

Blake

AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY
VOLUME 19 NUMBER 1 SUMMER 1985



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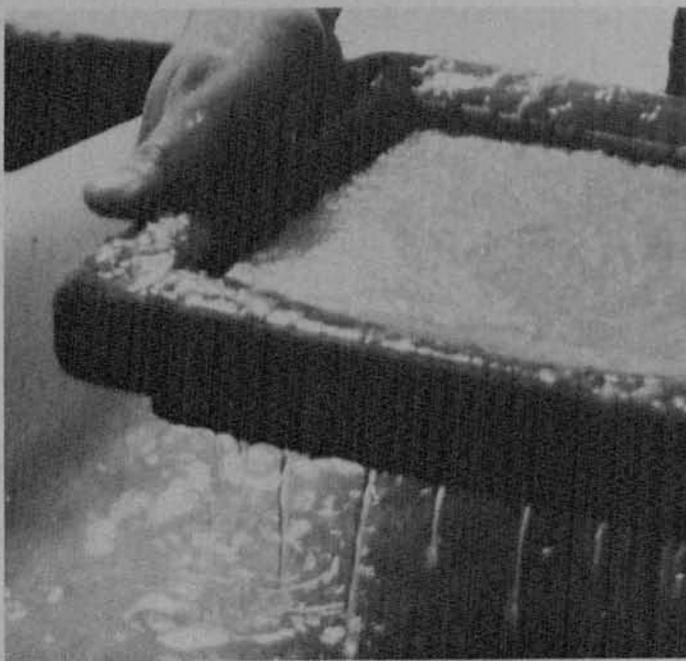
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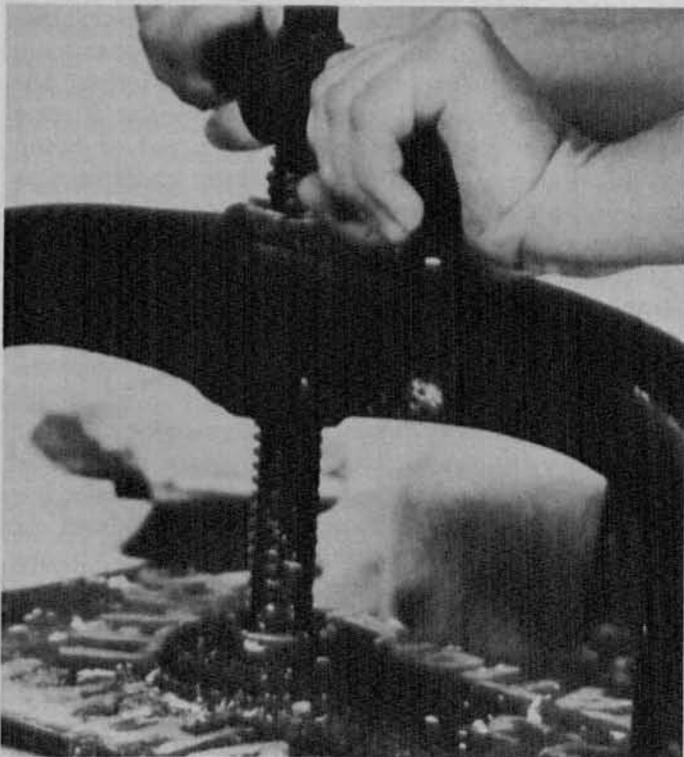
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Recreating Blake's Illuminated Prints: The Facsimiles of the Manchester Etching Workshop

BY JOSEPH VISCOMI

Robert Essick's review in this issue of the Blake facsimiles recently published by the Manchester Etching Workshop, with its "thumbnail history of hand-colored facsimiles" and insightful comments about the place of facsimiles in Blake studies, is characteristically complete. It leaves nothing for me to say about these new, beautiful prints except what Essick could not have known: their origin and evolution and a few details about their production. The history of the Workshop's facsimiles is not especially complex or long—or not, at least, when their three years of preparation and printing are compared to Samuel Hurd's eight and a half years of work on the Young & Sons 1923 facsimile of *Songs* (T)—but it is curious, the project actually beginning more by chance than design. And I think the mode of production is also worth recording in some detail, not because it is so simple and straightforward, and, as Essick points out (and as the notes to the present article hopefully show), because "the activities necessary for producing a facsimile can themselves lead to insights about the originals."

The Manchester Etching Workshop, located on the top floor of a Victorian clothes warehouse in a now unfashionable area of Manchester, England, was set up in 1978 by Paul Ritchie with some assistance from the Arts Council of Great Britain. Formerly of Peacock Printmakers, Aberdeen, Scotland, Ritchie studied advanced printmaking at the Manchester Polytechnic and Croyden College of Art, and since 1977 has exhibited widely throughout Great Britain, with one-man shows in Aberdeen and Amsterdam, and with works in many public collections, including the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art. His most recent sets of etchings, produced in small editions, are concerned mainly with landscapes and interiors, with color used in the manner of monoprints; unlike Blake's, these plates are very large and lightly etched, allowing the coloring, wiping, and plate tones

to be flexible and thereby—as in Blake's prints—critical to each separate impression. To execute such large but subtle prints, and to employ fully the creative possibilities of continually and radically reworking plates, in the metal, the inking, and the interaction of ink with paper, it was necessary for Ritchie not only to have his own workspace, but also to design and build his own presses and papermaking equipment.

Though built to answer the specific needs of one graphic artist, the Manchester Etching Workshop supported itself at first by renting its studio space and equipment to other artists and printmakers. It became financially self-sufficient when Ritchie, with the help of up to a dozen parttime assistants (printers, colorists, papermakers), produced three portfolios of etchings, two by Philip Snow, a contemporary artist, each consisting of six bird colorprints, and one by Alfred Coffrey, the late Australian etcher. The Blake portfolio, as Ritchie recalls, "rather happened and grew instead of being planned. I had attended a printmaking conference at Bradford, and after the conference, over a British Rail cheese sandwich at the station, met a curator of prints at the Victoria & Albert Museum. I later wrote to her asking if they were interested in a joint publication project using any plates they might have. They agreed to let me borrow some plates, amongst which were the Blake electrotypes."¹

For reasons more practical than aesthetic, Ritchie decided to print the electrotypes. Because they are in relief, electrotypes are easier to ink and thus take less time to print in large editions than intaglio plates. At first, Ritchie intended to print 500 sets of monochrome impressions on moldmade commercial paper. The initial proofs, however, printed in black relief ink, were disappointingly stark in comparison to original illuminated prints, resembling more closely the impressions printed by Fredrick Tatham in the 1830's than any printed by Blake.² Like the posthumous prints, these uncolored

proofs recorded the entire plate image, that is, they showed everything Blake drew on the plate in his "impervious liquid," as well as the thin borders inadvertently caused by the strips of (acid resistant) wax that were used to dike the plate for acid. The borders, though part of the relief line system, are not part of the printed image (except in late impressions), because Blake wiped them clean of ink before printing the plate. Blake not only deleted portions of the plate image, but also used colored inks and off-white wove paper, and he washed the printed image. Thus Blake's own impressions actually convey less information about the appearance of plates than do electrotype proofs—which, however, like posthumous prints, give an inaccurate idea of the appearance of illuminated prints.

Blake's printing process did not end with inking the plate and pulling it through the press—and neither could Ritchie's. The initial set of proofs, showing too much, but telling too little, quickly revealed that electrotypes could be printed in imitation of illuminated prints only if the paper matched Blake's in color and receptivity, the ink matched in color and texture, and the impressions were hand painted in water colors. In short, as Ritchie came to appreciate fully the beauty and subtlety of the originals, and, as with his own lightly etched plates, the importance of careful inking and wiping, the electrotypes became anything but easy to print—and the projected edition anything but a one-man job. In addition to requiring a substantially larger bank loan for start-up costs, a facsimile, as opposed to a monochrome, edition would require more time, energy, and artistic help than originally envisaged. The "Manchester Group," as Essick refers to all of us involved, consisted primarily of Kate Donnelly, who made most of the paper and assisted Ritchie with the printing, Guy Tucker, Jacqueline Marshall, and Paul Taggart, the principal colorists, Paul Heskell at Dorset Bookbinding Company, who made the leather portfolios and cloth-covered conservation boxes, and hand sewed the introductory booklet, and I, who, as technical adviser, wrote the introduction and helped to design the format of the two different editions.³

Songs, copy B, an early copy in the British Museum, was chosen as the model because of its delicate washes and accessibility. We came to realize from the subsequent sets of hand colored working proofs in imitation of copy B that the more we incorporated authentic eighteenth-century materials and techniques in the inking and painting stages of the process, the more authentic looking were the facsimiles. For us, reproducing Blake's illuminated prints came to mean reproducing Blake's illuminated printing process. But before we could even begin the facsimile-making process, let alone fine tune it, we needed plates that could be handled and printed in the same manner as Blake's—which ruled out using

the very electrotype blocks upon which was based the whole idea of a fine limited edition of Blake facsimiles.

The sixteen electrotypes made by Clay & Son for Gilchrist's *Life of Blake* (1863) were cast from ten of Blake's copper plates, at least six of which were etched on both sides, and mounted type high (.918") for relief printing.⁴ The Victoria & Albert set of electrotypes were cast from the original set, now lost, and are also type high and lead based. Their height makes the borders of the blocks more difficult to hand wipe and the blocks themselves far more difficult to print on a rolling press (the kind of press Blake used) than the original relief etchings, which were approximately 1/16", the standard thickness of a copper plate. Technically, it is possible to print type-high blocks on a rolling press, but only if the rollers are fully raised, which, because it is not the way the press is designed to work, prevents full control over the plate and thus over the quality of the impression. To obtain the control necessary to recreate the tactile qualities of the originals, we needed to print sixteen-gauge relief etchings, not type-high electrotypes. Thus, instead of using the electrotypes to print the impressions for the edition, we used them to print a set of embossed proofs, which were then photographed to make the relief etched copper plates.

The proofs were printed in a black proofing ink on an extremely soft, unsized paper made by Kate Donnelly and Paul Ritchie from "free stuff" (as opposed to "wet stuff," which produces parchment-like paper). This super-receptive paper picked up virtually all detail, and because it was soft enough to be printed dry, it eliminated the slight distortion in image size normally caused by shrinkage, thereby ensuring that the printed images were the exact size of the plate images. The photographic transparencies were shot directly from these impressions using a large-plate camera, which produced same-size negatives. These same-size negatives were then placed directly onto the sensitized copper plates and printed in reverse so the image is backwards. This contact method eliminates the slight elongation of image that occurs when the image is projected through a camera lens, as in the Trianon's collotype process.

The copper plates were etched by Gilchrist Brothers (!) Ltd., Leeds, with ferric chloride at 30° Baume.⁵ After several trial plates—and Ritchie trying the Brothers' patience with his fastidiousness and bewildering them with his insistence that they not *correct* any of the missing characters and punctuation—they produced excellent plates. The comparison between electrotype impression and workshop impression (illus. 1 and 2) shows the accuracy and reliability of this platemaking process. Practically speaking, there is no loss of fidelity between the generations.

As Essick has pointed out, most of the minor differences between electrotype and authentic impressions

are, like those between any two of Blake's impressions, due to different inking and printing methods. Most of these differences we were able to eliminate by using the kind of ink and printing method that Blake used. There are, though, a few letters and marks of punctuation missing in the electrotypes themselves and thus in our set of relief plates, but I've counted only seven of the eight Essick lists.⁶ Blake touched up or added missing letters in many of his illuminated prints, particularly in the early books, whose plates seem to have been bitten longer and deeper (if the heavily embossed posthumous *Songs* are any indication of depth) than plates after 1794 and thus were probably more susceptible to foul biting and having pieces of the varnished text and design lift off the plate. In any event, like Blake, we corrected the missing characters in a matching ink on the impressions themselves, rather than correct the electrotypes. The variations in the electrotype of the *Songs of Experience* title plate, however, were corrected on the plate. This particular electrotype (illus. 3), which appears to have been made from a drawing and not from the original plate, differs from Blake's by having too many lines in the pillars and too few in the bed's drapery, afro-like hair for the two young mourners, and no date (1794) in the right pillar (illus. 4).⁷ Because our objective was to create a facsimile of the title page in copy B, that is, as it was printed in this particular copy and not of the plate as it appears in proofs, we decided that making a new plate from an uncolored impression, *Songs of Innocence* copy U, for example, would be no more effective than "excavating" the lines in the copy B impression and altering the lines in the electrotype to match. An embossed impression was substantially corrected by having its incorrect lines masked out, and thus deleted, and others reshaped and newly added by hand. In a number of places the printing is deliberately broken, as in the tendril of the "T" of "The Author," and the foul printing is imitated, such as the thin border marks. A contact transparency was then made of the doctored impression and the resulting plate printed slightly more heavily than the others. As Essick points out, "the new facsimile plate . . . is much closer to the original," with the same high fidelity as those printed from relief plates made from unaltered electrotype impressions.

The paper for the edition was also specially made. Using a small hydropulper and paper refiner that Ritchie designed and built especially for the project, he and Kate Donnelly succeeded in making from 100% cotton linters a very soft and receptive paper (illus. 5). This is essentially the same paper that was used to print the electrotypes, and, although it had to be sized to accept water colors, it remained as receptive as the first batch of paper. Irgalite paper dyes in fairly miniscule proportions were added to the pulp at the refining stage to make its color match that of the original paper. Each

sheet (20.5 × 16.5 cm.) was individually made by hand on a wove mold giving four deckled edges, is watermarked *Songs of Innocence* or SONGS OF EXPERIENCE, and blind embossed with Blake's *Night Thoughts* monogram (illus. 6). The watermarked paper will prevent the facsimiles from being mistaken for originals—and prevent the British Museum from having a future headache. For if ever the printroom should be rearranged, the colored copy of "A Cradle Song" that will be found under several tons of solid oak chests will not be thought of as an uncatalogued Blake original, but a facsimile that slipped away from Jacqueline Marshall.

Even after being pressed in a bookpress (illus. 7) and passed through the etching rollers, the paper, because it is only lightly sized, remains slightly rougher and softer than Blake's Whatman paper, or Trianon's Arches. And because it is so soft, it is easily embossed, no matter how lightly printed. As Essick points out, most of Blake's prints do not have a pronounced plate-mark. There are at least two reasons for this: (1) because the image is on and not below the surface it transfers under light pressure; (2) because Blake's wove paper is made of "wet stuff" and is sized, and is thus a relatively hard support (even when printed damp).⁸ In any event, our impressions are not as flat as Blake's—or at least copy B—but neither are Blake's as flat as the finest collotype and lithographic and photomechanical facsimiles suggest. We could have flattened the impressions after printing to remove their very slight embossment, but this would have been to err in the other direction. It would have been to imitate the surface image and not the tactile quality of the original prints. We have tried, on the other hand, to remind the reader that the poems are pages and the pages are prints, and that as prints, by their tactile as well as illuminated nature, Blake's poems are "an improvement of *sensual* enjoyment."

Essick wonders why we went to all the trouble to make our own paper and suggests that the paper's rough texture is "unBlakean."⁹ But as mentioned, moldmade commercial papers, including the Rives that Essick suggests, produced disappointingly stark impressions, which is why we decided that a paper especially receptive to relief plates was needed. Blake, as Essick reminds us, used the best "wove paper that could be procured." This, however, did not mean just any commercially handmade paper, but the best handmade paper of the day, paper that was beautiful in itself and perfectly receptive to the plate. Paper is not merely a vehicle for the image, but interacts with the image and ink and colors. It is part of the print. In this sense, the MEW paper, which is the best printing paper I have ever used for relief printing, is as Blakean in body, giving a feel of the originals, as printing on the best handmade paper that can be procured is Blakean in spirit. The historical and technical precedents of the Trianon Press's specially made

paper in no way influenced our decision to make our own paper. But Essick is right to suggest that the exigencies of producing beautiful prints for a special deluxe limited edition overruled the need for exact similitude.

The paper was soft enough to be printed dry, and this is how it was printed for the first few sets of proofs. But because Blake clearly seems to have dampened his paper, we began to dampen ours, and, not surprisingly, we obtained better, more authentic looking impressions.¹⁰ We used light pressure, not much more than the weight of the top roller, with only three blankets (two size catchers and one swanskin) instead of the usual four, and registered the plate on a marked sheet of paper under the plate, thus assuring the proper margins (illus. 8). Producing impressions with the tactile qualities of the originals, however, involved more than getting the printing pressure right; it also involved getting the color and composition of the inks correct, as well as devising an effective and consistent way of inking the plates.

Because of the reticulation and uneven strength of the ink in Blake's printing, deciding upon the optimum ink color/tone was possibly the most perplexing and time-consuming aspect of the project. *Blake Books* describes the color as brown, noting that *Experience* is printed in an "orangish brown" and *Innocence* in a "flat brown" (*Blake Books*, p. 373, n. 21). The difference between Bentley's color definition and ours is largely one of descriptive interpretation; we refer to the "orangish brown" as yellow, though it is really a sort of faded warm ochre, while the "flat brown" is a color midway between brown and the ochre, and could well have been a mixture of the two inks, made either deliberately or accidentally. Even within the sets the shade of color sometimes appears different from one plate to another, possibly due to printing pressure and the amount of ink Blake has applied to the plate; e.g., "Holy Thursday" is very lightly printed, whereas in parts of, say, "Infant Sorrow," the inking is much heavier. It is possible that a residue of another ink on the dabber has affected the hue on some plates. Because of such variables, we could not use the same ink for all the plates, but had to match separately the color of each facsimile with the original, and, even then, arriving at a color match was maddeningly difficult because test strips would differ and yet, depending on what part of the print was used as the sample, all could be right.

The first ink Ritchie experimented with was a mixture of commercially made letterpress and intaglio inks, but this worked too well. The image transferred from the plate to the paper without the reticulation so characteristic of Blake's. We reasoned that Blake, like other engravers printing their own plates, would have made his own ink, but that this handmade ink would have been intaglio, not relief, ink. The thicker plate oils (burnt linseed oil) used in the former make it stiffer and

more tenacious, transferring evenly only with heavy pressure. We ground the inks on a marble slab, using first grade pigments and oils, carefully matching the colors of the originals. Ritchie applied the ink, however, with a roller, rather than a linen dabber, the tool Blake most likely used.¹¹ We resorted to the "unBlakean" tool (rollers were not invented till about 1813 and not in common use till mid-nineteenth century) because it produced more consistent results. With dampened paper, light printing pressure, and stiff handmade intaglio ink, we succeeded in duplicating the surface texture, as well as the colors of the originals.¹²

The prints were hand colored by eight different colorists. Jacqueline Marshall, Paul Taggart, and Guy Tucker were the principal colorists, and they were also the artists responsible for the prototypes made in the British Museum from the originals. This took eight weeks and three trial sets (illus. 9 and 10). The colors first used were Winsor & Newton, but we found—as we had with the ink—that we obtained more accurate results in texture and tonality by preparing the colors by hand. The pigments were ground in a vehicle of gum arabic, honey, and glycerine, with a drop of ox gall and phenol, a preserver, which is, except for the last ingredient, a variation of a recipe in Dossie's *The Handmaid to the Arts* (1764).¹³ The main colors were *Prussian blue*, *gamboge*, *yellow ochre*, *Indian red*, *umbers*, *black*, *vermilion*, *rose madder* (genuine), and *alizarin crimson*, all of which, except the last, were used by Blake.¹⁴ Back in the workshop, the colorists worked from their prototypes and occasionally from slides on a Diastar back-lit projector to produce final masters, which were then checked against the model and finished at the British Museum Print Room (illus. 11). We analyzed Blake's water color technique with the hope of working up each print as a composite whole, which can be quite tricky when copying, the copier not being the original author of the work. We found it necessary to improve certain details and modeling, as well as slightly strengthen some of the washes. The outlining, mostly done by Tucker, was executed in a diluted India ink with a quill, or lettering, brush—which, as Essick points out, is what was normally used in "pen and wash." The outlining on the master copy of "The Little Girl Lost," plate 1, however, was executed by Marshall, whose hand slipped over the printed line of the woman's hip, only then to discover that she had duplicated Blake's "error" of 1794!

The coloring was done after the prints were dry, except on those plates which appear color printed, like "Infant Sorrow," "London," and "Human Abstract." As unconventional as Blake's color prints are, his usual color printing method was a variation of the *à la poupée* technique used in England to color print mezzotints, stipples, chalk engravings, and aquatints. In this technique, the different colors are applied to the plate with small

dabbers, or "dollies," and the plate is printed just once. This technique, though, is difficult and the results are not consistent. So we looked for an easier, more precise technique of imitating the texture of these impressions, one that would enable us to paint the print rather than the plate. We knew that in conventional color printing the colors were oil-based inks, and not size-color as in Blake's, but that the impressions, like Blake's, were finished in water colors.¹⁵ This led us to experiment with different combinations of inks and water colors.

