

# WILLIAM BLAKE'S WRITINGS

Edited by  
G. E. BENTLEY, Jr.

VOLUME I  
Engraved and Etched Writings

OXFORD  
At the Clarendon Press

# The Complete Poetry and Prose of WILLIAM BLAKE



Edited by David V. Erdman  
Commentary by Harold Bloom

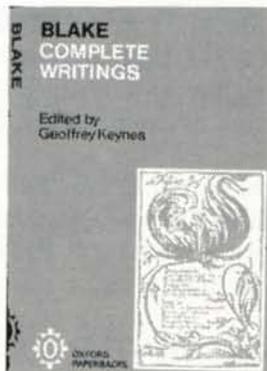
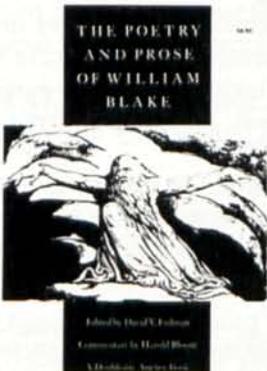
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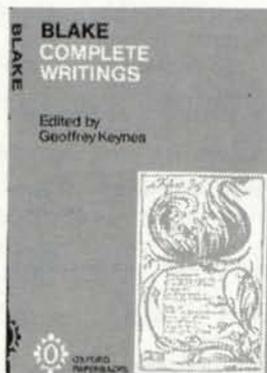
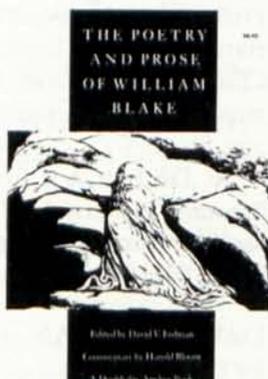
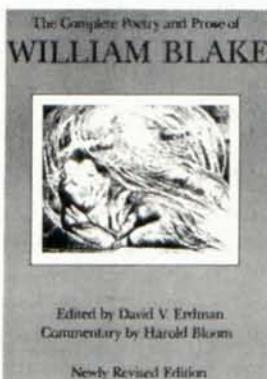
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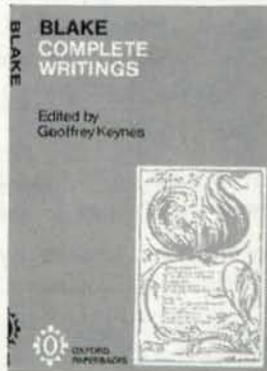
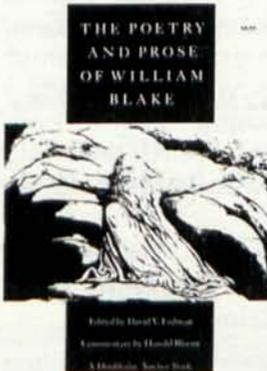
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# Blake

AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY 65  
VOLUME 17 NUMBER 1 SUMMER 1983

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# Blake

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AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY 65

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DAVID ERDMAN is very hopeful he's found a publisher for the *Four Zoas* facsimile with commentary on the designs, by Professor Magno and himself.

ALEXANDER S. GOURLAY is an instructor at the College of Wooster (Ohio). He is writing a dissertation on *The Book of Thel* and *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* and is co-author (with John E. Grant) of an essay on Blake and Reynolds forthcoming in the *Bulletin of Research in the Humanities*.

NELSON HILTON'S *Literal Imagination: Blake's Vision of Words* has just been published by the University of California Press.

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DONALD H. REIMAN'S volumes VII and VIII of *Shelley and His Circle* wend their way through several stages of proof toward publication in 1984, while he also shepherds to press the first dozen volumes of *Manuscripts of the Younger Romantics*, of which he is General Editor. In this series Garland Pub-

lishing will issue in facsimile, with full scholarly apparatus, important literary manuscripts of Byron, Shelley, Keats, and their circles.

**MICHAEL J. TOLLEY** is currently Chairman of the Department of English at the University of Adelaide, thus adding further delays to his continuing work on *William Blake's Designs to Edward Young's Night Thoughts* and Blake's use of the Bible: an annotated checklist. He is, however, reviewing Tannenbaum for *SiR* and preparing an article on Blake's (as he maintains) "To the Nightingale."

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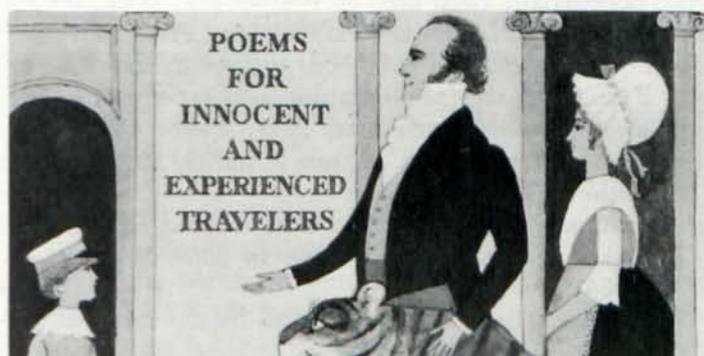
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# Redefining the Texts of Blake (another temporary report)

DAVID V. ERDMAN

Thirteen years ago I submitted "A Temporary Report on Texts of Blake" to the *Damon Festschrift*.<sup>1</sup> Wondering how perfectly or imperfectly the "texts" which Blake had etched, left in manuscript, or submitted to printers were represented in the available and forthcoming editions of Blake and in the *Concordance* of 1968 prepared by a team of ten Blake scholars, I made a survey of the "particular passages" that remained "incompletely transcribed or not certainly established." Since that time the informal collaboration of editors and other scholars in a "web of mutual communication of reports and queries and photostats" has continued, and the number of uncertain passages has diminished. Many cruxes remain, however, and some of the "certainties" of 1969 have been questioned. And the hope for technological advances that would reduce the "illegibles" of palimpsest (chiefly in *The Four Zoas*) has risen high, only to sink again.

The texts collated for this new report are four:

- E Erdman, ed. *The Poetry and Prose of William Blake* (Doubleday 1965, fourth printing 1970) with commentary by Bloom.
- K Keynes, ed. *Blake: Complete Writings* (Oxford Univ. Press 1966; 4th revised printing 1976; fifth 1979<sup>2</sup>).
- B Bentley, ed. *William Blake's Writings* (Oxford Univ. Press 1978; two vols. paginated continuously).
- C *The Complete Poetry & Prose of William Blake*, ed. Erdman, with commentary by Bloom (Doubleday, paper; University of California Press, cloth 1982).

Also occasionally cited are:

- BB Bentley, *Blake Books* (Oxford Univ. Press 1977).
- N Erdman and Moore, eds. *The Notebook of William Blake* (photographic and typographic facsimile; Oxford Univ. Press 1973; revised ed. Readex Books 1977). N, not in italics, refers simply to the Notebook itself.
- SAP Erdman "The Suppressed and Altered Passages in Blake's *Jerusalem*," *Studies in Bibliography* 17 (1964): 1-54.

"C" has been chosen as symbol for the new edition (rather than, say, E<sup>2</sup>) as more impersonal and in recog-

nition of the committees of textual scholars who watched and assisted the labor—judicially the CSE (MLA) who approved the procedures and format; critically the four scholars who helped check the text against originals or via film and facsimile: Robert Essick, John E. Grant, Mary Lynn Johnson Grant, and E. B. Murray. The present report is not quite exhaustive (dealing rarely with punctuation) and is intended primarily to enable users of any of the texts collated to find quickly what differences appear in C. Explanations of changes in C will be found in its textual notes, but certain critical passages are discussed briefly in this report. (Changes made in the second and third printings of E are not cited.) Points where B questions readings in E are attended to in the textual notes of C but if puzzling also noted here.

The fact that text and notes have been completely reset for C (and many of the notes rewritten) will mean that some errors have crept in. Responses to this report will be welcome, for revisions in subsequent printings.

The format of the textual notes in E and C is used in the notes that follow, and the symbols used in K and B are transposed into the same format. Square brackets [] enclose words or letters editorially inserted; italicized insertions represent [*deleted matter*] restored. Angle brackets <> enclose words or letters inserted by Blake; "rdg" and "del" stand for "reading" and "deleted."

All editorial emendations are indicated, with one exception. For the possessive of "Los" Blake often wrote "Los's" but also frequently omitted the apostrophe; in the latter instances, to avoid the clutter of brackets, the apostrophe has been inserted silently.

The textual note on punctuation has been revised somewhat. But I find that a further word is advisable about Blake's indications for paragraphing and about his occasional intermingling of design and text, insofar as it concerns the transcriber. Pictures interrupting the text, in *Milton* and *Jerusalem* for instance, sometimes serve as paragraph breaks but sometimes not. The designs after line 12 and line 27 in *J* 9 and after lines 13 and 26 in *J* 20 do not halt the narrative; those in *J* 20 after lines 4, 11,

20, 21, and 41 definitely do. And in his prose, Blake sometimes indicates a paragraph by a long dash, as after "Sword" in the *Milton* Preface.

Verse paragraphs are usually only spaced, but sometimes they are indicated by indentation; we treat them alike typographically. Sometimes a punctuation mark seems turning into vegetation or feather; sometimes a detail of foliage is thrust into position to serve as punctuation. Consider: is not the bird at the end of *J* 61:23 serving as a dash—yet still in flight as a bird?

The punctuation for this edition (C) has been thoroughly checked by our proofreading team against originals and photographs and facsimiles, also against B. Agreement within the team has not always been unanimous; B, however, has been found more often disagreed with than agreed with in this matter. Textual notes deal with some of these punctuational cruxes, but no attempt is made to cover them in the present report.

## Works in Illuminated Printing

The works are listed, in this and subsequent sections, in the order of arrangement of texts in E and C.

### All Religions are One

Now placed first, from evidence given by Geoffrey Keynes in his Blake Trust facsimile (but not applied in K 1979). Spelling variants are all that occur:

Principle 4th travelling (KE) / traveling (BC)  
Principle 5th Religeons (E) / Religions (KBC)  
each Nation's (EK) / each Nations (BC)

### There is No Natural Religion

The paragraph headed "Conclusion" is now moved from version (a) to version (b) following the paragraph headed "Application."

### Songs of Innocence & of Experience

*Night* 44 Grase (E) / Graze (KBC—see textual note)

*The Tyger* [6 eyes!] (E) / eyes? (KBC) 16 clasp? (EK) / clasp! (BC)

*The Human Abstract* Line 8 in N 107 draft ("The human image"): And spreads his [nets] baits with care (EK) / corrected by Bentley to ". . . his [seeds] baits . . ." (BC)

*A Divine Image* Now described, since discovery of copy BB, as not simply "rejected" but early and replaced.

*To Tirzah* C note on date (ca. 1803) is important, since B682 gives "perhaps 1797" (despite own evidence).

### For Children: The Gates of Paradise

Pl. 13: variant in N 61: What we hope we see (EKC) / . . . to see (B)

### The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

The "Proverbs" are now grouped by spacing, to cor-

respond with the grouping by color made in copy H (with obvious care, since the groups so indicated make sense). Other improvements made by Blake in copy H include the correction of two scribal errors by using (as ancient scribes did) a macron or horizontal stroke above a letter to indicate accidental omission of a letter or letters (or small word) immediately following. In 10:9 Blake corrects "improvent" with a macron over the "v" to make "improvement" (as in the next line). In 14:5 he etched "at tree" (EKB) but a macron in copy H indicates correction to "at the tree" (C). (Uncorrected words, "wholsom" and "witheld," lack only inessential letters.)

See textual note on 3:6 re "the Devil who dwells."

In "A Song of Liberty" corrections of punctuation made in copy H are adopted in C: 3 ocean? ] *corrected* to ocean! 6 weep] *to weep!* (C).

### Visions of the Daughters of Albion

All editions agree, except for two variants in B that must be scribal errors: omission of "are" before "their habitations" in 3:5 (B's 6:5) and "and" for "&" in 3:12. I.e., no variants in Blake.

### America a Prophecy

Canceled plate c:12 mossy pile (KEB) / massy pile (C) c:22 [&] or shut . . . [&] in (KB) / or shut . . . & in (E) / & shut & in (C)

### Milton

2:21 deed (K482) / deed? (E95) / deed[.] (B320) / deed[?] (C96), there being no punctuation at this point in any copy.

10:3 into the Space] B omits "the" in error.

11:35 spake (EK) / spoke (BC)

23:28 spoke (EK) / spake (BC)

24[26]: 63-64. lulld by the flutes lula lula / The bellowing Furnaces blare by the . . . clarion (B, giving text without emendation) / . . . flutes' lula lula . . . Furnaces blare . . . (K) / . . . flutes lula lula . . . Furnaces['] blare (EC). Too late to change, it was noted that C should also give "flutes[']"; readers often mistake this passage, not sensing that "blare" is a noun here, not a verb. The instruments are played "to ameliorate . . . slavery" (61). The sounds of Hammers "are lulld by the flutes['] lula lula" and the blare of the Furnaces is lulld by the long sounding clarion; the drum drowns the howls, &c.

31:13 Towards America . . . golden bed (EKC) / Line omitted (B)

### Jerusalem

To the Public

3:8 the Ancients entrusted their love to their Writing (EK) / the ancients acknowledge their love to their Deities (C) / (B questions all restorations of this plate)

In 1969 I could say that "no passages still in doubt" were "as central and significant as the Plate 3 deletions in *Jerusalem*" and could describe these as "now restored." In February 1980 a letter from Michael Tolley queried my restoration of the words "entrusted" and "Writing" in this gouged-out passage, and a very careful rechecking, by myself and others, using enlarged photographs from the Rosenwald and Morgan copies and the posthumous Rosenbloom copy and the unenlarged photograph of the Morgan page in SAP (which shows nearly everything that the others do).

My error resulted from incomplete observance of my own procedures, spelled out in SAP. The word read as "entrusted" or "acknowledge" has three ascending strokes (we must ignore the descending stroke of "p" from the line above); I had failed to notice that on this page Blake's t's barely rise above the body of the letters, hence that none of the three ascenders could be a "t". Indeed, the first ascender has a bend (not apparent in the Morgan, or it would have been noted sooner) which can belong only to a "k" in this script. The word "Acknowledge" in the very next line is more visible and offers a perfect model to test the misread word. Of the other queried word, the only plainly visible letters are "iti" in the center. The first letter, a bombed-out capital, has edges in the Rosenwald copy that fit a Blakean "W"; but, as I now see, in the Morgan the crater is encircled not merely by dots but by a large loop fitting exactly the "D" of "Divine" seven lines further down. And the second letter is more like "e" than "r". "Writing" was not an impossible hypothesis; "Deities" works perfectly. (I should add that Mary Lynn Johnson and John Grant, in the Norton *Critical Blake* (1979), recognizing something wrong with the passage, refer to "Blake's somewhat garbled defense of enthusiasm in this mutilated passage" (p. 312n4). The garbling was mine.

(I am told that in semiotic circles, the phrase "entrusted their love to their Writing" was becoming a favorite *locus classicus*! Mea culpa!)

7:65 Generation Image of regeneration!] "Image" was scratched through for deletion and is illegible or nearly so in most copies but was retouched into legibility in copies B and D. (Some copy B retouchings are clearly irresponsible: see notes on plate 17 and 18, below.) "Image" is shown undeleted in KB (with a note in B); "[Image]" in EC, signifying deletion editorially restored, with a textual note of explanation, but perhaps it should have been printed with this note but without the bracketing. (The details of the note in B [429] err from the correct account in SAP 16.)

8:32 The uncircumcised (E, in error but corrected in 4th printing) / Thy Uncircumcised (KBC)

17:21 fit for labour (EKBC) / changed to "labours" by printers' ink in copy B, but unidiomatic. Noted now in C.

18:36 So cry Hand & Hyle (EKBC) mended to "So criest thou? & Hyle" in copy B—first noted in C. The "u" is formed in the space between "n" and "d"; the "?" is made of a bit of interlinear ornament. This and the change in 17:21 are retouchings in the red-brown ink of the printing; other words are retouched without change in lines 10, 11, 20, 22, 25. Whoever made the mendings in 18 and 17 was inattentive to the sense and syntax.

BB 732 notes that some "words and designs are clarified in pencil (pl. 5, 7-10 [but these are in design only], in Red ink (pl. 8 [design only]), or in Black ink (pl. 9-11, 15, 19-22, 25 [words retouched in 10, 11, 20, 22, 25, without change])." B and BB overlook the actual changes in pl. 17 & 18, noted above.

21:44 worshipped (EKB) / warshipped (C and 1982K) Footnote on the page points out that the reading makes sense yet may be a misprint for "worshipped".

(The "a" is made with the usual serif at top right, never given to an "o", which is made in a circular sweep. The "a" is made with a curved stroke that begins at the top, comes up to make the serif and down again to connect with the next letter. Of course an "a" can look something like an "o", but even the "a" in "massy" in *America* c, misread until now, though it lacks the protruding serif does have the vertical right side produced by the up and down motion described.

24:60 Hope is banished from me] (KBC; yet B in "Addenda and Corrigena", p. xxvi, gives "from us" as a correction, without explanation.)

27 Begin new paragraph with "But now the Starry Heavens . . ." (BC).

27: next paragraph: was Created (EKBC) / B738 lists "was" as an error for "were"; indeed the grammar is polysomous and debatable. Problem overlooked in C.

32[36]:34 South [ ]ing (E) / South bounding (C). Explained in *Blake* 13:106.

40[45]:31 hands (KEC) / hand (B, printer's error?)

42:47 abhorred friend (KBC) / abhorred [*fiend*] (E); B and C note that "friend" may be an error for "fiend" but that the context gives support to the original reading.

30[34]:10 Why have thou elevate (KEC) / [Why hast thou elevated] (B). (Yet nine lines earlier "I am Love / Elevate into the Region" is given without comment or emendation in B.)

56:37 earth-Worm (KBC) / earth-Worms (E) Changed by ink in copy F, not necessarily by Blake. B asserts "by Blake" yet retains "earth-Worm"; K does not note; change adopted in E, with note; rejected in C, with note.

66:38 Their ear bent (KEBC) B with note: "Blake probably intended 'ears' plural"; perhaps, though singulars come in line 40.

77: bottom corners. Deleted lines, partly legible in copy F and posthumous copies I and J; for the first time fully recovered for C; reading column for column instead of line for line, as we all had been doing:

The Real Self[hood]            in the  
is the Imagination            Divine Man

K(919n) had read the top row, though not noting that "hood" was scratched out on the copper (Blake, having begun to write about the *real* Selfhood as against the spectral Selfhood, then passed beyond irony to emphasize "The Real Self").

In SAP I concurred with the K reading of the top row, venturing only a few letters for the bottom row:

The Real Self[hood]            in the  
is the?Spectre?within        P . . . . T . . . m

B has now deciphered that last phrase, putting "Divine Man" convincingly in place of "P . . . . T . . . . m" but unaccountably losing "in the," perhaps still trying to read line for line. C puts cautionary question marks on "Imagination" and "Man," but "tion" is clearly a better fit for the end of the first column than "thin." The *Concordance* shows Blake speaking several times of "The Imagination" as the "Real Man," an idea attributed to Jesus in Anno. Berkeley.

87:6-7 the space between these lines in E has been properly removed in C (as in KB).

89:26 Rocks (KE) / flocks (BC)

96:34 rouze up, rouze up! (K) / rouze up. rouze up. (E) / rouze up! rouze up. (C, as in originals) / (B omits one "rouze up" altogether and puts an editorial "!" on the one retained; probably a simple error of transcription). B's note that lines 1-25 "are curtailed" omits the explanation found in SAP.

97:45 mending of "thy Covenant" is correctedly described in B637n but wrongly described in B634n.

98:48 Sacrifices (KEC) / Sacrifice (B637, with note treating the "s" as doubtful). But the "s" is only crowded, not hidden, by the border; the syntax requires a plural.

## On Virgil

Concluding sequence is rearranged thus:

Mathematic Form is Eternal in the Reasoning  
Memory. Living Form is Eternal Existence.

Grecian is Mathematic Form

Gothic is Living Form

(This part of the text is in two columns; previous transcripts have put the second column first.)

## Laocöon

Practise is Art] *now moved to precede* A Poet a  
Painter . . . (Printers' error in C: photograph facing  
p. 273 is printed as a negative, with black printed for  
white; corrected in the clothbound.)

