen (see note 6 above), another passage from *Jerusalem* in which Blake associates the neighborhood of South Molton Street with sufferings in Ireland seems more pertinent in this context: "Dinah, the youthful form of Erin / The Wound I see in South Molton S[t]reet & Stratford place / Whence Joseph & Benjamin roll'd apart away from the Nations" (E 230). See also Blake's reference to "the [war?] Widows tear" in *The Grey Monk* (E 489).

26. A. L. Morton, *The Everlasting Gospel* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1958) 18.

27. E. P. Thompson, *Witness against the Beast: William Blake and the Moral Law* (New York: New Press, 1993) xviii.

D I S C U S S I O N

With intellectual spears, & long winged arrows of thought

Response to Anne K. Mellor

BY HELEN P. BRUDER

MUCH of the displeasure expressed in Anne K. Mellor's review of my book *Women Reading William Blake* [Blake 41.4 (spring 2008): 164-65] appears to derive from her conviction that it should have been about something else: "the