In the earliest trial proofs of "Infant Sorrow," the mottled texture of the size-color was reproduced by stippling water color with the tip of the brush on the dry ink of the impression. The results were labored and unconvincing. Ritchie discovered, however, that the opaque black at the bottom of these and other plates, which is thought to be color printed (*Blake Books*, p. 373, n. 21), was washed with a fairly dry brush over the ink on the impression, and not transferred from the plate. He also found that other areas that appeared color printed had the same structure, that is, a water-based color over an oil-based ink. We reasoned that the mottled texture, which made the paint appear to have more body than it did, was not caused by the paper pulling away from a buttery size-color on the plate, but by the water colors interacting with an oily surface and attaching to the exposed paper where the ink had reticulated (illus. 12). We found, however, that we could not reproduce this mottle effect once the ink was completely dry. By using a slightly coarser ink, which was even closer to Blake's and reticulated more readily, and applying water color washes on top of it while it was still tacky, which in effect was to manipulate the surface tension between oil-based ink and water-based paint, we recreated the color printed appearance of the originals—if not actually discover one of the methods used by Blake (illus. 13).¹⁶ If this was the method used in *Songs* (B), then Blake would have had to paint these impressions soon after printing, rather than wait until he had a buyer, as he is known to have done with a few copies of the illuminated books. Illumination, in other words, was not an afterthought.

We have recreated, intentionally and inadvertently, as many of Blake's printing methods as possible to create high fidelity facsimiles. Our objective, however, was not only to reproduce the appearance of Blake's prints, but the feel of them as well. Our mode of production, as Essick notes, has its weaknesses as well as its strengths: no one copy looks exactly like its model in every respect, no two copies of the edition are exactly the same—and no copy is not labor intensive. The original plan of five-hundred monochrome copies quickly became seventy-five after the amount of time and labor was known, and these seventy-five copies were divided into the facsimile edition, limited to forty copies, and the monochrome

edition, limited to thirty-five copies. The monochrome sets, which have been printed in a light brown ink without borders and on the same paper as the facsimile edition, consists of the sixteen *Innocence* and *Experience* impressions printed without plate borders, a proof with borders of the "The Little Girl Lost," and two hand-colored impressions of the same, one in imitation of copy B, and one in imitation of copy T (illus. 14), an elaborately painted late copy with frame lines. Each print is inserted in an acid free folder and the entire set of prints is enclosed in a cloth-covered box. The facsimile edition has one extra print, a proof with borders of "The Lamb," printed in black proofing ink (illus. 15). The facsimiles are loosely mounted in corners on pages of a portfolio hand bound in full morocco, which is enclosed in a cloth-covered box. Both editions include two blind embossed frontispieces, one to *Innocence* and one to *Experience*, consisting of the title extracted from Blake's own title plates, underneath which is "Published by Manchester Etching Workshop 1983" in a simple, conservative typeface.

The prints are presented in the order of copy B. Thus there are eight *Innocence* and eight *Experience* prints, with "Little School Boy," which later became part of *Experience*, still part of *Innocence*. The number of the edition is penciled in on the lower left corner, and the prints are numbered 1–16 on the verso so that they can be removed from the portfolio or box and returned to the same order. Both editions are accompanied by *The Art of William Blake's Illuminated Prints*, a hand-sewn booklet of twenty-five pages explaining the technique of illuminated printing. To make the booklet more widely available—and affordable to scholars—125 numbered copies have been issued separately with a monochrome impression printed without borders in light brown ink; print and booklet are enclosed in a dark brown cloth-covered folder with Blake's monogram stamped in gold on the front cover and cost \$35. Like the editions, the booklet can be ordered from the Manchester Etching Workshop, 3-5 Union Street (off Church Street), Manchester M4 1PB.

We presented the prints as prints, and not as bound pages, to make it possible for museums, libraries, and collectors to show them as a group, for, as M.H. Abrams states in the Prospectus, these impressions "are also, in their own right, delightful works of art for public or private exhibition." And we divided the seventy-five copies into two complementary editions to reveal the evolution from plate to illuminated print. Like the multiple impressions of "The Lamb" and "The Little Girl Lost," monochrome and colored impressions of the same plate clearly reveal what Blake could do to alter the image, and address the issue Essick raises about different versions of the "same" illuminated book. Perhaps the most enduring educational value of the prints, though,

is their beauty. They celebrate Blake, whether they missed a tendril or not, whether the green is too dark or too light on this or that impression. Here at Cornell and anywhere but the British Museum print room, students and lovers of Blake will not be comparing them to copy B, but to Blake's originals in general. What they will experience is copy B². But Essick says this better: the Workshop's facsimiles are "a recreation of a process as well as a reproduction of images; as much a new edition of an illuminated book, with its own unique qualities, as a reproduction of an existing copy."

¹ Private correspondence.

² Though electrotype and posthumous prints convey the same information, they are easy to distinguish: posthumous prints were usually printed in reddish brown ink and are very noticeably embossed, because they were printed on a rolling press with too much pressure. Electrotypes, like process blocks and type, tend to be flat because they are printed in common platen presses.

³ Guy Tucker, an artist and art lecturer at the Manchester Art College, was the colorists' supervisor and executed the general water color finishing and most of the fine pen line work; Jacqueline Marshall is a textile designer and artist who teaches part time at Stockport Art College; and Paul Taggart is an artist and parttime lecturer, Salford Art College, Manchester, and other colleges in the Manchester area. Others who worked on the coloring to a lesser extent are Colin Rispin, artist/illustrator, Manchester Art College; Andrea Hill, textile designer and lecturer, Stockport Art College; Penny Roberts, textile designer; Christopher Tipping, artist printmaker; Glenda Berg, an English teacher and art lover. The prospectus and booklet, *The Art of William Blake's Illuminated Prints*, were designed by Karen Meneghin and set by Mark Decker, both of Gladiola Press, New York, N.Y.

⁴ *Life of William Blake* (London: Macmillan, 1863), II, 267.

⁵ Ferric chloride (perchloride of iron), though used less than Dutch mordant and nitric, is one of the most controllable of acids. Because it leaves a sediment of iron oxide, the plate must be taken out of the bath regularly, washed, and examined; constant checking of the plate, and, equally important, the slow, even corroding action of the acid, greatly reduce the chance of foul biting and pitting of the plate's surface, thereby assuring accurately bitten plates.

As for the kind of acid that Blake used, nitric or the weaker, long out of date, vinegar-based acid, Essick is probably right to keep the jury out (see Essick review, below). In *The Art of William Blake's Illuminated Prints*, I state that Blake used the former; I do not, however, merely "allow for the possibility of additives" to the nitric, but strongly suggest it. Biting relief plates correctly is far more difficult than biting today's "deep etched" plates, which are analogous to Blake's in that part of the design is in relief and both surface and lower levels of the plate can be printed simultaneously in different colored inks. But open etched plates incorporate accidents in the biting of the plate as part of the evolving image and the overall exploitation of the medium. Blake's objective, on the other hand, was to reproduce, or rather, to duplicate the details and quality of the marks made on the plate, which made it necessary to reduce the technical distortion resulting from the biting action of the acid—whether, like nitric, the acid bites laterally or not. Much knowledge of additives, as well as skill in the use of acid,

is necessary to produce cleanly etched plates. The *America* fragment, even though taken from a rejected plate, may indicate depth—if it was not a plate rejected for its shallowness—and may also indicate type of acid—if its cleanliness was not the result of its being polished by Blake or Butts. Nevertheless, it *could* have been bitten—striations and all—just as easily and cleanly with a treated nitric as with the weaker acid. The effects of the weaker, more easily controlled and cleaner biting, acid can be duplicated by adding sulphuric acid and water to nitric, which weakens the nitric acid and causes a cleaner bite, or by adding sal ammoniac, the salt which produced the buffered effect in the vinegar recipe. A clean and controlled bite could also be produced by careful feathering of the plate while it is being bitten.

The vinegar-based acid bites cleanly and was, consequently, recommended for etching plates with fine cross hatchings, etc. But relief etching on copper, because of the amount of exposed metal that needs to be etched away, really is different from etching fine lines on copper. To get a printable surface, albeit a shallow one, a stronger acid is, if not absolutely necessary, very useful and, I think, technically as well as financially preferable. Nitric acid was certainly more easily acquired, being a product of commerce and the acid "commonly employed by engraving" in Blake's day (Dossie, *The Handmaid to the Arts*, London, 1764, II, 147). The weaker acid, commonly used in the seventeenth century, would have had to have been made from scratch, since it was no longer something the local drysalter would necessarily have stocked ready made. This acid, along with the stopout of oil and tallow, were not so much rejected by Blake as simply replaced in eighteenth-century etching by an acid that worked faster and by the simple-solution varnishes (a rosin suspended in a volatile solvent like alcohol or, more usually and as in Blake's case, turpentine), which were easier to handle and could be worked over like an etching ground. Using what is on hand, especially when it works, follows Occam's Razor: "entities must not be unnecessarily multiplied," which is to say, the simplest, most direct way of doing something is usually the right way.

⁶ For the list of missing letters and punctuation marks, see Essick, *William Blake, Printmaker* (Princeton: University of Princeton Press, 1980), p. 95. The mark in the MEW plate that is not missing is the "n" of "rain" in line 14 of "Holy Thursday" in *Experience*. This may have been "corrected" by the Gilchrist Brothers.

⁷ Besides a visual comparison, there is other proof to support the idea that the electrotype was made from a drawing and not from the original plate. Gilchrist says there were ten original plates from which he made sixteen electrotypes, which implies that at least six of the ten plates were etched on both sides. Yet, according to the sizes for the plates as listed in *Blake Books* (p. 68), plates 6 and 43, 27 and 33, 34 and 47, 36 and 46, 53 and 48, are exactly or nearly exactly the same size, indicating that only five plates (supplying ten electrotypes) were etched on both sides. These five and the remaining six plates (3, 8, 16, 18, 24, and 29), all of which, according to plate sizes, are on separate pieces of copper, make eleven plates. That there was a plate added to Blake's ten supports the idea that one of the plates is a facsimile. On the top right corner of plate 29 (the *Experience* title plate) in *Songs*, copy U, is a platemaker's mark, indicating that it is the verso of a plate; since it is 12.4 × 7.2 cm., it could only be the verso of plate 30, which is the same size and the largest of *Songs'* fifty-four plates. The electrotype, on the other hand, is 12.2 × 7.1 cm. It has been my finding that electrotypes and posthumous pulls are slightly larger, not smaller, than the originals, possibly because they were printed on dry, and thus nonshrinking paper.

The electrotypes reproduce the *appearance* of the originals, and, for all practical purpose, are the same size, but they do not reveal the depth or substructure of the originals as John Wright has claimed ("Blake's Relief-Etching Method," *Blake Newsletter*, 9 [Spring 1976], 95). The method by which the electrotype is made includes

preparing an intermediate matrix and then building up the relief areas of the matrix, so that its cast, the electrotype, is deep enough to be commercially printed. For a detailed description of the discrepancies in depth among the different sets of electrotypes, see *Printmaker*, pp. 94-95.

⁸ There may be one or two more reasons why the illuminated prints do not have pronounced platemarks. Blake may have used a stiff backing sheet placed between the thin felt blanket ("size catcher") and the paper. The wove pattern that is occasionally visible on illuminated prints (*Urizen* pl. 2 (B), for example), may have been produced by the damp paper being in direct contact with the felt blanket. Blake may also have printed plates face down on paper lying on the press bed, a method used to print engravings on "paper, pastboard, Satin or other thing you print upon" (William Faithorne, *The Art of Graving and Etching* [London, 2nd ed. 1702], "How to Ink the Plate"). Plates 7-12 in *Europe* (G) have horizontal and vertical pencil lines (some partly erased) on their face, which correspond to the size of the plates. If these lines are registration marks, then the paper must have lain on the press bed facing up and the plate placed on top of it—otherwise the lines would not have been visible. I have printed many of my relief etchings using this method, and, because I forego the blanket under the paper which Faithorne suggests, I can print the shallowest of relief etching with very clean results. A similar reverse method of printing was used with woodcuts that were printed independent of type. Ink is brushed on a leather-covered block and the woodcut stamped into the ink, "and then lifted up instantly and dropt with some little force on the paper, which is to receive the impression" (Dossie II, 222).

As the posthumous prints of *Songs* clearly show, there is nothing about the plates themselves that prevented them from embossing the paper. Indeed, Blake color-printed *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (F) and *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (F) with so much pressure that the figures' bodies seem cast in relief. These may have been early experiments at color printing, with more pressure than was necessary for the paper to pick up the color from both lower and relief levels simultaneously. On the other hand, *Europe*, copy G, which is also color printed, is very flat, perhaps because the paper is printed on both sides of the sheet and most of the size-color is from the relief rather than shallow areas—or applied directly to the impressions themselves. See note 16.

⁹ Essick's comments about an "unBlakean printing pressure" apparently refer to the impressions in the monochrome rather than the facsimile edition. The former are intentionally more deeply imprinted than the latter since they are not facsimiles of any copy. The idea that Blake's plates have no embossment whatever, of course, is not true (see note 8), and if the facsimiles have more now, wait two hundred years and they'll have less.

¹⁰ Intaglio printers dampen the paper so that it is soft and pliable enough to be forced into the incised lines of the plate. In the eighteenth century, however, paper was also dampened for letterpress printing, because there was not enough pressure in a platen press to force handmade ink into the dry fibers of rag paper. Although Blake's plates were printed on a rolling press, the tacky ink and light pressure would have caused problems with the transference of the image similar to those in letterpress printing. Dampening the paper opens its interstices so that the ink actually becomes part of the paper, thus assuring a solid, rather than a ghostlike, impression.

It was standard practice in the eighteenth century to print both relief and intaglio plates on damp paper, but there are three other ways to prove that Blake did so too: (1) the paper of certain color printed impressions, such as those in *Visions*, copy F, must have been pliant to be so embossed without tearing; (2) the wove pattern on the verso of a number of impressions is an indication that the paper was sufficiently dampened to accept the wove of the

felts; and (3) Blake's prints are slightly smaller than posthumous pulls, which could be printed on dry paper because they were printed with greater pressure and, it seems, with finer, machine-made relief inks.

¹¹ Essick distinguishes between the "inking ball," i.e. an engraver's linen dabber, and a "type-printer's inking ball," by referring to the latter as a "dauber" (*Printmaker*, p. 99). He argues quite persuasively that Blake used a dauber rather than a dabber (p. 101), but, because he also detects signs of a dabber (p. 102), wisely concludes that there may have been more than one inking tool and method. I have inked my own relief etchings and Blake facsimiles with both tools and can attest to the efficacy of the former. Because handmade linen dabbers, about 2½ and 3 inches in diameter, were the inking tools all eighteenth-century engravers made and used to spread etching grounds and inks, I suspect Blake used it, too. Despite its clumsy appearance, the dabber does a fine job of inking the relief surface and keeping the shallows uninked. Its broad, slightly convex bottom is supported by the relief line system of text and borders. In trial proofs, Ritchie also produced good results using an inking dabber, but resorted to using an inking roller for the impressions in both the monochrome and facsimile editions for consistency of effect.

¹² That the reticulation of Blake's ink could be caused by the kind of oil in his ink is supported by studio experiments, but also by the findings of other printmakers: "Strong oil in the ink alone would yield . . . owing to its tremendous grip, a somewhat mottled or granulated tone to the surface unless thoroughly cleaned [wiped off the plate] with whiting"; Ernest Lumsden, *The Art of Etching* (London: Seeley, Service & Co., 1925), p. 28.

¹³ Dossie, I, 177.

¹⁴ Though our analysis of Blake's palette was done by eye, our findings match those of analyses independently conducted by Ann Maheux with a polarizing microscope and a "scanning electron microscope with an energy dispersive x-ray spectrometer"; "An Analysis of the Watercolor Technique and Materials of William Blake," *Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly*, 17 (1984), p. 127. Maheux examined eight water color paintings executed over a twenty-seven year period and found that Blake's palette remained very consistent; except for blue verditer, which showed up in one late work, we found the same colors in *Songs* (B), a series of hand-painted prints executed five to ten years earlier than the earliest paintings she examined.

¹⁵ David Alexander and Richard Godfrey, *Painters and Engraving: The Reproductive Print From Hogarth to Wilkie* (New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, 1980), pp. 41-42. For a more detailed discussion of color printing, see Joan Friedman's *Color Printing in England, 1460-1870* (New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, 1978); Julia Frankau's *Eighteenth-Century Colour Prints* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1906); and R.M. Burch's *Colour Printing and Colour Printers* (New York: Baker and Taylor Co., 1911).

¹⁶ In color printing, Blake seems to have employed multiple techniques to create similar visual effects, which reveals both his willingness to exploit media and his concern with the painterly qualities of his prints. Such experimentation, however, makes the minute particulars of the process difficult, if not impossible, to fix definitively. Water color over tacky ink may be the earliest technique of color printing or the simplest variation. In any event, our experiments with color printing support Essick's idea that Blake could have applied size-color with a sponge or brush directly to the impression rather than to the plate (see Essick review, below). A few of the color printed impressions in *Europe* copy G also support this hypothesis. The black size-color on plate 5, for example, reveals brushstrokes and thus seems also to have been applied directly to the impression. More important are the small hairs, between .3 to 1 cm., in the color-printed areas of plates 8, 12, 14. Though too small to be from brushes used for washing, they may represent

water color brushes cut of their points (which makes the bristles stiff, like glue brushes) to enable them to daub paint on the lower and relief areas of the plate in an *à la poupée* manner. Most of these hairs seem to have been transferred from the plate along with the paint, but on plate 12, which, as mentioned in note 8, has registration-like lines, they seem to have been from brushes manipulating the paint directly on the impression itself. If plate 12 was "stamped" face down, it could pick up pigment from the lower levels only if the pigment had substantial body, which it does not have, or if there was a blanket under the paper making it pliable—which would defeat the purpose of printing in this fashion. The size-color on this particular print, in other words, seems to have been applied to the impression after it was stamped/printed, and its tactile, spongy texture created by brushes manipulating tacky paint over (wet?) ink and not by the paper pulling away from the plate.

By daubing impressions with warm size-color, Blake could simulate the visual and tactile effects of paint applied indirectly. Our experiments, however, showed that whether the impression was a true color print or a print colored in imitation of one, the final product involved at least two steps. Technically, Blake could finish his color printed impressions in water colors because size-color is both water miscible, and thus accepts water colors painted over it, and insoluble once dry, and thus not disturbed by being rewetted. And visually, as the proofs of *Urizen* plates 1 and 5 in Yale's Center for British Art and *Urizen* plate 24 in the Keynes' collection reveal, he needed to. An unpainted color printed image is literally a series of "blots and blurs." It assumes its well defined shape when water colors and pen lines are added. The two-step process recalls Turner's as revealed on Varnishing day, or Cozens' technique of making ink blots and then outlining on tracing paper the forms the blots suggest (*A New Method of Assisting the Invention in Drawing Original Compositions of Landscape*, London, ca. 1784). The purpose of color printing seems to have been texture, not color, for there are only a few colors printed from the plate. A large creamy white area, for example, becomes multicolored once it is gone over in water colors.