## PROPHETIC WORKS, UNENGRAVED

### TIRIEL

1:19 shrinking] *1st rdg del* heaving (K) / living  
(EBC); *2nd rdg del* ?shrieking (EC) Note in B903 mis-

takes this conjectured 2nd rdg for a proposed final rdg.

1:28 serpents [?all] (B) / (del word is not noted in  
KEC, but B is correct).

3:32 seeks] runs *1st rdg del* (EBC) (K: "word del")

4:50 rent] *mended from* rend (noted in EBC, not K)

4:63 . . . and know your father *1st rdg del* (EC) (K  
elides; B notes E rdg but considers its "and know" a single  
illegible word.)

5:5 [*earth*] ground (K) / [*ground*] world (E) /  
[*world*] ground (B) / [*ground*] earth (C) (No comment.)

## The French Revolution

Having been mistaken in the faulty recollection (I had once checked the original proofs) that traditional quotation marks were in the printed text, I have now removed them all; Blake himself would have supplied none.

More fully explanatory notes are now supplied for the readings bonds/bands (line 74), cloud/loud (101), war-living/war living (283).

## The Four Zoas

This report does not attempt to deal with all the differences among editions in the handling of deleted matter and in arrangement of pages. For the recovery of passages hitherto considered deleted see comment on pages 5, 6, and 7. For drastic rearrangement of the constituent pages of Night the Seventh, briefly described below, one must get one's sense of the effect by consulting the rearranged text itself.

In the new edition (C) for convenience of using the *Concordance* (based on K) we have given the K line numbers, within brackets, since they are continuous for each Night. But here I cite simply page and line numbers for the page.

3:8 no Individual [*Knoweth nor*] (B accidentally omits "Individual").

4:13 It is not Love I bear to [Jerusalem] It is Pity] See textual note for explanation of this editorial replacement of "Enitharmon" by "Jerusalem."

Pages 5-6] These pages have each ten new lines, previously considered deleted from failure to understand that when Blake circled a deleted passage he meant to restore it to the text; page 7 has been restored from its mistaken conflation (in E) with page 143, the readings in which are now recognized as preceding, not following, the final readings in p. 7. Andrew Lincoln cleared up these matters in *Blake* 46:91-95.

27:9 O Lamb] I ?die *1st rdg erased* (EC) / [*word del*] (B)

30:16 ?halls of *1st rdg erased* (EB) / centr f[orm] (C)

39:18-40:1 But saw not . . . in the cloud] Two lines shown as *del* (KEB); as undeleted (C): they are simply lined through lightly in pencil to be excluded when the passage was copied into J 43.

P. 41: Text unchanged (except for recognizing the

"I" in line 10 as undeleted), but see elaborately revised textual note concerning the late insertion of the name "Albion" on this page. (But K and B, mistaking the page markings, move line 10 to follow line 4, in error.)

42:18 She ended. [From] his wrathful throne burst forth (E) / She ended. for [from] his wrathful . . . (C) KB change the ms period to a comma; E misread the "for" as a canceled "From"—now supplied in C as the needed connective. The squiggle that looks like "for" may have been meant for "from"—or both words were intended but one slipped away.

It is also worth noting that here, and elsewhere, Bentley's spacing of lines hides the evidence of paragraph spacing when inserted lines, belonging to one paragraph or the other, physically fill an original gap. In this dialogue between Ahania and Urizen, the line "She ended . . ." should stand as a paragraph by itself, between her speech and his.

47:22 despair comes over (KEB) / editorial insertion in C: over [me]

56:23 is followed by Blake's instruction: "Bring in here the Globe of Blood as in the B of Urizen" (a reference to *Urizen* 18); editors have heretofore shirked their duty, but the lines fit perfectly, treating two *Urizen* lines as one. (We enclose the resulting four lines within editorial brackets.) (C338)

### Night The Seventh

The long debated conflation of the two Nights the Seventh (A and B) into one is carried out here with benefit of the proposals discussed by Andrew Lincoln, Mark Lefebvre, and John Kilgore in *Blake* 12 (1978): 107-34, along the lines of my discussion following theirs (135-39). See the textual headnote on C836.

78:13 rangd his [Books] Books around (B1185) / rangd his rocks a[round] Book around 1st rdg (EC) / rang'd his [word del.] Books around (K)

82:33 face lightnings] face [thy sons] < & his > lightnings 1st rdg (EC) / face, [word del.] lightnings (K) / face; [thy ?Smiles] lightnings (B1193). Yet not a very difficult ms.

85:41-42 Thou didst subdue me . . . lust & murder (KE) (Now moved in BC to follow 85:38; these lines are written in the bottom margin and not precisely marked for insertion; I agree with B1198 that "The sense seems to sanction their insertion here.")

91:11 red Orc in his [word erased] fury (K) / . . . in his [triumphant] fury (E) / . . . in his [blind(?) f th(?)] fury (B) / . . . in his [triumphant] fury (C, a bit less certain). B's "f" is my "p"; his "th" my "nt"; "triumphant" is the right length and has only two odd bits of strokes to account for, above the "p" and the "n" which I take to be a start at deleting the word before erasing it.

93:23 dropping tears of woe (K) / drinking . . . (EC) / . . . drinking? (B)

98, after 31 Then I heard the Earthquake &c (KEB) / Then Heavd the Earthquake &c (C)

101:31 expelled (KB) / repelled (EC)

113:25 in its Islands (E) / on its Islands (KBC)

105:24 there was hidden (E) / then was hidden (KBC)

119:18 flames whirring up (E) / . . . li[c]king up (KBC)

121:7 pleasant garden (EB) / pleasant gardens (KC)

126:6-7 obey & live . . . return O love (EC) / . . .

return & Love (KB, missing the progression of thought. Since the "&" and "O" are written clearly, K and B assume a scribal error; B even suggests that "& live" could be "O live").

145:10 (passage quoted in textual note on 106:6) Of most mournful pity (EK) / Of most merciful(?) pity (BC)—a more probable reading than "mournful" in the context; the written word is wobbly, the first 3 letters more clearly "merc" than "mour," the fourth not obviously either "i" or "n."

### POETICAL SKETCHES

To Summer: 15 Our youth[s] (E) / youths (K) / youth (BC)

Samson: (10 lines from end): stocks (E) / flocks (KBC)

### Then She bore Pale desire

In this fragment a change of position is made of the clause "Shame bore honour & made league with Pride," from line 75 to lines 91-92.

### AN ISLAND IN THE MOON

In E a fairly "clean" text was printed, without the many slight mendings of letters or parts of words that strew the manuscript. C includes some of these, when any significance can be deduced. The few reported here contain some new readings, or confirmation of disputed readings in E.

E440/C449: question mark now removed from [tipsy] (Mrs Gimblet); plural retained in "his own imaginations" (despite removal by B875). B, indeed, seems seldom to accept Blake's thin terminal "s"; in *IM* p. 4 he even reduces "the names in the Bible" to a singular.

( $\bar{A}$  propos, B has 21 footnotes citing readings in E, not always questioning them but never incorporating them; all these have now been multiple-checked and found sound. Most of them are quite legible to others, as well as to me.)

Chap. 1, 3rd par.: [Quid] [<the Elder>] (C)

Ms. p. 2: [here the] (E) / [here Etr (i.e. Etruscan)] (C)

p. 3: call me ass (E) / call me \*Arse (C). Blake wrote "ass," then "Arse," then "ass" again; then put an asterisk on the 2nd rdg to restore it. (K has the asterisk in the wrong place; B does not transcribe it.)

Chap. 6, opening: Then all went (E) / They all went (KBC)

Chap. 8 O ay Lock said Scopprell. [*Its a book about*] (K, punctuated, C) / Deletion omitted (E) / [*three words del*] (B)

Chap. 11 [*how many Blackamoors . . .*] (K) / [*If*] [*How many . . .*] (E768/C850) / [*If ?we ?manage Blackamoors*] (B898, but quoting E in a note, as supplying a "rather more plausib[le] reading").

## [SONGS AND BALLADS]

**To my Mirtle (N106)** The 16 lines (N 113, 111, 106) arranged under the title "in a mirtle shade" in E460 (18 lines in K169) were recognized as not constituting an authentic separate poem when I was collaborating with Donald K. Moore on the *Notebook* facsimile; a note to that effect was inserted in the 4th printing of E (pp. 769-70—and see the extensive note in N Appendix I pp. 69-71); in C these lines have been allowed to sink back into their proper state as a canceled extension of "Infant Sorrow" (given and discussed in the notes section C797-99). Yeats and Ellis had started this rearranging "according to the editor's taste" (to quote Geoffrey Keynes in his autobiography, *The Gates of Memory*, 1981, p. 255) and in 1926 Max Plowman had recognized that "in a mirtle shade" (lower case) was not a title but a catchphrase indicating where Blake wanted to fit the lines that follow into his "Infant Sorrow" extension. Plowman unfortunately had made a mistaken reconstruction of the sequence in the manuscript; so Keynes and the rest of us had carved out a separate poem (KEB). Alas, A. E. Housman wrote to Keynes (loc. cit.) that he preferred the Yeats version, "the old eight-line text," as, "however ill authenticated, . . . one of the most beautiful of all the poems." (The eight-line poem was made of the six lines on C469—with "sick" arbitrarily replaced by "weak"—plus two that Blake canceled: "Love, free love, cannot be bound / To any tree that grows on ground.") (Sampson in 1905 had "To My Mirtle" sorted out, but he treated 16 lines of N 111 as a "first version," with the title "In a Mirtle Shade.")

**Riches (N 103)** Line 1 deletions are correct as given in EC, though questioned in B975.

**Eternity (N 105)** 1 He who binds to himself a joy (KEC) / . . . bends (B). B declares he cannot see a dot on the "i" of "binds"; E says it's there. But a curious thing is that there are ten *i*'s in this four-line poem and its title, none with visible dots except for two tiny bits over "binds" and "it"; if Bentley followed his own rules, he would print: "hemself . . . wenged lefe . . . Leves en eternety's sun rese."

**"Abstinence . . ." (N 105)** 2 The ruddy limbs & flaming hair (KEC) / flourishing hair (B). Note: flaming hair *mended* over what was probably a bad scribble for the same two words (EC). Note: "flourishing hair"

seems to be written over something else (B978). Our committee struggled with this, to no avail. Was it first "flowery head" or "flourishing head"? No, Blake clearly wrote "haid" and changed the "d" to "r," perhaps then dotting the "i" (for here is one of the few "i" dots on the page). Was it "flaming" changed to "flourishing" or vice versa? Or "flowing" to "flaming"?

**"My Spectre . . ." (N 13, 12)** And let us go to the highest downs (EKC) / . . . high downs . . . (B927—but the "st" is legible, though cramped; a one-syllable word would mar the rhythm).

**"A fairy . . ." [leapt] skipt (K) / [leapt] skipd (EC) / leapt Stept (B1070: "'Stept' is written above 'leapt,' which has not been deleted").** Presumably B does not mean the line to be read with both verbs in it but means to urge that Blake had not decided which to keep. Presumably "skipt" or "skipd" is ruled out because Blake didn't dot the "i" (yet he did not cross the "t" either).

**To Mrs Ann Flaxman 2** Its form was lovely (EKC) / lively (B1331—curious because there is nothing to be taken for an *i* dot here; in fact the open *o* could be mistaken for *u*: *lively*).

**The Mental Traveller** (Pickering MS scrutinized in the Morgan Library) There are a few passages written over fairly complete erasures; B1306 attempts some conjectural restorations, for lines 85, 86, 91, impossible to confirm.

**The Grey Monk (N 8[12])** Deletion under line 11: From his dry tongue . . . (K419/E778/C860) / From his aking tongue (B930)

**When Klopstock (N 1[5]) 29:** [*Then after*] <From pity then> (EC; K: "illegible") / From [*anger(?)*] <pity then> (B926, not seeing the "Then" beneath the "From" and so turning "after" into "anger?" to make sense).

30 And the spell <removed> unwound (EC) / And the <ninefold?> spell unwound (B) / K declares 29-32 illegible). As I reexamine my photograph of the page, however, I am happy to report that I can see the *f* and *ld* (with room for the *o*) of "ninefold"—a word which not only makes better sense but is written in a position more plausibly intended to precede than follow "spell": the 2nd printing of C will have to read: "And the ninefold spell unwound."

31-32 B926 quotes a conjectural reading of mine in *Blake Newsletter* 1968 which was quite mistaken and, as Bentley says, awkward; his own reading confirms the EC reading.

**"You dont believe . . ." (N 21)** 11 When he said [*Rich*] Only Believe (KEC) / said [*Beli*] (a start for "Believe") (B934—which I now, too late for C, see is correct).

**From Cratetos (N 64)** B emends title to *From Cratelos*; but both *t*'s are crossed; "Cratetos" is an understandable Blake error about Greek inflections, while "Cratelos" makes no sense. (See *t* note in EC).

"And his legs carried it . . ." (N 22-23) Line 25 And Cur my Lawyer & Dady [my] Jack Hemps Parson (EC) / . . . & Dady mus(?) . . . (B936). EC infer deletion, i.e. that Blake having written (for his persona, Steward) "Cur my Lawyer and Dady my Parson," then decided to call him Flaxman's parson: "Jack Hemps Parson." Until we find an explanation either for Dady or for Dady mus, the crux is empty of content.

"Was I angry . . ." (N 23) The line 6 deletion "Mirths" (EC, not in K) stands obviously for "Mirth is." "Mirth" (B) makes nonsense and ignores the visible "s" stroke (between the *u* and *s* of the overwritten "Because.")

"He has observd . . ." (N 30) 2 *del* ?I ?sport ?with ?Fortune ?merry ?Blithe & gay (E, not in K) / ?Sporting ?with fortune [words illeg] gay (B) / ?Sporting with ?golden ?Fortune ?Blithe & gay (C)

"old acquaintance well renew" (N 24) i.e. "we'll." This half line is written on top of an erased full line beginning "Look ?what [or ?how]" and continuing "Flaxman & Stothard do" (EC, not in K; B "can read only 'Stothard' with confidence"). C868 suggests that Blake may have meant to retain the first two words, to make the revised line read "Look how [or what] old acquaintance we'll renew."

Mr Cromek to Mr Stothard (N31) 3 you travel all in vain (all texts) / B942 notes "'travel' might equally well be read as 'travil,' i.e. 'travail.'" Perhaps (though no "i" dot), but the *Concordance* shows that Blake's "travel" (he never wrote "travail") always, in every form, signifies journey or journeying (sometimes associated with travail, e.g. "returnd from his immense labours & travels" (FZ 2:201)—with two exceptions: (1) the female in *Europe* Prel 1 is "faint with travel" and (2) Blake in a letter writes of "the sore travel which has been given me." (In the present context, Stothard is advised to "turn back" from his vain "travel"; so the implication of travail is at most a pun.)

Cromek's Language (I should add, generally, of Cromek that the lyrics by his persona often contain the words "paint" and "painting" with the spelling "pant" and "panting" (more "travel"!)). It is obvious that Blake wanted Cromek to pant in these passages; whether in a given instance "ant" or "aint" is intended is sometimes hard to make out, but C prints the shorter form more often than E did.

E497/C506 The couplet beginning "To forgive Enemies H\_\_\_\_\_ does pretend" is now seen as the conclusion of "P\_\_\_\_\_ loved me," and no longer printed as a separate poem.

"When you look . . ." (N 41) 4 About freedom & Jenny Suck awa (KEC have a note on "Jenny Suck awa"—K912 being the best: "interpreted by Sampson as a grotesque way of writing *Je ne sais quoi*." B953 only notes that this quatrain "is written in Cromek's Yorkshire dialect" without mentioning (or noticing?) the French

base. The point may still be missed; hence the fuller explanation here. (As for dialect, B952 fails to recognize "ham" as "them," not "him.")

Now that we have learned that "poco pen" was really written "poco piu" (a little bit more), we have a punning glossary of the slippery language of the "Cunning-sures & the aim-at-yours" (N 40), i.e. the connoisseurs and amateurs. When they are buying or selling they "keep up a Jaw" (N 43) about that *soupson* or *poco piu* or *Je ne sais quoi* the presence or absence of which makes a work precious or worthless. (Of course many readers have always understood Blake's Cromek.)

Florentine Ingratitude (N 32) 21 merry hearted Fashion (EC) / warm hearted Fashion (K) / warm Hearted Fashion (B). B944 gets the capital H from mistaking a descending "p" from the line above as part of the letter. The "y" of "merry" is quite visible.

A Pretty Epigram . . . B949 rightly corrects E789 (and N 38); the suggested first and second titles, deleted, are not there. The second, "Major Testament of \_\_\_\_\_" is (notes B) a misreading of "the Entertainment of" and an overlooking of the caret. C872 now reads: "Title revised in ms thus: A [Pretty Epigram for <the entertainment of> those who have Given high Prices for Bad Pictures And ?have] Pretty Epigram for [those] the Entertainment of those Who [pay] <have Paid> Great Sums in the Venetian & Flemish Ooze."

"On the Great Encouragement . . ." (N 40) Dilbury Doodle (KEB) / Dilberry Doodle (C)

To Venetian Artists (N 61) Poco Pen (KEB) / Poco Piu (C)

"Her whole Life is an Epigram . . ." (N 100) smack smooth & neatly pend (KE) / ?smart smooth & ?neatly pend (B) / smack smooth & nobly pend (C) / smack-smooth and nobly pend (K1982). See textual note (C873) on the exchange in *ILS*, including the idea this may be a response to Wordsworth's "perfect Woman, nobly planned."

## The Everlasting Gospel

John Grant is responsible for the discovery that these four lines,

What can be done with such desperate Fools

Who follow after the Heathen Schools

I was standing by when Jesus died

What I calld Humility they calld Pride (N 52),

do not belong in "The Everlasting Gospel" but constitute a comment *on* it, by the man who *was* standing by when Jesus died, not William Blake but Joseph of Arimathea. In fact these lines are in the darker ink, with finer pen (this fact got left out of the C textual note) of the Joseph couplets which have hitherto been treated as a separate poem ("I will tell you what Joseph of Arimathea / Said to my Fairy") ending with the couplet that begins "Listen patient & when Joseph has done," couplets crowded into

the margins to serve, physically and poetically, as William Blake's announcement that he is about to quote Joseph. In C, then, we are printing, as Preface to the main poem, first Blake's three couplets, then Joseph's two. The other "Comments on this Poem" (as we call them) are printed at the end of the main text: "I am sure This Jesus will not do . . ." and "This was Spoke by My Spectre" (a comment on the Philosophy section).

Line 58 (now 54 with the moving of "What can be done . . ." to the Preface) of this first section of the poem proper (d in EK, k in BC) is a difficult palimpsest and has had a checkered career among transcribers:

the seraph hand (Sampson, noted in K921) / Lord Caiaphas hand (E, 4th prtg) / the Caiaphas (?) hand (B) / [*the guilty*] Lord Caiaphas hand (NC).

Line 31, section e: Wherefore has (KE) / has [t] (BC)

In d:21 the deleted "End" is clearly (from the context) a start for "Ended"; thus: [*End(ed)*] (ENC) but [*?End*] (B)

f:51 forgot your (KEC) / forgot our (B)

## BLAKE'S EXHIBITION AND CATALOGUE OF 1809

### A Descriptive Catalogue

p. 1 The Spiritual form of Nelson . . . wreathings are infolded] The Spirit of Nelson . . . folds are entangled *variant inscription on sketch* (Butlin 650). (This textual note got lost from C on the way to press. It is cited in B, from catalogue; in Butlin from original.)

p. 2 ordering the Reaper] commanding the reaper *variant inscription*, on back of painting, but not in Blake's hand (nor spelling: ploughman and plough instead of plowman and plow). Butlin suggests "Perhaps by Palmer" (Butlin 651). (Accepted in B as Blake's.)

p. 27 whose whole delight is the destruction of men (KE) / . . . is in the . . . (BC)

## DESCRIPTIONS OF THE LAST JUDGMENT

### A Vision of the Last Judgment (N68-93)

p. 81 Brittanica (KE) / Britannica (B) / Britannia (C: see note).

### PUBLIC ADDRESS

Comparing Bentley's text and his arrangement of the segments of *Public Address* has been helpful, though in both respects C differs somewhat from B.

p. 51 [*Engraved by William Blake tho Now Surrounded by Calumny & Envy*] pencil inscription, deleted. (EC) / Not mentioned in K; mentioned in B (1031 & 1060) as "illegible." Easy to read in the N facsimile, however, and included in the *Blake Concordance*.

p. 11, paragraph beginning "If Men of weak Capacities" is transcribed differently in each text (K591/

E560/B1029-30/C571). B was right to question "an artist who has carried on" (E&N) and to suggest "an unending." And E had mistakenly dropped "The Fools hand or the" (KBC).

p. 55 how then should (EKC) / . . . shall (B, simple error)

p. 57, 2nd parag: journeymen whose names (EKC) / journeyman whose name (B, compounded error).

p. 58, 1st parag. The "you/dey" mendings of the words of Gravelot, given incompletely in E, are given fully in KBC. But KB treat the deleted "Aliamet" (ENC) as illegible.

p. 60 Monopolizing Trader [*whose whole*] (C) / not previously deciphered, though B gives "whose." Further along: "Poco Pend" (EKB) / Poco Piud (C); "Drawn with a firm <and decided> hand" (KEC) / "Drawn with a firm hand <& decided>" (B, a misconstruction)

p. 17 Corregio & Titian (KB) / Corregio or Titian (EC): technically, "or" written on top of "&" (N)

p. 44 to leave it before he has spoild it (EK) / . . . leave off before . . . (BC)

p. 18 It is the Fashion] written along the right margin of the page, now broken off—but visible in the 1953 facsimile. B and C agree on the placement of this clause (after "a dark cavern"): E lacked it. K misplaced "They Produce System & Monotony."

p. 18 The two paragraphs beginning "Mr B repeats" have more fully reported deletions in C than E (and concur with B). K is somewhat in agreement, but misreads "Production of a Man" as "Product . . ."

p. 20 every Body of Understanding must cry out (E) / . . . [*will*] must cry out (K) / . . . [*can(?)*] [*will*] must cry out (B) / [*& sen[se] will*] must cry out (C) // Poco-Pen (K) / Poco Pen (EB) Poco Piu (C)

p. 23 [*That Painted as well as Sculptured Monuments . . .*] Variants reported more fully in C. B questions several readings, omits "the Plain unpainted" before "Those Sepulchurs," reads "dead Marble" as "dull(?) Marble"; but does also call attention to the misspelling "Sepulchures" in E.

p. 25 destructive of the true Artist (KC) / . . . Artists (EB)

## THE MARGINALIA

### Annotation to Lavater's *Aphorisms on Man*

Date corrected to 1788; underlining and bracketing revised.

248 beast & devil (KEC) / beast or devil (B1361) It would have been good to have more ample quotation of Lavater in C, but R. J. Shroyer's facsimile edition (1980) fills that need.

One important correction has been made, in Blake's note on blank page 225. The deletion given heretofore as "& they converse with the spirit of God!" is corrected to "& these are either Good or Evil"—a considerable difference.

11 false for weak (KE) / [*?Doubtful*] false for weak (BC)

612 "six or seven words erased" (EC)—still undeciphered.

### Annotations to Swedenborg's Divine Love and Divine Wisdom

Flyleaf: Good to others (K) / This Good to others (EB) / Thus Good to others (C)

11 springs up in your thoughts (KB) / . . . thought (EC)

49 the words Infinity & Eternal (KE) / . . . Infinite . . . (BC)

336 (Section omitted in KB from failure to note Blake's marking with large cross in right margin; given in EC.)

414 Is it not false then . . . / B399 supplies the wrong context.

(We have checked every variant in B, including capitalization and punctuation and find B quite frequently inaccurate.)

### Annotation to Swedenborg's Divine Providence

277.2 The comment "Cursed Folly!" is placed *after* the paragraph beginning "Predestination" in K, before it in E, but now (in C, following B) after the phrase "cannot be removed afterwards." B also supplies correction, at the end of the "Predestinarian" paragraph, from "In 69 . . ." (KE) to "See 29 . . ." (BC).

### Annotations to Watson's An Apology for the Bible

Blake's second line, "The Beast & the Whore . . . controls" (C) / "control" (KEB), is canceled by a ruled double line, in pencil, something quite uncharacteristic of Blake. I take it to have been added by Samuel Palmer, whose signature is on the title page. B gives the line as del.

B ignores Blake's guide-lines and daggers in the text and comments of p. 2 (though the dagger on "Always"—printed as an asterisk—is given, but not the matching dagger in Watson). On p. 4 B's questioning of the E readings led to further scrutiny of the ms, confirming them.

p. 5 The reading is "murderd" not "marterd" (B).

p. 9 A deletion not noted in K, noted but not deciphered in E, is somewhat tentatively restored in B and C:

. . . the plan of Providence was . . . not restored til [we in] Christ [were(?) restord(?)] (B1414) / . . . [made ?restoration] (C) I take it that Blake began to write "we in Christ" and then canceled "we in" before completing the sentence, to read "restored till Christ made restoration" or possibly "gave restoration"?

### Annotations to Boyd's Historical Notes on Dante

C now includes (from K1976) the new comment on p. 75, "Every Sentiment . . . Opinions & Principles" (B1448, C634)

### Bacon's Essays

p. 62 Virtuous I supposed to be Innocents (KEC) / . . . Innocent (B)

### Malone's Reynolds

Notes in B question several E readings; all have been confirmed, with the exceptions given below.

Angle brackets < > to indicate Blake's inked additions were only incompletely supplied in printings of E; they are all in place in C.

C (639) includes a new, partially recovered, Blake annotation—on Malone's p. xxviii, fns. 24 and 25.

p. 3 Ought not the Employers of Fools (K) / Ought not the <Artists &> Employers [*Imbecillity*] of Fools (E) / Ought not the <Patrons(?) &> [*word del*] Employers [*Imbecility*] of [*Folly*] Fools (B) / Ought not the <?Patrons &> Employers [*Imbecility*] of Fools (C)

p. 4, misnumbered "[iv]" [*Are there Artists . . . other Men*] (EC, questioned in B1461)

p. 7 There are, at this time, a greater number of excellent artists than were ever known before at one period in this nation. (Blake's comment:) [*Artists . . . ?Heavens ?Fool the hxxx Pxxxx as xxxcm*] (new in C643)

p. 30 [*those who are born for it*] (EC) (not in K) / [*wretches(?) Who are born for it*] (B, plausible, but scrutiny does not confirm.)

p. 48 without Con or Innate Science (EKC) / with Con . . . (B, clearly a mistake)

p. 50 following [*Letter*] <Discourse> (E) / . . . [*Lecture*] . . . (KBC)

p. 101 B1479 underlines "not Elegance," misinterpreting Blake's guide-line.

p. 126 C654 supplies a context indicating that the "Damnd Fool" is Vasari.

p. 179 Jan Steen (KE) / Jan Stein (BC)

p. 201 Knowledge[s] (EC) / Knowledge (KB)

p. 202 Reason or A Ratio (KEB) / Ratio *mended* from Ration (C textual note)

### Berkeley's Siris

p. 212 I will not leave you Orphans (KB) / Orphaned (EC)

p. 215 Imagination & Visions (KEB) / Imaginations & Visions (C) // the business of Plato & the Greeks . . . Wars & Dominency over others (KE) / baseness . . . Dominency . . . (B) / baseness . . . Domineering . . . (C) (The "ee" of "Domineering" is quite clear, the conclusion of the word less so.)

p. 219 A new paragraph begins with "Man is All Imagination" (BC)

### Thornton's The Lord's Prayer

Photostats that Keynes and I had used for this text had been made with the loose, unnumbered leaves of the pamphlet out of order; I had not noticed this even while checking the original. But Robert Essick has now straightened out the sequences.

KE p. iii should be [ii]; "The Beauty of the Bible . . . how was it" should be the 2nd paragraph of Dr. Johnson's remark. Our p. 1 should be p. 9 and should be moved to follow p. 6 and precede the fly-leaf, p. 10. (B has p. 9 in the right place but has not shifted the Bible remark from Byron to Johnson.)

Changes in the p. 3 transcript, from E to C, are per-

haps worth noting (B has a garbled transcript and his notes question several E readings, all now rechecked). "Heaven <s>" (C) corrects "Heavns" (EB) and "heaven" (K). A somewhat revised sequence is "([His Judgment] <His Accusation> shall be Forgiveness [and he shall] <that he may> be consumd in his own Shame > / Give [me] <us> This Eternal Day [my] <our> [Ghostly].  
**Annotation to Cellini(?)**

Our source for the annotation (one sentence, on the Pope's confusion of Nature and the Virgin Mary) is the slipshod E. J. Ellis, who says it was "In the margin of a copy of Cennini's book on fresco painting." B documents this with evidence that Linnell gave Blake a copy of Cennini's book and in it Blake found support for his use of carpenter's glue. Very well, but nothing in Cennini could have inspired the remark about a Pope and the Virgin; whereas Cellini's work (Ellis just confused the names) offers direct inspiration. (Each work was called "Trattato.")

#### Annotation to Young's Night Thoughts

Blake's identification of the five books of pompous Ignorance in NT199 constitutes a new entry (Plato, Cicero, Plutarch, Locke). (C670).

### INSCRIPTIONS AND NOTES ON OR FOR PICTURES

There are several changes and additions here and, most important, cancellations.

The N 116 Exodus list is now deciphered as "Exodus [from] Egypt"; item 3 reads "River turnd to blood"; item 12 "First born Smitten."

The inscriptions "Teach these Souls to Fly" and "I labour upwards . . ." and the long note on the back of *The Fall of Man* ("The Father indignant . . . the Lamb") (E662) are dropped from C because not in Blake's hand. (B1332 confuses matters by silently revising the spelling of "Tiger" to "Tyger" in the latter.)

The note on a pencil drawing of Nine Grotesque Heads (E667/C686) has been freed of the editorially inserted period after "varies". (It would probably work better after "Thus", but the sense is the same either way: the grotesque heads vary; all genius varies; Devils vary—i.e. "All Genius varies Thus"—or "Thus Devils are various".)

New in C are some notes in John Varley's hand but copied at Blake's dictation—having similar authority to Blake's memorandum on John Scolfield, a dictated document customarily included in Blake's writings. The caption on the fourth state of Blake's Chaucer engraving (C mistakenly says "third") reads:

The Use of Money                      An Allegory of  
& its Wars                      [title inscription] Idolatry or Politics

It seems to get lost easily. Not in K, it was put into a Supplement entry for the *Concordance* but did not get into E or B. It is now in C687—but failed to get into the Index under "Use"!

For Blake's inscriptions on his *Illustrations of the Book of Job*, we give a list of the verbal variants from his source, the King James Bible.

On C688 is a tracing of Blake's hieroglyphic signature on the drawing for Job design XIV; the explanation (C891) with aid from John Beer makes out that the hand and thumb are respectively "W" and "B," followed by an eye, the "I" of Imagination; the first and last symbols being a line and a sun, text and illumination.

#### [On Blake's Illustrations to Dante]

No. 3 & his ?Porch in Purgatory (EC) / and his throne(?) . . . (B) / (not in K). (Butlin, *The Paintings and Drawings*, 812:3, makes some bad guesses at words in this design, getting the sequence scrambled. Where we read "Porch" or "throne" he tries "Paradise"; he divides "The Thunder of Egypt" (EBC) into "The Turks God of Egypt". These guesses don't check out.

No. 7 & the Goddess Nature Memory [*Nature*] is his Inspirer (K) / & the Goddess Nature <Memory> <is his Inspirer> (EC) / the Goddess Nature Mystery is his Inspirer (B, surely wrong) / ?Memory (Butlin)

No. 38 (new entry in C689 but printed out of order) Virgin Casella Dante Venus (not in EKB) (Butlin notes only "Venus?")

No. 68 (not in KEBC) Butlin notes "M . . . y" and conjectures "Mercury" or "Memory" (The letters are spaced about that far apart, with all between erased.)

No. 86 (B prints "and" for "&")

No. 99 Butlin reads "Laws Dominion" where I see "Thrones Dominion[s]"; B spells "Scepter" Sceptre.

No. 101 B gives "Gulphs" as "Gulfs".

### Miscellaneous Prose

Blake's paragraph in Benjamin Heath Malkin's book (E671/C693) is at last properly described as "On the drawings of Thomas Williams Malkin" not "Thomas Heath Malkin." Also in this section now are the inscriptions in the ms of *The Four Zoas*, on pp. 56, 88, and 93; also the fragment of riddle answers in Blake's hand (though not invented by him).

### The Letters

A large addition to C consists of all the letters not selected for E. (Here "K" stands for Keynes' 1980 edition of the *Letters*.)

**To Dr Trusler**, August 23, 1799: 6th line: regret (E) / reject (BKC); 2nd paragraph: Thievery (EC) / Thieving (KB)

**To Flaxman**, Sept. 12, 1800, with poem. Collated afresh: the time is arriv'd (EB) / the time is now arrivd (KC)

**To Hayley**, March 21, 1804; 2nd parag. I have been to look (KC) / I have been able to look (B)

**To Hayley**, March 31, 1804: If . . . before I deliver then pray (KC) / deliver them (B) (K inserts comma after "deliver" to fit the sense).

To Hayley, May 4, 1804 (source Gilchrist *Life*) younger than I have known him (BC) / younger than I knew him (K, silently revising)

Letter 20, previously thought to be ca. 1800 to Hayley, is now dated Sept.-Oct. 1801, To Thomas Butts? (noted by Mary Lynn Johnson). E. B. Murray has corrected the date of letter 24 to Butts from "Jany 10, 1802" to 1803 (a slip of Blake's thought).

## Recent Conjectural Attributions

C785: tucked in at the last minute is a note telling of Sir Geoffrey's conjectural but confident attribution to Blake of a 24-line poem "To the Nightingale" (about which the note reflects the skepticism of the proofreading team) and another unknown poem reported by Keynes as "a remarkable piece of Blakean doggerel written in pale blue watercolour with a brush" and "addressed to Mrs Butts." C does not give the texts of these poems; the latter has not been seen by any of us.

## Errata emendata

Misprints (and omissions) already noted in the first printing of *The Complete Poetry & Prose of William Blake* 1982 (C).

p. 3 NNR [b] The spacing of the "Therefore" section should almost exactly follow Blake thus:

Therefore  
God becomes as we are,  
that we may be as he  
is

(I.e., to isolate "Therefore" and "is" as one-liners. Alternative, to follow exactly:

Therefore  
God becomes as  
we are, that we  
may be as he  
is

p. 121 *M* 24[26]: 63 flutes *shd read* flutes ['].

p1. 2, facing p. 273 is printed inside out in the paperback volume but correctly in the hardbound.

p. 148 *J* 5:60 A misspelling: "Jersualem."

p. 167 *J* 22; 25 This time "Jersualsm."

p. 271 Running head "THE GHOST OF ADEL!"

p. 273 The first Hebrew letter in the transcript should be heh, not thay; Blake engraved it correctly. (Pointed out by Stephen Mitchell.)

- p. 501 "Klopstock" 30: Spell removed *shd read* ninefold spell . . . .
- p. 687 Incriptions *shd read* Incriptions.
- p. 689 On design No 38 *should follow* On verso of No 36 . . . .
- p. 727 the word "Hebrew" should not be followed by a colon.
- p. 729 Letter 27 After the 11th line this line was omitted: "Maries at the Sepulcher. 4 The Death of the Virgin"
- p. 789 Add to note the statement: John Grant has pointed out that the "Conclusion" should precede the "Application" (one cannot apply a conclusion until it has been reached).
- p. 808 *M* 32:15 In "Kerabim" Blake wrote Kaph for the first Hebrew letter instead of Khaph; our printer tried several times but missed.
- p. 814 *Tiriel* 1:28 serpents [?]all] *1st rdg*
- p. 863 "You dont believe . . ." 11: *note shd read*: After "said" Blake first wrote "Beli," a start for "Believe"; my previous rdg ("Rich") has been corrected by G. E. Bentley, Jr.
- p. 881 [The Catalogue] Insert new note:
- p. 1 The Spiritual form of Nelson . . . ] The Spirit of Nelson . . . folds are entangled . . . *variant inscription on sketch* (Butlin 650)
- p. 895 Seventh line from bottom "nothern" *shd be* "northern."

## Index corrections:

- p. 978 Index entry "Her whole Life . . ." *shd read* "nobly pend."
- p. 980 Joseph of Arimathea, incriptions *shd read* incriptions
- p. 981 "Leave O leave . . . 6850 *shd read* t850
- p. 982 Insert: Nightingale, To the 785
- p. 983 Poetical Sketches . . . t864 *shd read* t846
- p. 985 "The Angel . . . borth" *shd read* ". . . birth"
- p. 986 "The grand style of Cert . . ." *shd read* ". . . of Art . . ."
- p. 986 insert: "The Use of Money & its Wars" 687
- p. 988 insert: To the Nightingale 785

## Postscript on Blake's Hebrew lettering:

Stephen Mitchell points out that in Blake's 2d Job design he misspells the Hebrew word for "angel" in "Angel of the Divine Presence" (though he has it right in the Laocoön plate) and leaves out an aleph; so the word appears to melekh (king) instead of mal'akh (angel), leading Foster Damon to the mistaken conclusion that "The Hebrew letters beneath his name . . . identify [Satan] as 'King Jehovah,' Job's false God."

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 395-413, 494-98, in Alvin H. Rosenfeld, ed., *William Blake: Essays for S. Foster Damon* (Brown Univ. Press, 1969).

<sup>2</sup> The 1976 printing of K was checked thoroughly in the preparation of C; the 1979 printing reached me only after C had gone to press, but a fairly complete collation of the passages in the present report revealed very few changes from K1976. Characteristic errors

that might have been corrected from E continue in 1979: "thoughts" for "thought" in Anno. Swedenborg p. 12; "Infinity" for "Infinite" in Anno. Swed. p. 40; *America* 5:3 retains "enclos'd" for "inclosd" and there are no corrections of *America* c. The K text of *The Four Zoas* remains frequently inadequate. On K268 "these" is not corrected to "them" in "I have murderd them"; "Or hover'd over" (K284:182) should read "Or hoverd oer"; "turned into cries" (K310) should read "turned to cries"; "better hope" (K355:547) should be "bitter hope"; "girded" (K370:504) is a mistake for "girded on"; "Aloud" (K380) a misreading of "O Luvah." In the 3rd edition of the *Letters* (1980) Keynes made several corrections—such as changing the date of letter 56 (K859) from April to March and revising "Home" to "House"—that were not transferred to the K text.

The "1979" Preface mentions only two corrections (on pp. 184 and 644 respectively: see below). The second of these is a surprising one, replacing "worshipped" with "warshipped" as probably a "de-

liberate 'misprint'" that amused Blake (a contextual pun, accepted in the C text as well). Still more curious is an unmentioned change in *MHH* 7:13, from "wholesome" back to Blake's "wholsom" (K151): curious because the K text is conscientiously normalized in spelling—and indeed Blake's "Wholesom" in *PA* p. 19 is kept in normalized spelling ("Wholesome") in K599. Also, for instance, in *FR* 216 (K144) Blake's "beastial" (respected by Johnson's printer) remains normalized (K144) as "bestial," and on K256 the Keynes "steadfast" is not changed to Blake's "stedfast."

It may be deduced from these and several other examples that the K text of 1979 received only a very few touches of revision or correction, quite possibly more spelling changes than I have noticed but probably very few substantive changes, or none, except in the two passages called attention to in the Preface. The present collation, in short, can stand as a near equivalent to a collation of the 1979 as well as the 1976 Keynes.

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## MINUTE PARTICULARS

### Charles Parr Burney as a Blake Collector G. E. Bentley, Jr.

Charles Parr Burney (1785–1864), the grandson of Charles Burney (1726–1814) the musicologist and nephew of Fanny Burney (1752–1840) the novelist, was a wealthy schoolmaster and Archdeacon successively of St. Albans and of Colchester. He is not known to have had any connection with William Blake, except for a letter which he wrote on 29 September 1862 to D. P. Colnaghi the print dealer asking about

a Volume of 'Blake's' eccentric, but very interesting Drawings, accompanied by Verses, written with great care and in very minute characters, — which is now in my possession, — was purchased from you . . . .<sup>1</sup>

This "Blake" can only be the artist-poet (despite the quotation marks round his name), but no such "Volume" of "Drawings, accompanied by Verses, written . . . in very minute characters" by Blake is known to survive.

On the other hand, the work may not be a manuscript at all. In the nineteenth century Blake's etched works in illuminated printing were sometimes referred to as drawings. For instance, in 1818 Coleridge wrote of "the Drawings" of that "strange publication" *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*.<sup>2</sup> If Charles Parr Burney was similarly casual in confusing drawings and engravings, the volume he owned might be one of Blake's works in illuminated printing. Few of these have "Verses, written with great care and in very minute characters," but *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* seems to fit the description fairly well. Perhaps Burney owned a copy of the printed *Songs*. Or he could have had a copy of *For the Sexes: The Gates of Paradise* (?1818) which has eighteen printed designs and some verses in a small hand. But no copy of either work can be traced to Burney.