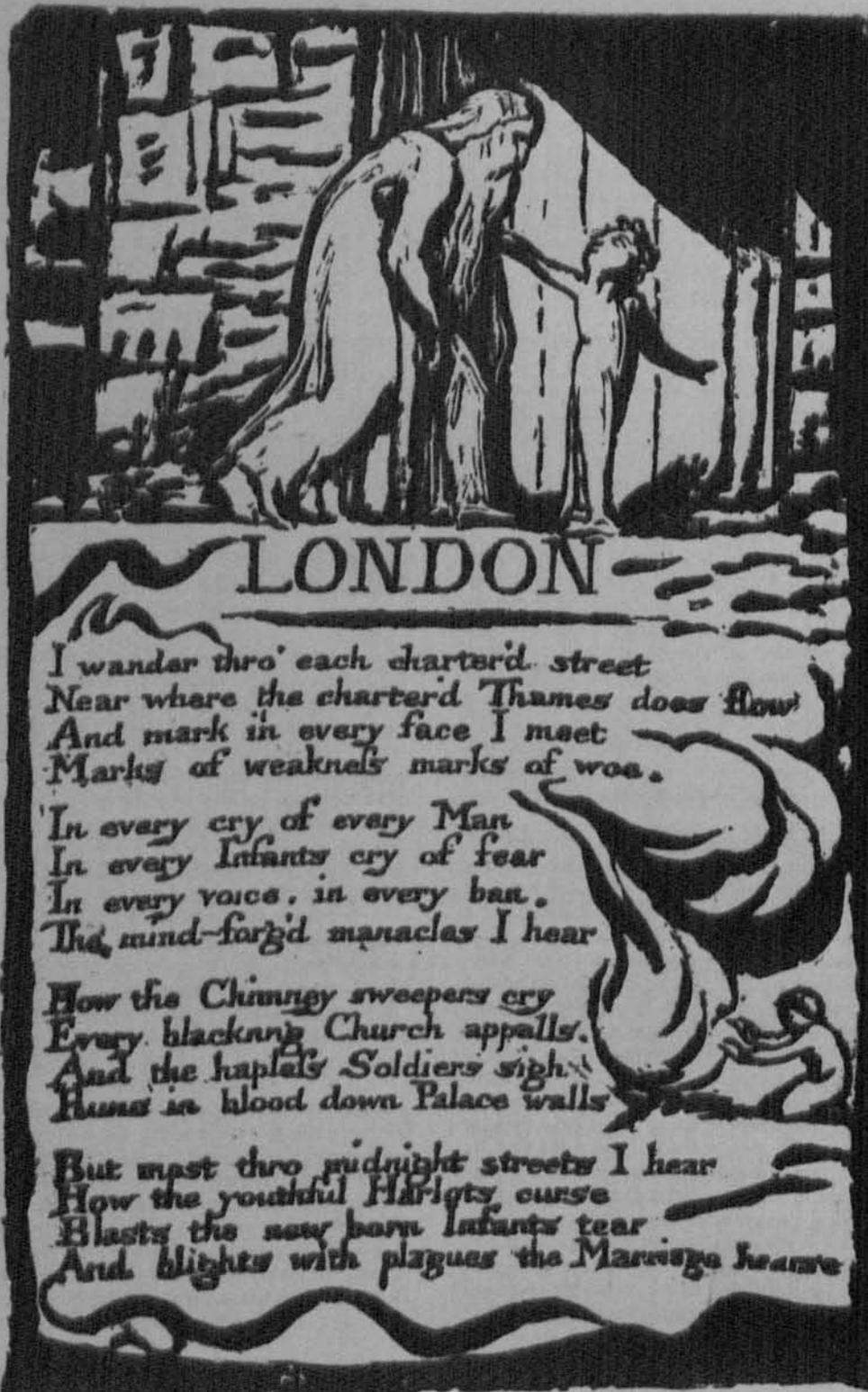
Our experiments have convinced us that Blake combined oil-based inks with water miscible paints, both when color printing from inked plates with size-color, and when washing, painting, or daubing the printed impressions in water colors. We disagree, in other words, with the idea that Blake's ink must have been water soluble since oil would have made it too greasy to accept water colors. This idea, first put forth by Ruthven Todd ("The Technique of William Blake's Illuminated Printing," *The Print Collector's Quarterly*, 29 [Nov. 1948], pp. 25–37), has been recently resurrected by Bo Lindberg (Review of *William Blake, Printmaker*, in *Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly* 59, vol. 15, no. 3 [Winter 1981–82], pp. 140–48). Lindberg does not believe Blake, or anyone else, for that matter, used an oil based ink when printing in colors. Because burnt oil, the vehicle of intaglio ink, is black, he reasons that "it is suitable only for blacks and other dark pigments. This is why color printing has been rare in the west until quite recent times" (p. 141). Contrary historical precedent is explained away: "since color printing was practiced in the eighteenth century, printers and engravers must have had recipes—more or less secret ones—for suitable binders" (p. 141). He states that Blake "probably preferred the customary burnt-oil binder . . . for intaglio printing," but that "it is likely that [he] used aqueous binders for most of his stereotype prints" (p. 141). Assuming an aqueous binder forces Lindberg to assume also that the paper was printed dry, since moist paper would have caused the water-based ink to blur (p. 142), and to explain the reticulation of the ink surface as being caused by the surface of the undampened paper (p. 142). Lindberg's logic leads to the imaginative, but I believe mistaken, conclusion that Blake printed his illuminated impressions in a secret water-based ink on dry paper,

a method like the one used to print Japanese color woodcuts (pp. 141–42).

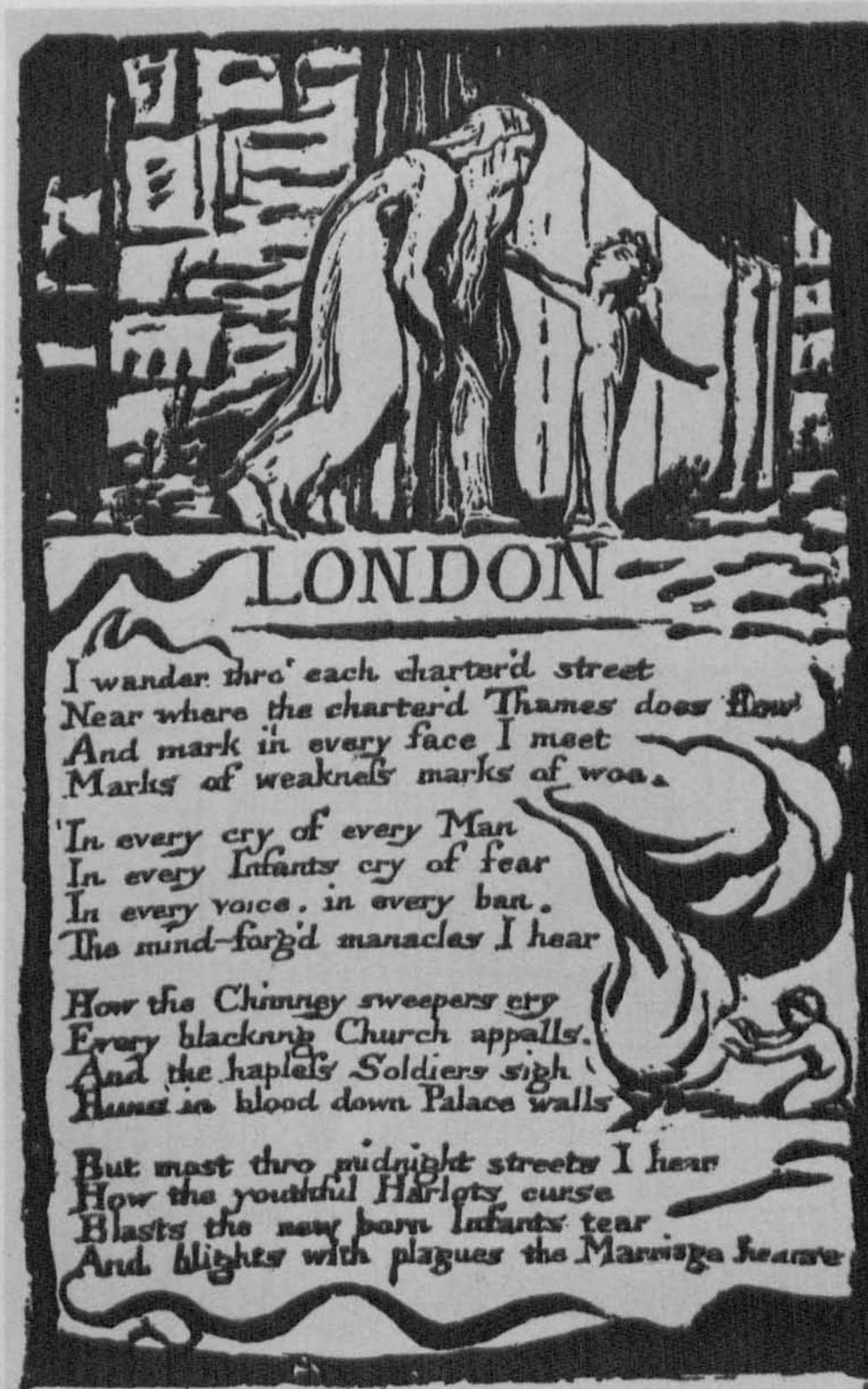
In short, Lindberg's explanation of illuminated printing is in direct opposition to what we discovered in making our facsimiles. I discuss the probable causes for ink reticulation and the likelihood of using dry paper in notes 10 and 12 of this article. As for burnt oil not being used with light pigments, such as the yellows, light browns, and ochres of *Songs* (B), and recipes being secret, I refer to William Faithorne's *The Art of Graving and Etching*, 2nd ed. 1702: "one may also Print Plates with many other sorts of Colours well ground and delay'd, as well with the same Oyl [burnt walnut oil] of this Black, for brown Colours, and for light ones with other thick Oyls purify'd" (Chapter: "How to Ink the Plate . . . for Printing"). And as for oil being too greasy to accept water colors: "Some put into the boiling Oyl [before setting it afire] either an Onyon or a crust of Bread to make it less greasie" (Chapter: "The Condition of the Nut Oyl, and how to boil and burn it").

Perhaps the most important thing we have learned about Blake's printing process is that it is not as complicated as once thought. It is, no doubt, inviting to think of Blake, the visionary, as having cunningly contrived all manner of innovative techniques rather than intelligently adapting existing printmaking technology to his own needs. Although non-printmakers attribute the printmaker with devious complexity, in all printing by hand the most surprising—and unintentional—results frequently occur without any conscious innovation. As Ritchie discovered, "simplicity of technique frees the artist to get on with his job of being creative."





1. Electrotype impression of "London" printed in black proofing ink.



2. Workshop's relief etched plate cast from electrotype impression of "London" printed in brown intaglio ink.



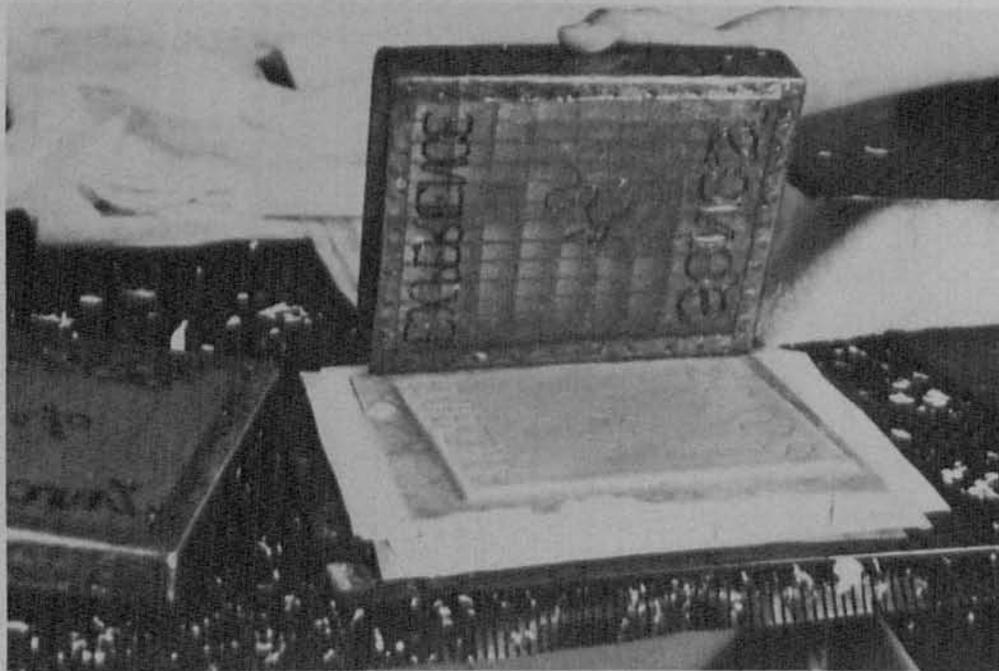
3. Electrotype of *Songs of Experience* title page.



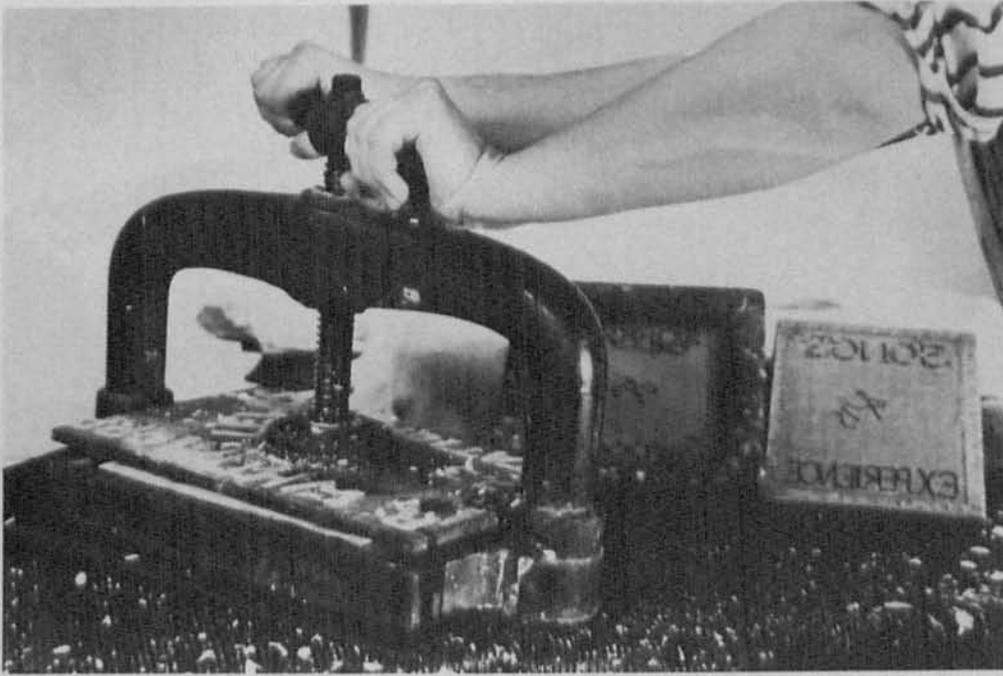
4. Workshop facsimile of title page to *Songs of Experience*, *Songs*, copy B.



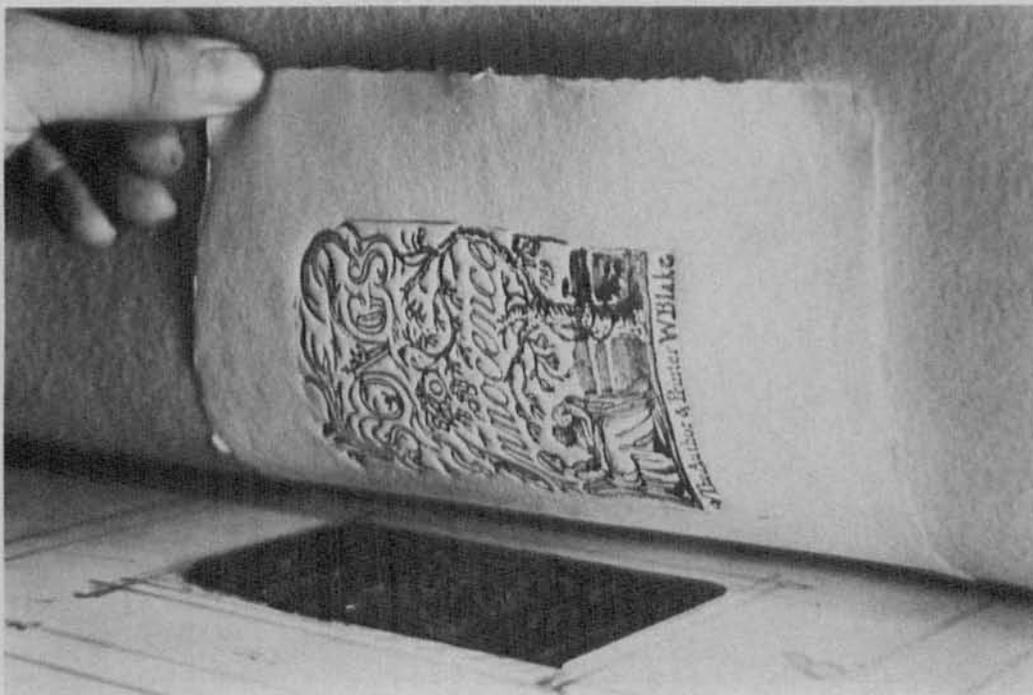
5. Forming the sheet with mold and deckle in the vat; shaking the mold to integrate and mesh the fibers as the water drains through the mold from the pulp.



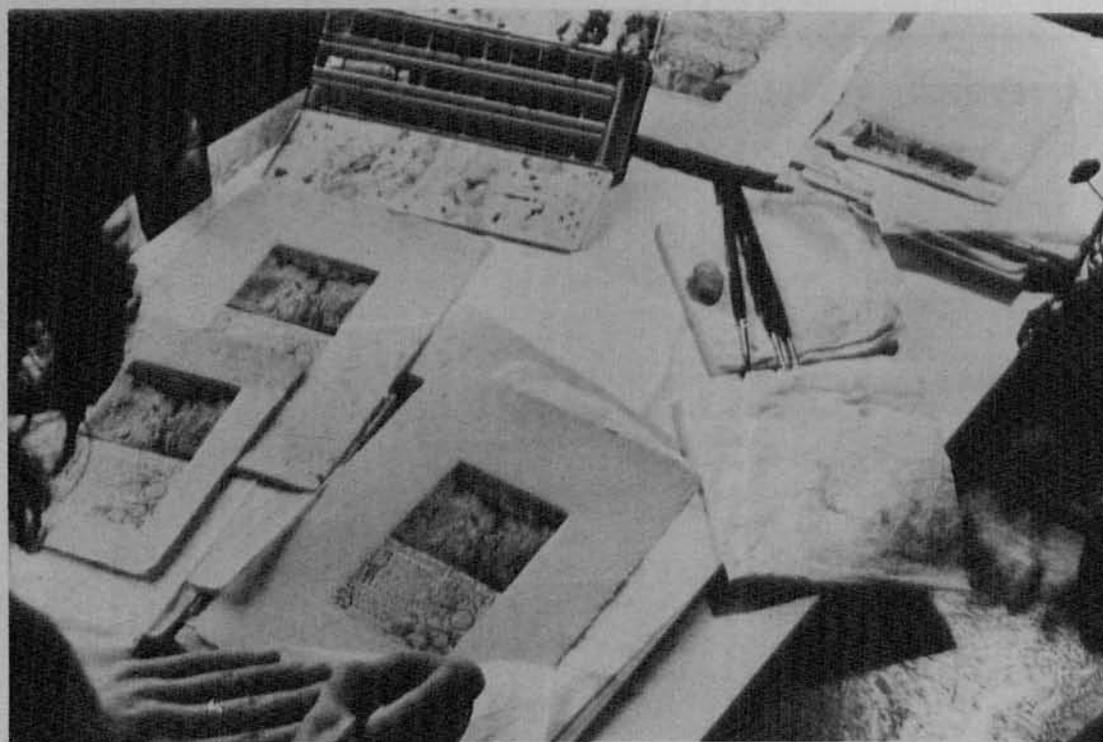
6. Couching the sheet, i.e., transferring the sheet of pulp from mold to felt; the pulp at this stage is very hydrated, and therefore the sheet is very thick. The watermark wires have impressed themselves in the pulp to produce the watermark.



7. First pressing of paper on bookpress. This pressing, ten sheets at a time, compresses the fibers sufficiently to allow the paper to be carefully transferred to a second, very much heavier pressing, which we achieved by putting the paper through the etching press.