It was also common to consider Blake's works in illuminated printing primarily as books of designs. Allan Cunningham speaks of the "wild verses, which are scattered here and there" among the powerful designs of *The Book of Urizen*, and he refers to *America* and *Europe* as being "plentifully seasoned with verse" (*Blake Records*, pp. 487, 500).

But the most likely candidate seems to be a "Volume" of "Drawings, accompanied by [Blake's] Verses, written . . . in very minute characters" which is neither a printed work nor a manuscript by Blake. It may be a facsimile of Blake's *Songs* made by a contemporary of the poet. There are two such manuscript copies, the first (Alpha) apparently copied from *Songs* (P) and the

second (Beta) copied from Alpha by 1825.<sup>3</sup> Alpha is known to have stayed in the same family throughout the nineteenth century, but the history of Beta is known only from recent times. It may have been Beta (or another, as yet untraced, contemporary facsimile) which C. P. Burney owned. Beta is colored with considerable imagination and skill, but the text was somewhat carelessly transcribed and was extensively covered by the coloring. These facts may explain why Burney describes it as primarily "a Volume of . . . Drawings" and why he puts "Blake's" name in quotation marks; the designs and words are Blake's but the hand that held brush and pen was not his.

It would be pleasant to think that such a Blake volume as Charles Parr Burney acquired from Colnaghi about 1862 had remained in the family, but C. P. Burney's direct descendant Mr. John R. G. Comyn, who has a number of Burney treasures including C. P. Burney sketchbooks, tells me that he has nothing of the kind, and Professor Joyce Hemlow of McGill University, the editor of Fanny Burney's letters and journals, who has given me generous advice, can throw no more light on the subject. Of all the possibilities among surviving "Blake" works, the contemporary manuscript facsimile of the *Songs* (Beta) seems to me most plausible.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from the manuscript in Beinecke Library, Yale University. Colnaghi's does not have records which extend back to this period. The firm sold *For Children: The Gates of Paradise* (B) to the British Museum on 12 January 1862.

<sup>2</sup> *Blake Records* (1969), pp. 252, 251.

<sup>3</sup> See "Two Contemporary Facsimiles of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*," *Publications of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 64 (1970), 450–63. In 1982, copy Alpha belongs to Mr. Paul Mellon and Copy Beta to Mr. Justin Schiller.

### An Emendation in "The Chimney Sweeper" of *Innocence*

Alexander S. Gourlay

A curious variant in the text of "The Chimney Sweeper" (*Songs* 12) in *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, Copy AA (Fitzwilliam Museum), appears to have gone unremarked in spite of the wide distribution of transparencies of this copy by EP Microform. Blake's etched text of line 20 of the poem reads, "He'd have God for his father & never want joy"; in Copy AA, however, the contraction "He'd" has been replaced by the word "But." Though I have not examined the original, the EP transparency appears to reproduce the plate accurately.

The transparency shows no evidence of erasure, but the inking of the plate was uneven; in consequence, letters are obscured by overinking and by underinking. The large area washes further reduce legibility. Someone ap-

pears to have strengthened some letters with pen and ink of the same orange-red color used in printing, but the result is not equal to the legibility of strengthened pages in late copies such as Copy Z (Rosenwald). The original contraction, "He'd," has printed very poorly, but vestiges of the word are still visible beneath the word "But," which has been supplied in the same orange-red ink.<sup>1</sup> The upper right serif of the "H" can be seen protruding from the upper lobe of the "B," the printed crossbar of the "e" is visible in the written "u," and most of the ascender of the "d" is evident to the right of the written "t," which has been formed along the curved bowl of the "d."

There are only a few textual alterations like this one elsewhere in the *Songs*; most other known instances of textual change attributable to Blake provide plausible readings, and most are improvements on the etched text. An emendation that is mechanically similar to the one in AA has been adopted by both David V. Erdman and G. E. Bentley, Jr. in their editions of Blake's writings. This change (from "sung" to "sang") in line 5 of "The Clod & the Pebble" (*Songs* 32), in Copy Z, has been accepted in spite of the fact that it appears in only that copy, and could have been accidental; Copy Z was finished at about the same time as AA and in a similar style.<sup>2</sup> But the emendation in Copy AA should not be accorded the same degree of respect, for it is a patent corruption. By itself line 20 of "The Chimney Sweeper" as emended in AA is not obviously wrong, but in context it leaves the Angel's promise incomplete and makes the sweeps' happy awakening particularly abrupt:

And the Angel told Tom if he'd be a good boy,  
But have God for his father & never want joy.

And so Tom awoke and we rose in the dark  
And got with our bags & our brushes to work.

Although this variant is not particularly meaningful in itself, it could well be authorial, and probably originated in Blake's workshop. The plate appears to have printed so poorly that it is unlikely that it would have been issued without any retouching of the text, and all strengthening (both accurate and inaccurate) appears to have been done with the same ink and in the same style. Whoever did it was certainly not paying close attention to the syntactic or printed evidence on the page; it is hard to imagine an owner of the book who would be sufficiently

officious to go to the trouble of carefully matching the ink but sufficiently obtuse to make such an implausible emendation. Because the word seems to have been added so casually, and because the ink used matches the printing ink so closely (indeed, it could be a diluted form of the printing ink), the emendation should probably be attributed to one of the Blakes or, as Erdman has suggested in correspondence, to an anonymous assistant in the workshop. The task of retouching the text was no doubt tedious, and it is likely that someone, working absent-mindedly, relied on an imperfect memory of the line rather than thoughtful consideration of the evidence in making the unhelpful emendation.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> That the variant in AA is not a change in the plate is certain, for the posthumous Copy *b* (Harvard) has the usual reading. See the Albion Facsimile edition (Albion Facsimiles #1) (London and New York: 1947), n.p. This (as well as all other facsimiles of Harvard's *b*) should, however, be used with caution; see below.

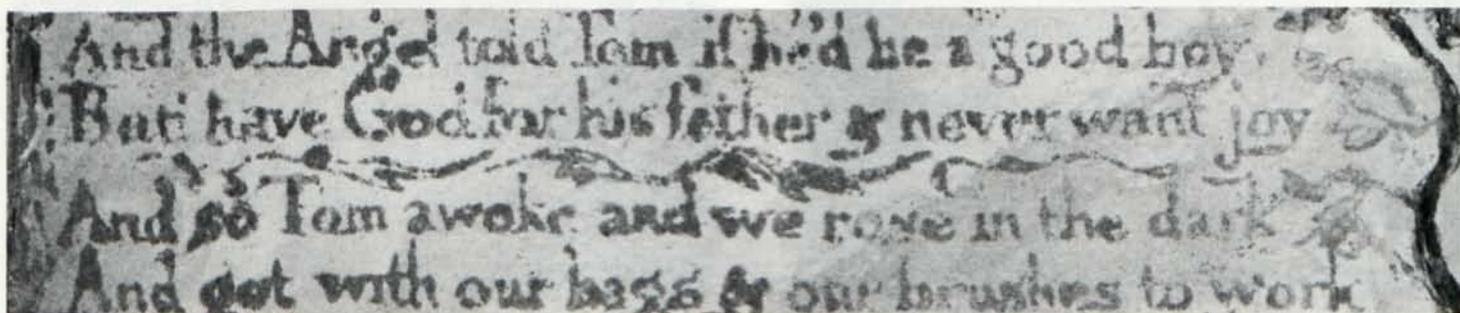
<sup>2</sup> In addition to the variant in "The Clod and the Pebble" mentioned in the text, four other *Songs* are emended in one or more copies: "A Cradle Song" (*Songs* 17), emended substantially in Copy J; "Night" (*Songs* 21), in Copy Q of *Innocence* (Erdman and Bentley differ slightly as to which words are changed); and "The Tyger" (*Songs* 42), in Copy P. Bentley also mentions an obviously inadvertent textual change in "On Another's Sorrow" (*Songs* 27), in Copy L of *Innocence*: the word "tear" in line 31 printed faintly and was covered by a painted leaf. Erdman's textual notes seem to imply that "The Blossom" (*Songs* 11) has been emended "in all copies issued by Blake." His assertion that the text of "posthumous copies" reads "thy" rather than "my" in line 6 is based on one of the unaccountably retouched facsimiles of Harvard's Copy *b*, in which "my" has been altered to "thy." That Copy *b* itself contains the usual reading has been demonstrated by Mary Ellen Reisner in "Folcroft Facsimile of the *Songs*," *Blake Newsletter* 40 (Spring 1977), 130. See Erdman, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, newly rev. ed. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California, 1982), and Bentley, *William Blake's Writings*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978).

<sup>3</sup> In correspondence Erdman cites two instances in which retouching has similarly corrupted the text of *Jerusalem*, Copy B, on plates 17 and 18. These are mentioned in his textual notes, p. 809. Copy B of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* contains another instance of sloppy retouching on plate 25: the word "chariots" is crudely written as "charots."

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Detail of *Songs* 12, Copy AA. Reproduced by permission of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

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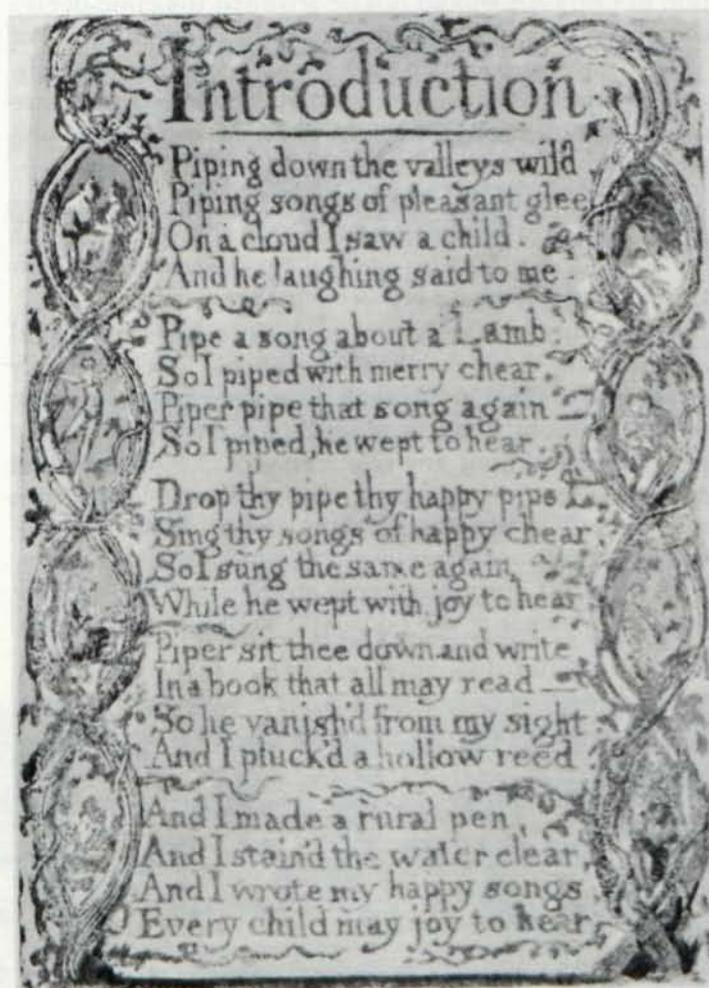
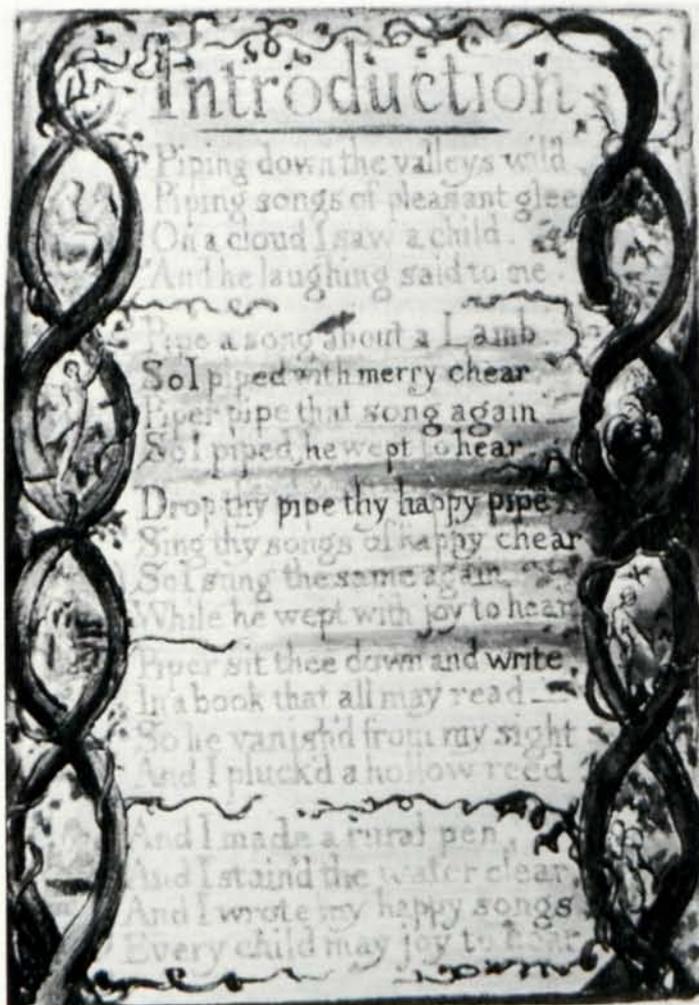
## A Minute Particular in Blake's *Songs of Innocence*, Copy O

Theresa M. Kelley

As several commentators have remarked, the eight tiny vignettes or panels which frame the text of the "Introduction" in Blake's *Songs of Innocence* are difficult to decipher, if indeed they can be deciphered at all.<sup>1</sup> Yet as a group these vignettes are clearly derived, as Sir Geoffrey Keynes has argued, from "a medieval manuscript illustrating the Tree of Jesse."<sup>2</sup> With this antecedent in mind, recent commentators have suggested that the sixth vignette, the second from the top in the group of four to the right of Blake's text, may be Jesse. David Erdman summarized much of earlier commentary when he described this figure as "huddled" with "legs crossed, head on hand; Jesse himself (suggests Essick) as in the Sistine fresco; or regarding or working at something in his lap,

perhaps writing."<sup>3</sup> However, in *Songs of Innocence*, Copy O, the figure is well defined. It is not Jesse, but a woman who holds a baby in her lap (illus. 1).<sup>4</sup> This figure is clearly a deliberate variant, of interest not only because it may be unique among copies of the *Songs*, but also because it demonstrates Blake's atypical attention to this minute particular in the "Introduction" of *Songs of Innocence*.

Impressions of this plate that have not been retouched show, in the sixth vignette, a figure that appears to be sitting, the legs slightly crossed, and the left arm possibly bent.<sup>5</sup> Otherwise, little can be distinguished. A similar figure appears in retouched or tinted copies, although a few exhibit variations in the definition of the arms and legs (illus. 2).<sup>6</sup> In still other copies there is something—but it is unclear what—in the lap of the figure.<sup>7</sup> Finally, two Muir facsimiles respond with admirable inventiveness to the muddled as well as huddled figure of most copies by altering its seated position or by having the figure stand.<sup>8</sup> Even in *Innocence*, Copy N, one of three copies which Blake produced shortly before and after Copy O, the figure is indistinct.<sup>9</sup> Yet if the clearly depicted image of a mother and child in Copy O is unusual in the context of



other versions of the same plate, it is typical of its immediate context, Copy O, which displays extensive ink modeling of individual figures and designs, particularly notable in the frontispiece, "Introduction," "The Little Black Boy" (1 and 2), "The Little Boy Found," "The Chimney Sweeper," and "Night" (1). Together with applications of color specific to this copy, such modeling either gives sharper definition to principal figures or permits some redefinition of smaller ones, as is the case with the "mother and child" vignette discussed here. Because there may be other variants of this figure in copies which I have not consulted, this note invites additional notes and queries concerning the "Introduction" of *Songs of Innocence*.

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Edwin J. Ellis's introduction for the facsimile edition of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1893), xviii. For easier reference, my citations of specific volumes of the *Songs* follow G. E. Bentley Jr.'s practice of referring to *Songs of Innocence* as *Innocence*, and to *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* as *Experience* (*Blake Books*, 1977). The Ellis facsimile is of *Experience*, U. See Bentley, *Blake Books*, p. 436. Bentley describes the vignette as "a man reading" in *William Blake's Writings*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), I, 24, and in *Blake Books*, p. 389.

<sup>2</sup> Keynes's commentary for *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* (London: Trianon, 1967), pl. 4. Facsimile of *Experience*, Z. See Bentley, *Blake Books*, p. 369.

<sup>3</sup> Erdman's commentary for *The Illuminated Blake* (N.Y.: Anchor Doubleday, 1974), p. 45. Facsimile of *Innocence*, I, with reference in this instance to *Experience*, U. See Bentley, *Blake Books*, pp. 407 and 422.

<sup>4</sup> *Songs of Innocence*, O. Reproduced here as illus. 1 through the

courtesy of the Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin. See Bentley, *Blake Books*, p. 409.

<sup>5</sup> Copies which show just the image printed from the copperplate or an image that is unretouched in the area of this vignette are: *Innocence*, E (New York Public Library, Berg Collection), U (facsimile, *Songs of Innocence* [Boston, 1883]) and *Experience*, C, b, h, A (facsimile, *Songs of Innocence* [London: Ernest Benn, 1926]). I am indebted to Robert N. Essick for descriptions of *Innocence*, U and *Experience*, c, b, h, and AA (see below).

<sup>6</sup> Copies which are retouched or tinted but still show the same image as that of the unretouched copies include: *Innocence*, B (facsimile, London: Trianon, 1954), D and K (Morgan Library), I (reproduced here as illus. 2 through the courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library), N (Estelle Doheny Collection of the Laurence Doheny Memorial Library) and *Experience*, B (facsimile, David Bindman, *The Complete Graphic Works of William Blake* [N.Y.: Putnam, 1978], p. 217), E (Henry E. Huntington Library), I (reproduced in *The Illuminated Blake*, p. 45), V (Morgan Library), Y (Metropolitan Museum of New York), Z (facsimile, London: Trianon, 1967), AA. For additional information concerning the copies cited in these notes, see Bentley, *Blake Books*, pp. 365-438.

<sup>7</sup> Two copies besides *Innocence*, O and possibly *Experience*, AA (see Erdman's note concerning Essick's reading of this figure in *The Illuminated Blake*, p. 45) appear to show something in the lap of the figure: *Experience*, U (mentioned by Erdman, *The Illuminated Blake*, p. 45) and T (facsimile, *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* [Liverpool: Henry Young and Sons, 1923]). See Bentley, *Blake Books*, pp. 436 and 421.

<sup>8</sup> *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* (facsimile of *Innocence*, D [Edmonton: Muir, 1884]) and *Songs of Innocence* (Muir and Trumble facsimile of *Experience*, A [London: Bernard Quaritch, 1927]). See Bentley, *Blake Books*, pp. 434 and 488.

<sup>9</sup> See Bentley's chronological list of the *Songs* in *Blake Books*, p. 367.

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1. "Introduction," *Songs of Innocence* copy O, reproduced by permission of the Humanities Research Center, the University of Texas at Austin.

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2. "Introduction," *Songs of Innocence* copy I, reproduced by permission of the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

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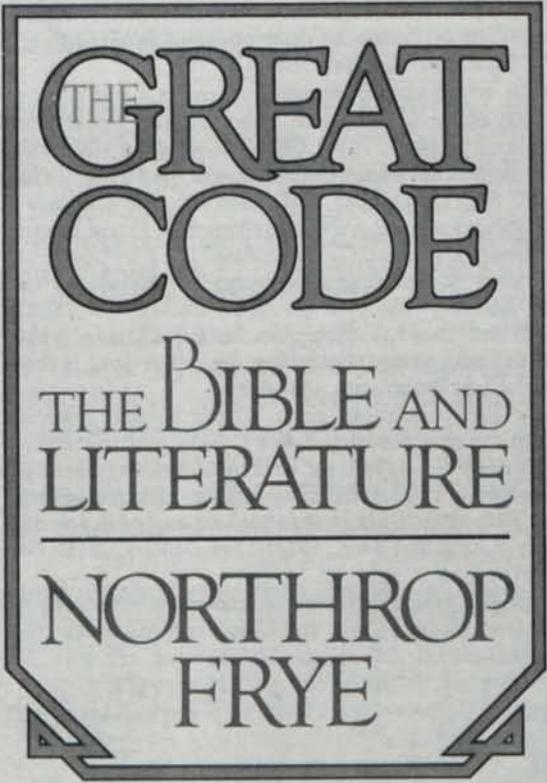
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## REVIEWS

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THE GREAT  
CODE

THE BIBLE AND  
LITERATURE

NORTHROP  
FRYE

Northrop Frye. *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 261 pp. \$14.95.