8. Pulling a proof of the *Songs of Innocence* title plate on an etching press.



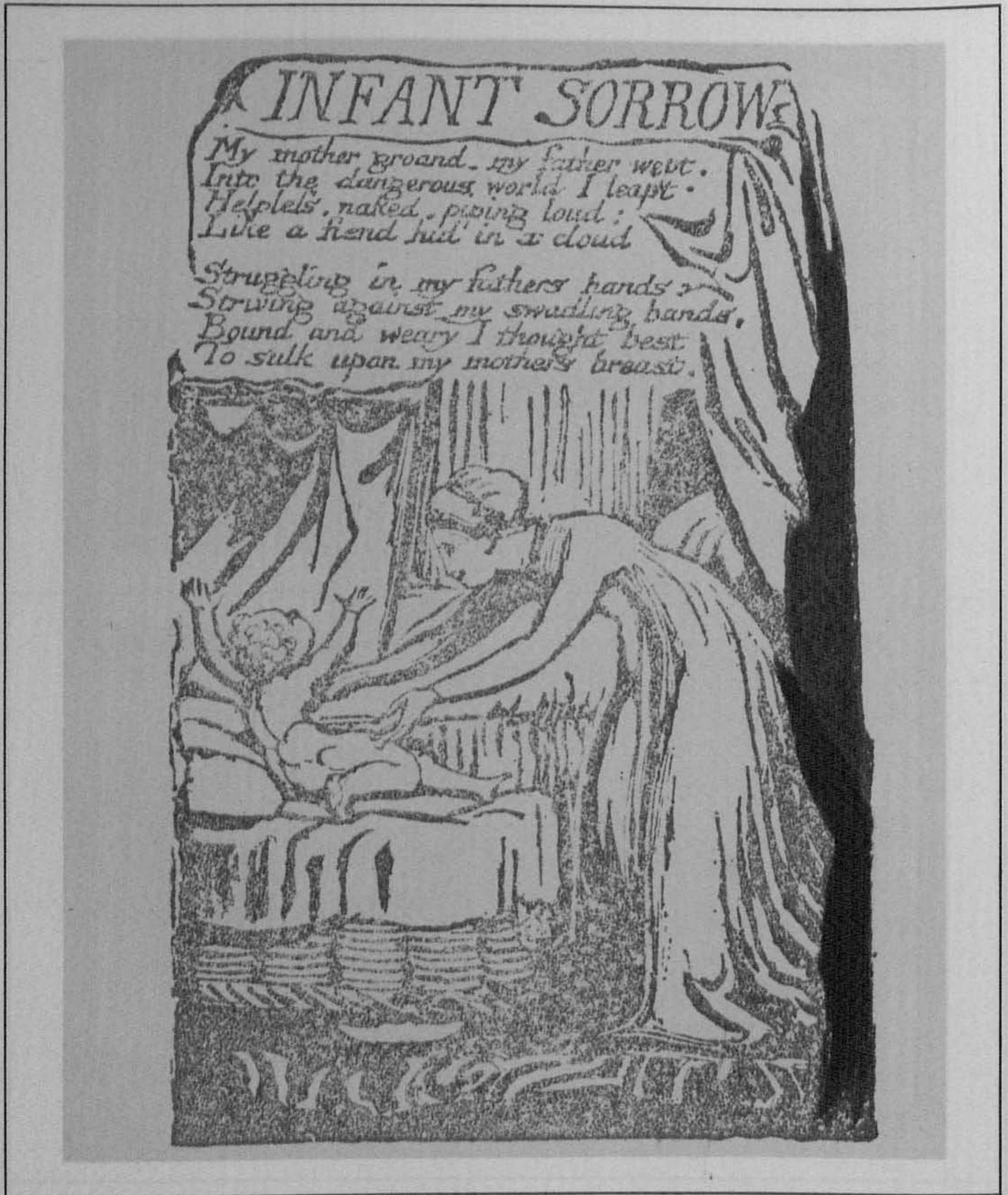
9-10. Jacqueline Marshall hand coloring master prints (between visits to the British Museum) of "The Echoing Green" and "Divine Image," from two prototypes made at the British Museum; all final masters were subsequently checked and finished at the museum.



The Ecchoing Green

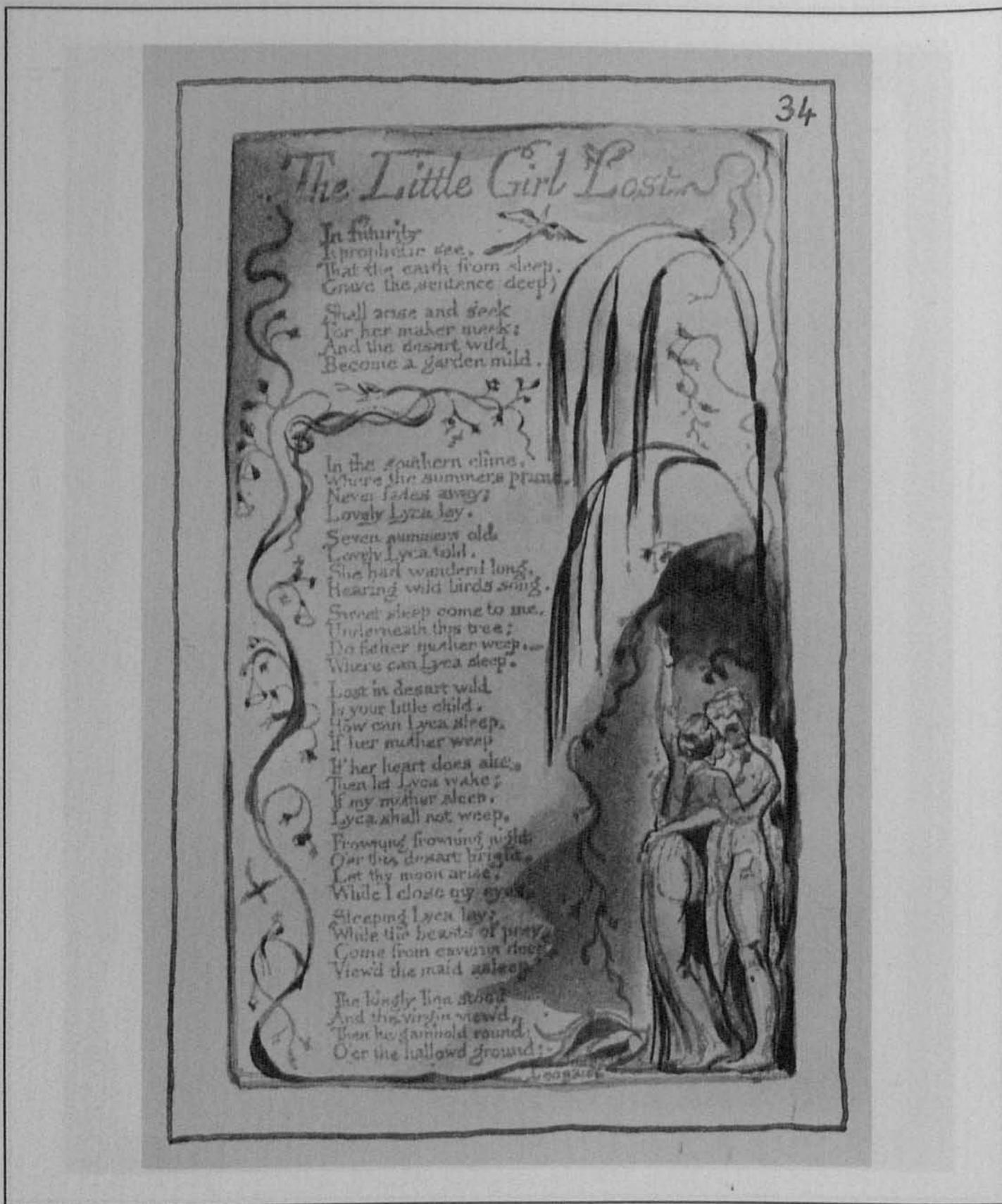
The Sun does shine,
 And make happy the day,
 The merry bells ring,
 To welcome the Spring,
 The little birds sing,
 And they laugh and they play,
 The little birds sing,
 And they laugh and they play,
 In the fields and in the woods,
 Which our sports shall be seen,
 On the Ecchoing Green.

Old John with white hair,
 Horns laugh every year,
 Sitting under the oak,
 Among the old folk.

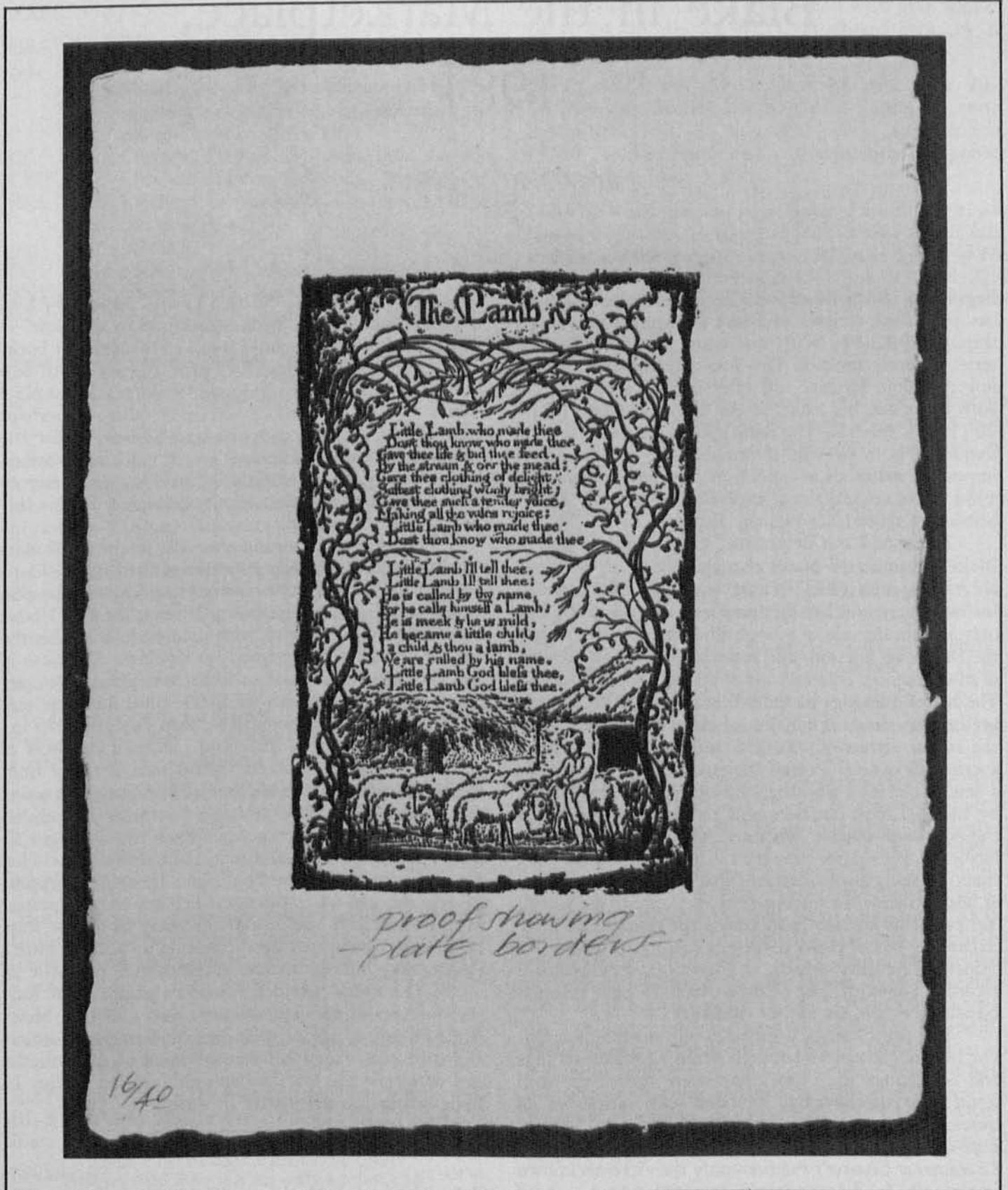


12. Test strip: "Infant Sorrow" showing reticulation of water color on top of wet ink and opaque black water color on impression.





14. Workshop facsimile of "The Little Girl Lost," copy T, in the monochrome edition.



15. Trial proof of "The Lamb" with borders from the facsimile edition.

Blake in the Marketplace, 1984

BY ROBERT N. ESSICK

Beginning in the Winter 1973-74 issue, this journal has published reviews of Blake sales every two years through 1982-83. With this issue, we initiate a new series of yearly reviews. This first contribution will follow the same format, and offer the same coverage of both Blake and his circle, as the 1982-83 report (*Blake* 18 [1984], 68-93). The main reason for the change in frequency is to provide information about the sale of important materials as quickly as possible. Fortunately, 1984 offers an additional rationale for an early report because of several newsworthy auctions.

As far as I can determine, no complete copies of Blake's illuminated books changed hands in 1984 and only 2 pages in relief etching were sold. Both are illustrated here and briefly described (illus. 1 & 2). The only significant sale of a book illustrated by Blake was the December auction, and subsequent offer by a dealer, of an unrecorded colored copy of Young's *Night Thoughts*. The list of drawings includes 6 examples, with a lovely preliminary drawing for the *Job* engravings (illus. 3) as the stellar attraction. At £56,160, this work sold at auction for over 2½ times the estimate and established a new record for a working (and slightly faded) drawing by Blake. I have not been able to confirm reports that the purchaser was Ian Woodner, one of the leading collectors of old master drawings in this country. If true, then the sale clearly indicates that Blake has arrived—at last and alas—in the big-time, big-money art world. Yet even this auction pales beside the remarkable price fetched by one of the 4 silver gilt castings of Flaxman's "Shield of Achilles" which, at £484,000, set all sorts of records. The whirligig of time seems to have restored Neoclassicism to its former eminence.

The print category includes one notable auction. On 14 June, Sotheby's London offered 17 Blake etchings and engravings in 7 lots. Most were run of the mill items, but the offerings included such rarities as an unrecorded impression of the frontispiece to *Songs of Experience* (illus. 2), the frontispiece to *The Prologue and Characters of Chaucer's Pilgrims* (only the eleventh known impression), and a previously unrecorded final state of the "James Upton" portrait (illus. 8). One lot featured

two impressions of the "Wilson Lowry" portrait by Linnell and Blake, plus a "book illustration by the same"—which in this context could mean either artist or both. This under- and mis-described print turned out to be a previously unknown work signed "Blake sc." in the plate (illus. 7). The anonymous vender of most, or perhaps even all, of these lots reported to Sotheby's that the prints came from a scrapbook which had languished in her attic for nigh on 40 years. I have not been able to discover anything further about the history of this collection, now dispersed.

The most entertaining spectacle in the 1984 marketplace offered a heady mixture of thrills and disappointments. Early in June I learned that Christie's London would be offering, in its sale of "Important Old Master Prints" on 27 June, a group of 6 plates described by the auction house as being from *For Children: The Gates of Paradise*. One East Coast collector was prepared to pay many times the estimate of £700-1000 for these rare prints. A sharp-eyed bookdealer soon depressed the excitement more than a little and reddened the faces of Christie's print experts: the plates were actually from the more common *For the Sexes: The Gates of Paradise*, and at least some were probably posthumous pulls on mid-nineteenth century paper. When the catalogue finally made its way to California, I found that it included a reproduction of plate 11 ("Aged Ignorance," appropriately enough) which did not match any recorded states. My pleasure over this minor discovery of a new state lasted until I compared the illustration to William Muir's convincing, but distinctively inaccurate, facsimile of 1888. The much-heralded Christie's plates, or at least the one chosen for reproduction, was clearly a Muir. After a flurry of phone calls between interested dealers and collectors, Christie's was informed of the evidence and withdrew the lot. The episode inspired Jenijoy La Belle to sum up the matter in verse:

The Gates of Paradise: Epilogue

Truly, my Christie's, thou art but a dunce,
And dost not know the true print from the fake;
Every harlot was a virgin once,
Nor canst thou ever change Muir into Blake.

ABBREVIATIONS

BBA cat.	Bloomsbury Book Auctions, London catalogue or sales list issued by a dealer (usually followed by a number or letter designation) or auction house (followed by the day and month of the sale)
CL	Christie, Manson & Woods, Ltd., London
CNY illus.	Christie, Manson & Woods, New York the item or part thereof is reproduced in the catalogue
pl(s).	plate(s)
SL	Sotheby Parke Bernet, London
SNY	Sotheby Parke Bernet, New York
st.	state of an engraving, etching, or lithograph
Swann	Swann Galleries, Inc., auctioneers, New York
#	auction lot or catalogue item number

The year of all sales and catalogues is 1984 unless noted otherwise. Except for Swann, the auction houses listed above add their purchaser's surcharge to the hammer price (i.e., the winning bid at auction) in their price lists. These net amounts are given here, following the official price lists in all cases.

I wish to thank those friends, particularly Shelley Bennett, Martin Butlin, Detlef Doerrbecker, Ruth Fine, and Thomas Lange, who have generously given me information about Blake sales.

ILLUMINATED BOOKS

The Book of Urizen, pl. 4 only. Listed in Bentley, *Blake Books*, p. 953, #38. Acquired Feb. by R. Essick from a private collector. See illus. 1.

Songs of Experience, frontispiece only. SL, 14 June, #200, illus. (£10,450 to D. Heald for R. Essick). See illus. 2.

DRAWINGS

"Butlin # ____" refers by entry number to Martin Butlin, *The Paintings and Drawings of William Blake* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1981), 2 vols.

Head of a Young Man, possibly Antinous, from the Blake-Varley Sketchbook. Pencil, 8 × 6¹/₈ in. Butlin #692.86. CL, 20 Nov., #104 (not sold).

Head of Job(?), from the Blake-Varley Sketchbook. Pencil, 8 × 6¹/₈ in. Butlin #692.92. CL, 20 Nov., #103, illus. (£3240).

Job and His Daughters. Pencil, gray ink, water color, 7³/₄ × 10 in. Butlin #556. CL, 10 July, #225, illus. color (Ian Woodner[?], £56,160). See illus. 3.

The Mourners. Pen & ink over pencil with gray washes, 18 × 24 cm. Butlin #153. Purchased Sept. by R. Essick from E. Taubman. See illus. 4.

Queen Constance and Her Son. Pencil & pen, wash, 20.9 × 24.9 cm. Sketch of a foot & 2 figures on verso. Butlin #151. CL, 10 July, #85, illus. (Spink & Son, £3780). Sold by Spink by Oct., apparently to a private collector. See illus. 5 & 6.

Sketch for War Unchained by an Angel, Fire, Pestilence, and Famine Following (recto, c. 1780); *Studies of a Child*, perhaps for the frontispiece to Malkin's *Memoirs of His Child* (verso, c. 1805). Pen & India ink, 17.7 × 22.1 cm. Butlin #186. Purchased April by R. Essick from a private collector in Scotland.

MANUSCRIPTS

Edward Garrard Marsh. Series of "over fifty" autograph letters to William Hayley, 1801-14, with references to Blake. SL, 6 Dec., #87, 1 letter illus. (not sold; estimate £4000-5000).

SEPARATE PLATES & PLATES IN SERIES, INCLUDING PLATES EXTRACTED FROM PRINTED BOOKS

"Beggar's Opera, Act III," after Hogarth, 4th st. SL, 14 June, #195, some staining (£143).

Chaucer, *Prologue and Characters of Chaucer's Pilgrims*, 1812, frontispiece only. SL, 14 June, #199, illus. (£968 to D. Heald for R. Essick).

Gay, *Fables*, 1793, pls. from. Ben Abraham Books, Jan. cat. 3, #18, 5 pls. by Blake (\$35 each).

Job, engraved illus. to, 1825. Lawson, Jan. cat. 218, #54, 1st issue without "Proof," bookplate of Barron Field (£4000). Walford, Feb. private offer, 1874 printing (\$7500). SNY, 3 May, #425, pl. 4 only, published "Proof" on laid India, buckled, foxed (\$330). Black Sun Books, July cat. 64, #49, "Proof" issue on laid India, original blue paper boards with label, chipped (\$17,000). SNY, 11 Oct., #619, pls. 7 & 12 only, published "Proof" issue (\$550); #620, pls. 7, 8, 12, regular issue on Whatman paper (\$900); #621, pls. 19 & 21, regular issue on Whatman paper (\$400). SNY, 8 Nov., #3, 1874 printing, some foxing, pls. 3 & 5 illus. (not sold). David Tunick, winter cat. 12, #133, "Proof" issue on laid India, some foxing, from collection of Beverly Chew, half-leather binding, pl. 14 illus. ("price on request"—apparently meaning over \$18,000). CL, 7 Dec., #655, pls. 7, 17-19 only, "Proof" issue on laid India, pl. 17 illus. (£1300).

"Lavater, Rev. John Caspar," after an unknown artist. SL, 14 June, #198, 3rd (final) st., stained, illus. (bought-

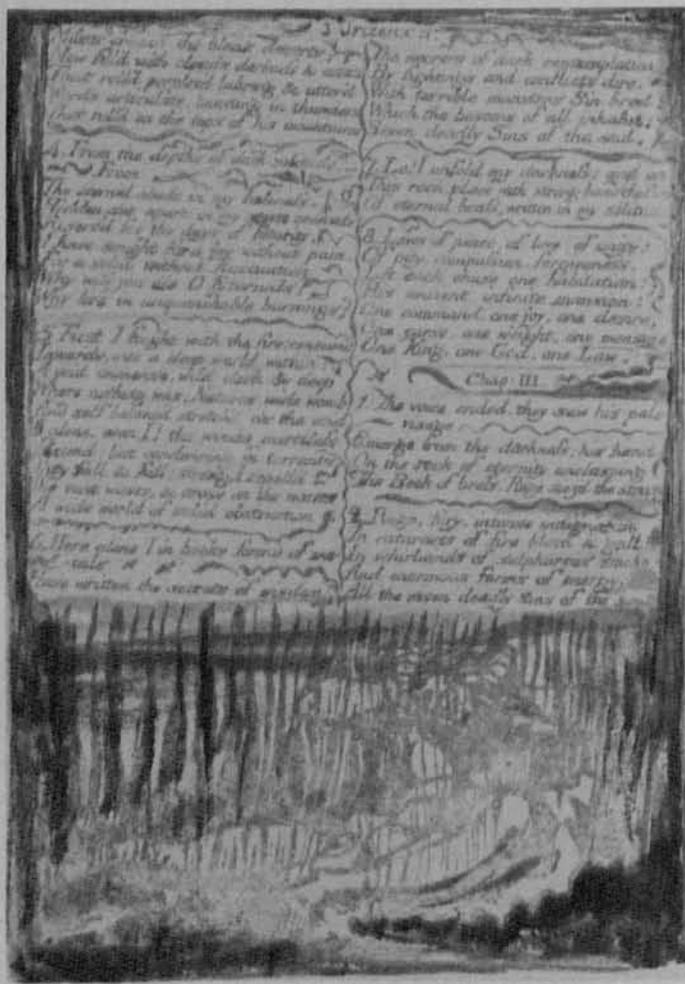
in at £250).

"Lowry, Wilson," Blake and Linnell after Linnell. SL, 14 June, #195A, 2 impressions of the final st., 1 on laid India (torn), & a pl. of "Carfax Conduit, Oxford" signed "Blake sc." (£88 to D. Heald for R. Essick). "Lowry" pls. now in the Huntington Library; for "Carfax Conduit," see illus. 7.

Rees, *Cyclopaedia*. Lawson, Jan. cat. 218, #56, 6 pls. from, not specified (£45).

"Upton, James," Blake and Linnell after Linnell. SL, 14 June, #197, previously unrecorded 3rd (final) st., illus. (£275 to D. Heald for R. Essick). See illus. 8.

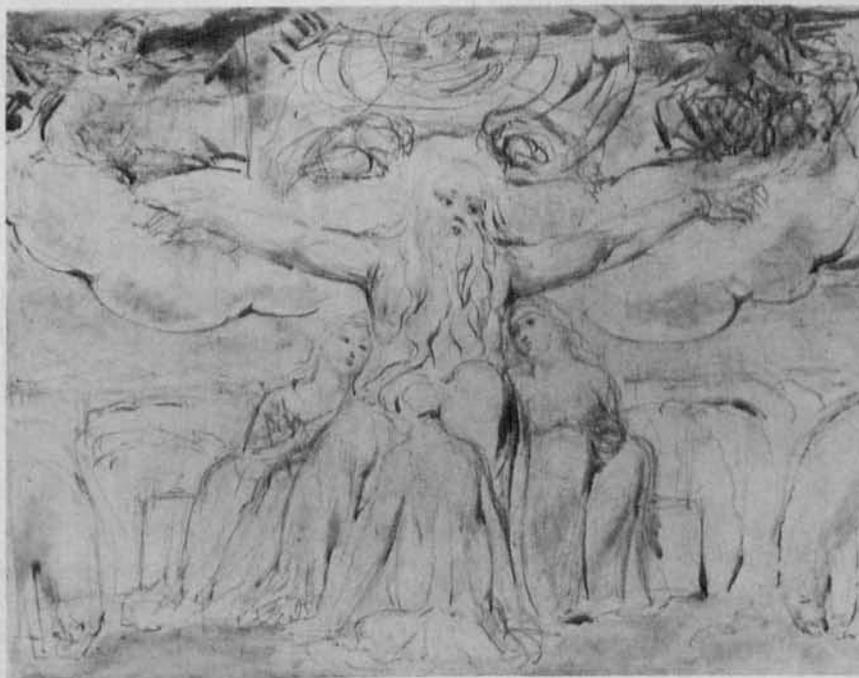
"Venus Dissuades Adonis from Hunting," after Cosway. SL, 14 June, #196, printed in black, imprint cropped, with "May-Day in London" from *The Wit's Magazine*, "Shipwreck" from Hayley's *Life of Romney*, "Orlando Up-rooting a Pine" from Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, 6 pls. from Scott's *Poems*, Blake's pl. from Enfield's *The Speaker*, and 1 pl. not by Blake (£154 to D. Heald for R. Essick). Although it was by far the most important print in the lot, "Venus Dissuades" was not named in the catalogue. The pl. for Enfield was lost before the lot was delivered to Heald.



1. Blake. *The Book of Urizen*, plate 4. Relief etching with water colors. Etched 1794; probably printed in orange and hand colored (blue, red, orange) in 1815 or later as part of copy G but never numbered and included in that copy. Image 15.6 × 10.8 cm., excluding hand-drawn framing lines in orange; wove sheet 29 × 22.8 cm. Essick collection. The plate was printed crooked in relation to the edges of the sheet and the hand coloring applied in an awkward attempt to rectify the misalignment. An article on this print and what it tells us about Blake's methods of production will appear in the 1985 volume of *Studies in Bibliography*.



2. Blake. *Songs of Experience*, frontispiece. Relief etching with pen & ink and water colors (green, blue, rose, yellow, orange). Etched 1794; printed in brown and numbered "2," upper right, probably c. 1800–1806. Image 11 × 7 cm.; wove sheet 19.7 × 13.3 cm. with three stab holes 5.95 and 7.3 cm. apart from the top hole. Essick collection. Perhaps originally part of *Songs* copy J (now in the collection of a member of the Rothschild family) and removed when the rest of the plates were cut down and mounted on larger sheets.



3. Blake. *Job and His Daughters*. Pencil, gray ink, water colors, 20 × 25.4 cm., c. 1821–27. Reproduced by permission of Christie, Manson & Woods, London.



4. Blake. *The Mourners*. Pen & ink over pencil with gray washes, 18 × 24 cm., c. 1785. Essick collection. The grouping of figures is similar to the huddled women above the text on plate 10 of *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (1793), but this drawing is not a direct preliminary for the relief etching.

Virgil, *Pastorals of*, Blake's wood engravings for Thornton's edition. SL, 8 March, #310, 2 cuts, Linnell reprints, 1 stained in the margin (not sold). CNY, 1 May, #365, "Menalcus Watching Women Dance" only, wove paper, small stains (\$55). W. & V. Dailey, complete set of Linnell reprints mounted in a red leather album, offered summer-fall at \$4500, acquired Oct. by "an institution which wishes to remain anonymous" (according to the Daileys).

"Winged Figure Flying through Clouds," after Stothard. See Bray, *Life of Stothard*, under "Stothard," below.

BOOKS WITH ENGRAVINGS BY & AFTER BLAKE

Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, 1783. Swann, 16 Feb., #7 (\$130).

Blair, *The Grave*. Lawson, Jan. cat. 218, #57, 1813 quarto, title-page imprint cut off (£140). Ben Abraham Books, Jan. cat. 3, #7, 1808 quarto, subscriber's copy (\$1750); same copy, winter 84 cat. 4, #4 (\$1750). Howard Mott, Feb. cat. 209, #32, 1813 "folio, original cloth" (i.e., 1870 folio?), rebacked, foxed (\$300). Sims, Reed & Fogg, Feb. 84 cats. 56 & 57, #17 & 89, 1808 quarto (£325); cat. 56, #18, 1813 quarto (£275). Wilsey Books, April cat. 12, #32, 1808 quarto, "original blue boards," front cover detached, uncut, no mention of cover label (\$650). Claude Cox, spring cat. 42, #25, 1813 quarto, "later blue grained cloth . . . presumably an issue binding used by Ackermann for copies stored in sheets for many years" (£120). McDowell & Stern, May cat. 28, #363, 1813 quarto, "little marking" (£180). Claude Cox, July cat. 43, #10, 1808 quarto, some spotting (£350). Traylen, July cat. 97, #82, 1808 quarto, some pls. foxed (£330). SL, 27 July, #354, 1808 quarto, spotted, lacking spine (Demetzy, £165). Traylen, Aug. cat. 97, #82, 1808 quarto, little foxed (£330); #1081, 1808 "folio" (?), no mention of the st. of the pls. (£490). Pickering & Chatto, Oct. cat. 42, #8, 1808 quarto (\$1250). SNY, 12 Dec., #367A, 1808 "folio" (?), shabby condition (\$220).

Bryant, *New System . . . of Ancient Mythology*, 2nd ed. Traylen, Aug. cat. 97, #142 (£160).

Catullus, *Poems*. W. Thomas Taylor, Dec. cat. 37, #23, 2 vols. in 1, with half-title & errata (\$800).

Cumberland, *Outlines from the Antients*. Joseph Felcone, May cat. 27, #19, "large paper copy" (\$175).

Cumberland, *Thoughts on Outline*. Paul Grinke, March cat. 10, #95, margins slightly foxed & dampstained (£110). Blackwell's, March cat. A60, #88, title-page motto corrected by hand, margins soiled (£350).

Darwin, *Botanic Garden*. Lawson, Jan. cat. 218, #58,

1st ed. of Part I, 3rd of Part II (£120). Traylen, March cat. 96, #25, 1st ed., rebacked (£220). Beeleigh Abbey Books, May cat. 37, #97, 1st ed. of Part I, 2nd of Part II, foxed (£160); #429, 3rd ed. of Part I, 4th of Part II, slight foxing (£190). Deighton Bell, July cat. 228, #624, 3rd ed. of Part I, 4th of Part II, worn (£300). BBA, 29 Nov., #232, 3rd ed. (Finch, £308).

Darwin, *Poetical Works*. Walford, Jan. cat. A/306, #94, rebacked, age-yellowed (£135).

Flaxman, Hesiod illustrations. James Fenning, fall cat. 71, #163, 1870 ed. (£30). Swann, 20 Dec., #267, apparently 1817 ed., with *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, & Aeschylus designs, 1805-31, foxed (\$250). Blackwell's, Dec. cat. A72, #108, 1817 ed., with *Iliad* 1805, *Odyssey* 1805, & Aeschylus 1831, in 4 vols. with Charles Dickens' bookplate in the *Iliad* vol. and his library label in each ("sold").

Flaxman, *Iliad* illustrations. Ben Abraham Books, Jan. cat. 3, #16, 1805 ed., foxed (\$365). James Fenning, fall cat. 41, #164, 1870 ed. (£25).

Fuseli, *Lectures on Painting*. Paul Grinke, March cat. 10, #129, uncut (£95).

Gay, *Fables*. Lawson, Jan. cat. 218, #59, 1st ed., "one of the large copies" (£85). Howes, spring cat. 225, #789, 1st ed., fancy binding, "entirely uncut" (£285). SNY, 16 May, #62, 2nd ed., minor stains, rubbed (\$192). SL, 9 July, #465, lacking 1 (unidentified) pl., spotted, worn (Elliott, £30). Traylen, Aug. cat. 97, #416, "large paper copy," 2 vols. in 1, ed. not specified (£135). CNY, 16 Nov., #137, fancy binding (\$385). BBA, 29 Nov., #246, Viscount Weymouth/Britwell copy, fancy binding (Traylen, £605).

Gough, *Sepulchral Monuments*. SL, 23 Oct., #356, 2 vols., 1786, 1796, worn, covers detached, with Le Neve, *Monumenta Anglicana*, 1717-19, & 7 others (Robertshaw, £110).

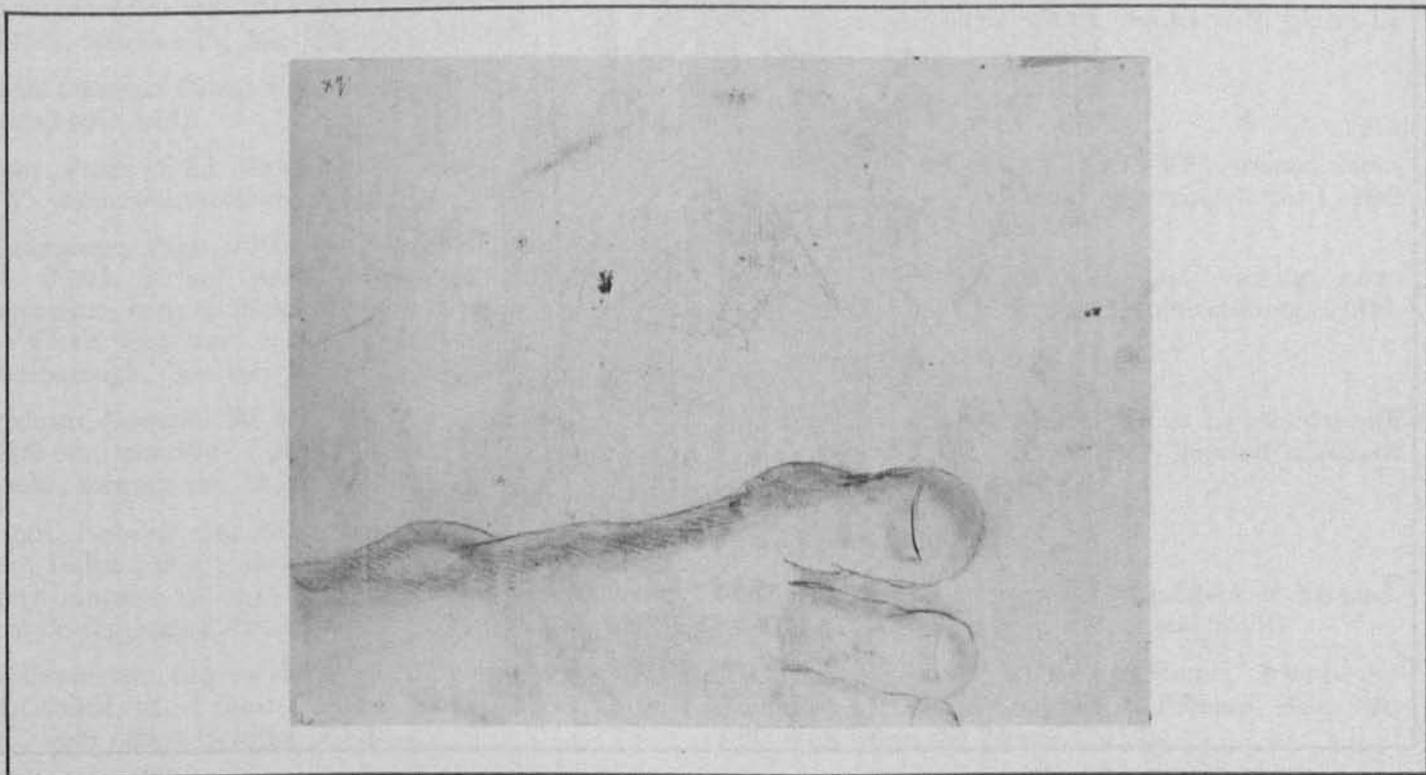
Hayley, *Ballads*, 1805. Lawson, Jan. cat. 218, #60, lacking 4 leaves of text (£100).

Hayley, *Life, and Posthumous Writings, of Cowper*. Lawson, Jan. cat. 218, #61, 1st ed. with supplementary vol. (£120). Beeleigh Abbey Books, May cat. 37, #210, 1st ed., lacking half-titles (£120). Ximenes, Sept. cat. 69, #249, 2nd ed. with supplementary vol. (\$400). Sanders, Dec. cat. 108, #134, 1st ed., lacking half-titles (£140).

Hayley, *Life of Romney*. Sims, Reed & Fogg, Feb. cat. 57, #90 (£150); same copy, June cat. 63, #1197 (£150); same copy, Aug. cat. 66, #28 (£125); same copy, Oct. cat. 68, #349 (£150). Rainsford, June cat. A39, #976 (£175).



5. Blake. *Queen Constance and Her Son*. Pen & ink with wash, 20.9 × 24.9 cm., c. 1785. The only previous reproduction is in Christie's auction catalogue of 10 July 1984. Reproduced by permission of Christie, Manson & Woods, London.



6. Blake. Verso of illus. 5, showing pencil sketches of a large foot and two figure groups, the latter perhaps for the recto. Sheet 26.8 × 32.7 cm. Not previously reproduced. Photo courtesy of Martin Butlin and Spink & Son.

Hayley, *Triumphs of Temper*, 12th ed., 1803. BBA, 19 Jan., #206, small paper copy (A. Thomas, £176). Lawson, Jan. cat. 218, #62, small paper copy (£125); #63, large paper copy (£300). Sanders, April cat. 107, #102 (£160). W. & V. Dailey, July cat. 33, #22, small paper copy, rebacked (\$400). Ximenes, Sept. 84 cat. 69, #361, "large paper copy . . . 8³/₈ × 5⁵/₈," with half-title (\$1000). G. Stuart, fall cat. 1, #95, large paper copy (\$395). Uncut copies of the large paper issue measure 9⁵/₈ × 5⁷/₈ in.

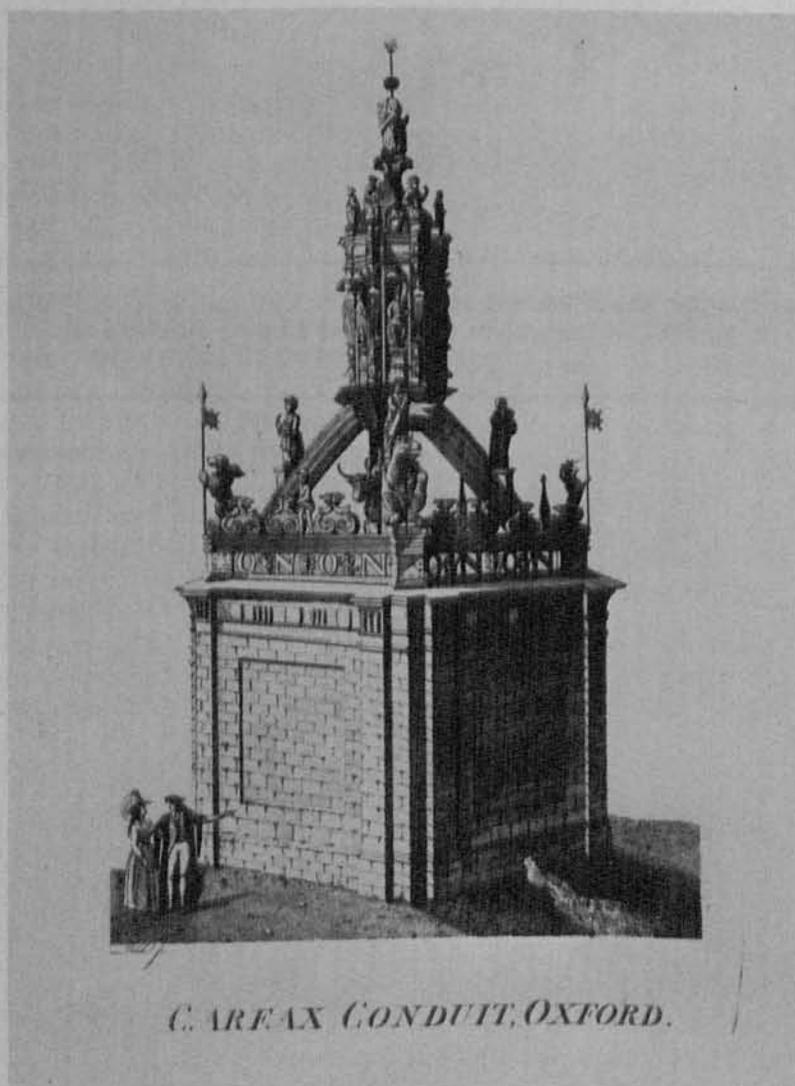
Hunter, *Historical Journal*. Christie's Australia, 3 April, #59, 1st ed. quarto, foxed, worn (\$2000 Australian).

SL, 22 May, #480, 1st ed. quarto, imprint shaved, inner margin soiled (Hammond, £1650). Quaritch, Nov. cat. 1044, #16, 1st ed. quarto, some spotting (\$3800).

Josephus, *Whole Genuine and Complete Works*. Swann, 9 Feb., #264, apparently the issue of c. 1785, stained, covers detached (\$175).

Lavater, *Aphorisms*, 1789. Blackwell's, Jan. 84 cat. A59, #197, pencil annotations (£65).

Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy*. John Andrew, Feb. cat. 2, #85, 1789-98, vol. 3 in original parts, uncut (£1250). Swann, 22 March, #192, 1789-98, worn, foxed, lack-



7. "Carfax Conduit, Oxford." Intaglio etching/engraving signed "Blake sc." lower left in the plate. Image 29.2 × 19.1 cm.; plate mark 35.8 × 26.4 cm.; wove sheet 44 × 30.3 cm. Etched c. 1780(?); printed in sepia (at a much later date?). Essick collection. An article tentatively attributing this plate to William Blake appears in the March 1985 issue of *Print Quarterly*.

ing half-titles (\$500). Christie's Scotland, 22 March, #186, 1789-98 (£389). SL, 10 April, #541, 1810, offsets from pls., rubbed (Jones, £165). Swann, 26 April, #125, 1789-98, minor foxing (\$500). Joseph Falcone, May cat. 27, #51, 1789-98, covers detached, some foxing (\$250). Charles Wood, June cat. 54, #77, 1789-98, fancy binding, weak hinges (\$750). Christie's Rome, 6 June, #201, 1789-98 (750 lira—multo cheapo). Traylen, Aug. cat. 97, #575, 1792 issue (£480). Lawson, winter 84-85 cat. 221, #138, 1810, fancy binding (£450).