Reviewed by Robert Alter

Since *The Great Code* for the most part has the unfortunate effect of revealing the defects of its author's virtues, something should be said first about those virtues. Northrop Frye, long before the new wave of literary theory, was the first widely influential critic writing in English to conceive literature as a system and to try to define the intricacies of its workings systematically. He has exhibited a Viconian deftness in the articulation of historical and generic schemata (Vico in fact is given some prominence in the first chapter of the new book), spelling out the stages and aspects of his sundry literary cycles and sequences with a

boldness that always has an intrinsic poetic allure and sometimes a certain explanatory power. Frye has brilliantly scanned a vast corpus of literary texts, ancient and modern, spotting significant interconnections others have overlooked, or, at the very least, imaginatively arguing for the connections that have struck him. *The Great Code*, which he conceives as a "restatement"—and, implicitly, a kind of summation—of the critical outlook he has developed over the past three decades, has moments of engaging wit and even penetrating insight, as one would expect from so intelligent a writer, but the project as a whole exposes an underlying weakness of Frye's predilection for schemata and networks of connection.

A more accurate subtitle for the new book than the one it has been given would be "The Bible and Archetypes," for one learns little here about literature, or about the Bible and literature, or about the Bible, though there is an eloquent exposition, offered by a loyal modern adherent, of the traditional Christian typological view of the Bible. A good deal of space is devoted to rehearsing what is familiar from dozens of handbooks on the Bible or from the biblical texts themselves—ranging from paraphrases of the arguments of Ecclesiastes and Job to summaries of the Mesopotamian flood story and other ancient Near Eastern antecedents to the Bible. But when Frye is not reviewing familiar material, what he says about the Bible generally proves to be at least a little misleading and sometimes dead wrong. The basic problem—and I believe it is also a basic problem in his whole conception of literature—is that he is far too concerned with the comprehensive structure of archetypes to attend with much discrimination to the differential structures of specific literary texts. For Frye, the individual case is finally interesting only to the degree in which it participates in the archetype; indeed, in some sense it is the archetype that validates the individual case for him, that confirms its status as literary expression.

Given this orientation, Christian typology becomes an ideally congenial way of organizing disparate texts, and in fact, *The Great Code* makes one wonder whether Christian typology may not have been the ultimate model on which *Anatomy of Criticism* was based. To be sure, Frye's frame of reference for typology is more modern anthropology than medieval theology. Writing with a sense of historical perspective, he does not seriously imagine that the authors of the tale of the binding of Isaac in Genesis and of the dead and resuscitated son of the Shunamite woman in Kings were explicitly adumbrating the story of the crucifixion and resurrection. But in the logic of his system, those earlier tales of threatened and saved sons are structurally subsumed under the Christ story, in a way "fulfilled" through it because the crucifixion and resurrection perfectly realize, and thus make perfectly transparent, the implicit archetypality of the Old Testament tales. "The two testaments," Frye affirms, "form a double mirror, each reflecting the other

but neither the world outside." I think this formulation discards the problem of referentiality in the Bible too readily, but I would like to address myself particularly to the distortions involved in Frye's viewing the Old Testament in the conviction that it should be imagined as one panel in a diptych mirror.

To begin with, everything must be seen as ordered progression moving from Old to New. Thus, he proposes seven "phases" of biblical literature forming a causal and chronological sequence: creation, revolution, law, wisdom, prophecy, gospel, and apocalypse. Any careful scrutiny of the actual evolution of biblical religion and the complicated history of the production of the sundry biblical texts will reveal that this sequence—most transparently, in the three middle phases—does not reflect a diachronic process at all but only Frye's rhetorical ingenuity. Similarly, Frye proposes a biblical "structure of imagery"—"demonic," "analogical," and "apocalyptic"—moving in grand progression away from "the oasis imagery of trees and water" in Eden through pastoral, agricultural, and then urban imagery, and finally back to a new Eden. Again the variegated data of the texts suggest nothing like this orderly "structure." The biblical poets referred to oases and gardens and sheep and vineyards because these were part of the reality they inhabited; they also referred to glassmaking and ceramics and architecture and laundry processes, but Frye passes over these in silence because they do not neatly confirm his schema. If the biblical writers had had bicycles and refrigerators, they would have also made those part of their stockpile of metaphors. For Frye, however, the final source of the image is the archetype, not reality. Thus, when the first Psalm compares the righteous man to "a tree planted by rivers of water," Frye immediately perceives this as "the paradisaic imagery of trees and water." But there is nothing at all paradisaic in the distinctly this-worldly, non-mythological poem that is Psalm 1, and the simile is invoked because everyone living in the Near Eastern climate and topography knew that only a tree planted close to a source of fresh water could have healthy roots and hope to flourish.

A good many of the archetypal misreadings are graver than this. Frye sees traces of an Oedipus myth in the creation of Adam, "whose 'mother,' so far as he had one, was the feminine *adamah* or dust of the ground, to whose body he returned after breaking the link with his father." This is imaginative but perverse. The story presents God as Adam's fashioner, never as his father; there are no textual hints of anything maternal about the earth which, far from being a submerged Gaea-Tellus, is represented here as mere raw material for man's construction; and in a language where all nouns have gender, the fact that *adamah* is feminine (as is also, for example, the biblical word for sword) hardly suggests in itself female identity.

Frye cites a Babylonian ritual of ceremonial humiliation of the king by the high priest as an explanation for

the remarkable clash between David and his wife Michal on his triumphant entrance into Jerusalem, dancing and cavorting before the Ark of the Covenant. She rebukes him for exposing himself (apparently, in the sexual sense); he retorts sarcastically by saying he will make himself as lowly as he pleases, for he, and not her father's house, has been chosen to rule. Now, for Frye, it is important to assimilate this story to the supposed archetype of the humiliated king because then it becomes a typological anticipation of the crucifixion. But the only way to reach such a reading is by ignoring all the rich details of the story, which is manifestly about the explosively loaded marital and political relationship between David and Michal that has evolved over many years and has nothing whatever to do with rituals of royal humiliation.

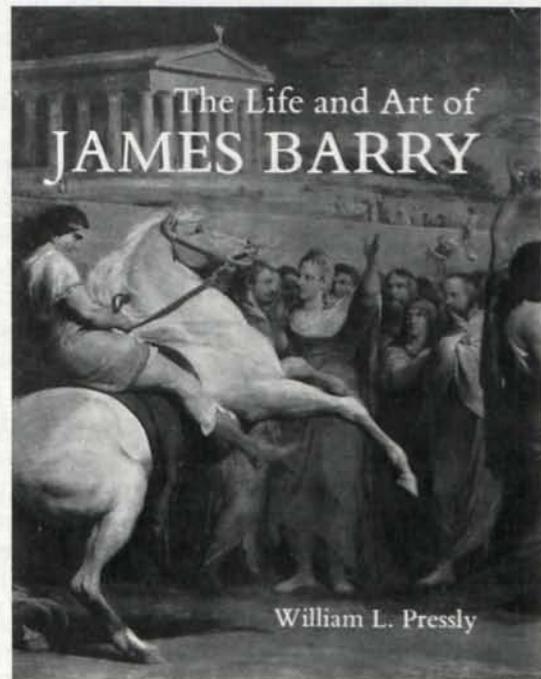
There are more instances than I can take space to enumerate of such wrenching of literary materials out of their defining contexts into the more edifying and obfuscating context of archetypal schemata. Metaphors are invented and then said to inform the text. Thus, Frye suggests that the "beginning" introduced in Genesis 1 is not birth but "rather the moment of waking from sleep," an interesting enough idea nowhere intimated in the text but which is said to be "the central metaphor underlying" the biblical creation. The keyword *hebel* (AV "vanity") in Ecclesiastes, which means the breath of one's mouth, or vapor—that is, something fleeting and insubstantial—is said to mean, on no philological authority, "dense fog," so that it can play a symbolic role against light in the archetypal system Frye proposes for Ecclesiastes.

Let me offer one final example. Reading Job with Christian, typological eyes, Frye asserts that "Job lives in enemy territory, in the embraces of heathen and Satanic power which is symbolically the belly of the leviathan, the endless extent of time and space." Every element of this statement happens to be false. There are no heathen in this scrupulously monotheistic book. There is equally no "Satanic power" in Job: the Adversary or Prosecuting Attorney (he is never designated with a proper name in the Hebrew) is not the Satan of Christian demonology and has no "territory" or power independent of God. A figure of ancient Near Eastern folklore rather than of mythology proper, he is one of a vaguely conceived crowd of *benei elohim*, divine beings, with a specific function of oppositionalism in the narrative. It is only later tradition that will develop him into the Prince of Evil. The Book of Job is concerned obsessively with man's finitude and not at all with endless time and space, and I fail to see by what mental gyration Job could be said to be living in the belly of the leviathan.

Yet Frye goes on to conclude about the ending of the book: "The fact that God can point out these monsters [leviathan and behemoth] to Job means that Job is outside them, and no longer under their power." Frye of course exhibits an archetypal kneejerk response to

leviathan and behemoth, assuming, because leviathan is elsewhere mythological, that they must both be mythological and demonic creatures in the Book of Job. But, if one really bothers to read the context, it is perfectly clear that these two strange beasts are part of a grand zoological catalogue, that they are the crocodile and the hippopotamus, quite realistically rendered in many respects, though with a degree of poetic hyperbole that draws on mythology for heightening effects. The poet's point is that both are exotic and uncanny beasts dwelling along the Nile, far from Job's observation, and thus are vividly part of that vast panorama of creation beyond his ken. In any case, they are not represented in the poem as evil; on the contrary, they are objects of God's providential supervision as Creator; and in no sense could anything that preceded lead us to imagine Job was ever in either of their bellies, figuratively or otherwise. One could hardly have invented a clearer case in which the adherence to archetypes has led a gifted mind to drastic misreading.

Individual literary texts, of course, cannot be read in isolation. Literature is certainly a cumulative tradition and, as Frye has so often argued, an endlessly cross-referential system. But by fixing above all on the system, we may forget to look for what the individual text gives us that is fresh, surprising, subtly or startlingly innovative, and that, alas, is the fault illustrated page after page in *The Great Code*.



**Raymond Lister.** *George Richmond. A Critical Biography.* London: Robin Garton Ltd., 1981. \$40.00.

**William L. Pressly.** *The Life and Art of James Barry.* New Haven and London: Published for The Paul Mellon Center for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 1981. \$65.00.

Reviewed by Shelley M. Bennett

In recent years there has been a remarkable increase in the quantity and quality of serious studies of British art. This upsurge is undoubtedly related to the rather belated growth of this area as an academic discipline. The magnificent new Yale Center for British Art and the lavish publications of the Yale University Press have further broadened general exposure to English art and fostered a more enlightened appreciation of this subject. Monographs by William Pressly and by Raymond Lister now add to this growing wealth of knowledge about British art.

Because this is a relatively new scholarly field, the need for basic information, which both books so generously supply, is still of critical importance. Lister's *George Richmond, A Critical Biography*, for example, is founded

on heretofore inaccessible Richmond diaries and family manuscripts. For the most part, Lister limits himself to a biographical account based on condensations and summations of the diary entries. A concluding chapter deals more specifically with his art, while a very useful appendix lists all his known portraits.

In his own day, George Richmond, R. A. (1809–1896) was best known for his fashionable portraits of eminent Victorians, through which he gained both financial and social success. He also painted narrative subjects and landscapes, primarily for his own amusement, and received some critical acclaim for his work in art restoration. He is best known today, however, for his connection with William Blake. Richmond was one of the young group of disciples, which included Samuel Palmer and Edward Calvert, who gathered around Blake in the last years of his life. For a brief period, in the late 1820s and early 1830s, Richmond was deeply influenced by the art of his mentor. Of the Shoreham circle of artists, his art was in many ways closest to Blake's. In Richmond's early drawings and prints, as in Blake's art, anatomical accuracy and convincing spatial foreshortening have been sacrificed in order to maximize the flow of the taut, bounding outlines. Contour lines sharply define the forms and create rhythmic, expressive patterns across the surface of both artists' work. Furthermore, Richmond relies on a figure type that is very reminiscent of Blake's distinctive manner of depicting the human body. However, Richmond, unlike Blake, was concerned with a more traditional, Christian imagery, as was the Shoreham circle as a whole, reflecting their rather conventional views. Richmond's early visionary works represent a nostalgic, spiritual world of private fantasy quite different from Blake's.

Lister's book is the first monograph devoted exclusively to this artist of Blake's circle. Prior to its publication, the only existing information on Richmond was to be found in a few, rather meager articles and in A. M. W. Stirling's edition of *The Richmond Papers* (1926), which is concerned primarily with Richmond's son. In addition to providing a vast new body of biographical information about Richmond, Lister amends several incorrect accounts recorded by Stirling. Of particular use is the list in Appendix I of Richmond's approximately 2500 portraits, including prices when known. This compilation is based on manuscript material provided by the Richmond family. Students of British art will be especially grateful to Lister for this new factual material. The numerous illustrations of Richmond's works from his early visionary period supply valuable information about this artist. One is very thankful to now have this visual material so readily available. Lister's analysis of Richmond's art, on the other hand, provides few new insights, particularly in regard to the portraits. Lister has quite meticulously noted Richmond's specific borrowings and quotations from other artists, especially Blake, but he goes little further in analyzing his

style, subject matter, or the historical context of his art.

William Pressly's *The Life and Art of James Barry* is a more intensive art historical study. In addition to providing a full biographical account of Barry's life, Pressly is concerned with relating Barry's art to the general developments in English art. This is particularly appropriate and relevant, for Barry was a central figure in the flowering of an internationally renowned school of English painting in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

James Barry (1741–1806) shared the concern of his fellow artists during this period with improving the status of English art and of English artists. To do so, Barry directed his artistic energies to promoting an English school of history painting, the subject matter held in highest esteem by his contemporaries. His efforts in this public arena culminated in his intricate, intellectual mural program in the Society of Arts rooms in the Adelphi, executed at great personal cost ("Barry told me that while he Did that Work—he Lived on Bread & Apples," writes Blake in his "Annotations to Reynolds"—"O Society for Encouragement of Art"!).

In addition to creating history paintings in the grand manner, Barry, like many of his fellow artists, began to expand the scope of art, turning to new subjects ranging from literature, classical mythology and early British history to contemporary politics and portraiture. Likewise, to enlarge the emotional gamut of his art, Barry developed a wide variety of styles, making adjustments in his style for different subjects. Barry's conscious manipulation of style for a variety of expressive effects in his paintings, drawings and prints provides an important link between contemporary English art and esthetic theory, particularly as formulated by his early patron Edmund Burke in his influential treatise, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757). Furthermore, his experiments with the expressive potential of line were influential in the evolution of an abstract linear style in the hands of Blake, Flaxman, and Stothard.

Pressly's monograph grows out of his dissertation on the same topic (1973) and represents years of intensive study based upon a wide array of primary and secondary sources. Though preceded by a dissertation by Robert Wark (1952) and by two master's theses, by Charles Kriebel (1966) and David Solkin (1974), Pressly's study is the first full scale treatment to reach publication since Edward Fryer's early nineteenth century account. It supplements the previous studies with new information, particularly concerning Barry's prints. As a readily accessible source on this important English artist, it will be of assistance in all future studies of the art of this period.

Pressly has arranged the book in a general chronological sequence. Within each chapter, he expands upon various themes, such as Barry's formation as a history painter, his portraits and politics, his Society of Arts program, etc. As Pressly states in his preface, his goal has

been "to present a detailed iconographical and stylistic study of Barry's work that takes into account his forceful and idiosyncratic personality as well as the impact of contemporary social, political, and theoretical issues." On the whole, Pressly does an admirable job in fulfilling his aim; however, on occasion, the emphasis falls rather too heavily on an analysis of Barry's tempestuous personality. A more balanced perspective could have been achieved if Pressly had presented the reader from the beginning with a broader view of the art historical context rather than relegating it to the conclusion. This would have been of particular help in clarifying Barry's contributions to the stylistic developments associated with English romantic art. Likewise, the study would have profited by a more thorough discussion of such pertinent issues as how Barry's works were perceived by his contemporaries. Who was his audience and, more importantly, who bought his prints? Pressly tells us that Barry's prints were the chief means by which he supported himself and the one area in which he was able to reach an audience successfully. Were his prints given a different reading than his full scale oils, which were, for the most part, undervalued in his own day? This line of pursuit would have set Barry squarely in the context of his times. Pressly, nonetheless, provides the reader with an invaluable amount of new information about both Barry and English art in general in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Pressly supplements the monograph with various helpful appendices including a *catalogue raisonné* of Barry's paintings, drawings and prints. Unlike earlier listings of Barry's works, Pressly's catalogue is conveniently arranged by subject rather than collection and arranged chronologically within each section. Copious illustrations further enhance the value of this handsomely produced book. Pressly's lucid manner of writing makes this excellent scholarly text a pleasure to read.



## FLAXMANS ILLUSTRATIONS TO HOMER

*Drawn by John Flaxman*

*Engraved by William Blake and Others*



Essick and La Belle, eds. *Flaxman's Illustrations to Homer*. Dover, 1977.

Reviewed by Janet Warner

This edition of Flaxman's designs to Homer was published five years ago and has become a most useful reference book for anyone interested in sources of English neo-classical design. Robert Essick and Jenijoy LaBelle provide a scholarly and pertinent introduction, a useful annotated bibliography chronologically arranged, and just enough commentary on each design to identify it and suggest its relation to Blake's and other artists' treatments of similar subjects.

The reproductions of the outline designs are very clear, even perhaps a little more highly contrasted than the originals I have been able to compare them with. The editors note the favorable reception of the designs from their first appearance in 1793, and their undeniable influence on motif and style in nineteenth-century Europe. Irreverently, I was reminded of the twentieth-century comic strip (see Scylla, *Odyssey*, plate 20): should we blame Flaxman for this? The flattened plane and economy of line of the illustrations appeal to the taste of the modern viewer more than does the classical subject

matter. One can see the genesis of the relief decoration of so many 1930s buildings, and many of the lines of Art Deco furniture in these illustrations.

### Additions to the Blake Apocrypha

**Blake, a play written and directed by Grant Hehir. Music by Bruce Stewart. Performed at the Sheridan Theatre, Adelaide, Australia, 4-20 March 1982.**

**Reviewed by Michael J. Tolley**

Adelaide, Australia, has a biennial Arts Festival in March and this Festival has developed a Fringe and among the Fringe activities in March 1982 was a play called *Blake*, written and directed by Grant Hehir, with music by Bruce Stewart. This play was performed at the Sheridan Theatre on eleven occasions from 4-20 March; I attended the final performance.

The play began promisingly enough with a harangue from a Russian, then one from an Anglican clergyman, who were both led, in celebrating Blake's 1957 bicentenary, to make the claim that he was the greatest genius who ever lived; they were then mocked by a sly bearded rogue calling himself John Joseph Hidson (the star of the show), who claimed to be the cynical alter ego Blake alone could see in his life, a life Hidson bedeviled. Thus we were prepared for amusing situation comedy of the type in which Blake, courting Polly or being patronized by Sir Joshua Reynolds, was goaded into shouting rudely at an invisible interlocutor. In his own person, Blake appeared as a morose, doubting coward, unluckily bearing a bald patch from his tender years and not even allowed a red flourishing wig.

This was a production that breathed the spirit of amateurism, which a full house enjoyed at \$4.50 a head. Eight performers handled all the characters deemed necessary in a rough representation of Blake's life, two of them

playing ten parts each, with the actresses all compelled to play male parts, one pleasant effect of which was, apparently, the adaptation of the character of Tom Paine to a womanish figure. To compensate, Mary Wollstonecraft appeared as a very mannish feminist who made a determined assault on Blake's virtue, Fuseli being inexplicably absent from Johnson's radical circle. The entertainment consisted essentially of a number of Blake's songs, set charmingly to music and, alas, all scannelly sung, interspersed with travestied episodes from Blake's life and illuminated by a double-screen slide projection, some of the slides being rare and excellent, some well-known ones appearing reversed, including the *Europe* frontispiece.