Malkin, *Father's Memoirs of His Child*. Ben Abraham Books, Jan. cat. 3, #33, foxed (\$500). Lawson, Jan. cat. 218, #65, frontispiece slightly foxed (£185). Blackwell's, Sept. cat. A69, frontispiece slightly water stained (£110).

Rees, *Cyclopaedia*. Walford, Jan. cat. A/305, #153, 6 pls. vols. only, "bindings defective" (£384). BBA, 23 May, #288, 6 vols. of pls. only, some spotting (Jeffrey, £132). SL, 9 July, #940, 39 text vols. & 5 pls. vols., 2 vols. lacking leaves, all title pps. lacking, covers loose (Jeffrey, £55). Traylen, Aug. cat. 97, #752, 39 text vols. & 5 pls. vols., few bindings repaired, "fine set" (£1100).

Ritson, *Select Collection of English Songs*. Pickering & Chatto, Feb. cat. 652, #246, Thomas Park's copy with his annotations for the 1813 ed. (\$1250); #247, rubbed (\$450). Blackwell's, May cat. A65, #213 (£220).

Royal Universal Family Bible. Swann, 9 Feb., #30, disbound (not sold).

Scott, *Poems*, 1782. Pickering & Chatto, July cat. 39, #55, some waterstaining (£250).

Shakespeare, *Plays*, 1805. McDowell & Stern, May cat. 28, #303, 10 vol. issue, extra-illus. with 160 pls. (apparently none by Blake), fancy binding (£450). Robert Clark, Oct. cat. 1, #270, 10 vol. issue (£220). Marlborough, Oct. cat. 108, #29, 9 vol. issue (£250).

Stedman, *Narrative*. W. & V. Dailey, July cat. 33, #241, 1806 ed., rebaked, 1 pl. torn (\$650). Beeleigh Abbey Books, autumn cat. 38, #132, 1813 ed. (£500).

Virgil, *Pastorals*, ed. Thornton. Phillips auction, London, 16 Feb., #191, both vols., some spotting, modern green morocco (£1561). The only 2 vol. copy I have seen on the market for about 10 years.

Wollstonecraft, *Original Stories*. SL, 27 July, #511, 1791 ed., soiled, pl. 4 illus. (Schiller, £715); #512, 1796 ed., light offsets (Schiller, £440).

Young, *Night Thoughts*, uncolored. Lawson, Jan. cat. 218, #66, fore-edge uncut (£1250). Sims, Reed & Fogg, Feb. cat. 57, #88, with Explanation leaf, rebaked

(£1900). CL, 30 May, #183, "contemporary panelled calf gilt in the style of Edwards of Halifax," title to *Night the First* illus. (Maggs, £4860, apparently for the binding). SL, 27 July, #353, some margins cropped, lacking Explanation leaf, covers detached (Percival, £792). Traylen, Aug. cat. 97, #990, lacking Explanation leaf, top edge gilt, others "uncut" (£1800). Tunick, winter cat. 12, #132, sold as a collection of prints, no mention of Explanation leaf, minor foxing, title page to *Night the Third* illus. (\$6750—a record?).

Young, *Night Thoughts*, colored. SL, 17 Dec., #318, all pls. hand colored, with Explanation leaf, "red straight-grained morocco gilt, uncut . . . probably acquired by Charles John, fifth Baron Dimsdale," p. 4 and title page to *Night the Third* illus., the latter in color (Sam Fogg, £13,750). Same copy offered Sims, Reed & Fogg, Jan. 1985 cat. 70, #245, where it is reported that *Death* on pl. 1 of this previously unrecorded copy is colored gray as in the Houghton Library copy, title page to "*Night the Third*" illus. (£20,000). Sold by Jan. 1985 to a private collector.

BLAKE'S CIRCLE & FOLLOWERS

Works are listed under artists' names in the following order: untitled paintings and drawings sold in groups, single paintings and drawings, letters and manuscripts, separate plates, books with plates by or after the artist.

BARRY, JAMES

Series of Etchings, 1808. CL, 6 Nov., #63, stained, binding loose, with an album of engravings after Coypel (£237).

"John Milton Dictating *Paradise Lost*," etching, proof before letters. SL, 14 June, #193, some staining (£385).

BASIRE, JAMES

"Embarkation of King Henry VIII at Dover May 30, 1520," engraving. CL, 22 May, #29, "reprint?," stained (not sold).

CALVERT, EDWARD

"Cyder Feast," wood engraving. Craddock & Barnard, Aug. cat. 148, #67, from the *Memoir* (sold).

"Lady and the Rooks" & "Return Home," 2 wood engravings on 1 sheet. Craddock & Barnard, Aug. cat. 148, #68, from the *Memoir* (£430).

"Return Home," wood engraving. Craddock & Barnard, Aug. cat. 148, #69, from the *Memoir*, small margins (£270).

FLAXMAN, JOHN

Dante and Beatrice. Pen & ink over pencil, 32 × 37 cm. SL, 21 Nov., #7, illus. (£2640).

Miss Denman with Children of the Tulk Family. Pencil, 24 × 20 cm. SL, 21 Nov., #73, illus. (£1100).

Shield of Achilles. Cast silver, gilt, 93 cm. diameter, 1821. From the collection of the Duke of Northumberland. SL, "Important Silver and Gold," 3 May, #124, illus. color with details and preliminary drawings not for sale (E.C. & T. Koopman & Son/Armitage, £484,000). Reported as a world record for a work in silver; certainly a record for any work by Flaxman. According to *Country Life*, 14 June 1984, the purchaser was Muhammed Mahdi Al Tajir, Ambassador for the United Arab Emirates to the Court of St. James. The only other silver castings were made for George IV (still in the Royal Collection), the Earl of Lonsdale (now at Anglesey Abbey, the property of the National Trust), and the Duke of York (acquired by the Huntington Library & Art Collections in 1973).

Studies of Classical Figures. 2 sheets, recto & verso, pen & ink, each 21 × 35 cm. SL, Nov. 1983, #4 (not sold).

Aeschylus Illustrations. James Fenning, fall cat. 71, #161, 1870 ed. (£25).

Anatomical Studies, 1833. Marlborough, Oct. cat. 108, #26 (£150).

Dante illustrations. BBA, 9 Feb., #233, *La Divina Comedia di Dante*, 1802, with 109 of 110 pls. (Bloomsbury Rare Books, £24). Howes, spring cat. 225, #788, 1807 ed., rubbed (£75). James Fenning, fall cat. 71, #162, 1807 ed. (£48.50).

Lectures on Sculpture. Sanders, April cat. 107, #35, 1838 ed. (£60). Michael Bennett, spring cat. 44, #90, 1838 ed. (£40). Sims, Reed & Fogg, Oct. cat. 68, #132, 1838 ed. (£50). Marlborough, Oct. cat. 108, #195, 1829 ed. (£110).

Oeuvre Complet, Paris, 1844. Swann, 20 Dec., #226, 4 of 8 vols. only: *Odyssey*, Dante, Hesiod, & "Sujets Divers" (not sold).

FUSELI, HENRY

Head of Caractacus. Oil, cut from a larger painting now destroyed, 22.9 × 17.8 cm. CL, 23 Nov., #60, illus. (£5400).

Huon and Amanda by the Dead Body of Alphonsos (for Sotheby's *Oberon*, engraved R.H. Cromek 1806). Oil, 61 × 44.5 cm. CL, 23 Nov., #59, illus. color (not sold).

Richard Plantagenet Throws the Head of the Duke of Somerset at the Feet of His Father. Pencil & brown wash with gum arabic heightened with oil, inscribed "Roma 70," 29 × 40.5 cm. SL, 17 Nov. 1983, #95, illus. color (not sold; estimate £15,000–20,000).

"Woman Sitting by a Window" ("O Evening thou Bringest All"), lithograph. SL, 8 March, #308, 1st st., foxed & soiled, vertical crease, 2 skinned patches, illus. (£352); subsequently acquired by Weston Gallery, sold Feb. 1985 to R. Essick. CL, 6 Nov., #62A, st. not given, some staining (£864).

Bible, published Macklin, 1800. Swann, 9 Feb., #41, lacking Apocrypha (issued later), worn, covers detached (\$225).

Boothby, *Sorrows Sacred to the Memory of Penelope*. Deighton Bell, July cat. 228, #601, paper boards worn (£130). Quaritch, fall cat. 23, #109, fancy binding (\$1250).

Boydell, *Collection of Prints Illustrating . . . Shakspeare*. Heritage Bookshop, Feb. private offer, 93 pls. only, many working proofs including 4 of pls. after Fuseli (R. Essick; previously sold Swann, 21 April 1983, #127, for \$550).

Darwin, *Temple of Nature*, 1803. John Andrew, Oct. cat. 5, #32 (£250).

Pope, *Rape of the Lock*, 1798. Claude Cox, July cat. 43, #11, large paper, fancy binding (£60).

Smollett, *Humphry Clinker*, 1769. John Andrew, Oct. 84 cat. 5, #141, 1st issue, "grubby set" (£65).

LINNELL, JOHN

Backs of Old Houses, with a Broken Fence. Black & white chalk on blue paper, 10 × 13½ in. CL, 15 May, #201, with 2 landscapes by R. Hills (£183).

Entrance of the River Lea into the Thames & The River Lea. 2 water colors, 44 × 59 cm. SL, 17 Nov. 1983, #70, both illus. (£968).

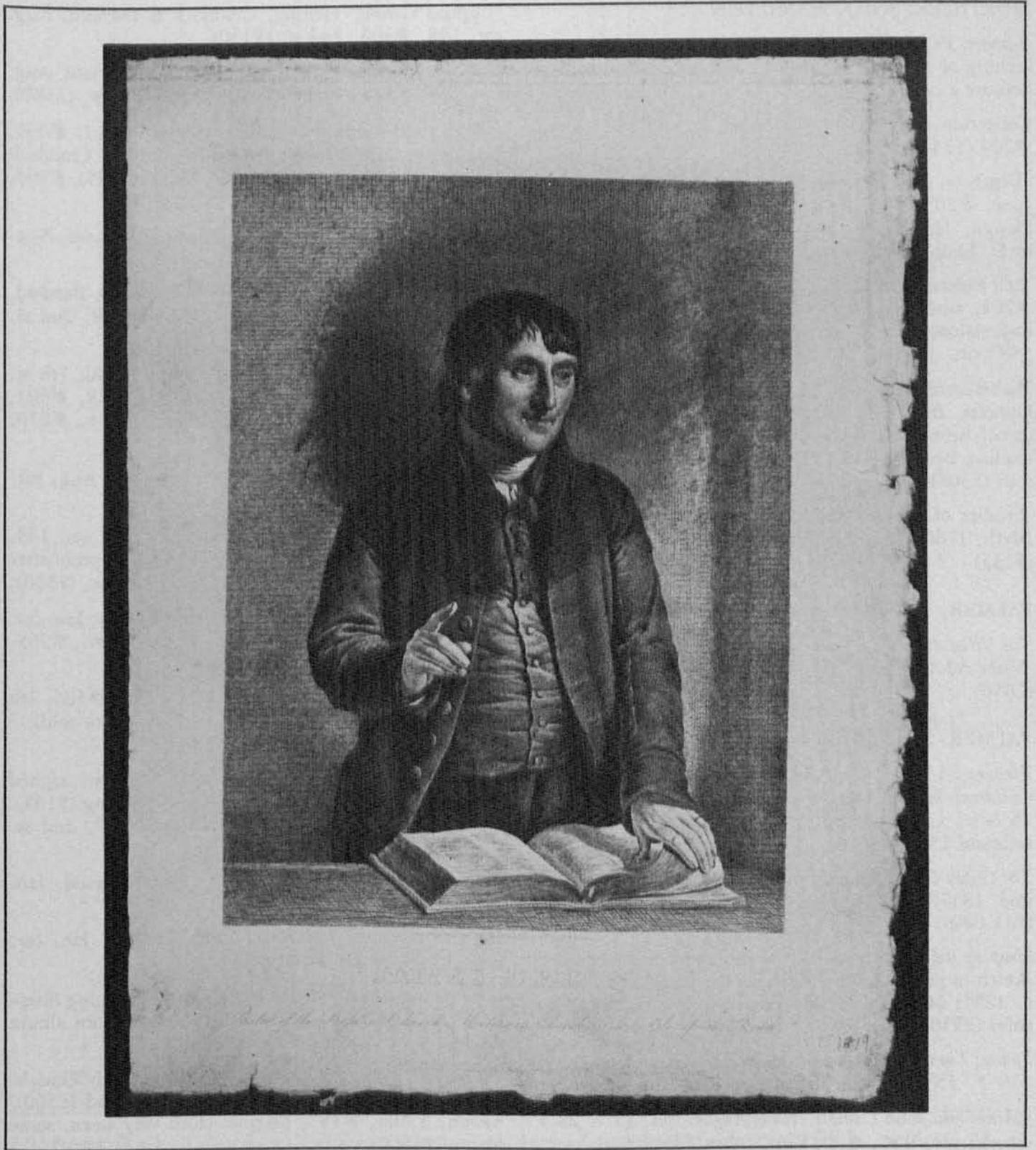
Paddock in Elms Lane. Pencil & white heightening, 11½ × 17½ in., signed & dated c. 1840. Martyn Gregory, Feb. cat. 35, #89 (£150).

Portrait of Henry Sterry. Water color, signed & dated Feb. 1824, 32 × 24 cm. SL, 12 July, #24, illus. (£1045).

Portrait of Professor Mylne. Oil, 41 × 34.5 cm., 1835. SL, 29 Feb., #32, illus. (£880).

Timber Wagon. Oil, 44.5 × 63.5 cm., signed & dated 1855. SL, 21 Nov., #84, illus. (£3080).

Varley, John, study of. Pencil, 6⅞ × 4⅝ in., signed & dated "about 1821." CL, 10 July 84, #233, with a smaller study by Varley (£756).



8. "James Upton." Intaglio etching/engraving by Blake and John Linnell after Linnell. Previously unrecorded 3rd (final) state with full imprint (*London Published July 1st 1819 by R Pontifex Lisle Street*). Inscribed "PROOF" lower right, with a pencil inscription ("1819") just above on this impression. In the image, a mole has been returned to Upton's right cheek (removed in the 2nd state) and a ring added to the small finger on his left hand. Image 26.1 × 19.4 cm.; laid sheet 36 × 27 cm. with all but the top plate mark cut off. The plate was heavily wiped of ink before printing, except in the oval left more darkly inked around Upton's head. Essick collection.

MORTIMER, JOHN HAMILTON

Beatrice. Pen & ink study for (or after?) the Shakespeare etching of 1776. SL, 21 Nov., #71, illus. (not sold—because a copy?).

Collection of 55 etchings by and after. SL, 14 June, #204 (£242).

"Death on a Pale Horse," engraved by Haynes. SL, 14 June, #205, proof before title, with "A Monumental Design," Haynes after Mortimer, proof before title (£308 to D. Heald for R. Essick).

"Self Portrait," etching, perhaps by Blyth. SL, 14 June, #202, with 4 pls. by or after Mortimer (£231); same impression(?) of the self portrait, Weston Gallery, Jan. 1985 cat. 1, #18, proof before letters, illus. (\$510).

Shakespeare Characters. SL, 14 June, #202A, including Ophelia, Bardolph, Edgar, Caliban, Richard II, Poet (proof before letters), some foxing (£264); #203, including Beatrice, Lear, Cassandra, York, Shylock, Falstaff (£308).

"Studies of Soldiers and a Woman," pair, etchings by Blyth, 1780. Weston Gallery, Sept. cat. 9, #33, illus. (\$135).

PALMER, HANNA

The Villa d'Este at Tivoli, attributed to Hanna Palmer. Water color, 49.7 × 35 cm. Agnew, Jan. cat., #174 (£850).

PALMER, SAMUEL

Evening: A Countryman Returning Home Greeted by His Children. Water color heightened with white, 7½ × 16⅛ in. CL, 20 March, #104, illus. color (not sold; estimate £5000–8000).

The Gypsy Dell. Water color, 31.5 × 46.5 cm., exhibited 1847. SL, 17 Nov. 1983, #172, illus. color (£11,000).

Sheep in the Shade, pencil & water color, & a landscape sketch in pencil & sepia wash on the verso, 6 × 9 in., c. 1851. Martyn Gregory, Feb. cat. 35, #102, illus. color (£5500).

Sunset: The Campagna and Aqueducts of Rome. Water color, 5⅝ × 15⅝ in. CL, 20 Nov., #116, illus. (£4968).

Palmer and John Linnell, *Young Angler*. Oil, 45 × 28.5 cm. SL, 21 Nov., #96, illus. color (£35,200).

"Bellman," etching. CL, 25 April, #441, 7th st., 1926 printing, light foxing & staining, illus. (£1188). CNY, 7 Nov., #272, 7th st., 1926 printing, faint stains, illus. (not sold).

"Cypress Grove," etching. Craddock & Barnard, Aug. cat. 148, #305, 2nd st. (£130).

"Early Ploughman," etching. Craddock & Barnard, Aug. cat. 148, #302, 4th st. (£240); #308, 8th st. (£380).

"Herdsman's Cottage," etching. CL, 25 April, #439, 2nd st., with 8 pls. not by Palmer (£140). Craddock & Barnard, Aug. cat. 148, #299, 1st st. (£525); #300, 2nd st. (£190).

"Homeward Star," etching. Craddock & Barnard, Aug. cat. 148, #304, 2nd st. (£130).

"Moeris and Galatea," etching. Craddock & Barnard, Aug. cat. 148, #307, 1st st. (£160); #308, 2nd st. (£135).

"Rising Moon," etching. CL, 25 April, #440, 7th st. (£162). Craddock & Barnard, Aug. cat. 148, #301, 7th st., unlaidd India paper (£165). CNY, 7 Nov., #270, 7th st., laidd India, foxed (not sold).

"Sepulchre," etching. Craddock & Barnard, Aug. cat. 148, #306, 2nd st. (£110).

"Skylark," etching. Craddock & Barnard, Aug. cat. 148, #298, 7th st. (£535). CNY, 7 Nov., #267, proof after the pl. was cut down between 6th and 7th st. (\$330).

"Sleeping Shepherd," etching. Weston Gallery, Jan. cat. 1, #42, 4th st., laidd India (\$665). CNY, 7 Nov., #269, 4th st., laidd India, foxed (\$308).

"Weary Ploughman," etching. CNY, 1 May, #186, 7th st. but before the number, slight staining (not sold); 7 Nov., #271, 8th st., laidd India, foxed (\$352).

"Willow," etching. CNY, 1 May, #185, 2nd st., signed (\$330); 7 Nov., #266, 3rd st., 1926 printing (\$165). Craddock & Barnard, Aug. cat. 148, #297, 2nd st. (£220).

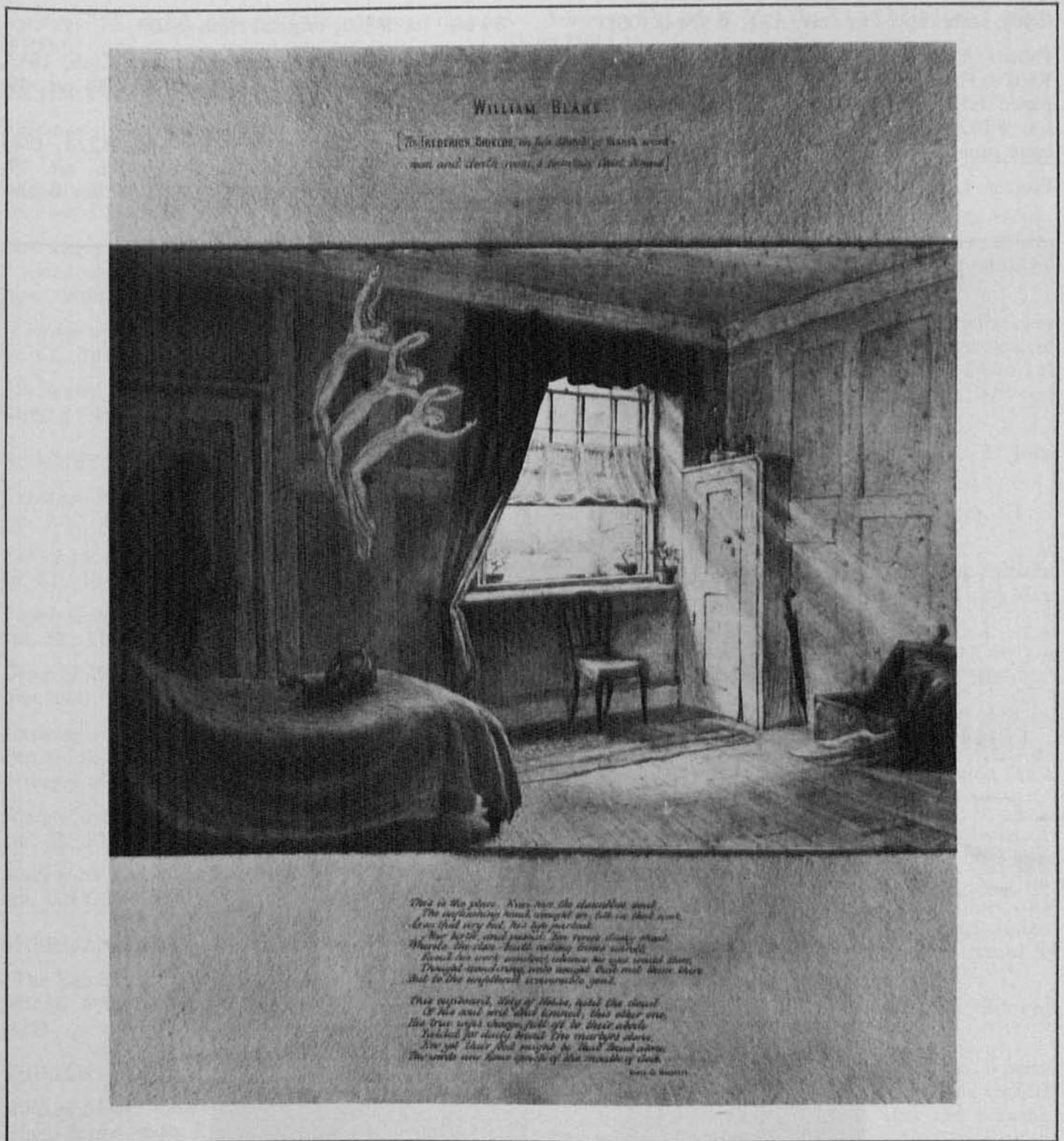
Book of Favourite Modern Ballads, 1860. Lawson, Jan. cat. 218, #219 (£45).