All of those Blakean purists who could not bear the heresies of Adrian Mitchell's *Tyger* would have stormed from the small Sheridan Theatre breathing threats of libel, but we are all so civilized in Adelaide (that is to say, we do not take art seriously here), and it was such a pleasant warm night, and the whole enterprise was so patently harmless in such of its intentions as could be inferred, that even I sat back and chuckled at each fresh absurdity and clapped with the others at the end of each act (there was an interval of fifteen minutes for refreshments: superb orange juice for 40 cents or, in this renowned wine state, plonk for 50).

The unsuspecting credulous members of the audience would have left believing some curious apocryphal facts. Among these are the idea that Blake was, indeed, mad, though this was partly the fault of Hidson who, however, provided Blake with the experience which led to the doctrine of contraries; that the girl he first courted was a tartish model called Polly from the life class at the Royal Academy where he studied with Rowlandson and argued with Reynolds about painting from imagination; that he went to Felpham as an expedient to avoid accepting the position of Royal Engraver (selected by the mad George III on the blind-dab-at-a-moving-list principle), where Mr. and Mrs. Hayley first introduced themselves to him and Catherine (Mrs. Hayley remaining visibly alive and well through the whole trial for sedition); that it was to rescue Catherine from a sexual assault of the drunken Schofield that Blake grappled with the trooper and ejected him from his garden; that Blake was saved from hanging or worse (transportation to Australia) from a hostile judge largely by the Royal-Engraver-selection story; that thereafter Coleridge befriended him, meeting him at the womanish Charles Lamb's house, in the intervals of insulting Wordsworth (Coleridge misremembered Blake's poetry but Blake capped him with a word-perfect recollection of "Kubla Khan"); that Blake died alone, chanting (partly under Parry's inspiration) the famous lyric "And did those feet," which he wrote on his deathbed.

The Letters and  
Prose Writings of  
**WILLIAM  
COWPER**

Volume III 1787-1791

EDITED BY

JAMES KING AND  
CHARLES RYSKAMP

James King and Charles Ryskamp, eds. *The Letters and Prose Writings of William Cowper. Vol. II: Letters, 1782-1876.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981. xxviii + 652 pp. \$98.00.

Reviewed by Donald H. Reiman

In discussing the first volume of this edition of Cowper's letters (reviewed together with the first volume of Cowper's *Poems in Blake*, 15, 149-51), I highly praised the quality of Cowper's letters and their value for students of Blake and the Romantic poets and commended the editorial principles and textual accuracy of the volume. At the same time, I questioned some of the editors' annotations, and I severely criticized the Clarendon Press's production procedures and standards. At the outset of this review, let me say that the intelligent editorial principles and the high standard of textual accuracy continue in Volume II and that the annotation has markedly improved (though there are, inevitably, small slips, as on page 343, where the poem quoted in fn. 3 is marred by a typo and where fn. 4 contains a speculation apparently

refuted on page 344). The Clarendon Press, however, continues to turn out an inferior physical artifact. My review copy contains two cognate leaves, comprising pages 79-82, that have never been sewn in at all and arrived laid in the book, completely unattached to the binding. It appears that the same kind of workmen are producing Clarendon's books and New York City's buses and subway cars. One cannot be killed by a badly manufactured edition of Cowper's *Letters*, but the question remains to why anyone should have to pay \$98 per volume to buy one.

If, however, you have the good fortune to hold a copy together long enough to read it, this second volume contains a fund of valuable information on the craft of writing verse and the process of publishing it in the 1780s (and for some years thereafter), as well as a treasury of marvelous anecdotes illustrative of the daily life and social mores of England on the eve of the French Revolution. Besides all these pragmatic attractions, Cowper's letters are among the very wittiest and most interesting I've ever read. Though they lack the apparent spontaneity of Byron's and Lamb's, they offer the reader glimpses of a gentleman writing, in varied tones appropriate to his relationships with his correspondents, on the whole range of religious, political, social, literary, and personal concerns that characterized the period. It thus provides both a self-portrait of the artist at work by the leading poetic talent in *England* at the time (Burns was in Scotland) and holds up a mirror to the social conditions of the age.

Let me illustrate, first, the kind of social understanding these letters provide. For one thing, both justice and lawlessness in the period seem to have been directed at particular persons. In March 1783, Cowper tells that there passed through Olney "a body of Highlanders" who

lately mutinied at Portsmouth. Convinced to a man, that General Murray had sold them to the East India Company, they breath nothing but vengeance, and swear they will pull down his house in Scotland as soon as they arrive there . . . as Men, if their charge against the General be well supported, I cannot blame them. . . . None of their principal Officers are with them; either conscious of guilt, or . . . suspected as . . . partners in the iniquitous bargain, they fear the resentment of the corps. . . . General Murray's skull was in some danger among them, for he was twice felled to the ground with the Butt end of a Musquet. The Sergeant Major rescued him, or he would have been for ever render'd incapable of selling Highlanders to the India Company. (pp. 113-14)

Not only Cowper, but the government decided that the Highlanders were in the right and discharged the men instead of punishing them. On their way north, they attended various evangelical churches, well received by the people.

In November 1783, Cowper reports the first of a series of fires set by arsonists, who used the confusion to

steal things when people abandoned their houses or carried their valuables outside. "George Griggs is the principal sufferer. He gave 18 Guineas or nearly that Sum to a woman whom in his hurry he mistook for his wife . . . He has likewise lost 40 pounds worth of wool" (p. 176). Two weeks later, Cowper writes again:

The Country around us is much alarm'd with apprehensions of fire. Two have happen'd since That of Olney. One at Hitchin, where the damage is said to amount to 11,000 £ . . . Since our Conflagration here, we have sent two Women and a Boy to the Justice for depredation. Sue Riviss for stealing a piece of Beef, which, in her excuse, she said she intended to take care of. This Lady . . . escaped for want of evidence. Not that evidence was indeed wanting, but Our men of Goatham judged it unnecessary to send it. With her, went [another woman who had] filled her apron with wearing apparel, which she likewise intended to take care of. She would have gone to the County Gaol, had Billy Raban, the Baker's son, who prosecuted, insisted upon it. But He . . . interposed in her favor and begg'd her off. The young Gentleman who accompanied these fair ones, is the Junior Son of Molly Boswell. He had stolen some Iron work the property of Griggs the Butcher. Being convicted he was order'd to be whipt . . . He seem'd to show great fortitude but it was all an imposition upon the public. The Beedle who perform'd it had filled his left hand with red Ocre, through which after every stroke he drew the lash of his whip, leaving the appearance of a wound upon the skin, but in reality not hurting him at all. This being perceived by Mr. Constable Henscomb . . . he applied his cane without any such management or precaution to the shoulders of the too mercifull Executioner. The scene immediately became more interesting, the Beedle could by no means be prevailed upon to strike hard, which provoked the Constable to strike harder, and this double flogging continued, 'till a Lass of Silver End, pitying the pitiful Beedle thus suffering under the hands of the pitiless Constable, joined the procession, and placing herself immediately behind the latter, seized him by his capillary Club and pulling him backward by the same, slapt his face with a most Amazonian fury. This Concatenation of events has taken up more of my paper than I intended it should, but I could not forbear to inform you how the Beedle thresh'd the thief, the Constable the Beedle, and the Lady the Constable, and how the thief was the only person concern'd, who suffer'd nothing. (pp. 180-81)

There are numerous other incidents of similar interest, including two situations in which married men are accused—and assumed to be guilty—of having sexual relations with a ten-year-old girl (p. 251) and with young boys, respectively (p. 314). In each case, Cowper and, presumably, the community seem to pity the men (who are removed from their churches) and their families more than the children involved. Cowper, indeed, seemed to have only limited sympathy for those in whose situations he cannot imagine himself (such as being the parent of

such an abused young child). He could, however, feel the pangs of hunger and cold that afflicted the poor of Olney and did his best to raise money from wealthy friends to relieve their sufferings (see, for example, pp. xxvi, 86-87, 91, 94-95, and 328-29).

Of all Cowper's sympathies, his religious and political ones are the most interesting because they show the contrast between his (and his age's) thinking on these matters and the ideals of the later Romantics. That someone was pious or religious and lived morally were more important to Cowper at this point than *what* religion one espoused. We find him not only being cordial to the Throckmortons, neighboring Roman Catholic gentry, but also encouraging the Rev. William Unwin to develop ties with Lord Petre, *his* Catholic neighbor. Cowper gives aid and comfort to all persons who seem to be religious but withdraws his approval as soon as he learns that they are licentious, or hypocritical, or unduly avaricious. He leaves final judgment to God—but he assumes that God does and will judge, and that, therefore, people need not exert themselves to punish vice on earth. (All being sinners, all stand rather equally in need of punishment anyway.) Cowper, therefore, though he fears robbers and incendiaries, does not show an inclination to organize counter-measures or to call out for improved earthly justice.

This same quietistic attitude also governs his political thinking. He roundly condemns parliament more than once for overtaxing the poor and for producing no benefits for the people. But rather than seeking reform, he falls back on his faith that God ultimately governs and judges all human affairs (see, for example, pp. 103-105). On the one occasion when a parliamentary candidate calls on him and solicits his influence, Cowper does not discuss the candidate's qualifications or the issues, but assures the man that—contrary to the testimony of his Olney neighbors—he has no influence with the enfranchised freeholders (see pp. 229-30).

One of the most delightful discoveries in this volume is how excited Cowper and, indeed, all the gentry with whom he corresponded became about the new experiments with hot-air balloons, which interest—though not easily traceable in a volume with an index only of proper names—forms one of the staple topics of his correspondence. One of the least edifying surprises is Cowper's strong objection to a concert commemorating the hundredth anniversary of Handel's birth because, as "a religious service instituted in honor of a Musician, and performed in the house of God" (p. 254), it bordered on sacrilege.

But the chief interest of this volume, beyond the brilliant portraiture of the writer and his friends, lies in Cowper's response to the growing reputation of *Poems* and *John Gilpin*, his writing and publication of *The Task* volume, and his embarkation on the translation of Homer. Cowper's remarks ought to show Romanticists

clearly the distinction in attitudes that separated *professional* literary men such as Dr. Johnson from those, including Cowper, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, and Shelley, who began publishing not to earn a living but to disseminate their views or to win literary fame. Cowper himself comments on the distinction in remarks on Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*: Cowper himself, who reads

merely for his amusement, . . . is pleased with what is really pleasing, and is not over curious to discover a blemish . . . . But if he once becomes a critic by trade, the case is altered. He must then . . . establish, if he can, an opinion in every mind, of his uncommon discernment, and his exquisite taste. This great end, he can never accomplish by thinking in the track that has been beaten . . . . He must endeavour to convince the world, that their favourite authors have more faults than they are aware of, and such as they have never suspected. (p. 9)

The key phrase here is "critic by trade," which, like identifying a person as being in any other "trade," marked him or her as being beneath the level of a gentleman.

Cowper, as gentleman author, was very much concerned with the details and fine points of his writing, its production, the reactions of his friends and acquaintances to it, and—to a lesser extent—the reputation it gained from the reviews of "critics by trade." Cowper seems neither to have expected nor received any money from his *Poems* (1782) or *The Task* (1785). In February 1783, Cowper says that he hasn't heard from Joseph Johnson about the earlier volume since publication (p. 107) and when in October 1784, apparently still ignorant of the sales of *Poems*, he asked William Unwin to approach Johnson about publishing *The Task*, he cautioned him:

If when you make the offer of my book to Johnson, he should stroak his chin and look up to the ceiling and cry Humph! anticipate him I beseech you at once, by saying that you know I should be sorry that he should undertake for me to his own disadvantage, or that my volume should be in any degree press'd upon him. . . . The Idea of being hawked about . . . is insupportable. Nicols I have heard is the most learned Printer of the present day. He may be a man of taste as well as of learning . . . . He prints the Gentleman's Magazine, and may serve us if the others should decline. If not, give yourself no further trouble about the matter. (pp. 286-87)

Only by late December 1785, when Cowper described himself to the playwright George Colman the Elder as "Once an Author and always an Author" (he had embarked on his translation of Homer), did he turn his thoughts to money: "Hitherto I have given away my Copies, but having indulged myself in that frolic twice, I now mean to try whether it may not prove equally agreeable to get something by the bargain. . . . I shall print by Subscription" (p. 436).

The point to be drawn from Cowper's attitude is

that, though Defoe and Dr. Johnson (to say nothing of numerous hacks) had earned their livings for periods of time from their publications, in Blake's day the thought was still something of a novelty for a serious poet. Therefore, Blake's or Shelley's or Keats' unsucccess as a commercial author signified nothing in itself, but came back to bother the three only in their self-comparisons with the phenomenal success of Lord Byron, whom they recognized to be a great poet as well as a prolific and popular one. Most serious writers of Blake's early years expected to find the means to live by inheritance or patronage (Cowper combined these to live modestly), or by achieving some post in church, university, or government. The only poets of the Romantic period who attempted to live on earnings from their writings were Southey, Moore, Hunt, and—with great unhappiness during his journalistic period—Coleridge. None could continue long to write ambitious non-occasional poems under these circumstances.

Cowper's attention to the details of his poetry was like that of other non-commercial poets, though Cowper confined his attention to the texts of the poems—the diction, punctuation, and orthography, even down to the use of elisions—rather than to the visual presentation (which was of concern not only to Blake but, to a lesser extent, to Wordsworth and Shelley). An examination of some of Cowper's statements in this volume about details of orthography should dispel any lingering notions that—at least for the serious *poets* of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—such matters were willingly left to compositors and proofreaders. For example, in writing to Joseph Johnson about the proofs of *Poems* (1782), Cowper says: "I have made some othe[r] cor[re]ctions, which though they be for the most part bu[t ] a Letter or a Stop, are yet such as were very necessary either to the Expression or the Sense" (p. 14; see also p. 22). Four years later, regarding his translation of Homer, Cowper raised an even smaller matter: "As to those elisions of the vowel before a vowel, . . . they are of the very essence of the manner, that I have adopted, and in my judgment are no blemishes" (p. 472). To this statement, King and Ryskamp key a very valuable note that quotes "the Preface to the second edition of his Homer (p. xlvii, 1802)" upon the article *the*:

. . . when this article precedes a vowel, shall [an author] melt it into the substantive, or leave the *hiatus* open? Both practises are offensive to a delicate ear. The particle absorbed occasions harshness, and the open vowel a vacuity equally inconvenient. Sometimes, therefore, to leave it open, and sometimes to engraft it into its adjunct seems more adviseable; this course Mr. Pope has taken, whose authority recommended it to me; though of the two evils I have most frequently chosen the elision as the least.

Though the Romantic poets, in their proto-democratic

age, didn't go around appealing to the "delicate ear," they, too, obviously felt the harshness of the *hiatus* arising from the juxtaposition of a word ending in a vowel and a succeeding word that began with one. In Coleridge's poems elisions are frequent, and even in Shelley's *Adonais* we find "th'intense atom glows" and "Torturing th'unwilling dross" (lines 179, 384). The point I am making, through Cowper's articulation of his interest in such minutiae, is that any form of modernization can be dangerous to poetic texts of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, possibly destroying or muddling details that the authors who were not "in trade" felt were important to the meaning or the aesthetic effects of their poems.

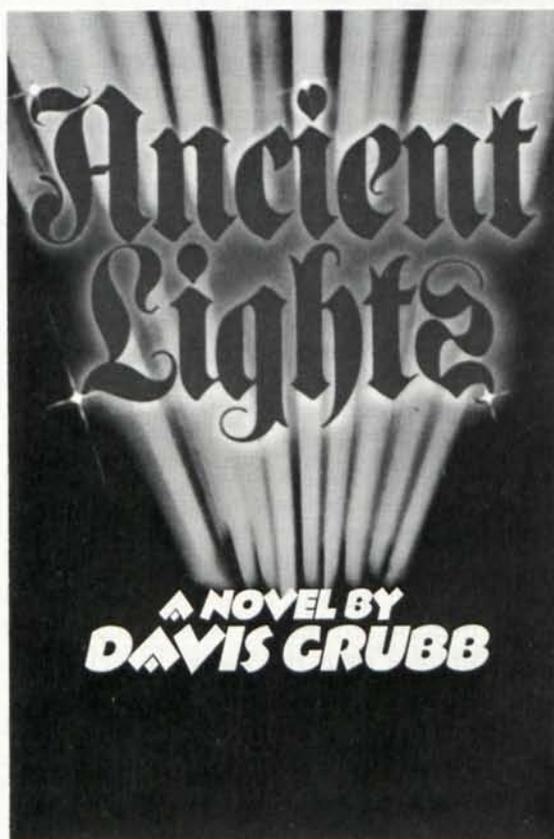
Beyond the value of these letters for the modern scholar in their revelations about Cowper's times and the ways of literary men then, Cowper's correspondence presents models of civilized social intercourse that can teach (most of) us a great deal about how to treat our friends. As the first volume showed Cowper coming through his first bout with madness a bit selfish and self-righteous, almost celebrating the painful deaths of his brother and Morley Unwin, this volume finds his ego healed through poetic recognition and his conscience cleansed by his years of kindness and civility to both those around him at Olney and his correspondents.

One aspect of being a gentleman author was to refrain from discussing one's writing with every friend and correspondent. In preparing *Poems* (1782), Cowper had taken into his confidence only John Newton, who had arranged for Joseph Johnson to publish the volume. That decision had made William Unwin, son of Cowper's beloved Mary Unwin, feel slighted, and Cowper decided to show his regard for Unwin by taking him into his confidence about *The Task* and allowing him, rather than Newton, to arrange for the publication. When he notified Newton that *The Task* was in press and Newton took umbrage, Cowper handled the situation politely but firmly (see pp. 291-322). Again, Cowper's behavior is unlike that of most modern authors, but it bears scrutiny. As a man indebted to both Newton and Unwin, his closest intellectual companions over the years, Cowper repaid their friendship in the best coin he knew—by taking each into his confidence and associating him with one of Cowper's two major claims to immortality. First, he put his poetry into the hands of Newton, who had earlier involved Cowper in the joint venture of *Olney Hymns*. Then he turned to the modest younger man and attempted to raise Unwin's self-image through the trust he placed in him and by means of the dedication to Unwin of "Tirocinium" (an attack on contemporary education published with *The Task*). It is well that Cowper expressed his friendship when he did. Volume II of the *Letters* opens in January 1782 with one addressed to Unwin as "My dear friend"; when it closes in December 1786, Cowper is still in shock over William Unwin's death on

29 November. By this date, Cowper was well on his way toward publishing his translation of Homer, but the turn of the year 1787, which will begin Volume III of the *Letters*, marks the beginning of a six-month period of depression, the fourth major one in Cowper's life, that is undoubtedly related to William Unwin's death, just as a fifth and final period of severe depression was to follow Mary Unwin's paralytic strokes and her physical deterioration.

When Shelley in his *Defence of Poetry* speaks of poets as "those of the most delicate sensibility and the most enlarged imagination," he was thinking of the great, strong imaginations of Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton—those capable of embodying "sorrow, terror, anguish, despair itself" in "chosen expressions of an approximation to the highest good"; he was not thinking of Cowper, Chatterton, Gray, Collins, or Smart. In some of these he would have recognized the "delicate sensibility," but, again, the Romantics wrote and thought to survive in the tough-minded world of the French Revolution and the succeeding twenty-five years of pan-European wars. Cowper is separated from us by at least two more violent shocks to a "delicate sensibility," events that have left us with larger offenses than the *hiatus* to delicate ears. If there ever succeeds a time of peace when ideological ferment subsides, Cowper's poems and letters, like the fiction of Henry James, will provide subtle lessons in humanity for ladies and gentlemen of "delicate sensibility" and "delicate ear."





Davis Grubb. *Ancient Lights*. New York: The Viking Press, 1982. 540 pp. \$10.95 and \$25.00.