Dickens, *Pictures from Italy*, 1846. Lawson, Jan. cat. 218, #220, original cloth (£65).

Etchings from the Art Union, 1857, with "Sleeping Shepherd" & "Skylark." CL, 25 April, #442, worn album (£594).

Hamerton, *Etching & Etchers*, 1868, with "Early Ploughman." Lawson, Jan. cat. 218, #35, rebound (£500). Swann, 3 May, #197, original cloth very worn, some foxing (\$1000).

Milton, *Shorter Poems*, 1889. Ars Artis, Feb. cat. 49, #1834 (£150). Wilsey Books, April cat. 12, #151, original cloth, marginal foxing (\$150). Blackwell's, Sept. cat. A68, #350, some spotting, original cloth rebacked



9. Frederic Shields. *William Blake's Workroom at 3 Fountain Court the Strand*. Pencil & gray wash, 23 × 32.5 cm., 1880. Also pictured is the mount (of c. 1900?) bearing D.G. Rossetti's sonnet in response to the picture. Essick collection. Shields executed at least 4 other versions of the design: a pencil and wash sketch without the hovering spirits (untraced; reproduced T. Wright, *Life of Blake* [1927], pl. 73), a wash drawing with spirits but without the bonnet on the bed and with other variations from the version reproduced here (untraced; reproduced *Life & Letters of Shields*, ed. E. Mills [1912], facing p. 256), a water color without the spirits (Delaware Art Museum; reproduced [R. Elzea], *The Samuel and Mary R. Bancroft, Jr. and Related Pre-Raphaelite Collections* [Delaware Art Museum, 1984], p. 153), and an oil painting with spirits (City Art Gallery, Manchester; reproduced in its *Concise Catalogue of British Paintings* [1976], p. 173).

(£90); same copy, Dec. cat. A71, #324 (£100).

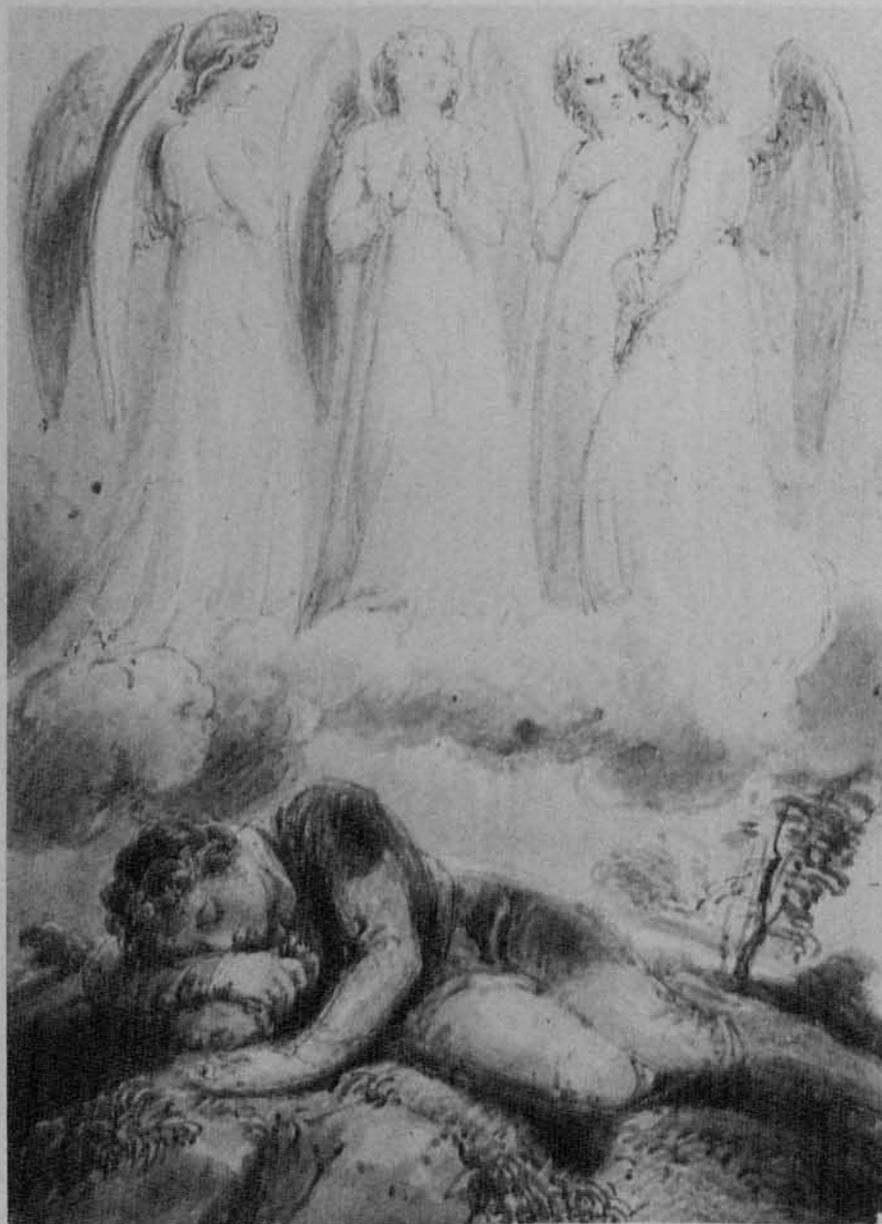
Palmer, A.H., *Life and Letters of S. Palmer*, 1892. Sims, Reed & Fogg, Feb. cats. 56 & 57, #149 & 211, large paper, original cloth (£200); same copy, June 84 cat. 63, #1022 (£200). Rainsford, June cat. A39, #890, large paper, original cloth (£260).

Proctor, *Legends and Lyrics*, 1866. Sterling Books, May

84 cat. 58, #307, original cloth (£10).

Songs and Ballads of Shakespeare, Etching Club, 1853, with "Plumpy Bacchus." Ars Artis, Feb. 84 cat. 49, #1832, spine repaired (£150).

Virgil, *Eclogues*. Lawson, Jan. cat. 218, #223, 1884 ed., "orig. vellum" (£250). Ars Artis, Feb. cat. 49, #1833, 1883 ed., small paper (£500). Wilsey Books,



10. Thomas Stothard. *Yet Man, Fool Man; Here Buries All His Thoughts*. Pencil, pen & wash illustration, 13.3 × 9.5 cm., for "Night the First" of Edward Young's *Night Thoughts*. The design was engraved by P. Rothwell for T. Heptinstall's 1798 edition of the poem. Photo courtesy of Sam Fogg of Sims, Reed & Fogg.

April cat. 12, #150, 1883 ed., "large-paper," rebound (\$1000).

RICHMOND, GEORGE (excluding later portraits)

Adoration of the Shepherds. Oil sketch, 23.5 × 32.5 cm. SL, 24 Oct., #261, illus. (£275).

Lady at a Writing Desk. Pen & ink & pencil, 33 × 21.5 cm., dated 1829. SL, 17 Nov. 1983, #117, illus. (£715).

Man with a Team of Oxen & Warriors Resting by a Parapet. 2 water colors, 13 × 16.5 & 16.5 × 11.5 cm. SL, 21 Nov., #68, *Man with Team* illus. (£935).

A Mother and her Child. Pencil, pen & ink, 8⁷/₈ × 7¹/₄ in. CL, 18 Dec., #179 (£140).

The Sower. Pen & ink, 13⁷/₈ × 7¹/₄ in., initialed & dated 3 Feb. 1830. CL, 20 Nov., #117, illus. (£7020).

ROMNEY, GEORGE (excluding portrait paintings)

Cupid and Psyche. Pen & sepia, 32.4 × 21.6 cm. Agnew, Jan. cat., #161, illus. (£2500).

Fall of the Rebel Angels. Pencil sketch for, 15³/₈ × 12 in. CL, 10 July, #83, illus. (not sold).

Figures Gathered Outside a House. Pen & wash, 18 × 25.5 cm. SL, 11 Oct., #26 (not sold).

Group of Mourners. Pen, 6 × 10 in. CL, 24 July, #92 (not sold).

Studies of a Reclining Figure: Serena in the Boat of Apathy. Pen & ink, 4³/₈ × 7¹/₄ in., the subject from Hayley's *Triumphs of Temper.* CL, 20 March, #3, illus. (£302).

Study of a Lady. Pen & ink with wash, 25.5 × 19.5 cm. SL, 21 Nov., #23, illus. (£528).

Study of the Rape of the Sabines. Pen & wash, 15 × 23.5 cm. CNY, 1 March, #444 (£352).

SHERMAN, WELBY

"The Bacchante," wood engraving after Calvert. SL, 8 March, #317, from the Carfax Portfolio, illus. (not sold).

SHIELDS, FREDERIC

William Blake's Workroom at 3 Fountain Court the Strand. Pencil & gray wash, 23 × 32.5 cm. SL, 12 July, #66, framed, illus. (J.S. Maas & Co., £2090). Sold by Maas Nov. 84 to R. Essick. See illus. 9.

STOTHARD, THOMAS

Beauty, Victory and Love in a Rose Bower. Pencil, ink & water color, 5 × 6¹/₂ in. CL, 18 Dec., #16 (£216).

Britannia. Oil, 45 × 35.5 cm. CL, 25 May, #77, illus. (£756).

Britannia Mourns the Ashes of Nelson. Pencil, pen, brown wash, oval, 5¹/₄ × 3¹/₂ in. An illus. to Southey, *Life of Nelson.* CL, 10 July, #117 (£86).

By the Rivers of Babylon. Water color, 5 × 6⁵/₈ in. CL, 10 July, #108 (£183).

Canterbury Pilgrims. Oil on panel, 12 × 40.5 cm., painted 1813 for Samuel Rogers. SL, 14 March, #106, illus. color (£7700—well over estimate and probably a record for a painting by Stothard).

The Eve of Macartney's Entrance into China. Preliminary pen & ink sketch, 4 × 3 in., for the frontispiece to George Staunton, *An Historical Account of the Embassy to the Emperor of China* (1797). Martyn Gregory, Feb. cat. 35, #119 (£380).

The Family Reunion. Oil, 11¹/₂ × 15 in. CL, 27 July, #208 (not sold).

The Farewell. Oil on panel, 24.8 × 30.5 cm. CL, 2 Nov., #162, illus. (£432).

Gathering in the Vintage. Oil, 21.5 × 15 cm., similar to a design for Rogers, *Pleasures of Memory.* SL, 16 May, #215 (not sold).

King Lear and His Daughters. Water color, 11 × 7¹/₂ in. Martyn Gregory, Feb. cat. 39, #122 (£250).

Mission in Africa. Pen & water color, 3⁵/₈ × 3³/₄ in. CL, 24 July, #24, with a drawing by Monro (£86).

Nude Reclining on a Couch. Pencil, signed & dated 1829, 6³/₄ × 8³/₄ in. CL, 15 May, #193 (£108).

Pair of large George III silver gilt sideboard dishes designed by Stothard, showing in the center a bold relief of Bacchus and Ariadne, 77.5 cm. diameter. SL, "Important Silver and Gold," 3 May, #105, illus. color with the preliminary drawing for the central design, not part of the lot (£286,000). No doubt a record for any work designed by Stothard.

Sancho Panza and the Duchess. Oil, 48.2 × 38.7 cm. CL, 27 July, #207 (not sold).

Sterne, Tristram Shandy & A Sentimental Journey. 6 pencil & gray wash drawings for, 4⁵/₈ × 3¹/₂ in. and smaller. CL, 10 July, #116, with 6 pls. after the drawings (£453).

The Victory of Assaye for the Wellington Shield. Pencil & brown wash, 6 × 11³/₈ in. CL, 10 July, #118, illus. (£972).

Young, *Night Thoughts.* 8 pencil, pen, & wash illustrations for the 1798 ed., 5¹/₄ × 3³/₄ in. CL, 10 July,

#115, with 6 of the pls., 1 drawing illus. (Sims, Reed & Fogg, £918). See illus. 10.

Large group of prints after Stothard illustrating Milton, Richardson, Bunyan, etc. CL, 6 March, #38 (£183).

"Lost Apple," lithograph. SL, 8 March, #311, foxed, corner creases, illus. (£363). CL, 6 Nov., #62, minor stains (£453).

Bijou, an annual of literature and the arts, 1829. Pickering & Chatto, Feb. cat. 652, #431, worn (\$65).

Boccaccio, illustrations of the *Decameron*, 10 proofs on laid India, 1825. Pickering & Chatto, winter cat. 34, #55, original wrappers frayed (\$650).

Bray, *Life of Stothard*, extra-illustrated copies only. D. Heald, Jan. private offer, 3 vols. with 560 added pls., including "Winged Figure Flying through Clouds" engraved by Blake (3rd recorded impression), illustrations to J. Scott's poems, and pls. by Blake for the *Novelist's Magazine* (acquired R. Essick); previously sold BBA, 15 Dec. 1983, #291 (£440 to Snelling). Kenneth Karmiole, Jan. cat. 84, #12, 137 added pls., none by Blake (\$200). Beeleigh Abbey Books, May cat. 37, #189, 2 vols. with 169 added pls. (£395).

Cromek, *Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Song*, 1810. Jarndyce, winter 1983-84 cat. 32, #585 (£38).

Hayley, *Essay on Old Maids*, 1793. Blackwell's, May cat. A65, #126 (£50).

Literary Souvenir, 1828. James Fenning, April cat. 68, #409, original printed boards (£18.50).

Novelist's Magazine, vol. with *Tristram Shandy*, 1781. Claude Cox, March cat. 41, #173 (£12).

Rogers, *Italy, A Poem*. Jarndyce, winter 1983-84 cat. 32, #763, 1836 ed. (£14). T. Hannas, spring cat. 72, #367, 1834 ed., some foxing (£25). Beeleigh Abbey Books, May cat. 37, #299, 1838 ed., pls. on laid India (£65). BBA, 29 Nov., #387, 1830 ed., with Rogers, *Poems*, 1834 (Symington, £99).

Rogers, *Pleasures of Memory*, 1810. BBA, 29 Nov., #386, contemporary "Etruscan" style binding by J. Rodwell (Marlborough, £154).

Rogers, *Poems*. Jarndyce, winter 1983-84 cat. 32, #759, 1812 ed. (£20); #760, 1834 ed. extra-illustrated (£32). Howard Mott, Feb. cat. 209, #387, 1834 ed., original boards uncut (\$125). T. Hannas, spring cat. 72, #368, 1816 ed., rebounded (£30). Beeleigh Abbey Books, May cat. 37, #300, 1838 ed. (£50). Claude Cox, July cat. 43, #12, 1812 ed. (£30).

Shakespeare, *Plays*, 9 vols., 1825. Maggs, summer cat. 1048, #109, original cloth, with S. Maunder, *Little*

Lexicon [1825], spines illus. (£450).

Thomson, *The Seasons*. T. Hannas, spring cat. 72, #472, 1795 ed. (£15). BBA, 29 Nov., #304, 1793 ed. (Ayres, £55).

Young, *Night Thoughts*, 1798 (see also drawings, above). Claude Cox, winter cat. 40, #211 (£35). James Fenning, April cat. 68, #457, light foxing (£24.50). Sanders, April cat. 534, #534 (£40).

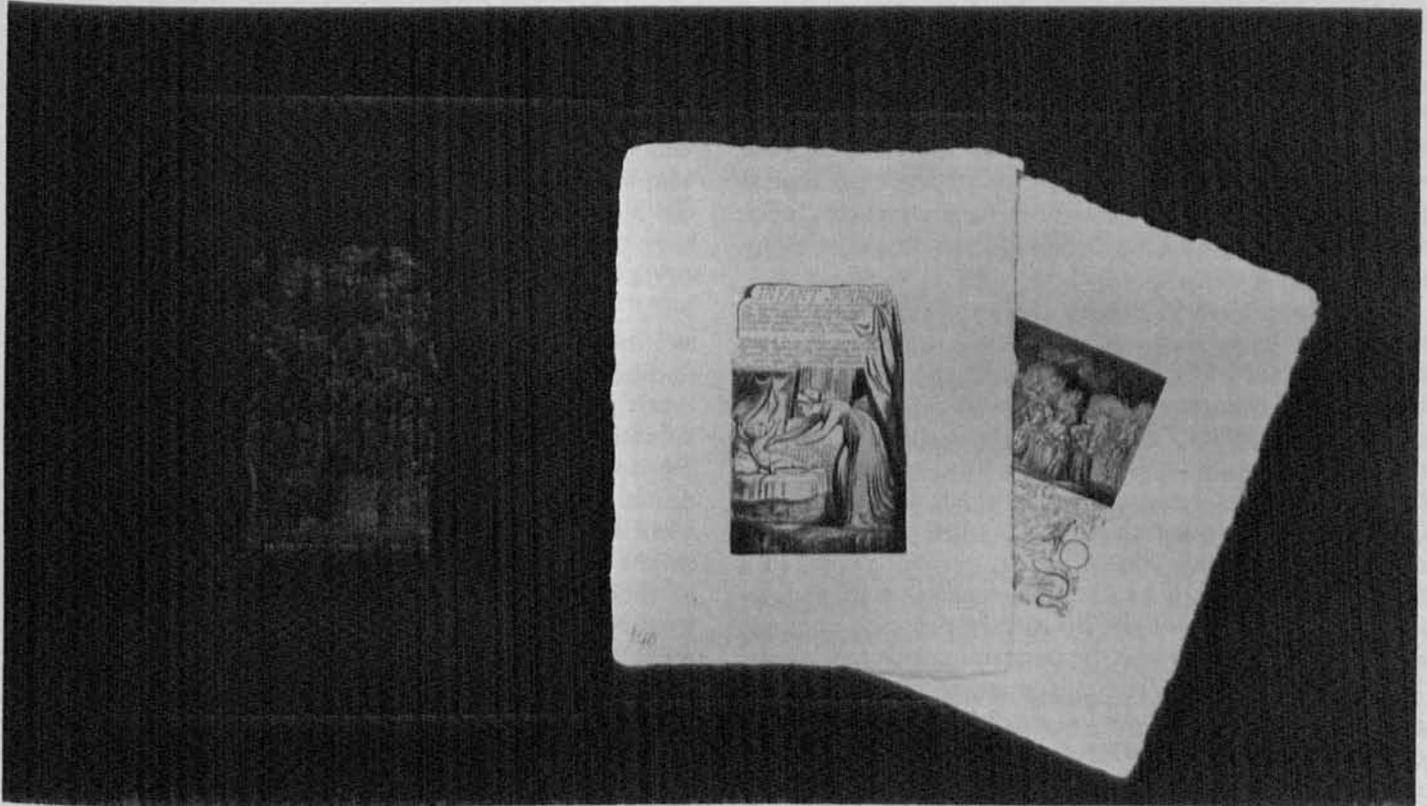
VARLEY, JOHN (selection only)

Studies for *A Treatise on Zodiacal Physiognomy*, including "Gemini," "Cancer," "a Cur," "a Pup," "Pride," "Taurus," & others on 5 sheets, 5 1/2 × 9 3/4 in. & smaller, from the collection of John Linnell. CL, 20 March, #28 (£518).

VON HOLST, THEODORE M.