Reviewed by Nelson Hilton

Davis Grubb has written a perfectly mad novel called *Ancient Lights*—the Last Supper is said to have taken place in the Holiday Inn of Weirton, West Virginia, not that far from “a whorehouse on the high-road to Glory called Jew’s Harp House” and near where Uncle Will Blake showed himself to Sweeley Leech “last Friday night and smiled and joked awhile, and then he told him frankly that Criste had told him that there was one thing lacking.” I wonder if Cousin Davis (as he sometimes refers to himself in the book) is smiling around us as the people of “ugly, reeking, steel-mill town, Weirton” struggle to find the cash to buy the mill from the conglomerate that has doomed it and so create the largest worker-owned plant in America. He certainly knew “that Weirtons create Criste. Every time.” (“Criste,” because the “name Christ has been disgraced. The name is a cliché—not a metaphor. Criste is a metaphor. Christ is a word like fuck and cunt and cock—good words, holy words, once. Now soiled

...”) Cousin Davis, author of eleven other works (including *Night of the Hunter*), died six weeks after this book was done, and the story and imagery at times bear moving witness to the progress of cancer, of hope and fear and vision:

Fear is so funny. There are so many kinds of danger. How do we know when we are in peril? How can we guess that that headache last Wednesday night at dinner, that slight restlessness through the night, that tiny fever—that these were the battle reports on a monstrous and titanic struggle within us. Against cancer. Or typhoid. Or worse.

The narrator, Fifi Leech—at 6:30 in the morning of 4 September 1992, arching her pelvis and grinding merrily into her finger—explains that the sad reason for her being in West Virginia is “the death of the real writer in my family, the late Davis Grubb.” But, she goes on, “He was not the author.”

It is a strange, at times wonderful, production—the story of a female Gulley Jimson told by a modern George MacDonald who can graphically describe “the how and why of having sex with fairies” as well as the paranoia of “TRUCAD,” “La Machine! La ultimate world economic order. La whole fucking system that has us all prisoner” (“It had come into being out of the old Trilateral Commission . . .”). It is a book which knows its Blake but doesn’t trot out quotations in the heavyhanded manner of *The Horse’s Mouth*. At one of many points Sweeley declaims “from his favorite, next to Shakespeare, Uncle Will Blake:

And there to Eternity aspire  
The selfhood in a flame of fire  
Till then the lamb of God . . .”

Fifi adds, “It was one of Uncle Will’s lovely little unfinished things” (as indeed it is, appearing only as a textual note in Erdman’s edition; Sweeley, however, reads from “his scarred and dogeared Nonesuch Blake,” where the lines appear among the poems from the Notebook). the M104 Broadway bus appears “flatulating diesel smokily like Uncle Will Blake’s farting and belching God—the one he called Nobodaddy.” An advertisement in the London *Times* begins with “The outward ceremony is the Anti-Christ” (and continues with four lines from Gilbert and Sullivan, ending, “Then is the spectres’ holiday—then is the ghosts’ high noon!”).

The loose plot follows Fifi, who likes to fuck and has no sympathy for the “machocists” and “homosocials,” as she moves through a late ’70s 1992 toward the reconstitution of the Book of Criste Lite. Her father Sweeley had it once, on forty-four pages of yellow ruled paper: “No words. In heaven . . . there is only form and color. And movement.” And more, says Sweeley, describing a would-be *Ancient Lights*, “it was the damnedest, most godawful funny book I ever read. Funny. And horny. A real stroke book!” But that version is lost, and recreating the second entails a collective effort in which Sweeley (“the dear cor-

ruption of the word *Seeley*—of the Fairy Court. Leech . . . a Healer”) fights to keep from being *organized* (“The worst thing that happened to Criste”) by the Church of the Remnant, who, in turn, must battle against the vicious Goody Two-Shoes, with their white plastic Bibles, and the ever-present TRUCAD. Fu Manchu, another “religioeconomic” heretic, makes an appearance. The achieving of the second book of *Criste Lite* shows the author’s love for the story of Blake pointing to children and saying “That is Heaven” and also involves Fifi’s winding a golden string into a ball. (The parable about becoming a child appears again in Fifi’s memory of Sweeley’s reaction at finding her, age three, “with crayons aforethought,” coloring in first-state woodcuts of “the Adoration of the Magi and the Whore of Babylon” by Dürer: he “encouraged me to color a few more of the spidery, wild little pictures, but I soon wandered away into the tall iris to trade jokes with a mushroom-sheltered friend or foe.”) On the way we pass through a house with framed Blake mottos; hear Uncle Will chanting audibly in Fifi’s ear; encounter statements urged “on authority from none other than Uncle Will himself”; see someone reading “not the King James Bible—it was a Nonesuch William Blake”; and ponder how to get back “to the place where the golden string will at last be wrapped into a glittering ball. To the goal—that gate carved in Jerusalem’s wall.” There is also one minor difference raised, as Fifi thinks, “Uncle Will Blake says it is wrong for us to love our enemies, that only betrays our friends. I don’t know about that. I do know it’s better than pitying our enemies—because that gets us into bed with them . . . .” Little wonder in this fantastic effort for astonishment and against death that the recurring refrain is “*Try to believe—only try*, as Uncle Will Blake has our dear Lord bid us.”

*Ancient Lights* takes several clear positions. It is pro-individual—“the lonely, Criste-crazed individual”—and anti-institutional: “when Truth is Organized, it becomes a Lie. There is no bigger Lie than organized Truth. There is no greater Hate than Organized Love . . . . The only place where Truth can survive is in the spirit of the In-

dividual.” It is pro-dope—low-grade marijuana has been legalized, and everyone tokes either that or contraband—and it is very, so to speak, pro-sex: “Because the Sexual—the freely given, unbought, unsold, unforced Sexual—is, if you must be told . . . the essence of what someone somewhere has called the *Criste Lite*” (St. Paul appears as a giant turtle, his shell inscribed with intimate details of copulations, to offer his recantation). Few, I suppose, will find much to object to in such positions, yet, confronted with “La ultimate world economic order,” one may find oneself trying, trying, trying, and not quite believing that agreeable opinions can substitute for analysis. “The perception of power is power,” reads one chapter’s epigraph, but it is precisely here that one feels most unsure. What about those workers in Weirton who need \$250 million to build Jerusalem in their Dark Satanic Mill?

*Ancient Lights* lives in its luxuriant images (“the soft, wet braille of scalloped labia”), its at times excessive similes (“Police sirens were yodeling like castrated Dobermans”), and its outright puns (“poets, a batch of pale, lifehating godhating naysaying bookclub avatars, scuttling and hopping back and forth in the liberal, cautious, cynical safety of their rabbit-pen warrens”). Some of these live on in the reader’s imagination: “The black Ohio River shone and shimmered and wound like a dark, sullen torrent of Coca-Cola sewerage into the rotting teeth of little children.” And some glimmer with something like the true light of Old Uncle Will, as in this description of the colors giving meaning to the *Book of Criste Lite*:

Colors you see deep in the flames of glowing coals in a grate on a deep winter’s night. Colors you sometimes see deep inside the pagan quiet of a Christmas Tree. And something—something dangerous, too—like the tints you see flaming in sorrow within the wings of a murdered jungle butterfly imprisoned in a Lucite paperweight.

While one would probably hesitate before going out to contribute \$10.95 to La Machine for the *paperback* version of the novel, many readers of *Blake* will surely want to look into *Ancient Lights* as time goes by.

Warren Stevenson. *The Myth of the Golden Age in English Romantic Poetry, Romantic Reassessment*, 109, ed. James Hogg (Salzburg Studies in English Literature). Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1981. iv + 109 pp.

Reviewed by V. A. De Luca

This slender book, really a pamphlet, is as diffuse as it is brief. Large as the subject announced in its title may seem, Warren Stevenson's treatment widens the focus. What he has produced is not an essay on the Romantic revival of a specific classical topos but rather six thumbnail synopses of the high points in the poetic careers of the six major Romantic poets, considered seriatim. Since none of these chapters runs longer than twenty pages, the commentaries on individual works tend to be emaciated, and Stevenson has room for the Golden Age only *en passant*.

As one might expect from the author of an earlier book largely about Blake (*Divine Analogy*, Salzburg 1972), Stevenson makes Blake the cornerstone of what thematic structure the book has, and it begins appropriately enough with the central statement: "The Nature of my Work is Visionary or Imaginative it is an Endeavour to Restore what the Ancients call'd the Golden Age." But Stevenson never quite explains what precisely Blake is saying here or how he is reading the Ancients. As a result no firm idea of the Golden Age ever emerges in the book, although as he skims from poet to poet and work to work Stevenson keeps an eye out for anything salvational, anything numinous, anything pastoral, anything apocalyptic, anything agreeable, anything specially labeled "Edenic" or "golden." There are nonetheless some astounding omissions: no mention, for instance, of Wordsworth's "Prospectus" and the famous lines, "Paradise and groves / Elysian, Fortunate Fields—like those of old / Sought in the Atlantic Main—why should they be / A history of departed things, / Or a mere fiction of what never was?"—the most germane lines to Stevenson's subject in all of Romantic poetry. At the same time there is room for such things as a five-page treatment of "Christabel," where the Golden Age comes in only twice—Christabel's bedchamber is a "mini-Golgonooza," and "Christabel's paradigmatic rela-

tion to the theme of the Golden Age is that of a spiritual transformer embodying the concept of vicarious atonement" (49). These instances give some notion of the prose style in the book, the sponginess of the ideas, the hollow use of Blake as touchstone.

On the whole, however, *The Myth of the Golden Age* strays only rarely into fantastical interpretations. For the most part, Stevenson's observations are inoffensive and unarguable, like those in headnote comments in undergraduate anthologies. Although there is nothing in this book that a scholar or critic will find valuable, it might usefully serve students as a light introduction to the romantic quest for bliss. It is a pity that its Salzburg venue makes it unlikely that the book will be sold in those outlets where undergraduates purchase their study guides.

Geoffrey Keynes, Kt., and Peter Davidson, eds. *A Watch of Nightingales*. London: The Stourton Press, 1981. xii + 48 pp. Four hundred copies printed.

Reviewed by G. E. Bentley, Jr.

Sir Geoffrey Keynes and Professor Peter Davidson have collected "nearly fifty poems" (p. [xii]), or rather twenty-seven poems and twelve fragments (some of them in prose), addressed or referring to the "Most musical" of birds, as Milton called the nightingale. Isaac Walton says that the man who hears at midnight

the clear aires, the sweet descants, the natural rising and falling, the doubling and redoubling of her voice, might well be lifted above earth, and say, Lord, what Musick hast thou provided for the Saints in Heaven, when thou affordest bad men such musick on earth!

The title derives from the technical term for a group of nightingales, as in an exaltation of larks and a charm of goldfinches, also derived from Dame Julia Berners's *Boke of Hawkyng, Huntynge, and Fysshynge* (1486).

The poets are, of course, concerned with the birdsong rather than the songbird, for the bird itself is negligible in appearance and usually invisible. Some try to imitate the sound of the song, as in Skelton and Coleridge's "jug jug" and Fitzgerald's translation of Omar Khayyam, "Wine!

Wine! Wine! Red Wine!," but most describe it or reproduce its rhythms, like Coleridge's

merry Nightingale  
That crowds and hurries, and precipitates  
With fast thick warble his delicious notes . . . .

But perhaps most interesting is the way the poets, moved to a fine frenzy by the shower of song, are governed not by the song they heard in the "melodious plot / Of beechen green, and shadows numberless" but by what they heard in the songs of other poets.

In the Renaissance, the most important influence was that of Ovid, who in his *Metamorphoses* tells of the rape of Philomela by Tereus and, at the moment of her revenge, their transformation into birds, Philomela into a nightingale and Tereus into a Hoopoe:

How prettily she tells the tale  
Of Rape and Blood.

Richard Barnfield in 1598 hears the legend in the song:

*Fie, fie, fie*, now she would cry  
*Teru Teru*, by and by . . . .

In the myth the singer is female, and so most of the singing birds are too, from Chaucer and Sidney (1598) and Shakespeare through Thomas Carew (1651) and Milton (1673) and Marvell (1681), down to Sir John Vanbrugh (1702), William Walsh (1721), Joseph Warton (1746), John Keats implicitly (1820), and even such an acute observer as John Clare (1825). But it is, of course, the male, not the female, who sings, though the only poets to get the sex right here are Cowper (1782), Blake in *Milton* (1804-?08), and Pound (1919).

Similarly, the bird was thought to learn against a thorn to stimulate her song, joyfully to mourn the prick, as it were, as in the anonymous song set to music by Robert Jones (1600):

percht with prick against her breast,  
She sings fie, fie, fie, fie, as if she suffered wrong  
Till seemingly pleased sweet, sweet concludes her song.

Clearly it is something added to the birdsong which has carried away the poet's imagination.

Almost as powerful is the tradition of jealous musical rivalry echoed by Goldsmith in his *History of the Earth and Animated Nature*, in Buffon's *Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux*, and in Thomas Pennant's *British Zoology*, probably deriving from Pliny's *Natural History*:

all of them [nightingales] have not the same, but every one a special kind of musicke by her selfe: nay they strive who can do best, and one laboureth to excel another in varietie of song and long continuance: yea and evident it is, that they contend in good earnest with all their will and power: for oftentimes she that hath the worse and is not able to hold out with another, dieth for it, and sooner giveth up her vitall breath, than giveth over her song.<sup>1</sup>

William Walsh writes in 1721 of a nightingale driven to suicide by despair at rivaling the echo of her own song or "the Waters . . . laughing in the Brook."

Clearly the liquid measure of sound is not enough for the poets, but they must make what Joseph Warton calls "Contemplation's favourite bird" into an emblem of the human condition, in an attempt to

quite forget  
What thou among the leaves hast never known,  
The weariness, the fever, and the fret  
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan.

The *raison d'être* of this little book is the poem called "To the Nightingale" etched about 1784 by George Cumberland: "This anthology has . . . been built around" the poem (p. [viii]). Sir Geoffrey owned copies of this poem for many years and cherished them as examples of Cumberland's experiments with printing, until about 1980 Robert Essick suggested a Blake connection. The suggestion was that the transcription might be not by Cumberland but by Blake, but they soon decided that the evidence for this was inconclusive.

However, the inquiry stimulated Sir Geoffrey to speculate that while Blake probably did not transcribe the poem, he may well have composed it: "the internal evidence that it could have been composed only [*sic*] by Blake was very strong" (p. [vii]). Sir Geoffrey canvassed a number of distinguished scholars and critics on the persuasiveness of this internal evidence and published the consensus, with a facsimile of the print, in *The Book Collector* in 1981, attributing the composition of the poem emphatically to Blake. Certainly all the scholars and critics there cited either agree with Sir Geoffrey, though usually not in terms as emphatic as his own, or at least present evidence tending to his conclusion. He also printed the poem in a very slim, handsome volume in 1980 called *To the Nightingale*, though omitting there both the facsimile and most of the evidence that the poem is by Blake. Readers of *Blake / An Illustrated Quarterly* will be chiefly concerned with the evidence that the anonymous poem called "To the Nightingale" printed for George Cumberland was in fact composed by William Blake.

The external evidence is very slight. The poem was certainly sent in January 1784 in a letter from George Cumberland to his brother as an example of his new, cheap, and easy method of etching and printing. William Blake was probably experimenting with similar methods of etching and printing, which he apparently alludes to in his *Island in the Moon* (?1784) and which evolved into his own illuminated printing. Cumberland certainly knew of Blake at the time, for he mentioned him in his review of the annual Royal Academy exhibition in 1780, and they became intimate friends, exchanging correspondence from at least 1795 through 1827. The poem was printed by William Staden Blake, the writing-engraver of Exchange Alley, and, according to Sir Geoffrey, "It can be inferred from this action that Cumberland was not yet, in 1784, the close friend of William Blake, the artist, that he afterwards became" (p. [viii]). I am puzzled by

the logic of this sentence but conclude that it means that if Cumberland had known the poet well he would have asked *him* to print the poem. But we do not know that the poet *could* have printed it then—we don't know when he acquired his own printing press (probably not until autumn 1784)—and there is no evidence that he ever welcomed or did casual job-printing, as opposed to printing his own plates. But the more slightly Cumberland knew the poet, the odder it seems that he should have been etching his poem and sending it to friends without identifying the author—it rather smacks of plagiarism. Certainly when a friend sends me a poem in a letter, I assume that he wrote it unless he tells me the contrary. Sir Geoffrey's theory is that "To the Nightingale" is a poem left over from *Poetical Sketches* (1783), but there is no evidence whatever that the poem was considered for this collection by the apparent compilers John Flaxman and the Reverend Mr. A. S. Mathew, and there is no evidence that Cumberland had anything to do with the production of that volume, though he acquired copy D of it at an unknown date. Cumberland may have known Blake in 1784, he may have seen his manuscript poems then (though there is no evidence that anyone other than Flaxman and Mathew did), and he could have presented a printed copy to his brother—but there is no direct evidence that he did so, and the external probabilities are against it.

Sir Geoffrey finds "the internal evidence . . . very strong," but this suggests the understandable pride of ownership and discovery rather than the dispassionate persuasion of scholarship. "To the Nightingale" is an agreeable little poem in four six-line stanzas, written in a somewhat stereotyped eighteenth-century style. The vocabulary is fashionably poetical, with the "lovely Chautress of the lonely Bow'r," "wildly pour[ing] thy mellow Minstrels'y [*sic*]," a "Hind," and "Cynthias's silvry beams." This is not Blake's characteristic vocabulary and diction—but then, neither is that of a number of poems in *Poetical Sketches*, such as "An Imitation of Spencer" with its "jocund hours," "tinkling rhimes," "Pan," "Mercurius," and "Mercury." "To the Nightingale" runs:

Come lovely Chautress of the lonely Bow'r,  
(Allured by vernal airs to chequer'd shades)  
And lightly sit upon the moss grown tree,  
Near where the dark stream glides, and the soft flow'r,  
Rears its enamel'd head to grace the glades;  
Come there and wildly pour thy mellow Minstrels'y.

And I with open ears will drink thy song,  
With cautious trembling steps advancing near,  
Chiding the low hung boughs that bar my way,  
Then gently stretch my weary limbs among  
The Fern, and part the Woodbind shoots, and peer  
About to find thee perch't upon the bending spray.

O then begin thy undulating note,  
Check't by faint Echos from the distant grove,  
And oft recall the sweetly wandring air;

Till, bursting forth, the jolly peal shall float  
Upon the Breeze, and tell a tale, to move  
Bald Apathy, or smooth the wrinkled brow of Care.

And may no Hind thy secret haunt disclose,  
Or wanton Heifer near the thicket stray,  
Rudely to break thy song, thy breast affright;  
But whilst Attention hears thy gentle lay,  
Soft Eve advance, clad in Her mantle gray,  
And Cynthia's silvry beams illuminate the night.

Sir Geoffrey finds "jolly" characteristic of Blake, as it is used "on three occasions in *Poetical Sketches*" (p. [viii]), but it is scarcely a peculiarly Blakean word—Milton uses it in his sonnet on the nightingale. The phrase "the wrinkled brow of Care" is an eighteenth-century conceit which is repeated "in a prose composition of about the same date" ["then she bore Pale desire" (?1783)] as "Care Sitteth in the wrinkled brow," and "Bald Apathy" is alleged without evidence to be "an unusual conjunction of words pointing to Blake's authorship" (pp. [viii-ix]).

In his article, Sir Geoffrey satisfies himself that Blake composed "To the Nightingale" by canvassing vainly for an alternative author. For example, he quotes a passage from a poem undoubtedly by Cumberland which is strikingly different from "To the Nightingale" in diction and accomplishment and concludes therefore that Cumberland cannot have written it. But this presumes a uniformity of vocabulary and achievement in a poet which is very rare. It would, for instance, be difficult to demonstrate from internal evidence alone that the author of

I'll draw my sword, nor ever sheath it up,  
Till England blow the trump of victory,  
Or I lay stretch'd upon the field of death!

["King Edward the Third" from *Poetical Sketches* (1783)]

was the same as the author of the famous passage from *Milton* (1804-?8):

Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand:  
Till we have built Jerusalem,  
In Englands green & pleasant Land.

Sir Geoffrey notes that Coleridge in his "The Nightingale" follows Blake in making the nightingale's song cheerful ("merry") rather than melancholy and even suggests therefore "that he had seen one of the counterproofs [of "To the Nightingale"] made for Cumberland" (p. [ix]), but other poets too found the nightingale's song cheerful, such as an anonymous author of 1600 ("sweet content"), William Drummond in 1630 ("Well pleased with Delights"), and John Keats in 1820 ("thy happy lot").

The internal evidence is far from conclusive, and we should hesitate to alienate the poem from George Cumberland and attach it firmly to William Blake. "To the Nightingale" is a poem with an achievement above competence but scarcely reaching to greatness. And there are words and ideas in it different from those one associates with Blake. The poet peering between "the Woodbine shoots [*and fern*] . . . to find thee" sounds less like Blake than like John Clare in "The Nightingale's Nest,"

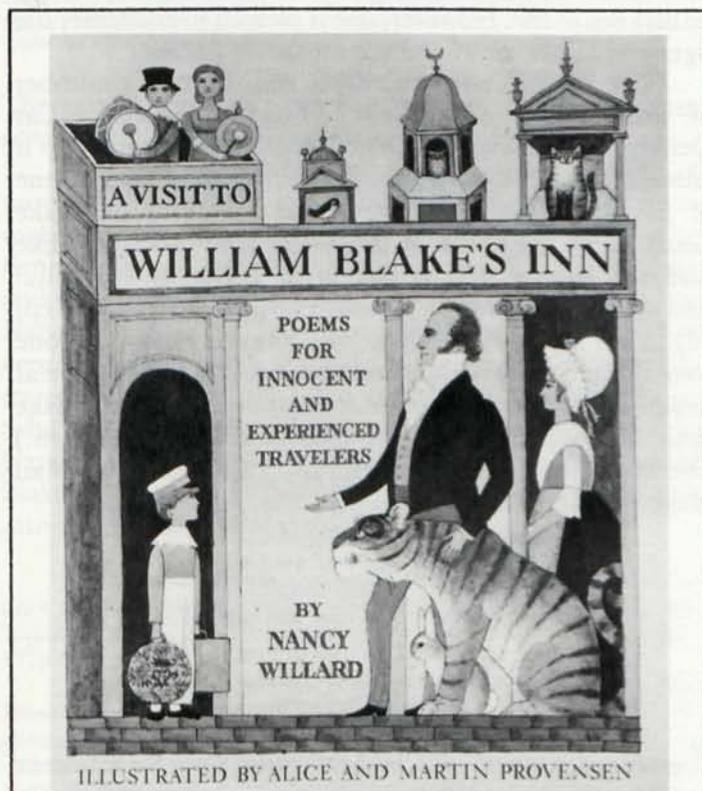
"Creeping on hands and knees through matted thorn [and fern-leaves] / To find her nest." The "Hind," the "Woodbine," "Cynthia," "Minstrel's'y," and the "wanton Heifer" are very unusual in Blake's verse,<sup>2</sup> and Blake knew that the singing nightingale was masculine ("his song" appears in *Milton*), not feminine as in "To the Nightingale" ("lovely Chauntress").<sup>3</sup> The evidence for Blake's authorship of "To the Nightingale" leads hesitantly to possibility rather than to certainty. He could have written it, but until we have more evidence it will be safest to assume no more than the possibility—numbers of others could have written it as well. And there are numerous contemporary poems which might equally well be his, some in periodicals even signed W. B. "To the Nightingale" does not deserve to be included "in the Blake canon" (p. [viii]), except perhaps as a footnote.

This *Watch of Nightingales* is, then, a charming nonce collection revealing much about the nature of the genius of English poets, but leaving the magical nature of the bird's song and the authorship of "To the Nightingale" still mysteriously obscure. As Keats wrote in his "Ode to a Nightingale," "Darkling I listen" "in embalmed darkness."

<sup>1</sup> Tr. Philemon Holland (1601), I, 286, quoted in Fred V. Randel, "Coleridge and the Contentiousness of Romantic Nightingales," *Studies in Romanticism*, 21 (1982), 36.

<sup>2</sup> Only "hind" appears in Blake's known writings (once, in *The French Revolution* [1791]), though "minstrel" is found thrice in the *Concordance*, as Professor Essick kindly reminds me.

<sup>3</sup> I must confess that Blake was not always sexually faithful, for Albion is feminine in the "Prologue to King John" in *Poetical Sketches* (1783) but masculine thereafter.



Nancy Willard. *A Visit to William Blake's Inn, Poems for Innocent and Experienced Travelers*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981. 44 pp. \$10.95.

Reviewed by Elizabeth B. Bentley

Readers and scholars of William Blake are likely to be much attracted by the title and notion of *A Visit To William Blake's Inn: Poems for Innocent and Experienced Travelers*, by Nancy Willard and illustrated by Alice and Martin Provensen. Nancy Willard relates her experience as a seven-year-old convalescent measles patient introduced to William Blake through the good offices of an imaginative sitter who first quoted four lines of "The Tyger" and then sent an illustrated book containing William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*.

Having published her first book while a high school senior, Nancy Willard has gone on to publish some fourteen books, a number of them children's books for which she has twice received the Lewis Carroll Shelf Award. According to the dust jacket summary of *A Visit To William Blake's Inn*, she teaches in the Vassar English Department. Her scholarly publications include a study of four twentieth-century poets, William Carlos Williams, Francis Ponge, Rainer Maria Rilke, and Pablo Neruda, entitled *testimony of the invisible man* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1970). In the introduction to this study, a Vassar colleague writes admiringly of Nancy Willard's poetry. *A Visit to William Blake's Inn*, then, is written by an experienced and successful author of children's stories, a university teacher of English, a critic and a practicing poet who connects this book with her youthful introduction to William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*.

The inside of the dust jacket of *A Visit To William Blake's Inn* assures us that the illustrations reflect the multiple-award-winning artists' "deep love for William Blake and the London in which he lived." The paper and color printing of the book are of very good quality. The first illustration to the first poem (pp. 14-15) shows a redhaired man on the steps of a house labelled

"WILLIAM BLAKE ENGRAVER POET & PAINTER" and "WM BLAKE BED AND BREAKFAST." This is quite a happy beginning except that William is disconcertingly dressed as a high-Victorian businessman, in a frocked coat, a double-breasted waistcoat and morning trousers. The Provencens are presenting a later period, often blatantly not William Blake's London.

However, William Blake does remain redhaired and often is to be seen writing or drawing. On page 21 there are a man, woman and boy engaged by candlelight in mysterious engraving or process with a press which is not for printing.<sup>1</sup> On pages 29, 35 and 41 the redhaired man sits at a desk or drawing board with a quill pen and blank sheet before him. Since there is no evidence of an ink pot to hand, the paper seems doomed to remain blank.

A tiger is one of the guests at William Blake's Inn. The illustrations on pages 12, 32 and 37 are vaguely reminiscent of the Tyger of Blake's *Songs of Experience*. Perhaps one should leave it at that. However, on pages 21, 35, and 41 the Provencens have produced an overgrown pussy cat which is neither Blakean nor tigerish.

Twice the verses call for a vehicle to be illustrated, and the Provencens have responded with "Blake's Celestial Limousine" (p. 16) and the vessel *Believe* (p. 31) which is a wheeled boat captained by Blake. Both these vehicles enjoy the whimsey of a Frederick Rowland Emmet



creation and sent me off to enjoy the collections of his *Punch* cartoons. Every child or adult who has seen my copy of *A Visit to William Blake's Inn* commented favorably on the charm of the illustrations. So, in sum, the illustrations do give pleasure, though that dust jacket blurb still worries me. The illustrations, however pleasing and closely following the text they illustrate, do not reveal very obviously "a deep love for William Blake and the London in which he lived."

However, they lead one to Nancy Willard's poems which do have charm and imagination and a final, appropriately-cited, Blakean message from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* which one hopes readers of all ages will take to heart: "He whose face gives no light will never become a star." The title and subtitle of the book lead one to expect a close connection with *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*, but Nancy Willard's "Poems for Innocent and Experienced Travelers" are peopled with dragons, rabbits, a shaggy old bear, a lunatic cat, a King of cats, a wise cow, rats, and pigeons which are disconcertingly unBlakean to me. However, one is pleased to encounter the tiger and lambs which are appropriately Blakean.

The Willard poems amiably call to mind a number of writers other than Blake. "Blake's Wonderful Car Delivers Us Wonderfully Well" with a driver whose cap is labeled "Blake's Celestial Limousine" (p. 17) reminds one of E. M. Forster's "The Celestial Omnibus."<sup>2</sup> "Blake Leads a Walk on the Milky Way" (pp. 32-33) is like Rudyard Kipling's "The Cat Who Walks by Himself," and when "The Man in the Marmalade Hat Arrives" (p. 22) in the middle of March, one definitely feels as if one were in the wrong fantasy and about to encounter Alice at any moment. (Indeed, there are two little girls who make their first appearance in the illustrations in this poem.) The Marmalade Man reappears in "The Marmalade Man Makes a Dance to Mend Us" (p. 36), which runs:

Tiger, Sunflowers, King of Cats,  
Cow and Rabbit, mend your ways,  
I the needle, you the thread—  
follow me through mist and maze:

Fox and hound go paw in paw.  
Cat and rat be best of friends.  
Lamb and tiger walk together.  
Dancing starts where fighting ends.

This seems to me an excellent marching song for innocent and experienced travelers.

There are at least two of Nancy Willard's poems which are clearly modeled on William Blake's *Songs*. In "The Tiger Asks Blake for a Bedtime Story" (p. 40), the reader familiar with Blake will think of "The Tyger" and "A Poison Tree":

William, William, writing late  
by the chill and sooty grate,  
what immortal story can  
make your tiger roar again?

When I was sent to fetch your meat  
I confess that I did eat

Tyger, Tyger, burning bright,  
In the forests of the night:  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

I was angry with my friend:  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.

half the roast and all the bread  
He will never know, I said.

When I was sent to fetch your drink,  
I confess that I did think  
you would never miss the three  
lumps of sugar by your tea.

Soon I saw my health decline  
and I knew the fault was mine.  
Only William Blake can tell  
tales to make a tiger well.

Now I lay me down to sleep  
with bear and rabbit, bird and sheep.  
If I should dream before I wake,  
may I dream of William Blake.

I was angry with my foe:  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I watered it in fears,  
Night & morning with my tears:  
And I sunned it with smiles,  
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night  
Till it bore an apple bright.  
And my foe beheld it shine,  
And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole,  
When the night had veild the pole:  
In the morning glad I see  
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

Also, "Two Sunflowers Move Into the Yellow Room"  
(p. 28) is clearly modeled on Blake's "Ah! Sunflower."

"Ah, William, we're weary of weather,"  
Said the Sunflowers shining with dew.  
"Our traveling habits have tired us.  
Can you give us a room with a view?"

They arranged themselves at the window  
and counted the steps of the sun,  
and they both took root in the carpet  
Where the topaz tortoises run.

Ah Sun-flower! weary of time,  
Who countest the steps of the Sun:  
Seeking after that sweet golden clime  
Where the travellers journey is done;

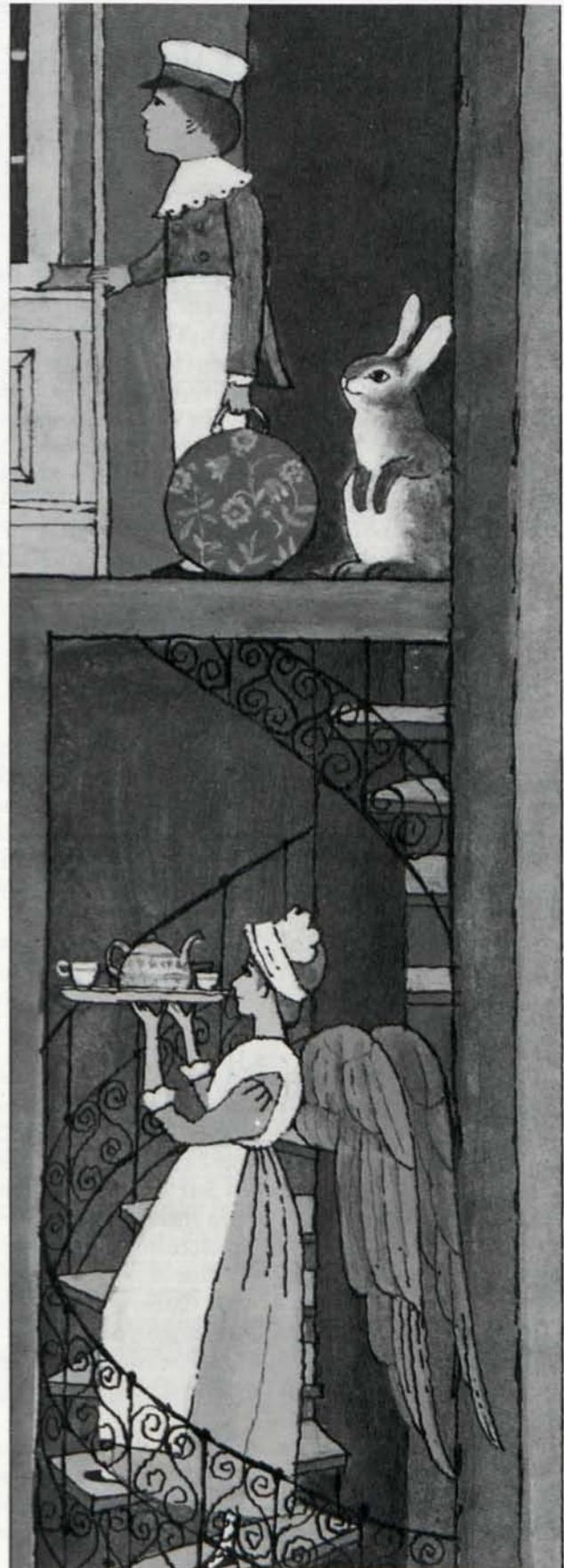
Where the Youth pined away with desire,  
And the pale Virgin shrouded in snow:  
Arise from their graves and aspire  
Where my Sun-flower wishes to go.

The sitter's gift of Blake's *Songs* to a very young Nancy obviously took root in her imagination and poetry.

The result of this implantation is a children's book of much charm in verse and illustration. It also bids us to make comparisons with the *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, and I hope future sitters and friends of ailing and healthy responsive young children will be as wise as Nancy Willard's Miss Pratt and produce William Blake's verses for them. *A Visit to William Blake's Inn* well illustrates the value of an early introduction to the *Songs*. Scholars and admirers of Blake should be very grateful to Nancy Willard for her admirable demonstration that Blake's *Songs* should be brought out of the study and put into the libraries of the young.

<sup>1</sup> The scene is somewhat reminiscent of Fermin Rucker's illustrations to *The Gates of Paradise*, a children's novel based on the poet William Blake. See "A Vision in Fiction," *Blake*, 12 (Winter 1978-79), 209-10.

<sup>2</sup> Edward Morgan Forster, *The Celestial Omnibus and Other Stories* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1911). There is also the anomaly of William Blake having a limousine. In the Supplement to the *OED*, the earliest known usage of "limousine" is recorded from 1902. Both the poems and the illustrations seem to me quite happily to depict this time rather than a full century earlier.



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# NEWSLETTER

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## BLAKE SYMPOSIUM

The McMaster Association for 18th Century Studies is holding a one-day symposium on "William Blake and Revolutionary Europe" on 14 October 1983. The speakers will be David V. Erdman, David Irwin, Jean Hagstrum, James K. Hopkins, Karen Mulhollen and Alicia Ostriker. The conference will evaluate Blake's response to the various "revolutions" which took place during the last part of the eighteenth century. The participants will discuss Blake and politics, women, sexuality, millenarianism and war. Information about the conference may be obtained from Professor J. King, Department of English, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8S 4L9.

## MORGAN LIBRARY EXHIBITION

Twenty-one watercolor illustrations of *The Book of Job*, the Pickering Manuscript, twelve original designs for Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, and illuminated books such as *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, *America*, *The First Book of Urizen*, and *Europe* were among the works by Blake on view at the Pierpont Morgan Library from 18 February through 31 March 1983.

## BLAKE DOCUDRAMA

Global Concepts/The Media Group, Inc. has produced a half-hour television docudrama on *Blake: The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* for the Swedenborg Foundation of New York. According to a press release from Global Concepts, "the final script is set in 1827, during Blake's last days, painting his final version of the engraving of Urizen spanning the heavens with a giant compass. From the microcosm of the simple rooms shared by William and Catherine Blake, the action expands into a series of visions of what Catherine is reported to have deemed their 'children with bright fiery wings.'" Blake is played by George Rose, Catherine by Anne Baxter, Urizen by Joseph C. Davies, and the Devil by Captain Haggerty.

The film is available free on loan from the Swedenborg Foundation, which has also sponsored other films that might interest *Blake* readers. For information and a catalogue, write Darrell Ruhl, Executive Director, Swedenborg Foundation, 139 E. 23rd St., New York, NY 10010.

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Anne Baxter as Catherine Blake and Vision of "Innocence" from Blake: *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Photo by Global Concepts, Inc., the Swedenborg Foundation, Inc.

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"Without wisdom  
love has no  
power."

Swedenborg

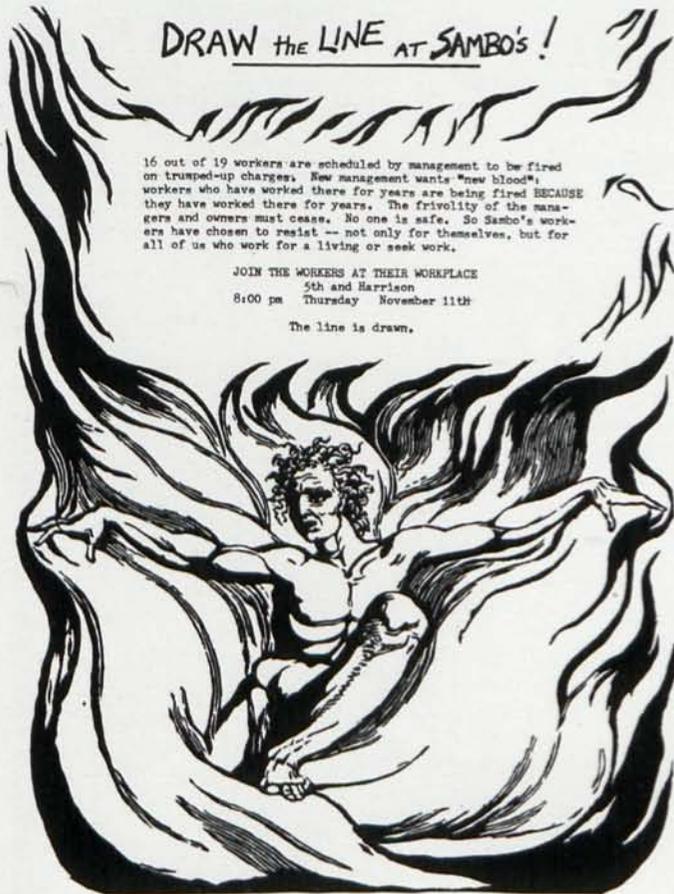


**DRAW THE LINE AT SAMBO'S!**

16 out of 19 workers are scheduled by management to be fired on trumped-up charges. New management wants "new blood"; workers who have worked there for years are being fired BECAUSE they have worked there for years. The frivolity of the managers and owners must cease. No one is safe. So Sambo's workers have chosen to resist -- not only for themselves, but for all of us who work for a living or seek work.

JOIN THE WORKERS AT THEIR WORKPLACE  
5th and Harrison  
8:00 pm Thursday November 11th

The line is drawn.



## PALEY'S AUTUMN ADDRESS

For those who might wish to correspond directly with Morton Paley in October, his address during that month (only) will be Yale Center for British Art, Box 2120 Yale Station, New Haven, CT 06520.

## VIRTUOSO PERFORMANCE

in  
**Blake**



"Stage veteran Campbell gives  
a riveting portrayal"

London Free Press, Nov '82

by Elliott Hayes

Directed by Richard Monette

Designed by Debra Hanson

Lighting by Robert Bosworth-Morrison

Third Stage: June 18 to August 13

One of Canada's foremost actors introduces us to the visionary poet and painter William Blake and explores both serious and light-hearted moments in a life of dramatic intensity.

## BLAKE: STRATFORD FESTIVAL

Blake appears on the Third Stage at Stratford in Ontario this summer in the form of a play by Elliott Hayes. *Blake* stars Canadian actor Douglas Campbell. The run begins 15 June and ends 13 August. Tickets may be ordered by telephone: the box office number is (519) 273-1600. For complete information write Brochures, Festival Theatre, Stratford, Ontario, Canada N5A 6V2.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

The English Romanticism section of NEMLA is calling for papers, or paper proposals, for its 1984 meeting in Philadelphia. The topic for the session is "Romanticism, Women, the Feminine, and the Feminist." Papers dealing with one or more of these issues and running approximately ten pages in length are welcome. *Studies in Romanticism* is planning a special issue on the topic, and is interested in reviewing papers selected for this session. Please send proposals to Susan Wolfson, 15 Glenview Drive, Princeton, NJ 08540 (609-452-1089) as soon as possible, essays by September 15.

Karl Kiralis  
1923-1982