44 drawings in pencil & pen, 12 × 7 3/4 in. & smaller. CL, 15 May, #7, 1 illus. (not sold; estimate £400-600).





REVIEWS

Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience. Manchester, England: Manchester Etching Workshop, 1983. "Facsimile Edition" limited to 40 copies each with 17 prints, 16 hand colored, boxed with leather portfolio (\$800) or boxed in wrappers (\$700). "Monochrome Edition" limited to 35 copies each with 19 plates, 2 hand colored, boxed in wrappers (\$450). Each edition accompanied by a 25-page pamphlet, *The Art of William Blake's Illuminated Prints*, by Joseph Viscomi.

Reviewed by Robert N. Essick

[Editor's note: According to the publishers, colored copies of the Manchester Etching Workshop's facsimile are no longer available, except for four "artist's proof" copies (\$1200 each). The monochrome edition, which now

comes with four colored trial proofs, is still available. Send inquiries and orders to Manchester Etching Workshop, 3-5 Union St. (off Church St.), Manchester M4 1PB, United Kingdom.]

Facsimiles of the illuminated books have played an important role in the history of Blake collecting and scholarship. The various techniques used by facsimilists in their attempts to capture Blake's unique effects can be as mystery-laden a subject as the study of Blake's own graphic methods. Some of the earlier efforts provide a context for understanding the special properties of the new facsimiles under review.

The Victorian publisher John Camden Hotten was the first to initiate a series of high-quality color reproductions. In about 1867, he announced "a few fac-simile copies (exact as to paper, printing—the water-colour drawings being filled in by an artist) of the ORIGINAL EDITIONS of the Books written and illustrated by William Blake. . . . The first volume, 'MARRIAGE OF HEAVEN AND HELL,' 4to, to be ready by Jan. 15, 1868."¹ Only this one title was published as a color facsimile, apparently produced by Henry J. Bellars, an expert copyist in Hotten's employ.² Proofs of the Hotten/Bellars plates, as well as uncolored areas in the published volume, indicate that the pages were printed lithogra-

phically in brown ink. These were subsequently hand-colored in imitation of copy F of the *Marriage*, then in the collection of Lord Houghton and now in the Pierpont Morgan Library. Hotten and Bellars selected a paper with color and texture similar to the Edmeads & Pine wove stock of the original. Attention to paper is essential for good facsimile work, but unfortunately their choice was not pure rag and has become badly foxed in many copies.

William Michael Rossetti believed that Hotten intended "to bring out a photographic copy of Blake's *Jerusalem*, and I think some of the other books."³ If Bellars used photography for the *Marriage* facsimile, then he encountered one of the chief difficulties confronting later facsimilists. Technically, the colored illuminated books are composites of an image printed from a metal plate and an overlay of other media—water color, drawing with pen or brush, perhaps pencil in a few cases—applied by hand to the impression after printing. To replicate this basic division of processes requires the facsimilist to recreate the underlying printed image. This can be extremely difficult when no uncolored copy is available. The analysis of a colored image into its constituent elements, printed and drawn by hand, cannot be done by photomechanical processes alone. The photographic image must be "corrected," either in the negative or after transfer to the printing body (stone or metal), to remove some of the effects of coloring. These complexities are multiplied in the case of Blake's color-printed works, such as copy F of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Perhaps the computer techniques developed by the Jet Propulsion Lab for enhancing video images would overcome these difficulties. Lacking such space-age tools, the color facsimilist must either use completely photomechanical techniques lacking Blake's basic division between printed and non-printed media, or introduce his own hand and eye at a very early stage of production, long before coloring begins. The first alternative offers exceptional fidelity to outline; the second inevitably disturbs such accuracy in an attempt to recapture some of the more distinctive and subtle qualities of the originals by using processes similar to Blake's own.

In about 1883, William Muir embarked on an ambitious project to publish hand-colored facsimiles of most of Blake's illuminated books. By 1890, he had produced fourteen titles.⁴ The first printed notice of Muir's plans would appear to be an undated "Proposal for the Publication of the Prophetic Books and the Songs of Innocence and of Experience, by W. Blake," issued by the Pall Mall bookdealer John Pearson. Neither Muir nor any other facsimilist is named, but the list of works "Now Ready" (*Visions of the Daughters of Albion*, *The Book of Thel*) and "In Preparation" and their prices clearly indicate that these are Muir's volumes. A second edition

of the "Proposal" adds *Songs of Innocence* and "The Act of Creation" (i.e., the frontispiece to *Europe*) to the "Ready" list.⁵

Little is known about Muir and why he labored so long and hard on Blake facsimiles. Sir Geoffrey Keynes, who knew the man, told me a few years ago that Muir was a commercial lithographer, a profession which may have provided his first intimate contact with Blake's works and an interest in their technical features. In 1877, Pearson had published an uncolored lithographic facsimile of *Jerusalem*, bound in blue paper wrappers and numbered upper left on the front cover.⁶ Muir consistently issued his volumes with the same type of binding, similarly numbered. Perhaps Pearson employed Muir to prepare the photolithographs for the *Jerusalem* volume, much as Hotten had hired Bellars. Pearson's failure to mention Muir in his prospectuses for the facsimile series might have resulted from the bookdealer's perception of their relationship as that of a publisher to a hired journeyman, not that of a publisher to an author or artist. Pearson retired from business in March 1885⁷ and Muir took his project to the dealer Bernard Quaritch, who in May 1885 issued a four-page advertising flyer for "William Blake's Original Drawings . . . and Mr. William Muir's Admirable Facsimiles of Blake's Works."⁸ Muir was no longer an anonymous hireling.

The first Pearson prospectus for Muir's facsimiles contains the following paragraph on their technical merits:

The methods employed for these reproductions will be the same as those by which Blake himself produced the originals, with such variations only as may be required to maintain fidelity to his results. All will be carefully produced, not in ordinary type, but, as Blake himself printed them, and they will be coloured by hand with colours of the same description and vehicles of the same nature as those used by Blake. Neither photography nor chromolithography will be employed in any of the works in the list attached hereto.

The emphasis is placed on recapitulating Blake's own techniques, not just accurate reproduction of the finished products. However, the promise that photomechanical processes would be eschewed entirely was slightly modified in the first Quaritch advertisement, which states more modestly that "almost all the labour is hand work." Compromises to "maintain fidelity," or simply to keep the project within practical limits, were unavoidable.

Pearson's and Quaritch's claims might suggest that Muir produced relief-etched books, but this does not seem to be the case. Except for the intaglio plates of *The Gates of Paradise*, all his facsimiles appear to be printed lithographically. For most titles, Muir worked from colored originals, and thus like Hotten and Bellars he had to recreate the underlying printed images by eliminating those portions of the designs created by subsequent coloring. This requirement may explain the

existence of monochrome wash drawings by Muir corresponding to what one might reasonably determine to be the printed images of the originals. Muir also prepared a few color facsimiles completely drawn and painted by hand, and these may have begun their careers as master guides for hand-drawn lithographs and coloring when the originals were not available to Muir for extended loan periods.⁹ Except for the *Gates*, all titles were regularly issued with hand-tinting, in some cases quite elaborate. Even the monochrome facsimile of *America*, based on untraced copy R,¹⁰ shows extensive hand-work over printed areas of the designs with the same blue-green color as the ink.

When not neglected altogether, Muir's work has generally been criticized. There is no defending his works against the charge that they vary in outline and color from the originals, often in obvious and awkward ways. Indeed, copies of the same facsimile title vary considerably one from another, particularly in the placement of colors. Clearly, Muir's facsimiles cannot be trusted as accurate reproductions of the sort needed by modern Blake scholars. Yet these problems should not blind us to the best features of Muir's works. They maintain a truth to Blake's processes, if not to his images, by continuing the basic combination of a printed monochrome image and hand coloring. Muir's productions capture something of the spirit of the originals, their various textures and hand-made craftsmanship, better than any photographic reproductions. Even Muir's limitations give his work a certain companionship with Blake's. Both have been criticized for diverging unduly from a pre-established norm, both have been faulted for failing to accomplish something (for example, naturalistic representation or mechanical reproduction) they may not have been trying to do, and both have been found wanting in precision, clarity, and consistency. Now we are intrigued by these very qualities in Blake's illuminated books, but disparage Muir's work on the same grounds. We may be right to judge the original artist and the facsimilist differently, but this forces the latter into the paradoxical position of having to assume a most un-Blakean aesthetic and mode of production to satisfy our requirement that his products look exactly and consistently "like" one of Blake's. Perhaps by thinking of Muir's books not as facsimiles but as recreations—or, in Coleridge's terms, as "imitations" rather than "copies"¹¹—we can perceive their honors as well as their taints.

Muir and his colleagues did produce at least one masterpiece, the 1890 facsimile of the color-printed *Song of Los*, limited to about half the usual number of fifty copies of each title.¹² In a letter of 12 July 1891 to the Editor of *The Athenaeum*, Muir claimed to have rediscovered Blake's own method of color printing after many failed experiments:

At last one day I got an idea from a mathematical paper of Lord Ragleighs[?] on capillary attraction and fluid surface tension and on getting home that evening I mixed what proved to be the first bottle ful of what we have ever since called "the Blake Medium" and I do verily believe that it is just what Blake used[.] I dont mean that Lord Ragleighs[?] paper contained any recipe but its principal observation on its subjects gave me a clue which I followed up.¹³

Muir does not explain what his "Medium" is, although I doubt that it was identical to what Blake actually used. The method of printing and/or blotting the colors is just as important as their chemical composition. But whatever the exact nature of Muir's methods and materials may have been, his *Song of Los* is uniquely successful in giving one a sense of the deep tones and reticulated surfaces of Blake's color printing.

Two individual publications deserve mention in this thumbnail history of hand-colored facsimiles. In 1893, Quaritch published a *Facsimile of the Original Outlines Before Colouring of The Songs of Innocence and of Experience Executed by William Blake*. In the Introduction, p. xviii, Edwin J. Ellis gives the lie to the book's title: "Those pages where a little shading of a mossy kind is to be seen are photographed from copies already coloured by Blake, and the results printed in monochrome. In these cases no uncoloured original was accessible for reproduction. The shading is due to the fact that a little of the colour-effect always united itself to the outline." The frequently muddy designs, probably printed from process blocks,¹⁴ are just what one would expect from such a cavalier approach to the central problem of reclaiming the printed image from hand-colored plates. These printed reproductions become less disturbing in the fifty copies hand colored in imitation of copy U, then in Quaritch's possession, and issued under a new title: *Facsimile of What is Believed to be The Last Replica [i.e., copy] of The Songs of Innocence and of Experience Executed by William Blake*.¹⁵ In his revised Introduction, Ellis describes its production:

The plates, after they were printed, were given to Mr. Laing, of Latchmere Road, Lavender Hill, a professed "colourist" who makes a business of tinting illustrations wholesale by hand for the trade. I feel that special acknowledgment is due to him for the care with which he followed the originals, a task rendered peculiarly difficult from the sketchy, dotty, and subtle nature of the work which is so unlike the customary hand-done diagrams of the day. Mr. Laing's colourings being delivered to me I went over each one at leisure with the original on the table, reducing tints with a soft sponge to the required transparency, adding the black lines, and here and there a touch of stronger colour till they were all as like the original as I could make them. (p. xix)

The results are as mixed as the mode of execution. The colors are close to Blake's but generally too bright in spite of Ellis's sponge baths. Laing's brush was too wet and he tended to apply his colors in thicker, more even washes than those in the original. It seems as though

Laing's methods of charging and applying his brush were antithetical to Blake's style. We should, however, credit Ellis with an awareness of these difficulties and an attempt to add the ink outlining so important to the definition of forms in the illuminated books. He also surpasses Hotten and Pearson in honesty by naming, even thanking, his fellow colorist.

A similar, but more successful, pair of *Songs* facsimiles was published in 1923 by the Liverpool book-dealer Henry Young & Sons. The three-page "Publishers' Note" claims that the "edition has been produced in the same laborious way as Blake produced his, viz., the designs have been bitten out of metal plates by acid, printed in a press with the same tints as Blake used, and (in the case of the coloured copies) painted by hand with water-colours and gold which are as nearly like those of the original as a clever and devoted copyist could make them." The description of the graphic process is so brief and general that it could fit common line blocks (see note 14) just as well as relief etching as Blake practiced it. Further, the publisher fails to mention *how* the image was executed on the metal before etching. Several details indicate that copy T of the *Songs* was photographed and printed on the metal. Either the negatives or the images on the plates seem to have been hand-corrected. This work eliminated the fuzzy passages of the Quaritch/Ellis volume; but in the case of the color-printed plates in copy T (actually a composite of a hand-colored and a color-printed copy), the reproductions show major variations from the images on Blake's own copperplates.¹⁶

The publisher's description of the hand coloring of a few copies of the Young facsimile contributes a moment of pathos to the history of Blake reproductions:

The colouring and gilding have been done by Mr. Samuel Hurd, of London, who worked from Blake's original in the British Museum [i.e., copy T].

Mr. Hurd promised to colour 100 copies, but the work proved to be so much more arduous than he had anticipated or could endure, that he felt compelled to call a permanent halt when, after a struggle lasting eight and a half years, he had finished, to his own satisfaction and ours, 51 copies.

Although his basic techniques were similar to Laing's, Hurd was more skillful in replicating the placement and layering of colors in the original. To reproduce the effects of color printing on twelve plates in copy T, Hurd laboriously applied tiny dots of color in stipple-like patterns. In a few areas, such as the tree in "The Tyger," the dots cluster into maculated patterns that capture a sense of color printing almost as well as Muir's *Song of Los*. The now quite rare colored versions of the Young facsimile are very beautiful books with a truth to Blake's materials, if not to the details of his outlines and tones, surpassing any entirely photomechanical reproduction.

New high-quality reproductions of the illuminated

books will inevitably be compared to the Blake Trust color facsimiles produced by the Trianon Press under the direction of Arnold Fawcus. They are far more accurate in tone and form than any of their predecessors, even though their mode of production is more distant from Blake's own. Like earlier facsimile techniques, the Trianon's method depended on the analysis of the originals into constituent parts, but the divisions were based on differences in color and tone not necessarily related to the basic distinction between what was printed and what was drawn in the originals. Great accuracy was achieved not by imitating the distinctions between media in Blake's work but by greatly multiplying the number of divisions. The larger segments, representing both printed and painted passages in the original, were printed in collotype.¹⁷ The role of hand work in the Trianon's publications also varies from what we have seen in the work of Bellars and Hurd. Rather than coloring the prints freehand, the Trianon's craftsmen continued the schematic division of the image by cutting stencils corresponding to the various colors Blake used and the areas to which he applied them. Great manual skill, as well as an acute eye for colors, was required for cutting the stencils, for they played the key role in the development of the facsimile beyond its photomechanical base. The actual application of water colors through the stencils demanded more precision than artistry.

The collotype and stencil process was ideally suited for reproducing late copies of the illuminated books, such as copy Z of the *Songs*, in which Blake applied his tints in overlapping layers. Every technique, however, has limitations attending its virtues. Close inspection of the Trianon's best work reveals distinct boundaries among different shades of the same color. In the originals, the transitions from one shade to another are more gradual and continuous. This is a small price to pay for facsimiles that equal photographs in accuracy of outline and still retain something of the tonal values and textures of hand painting. Serious difficulties emerged only when the Trianon extended its sophisticated processes beyond their natural scope and attempted to reproduce Blake's color printing in the *Europe* facsimile of 1969.

The new edition of the *Songs* by the Manchester Etching Workshop is an important contribution to the list of hand-crafted Blake facsimiles. Rather than continuing the complex integration of modern techniques characteristic of the Blake Trust volumes, the Manchester facsimiles harken back to the traditional methods of Bellars, Muir, Laing, and Hurd.

From the beginning of the project, the Manchester group set out to keep every step in the production of the facsimile as close as possible to Blake's own procedures.¹⁸ Instead of attempting the impossible task of fully excavating the printed image from a hand-colored original, the Workshop printmakers turned to the elec-

trotypes of the *Songs* plates in the Victoria and Albert Museum, made from the set used in Alexander Gilchrist's *Life of Blake*, 1863 and 1880. This choice necessarily limited their publication to sixteen plates rather than a complete facsimile of the *Songs*. The small selection may be regrettable from the collector's point of view, but it may have helped the project stay within manageable bounds. Samuel Hurd's fate offers ample warning to all overly-ambitious facsimilists.

The Manchester prospectus explains that "a set of relief etchings" on copperplates was made from the electrotypes. This could have been accomplished by hand-copying, tracing, or counterproofing, thereby avoiding the introduction of modern techniques. Whatever method was used, the facsimiles show a fidelity to the electrotypes equivalent to that produced by photo-etching.¹⁹ The electrotype title-page for *Experience* was not used because it seems not to have been made directly from Blake's plate but crudely copied by hand. The new facsimile plate (also hand drawn?) is much closer to the original.

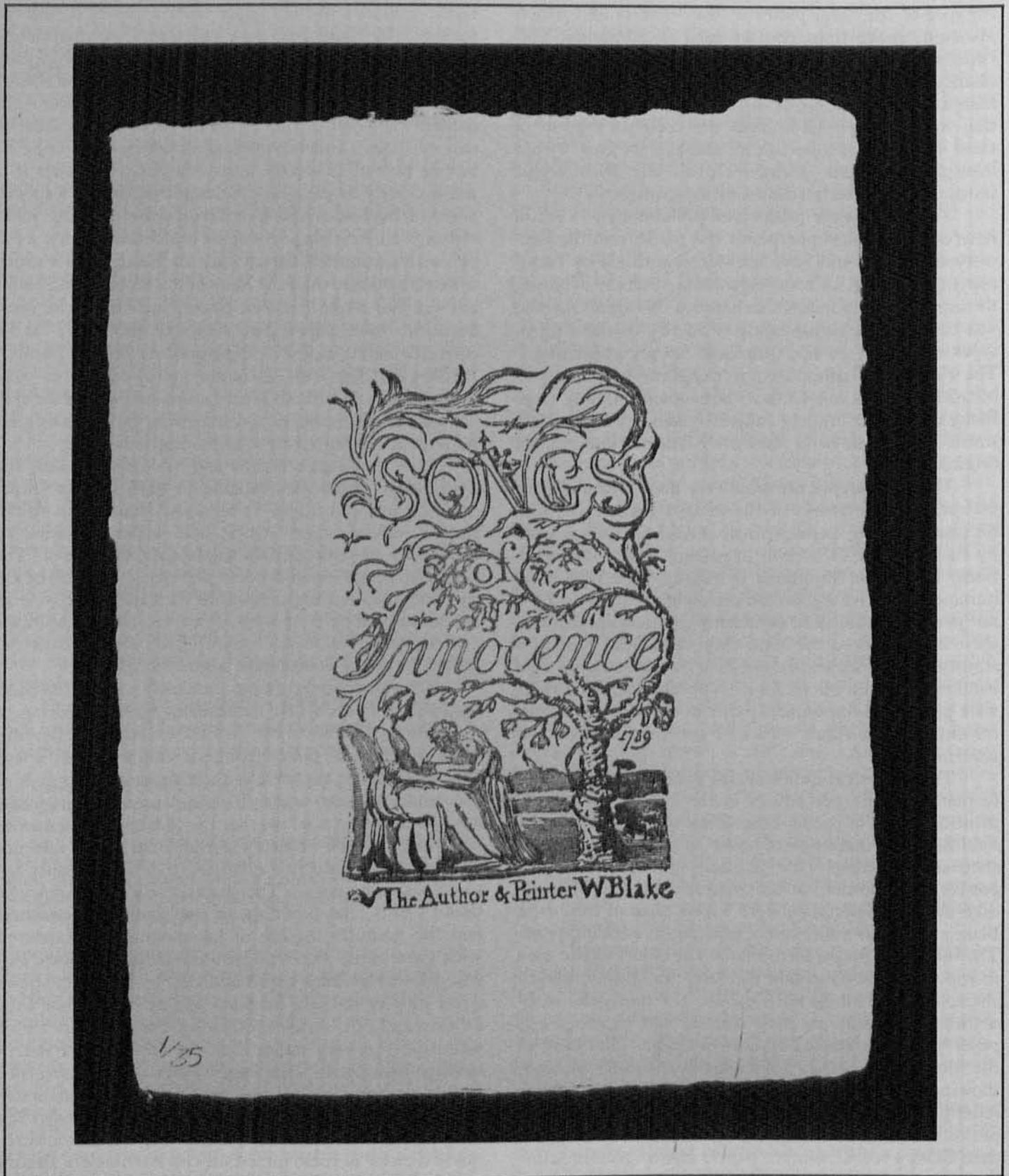
The electrotypes provided very good (although not perfect) representations of the images Blake etched on his plates—better, perhaps, than uncolored copies printed by Blake (Q and BB, both in private American collections) because of variations in inking. The best posthumous pulls give a good indication of the plate images; but perhaps technical or ownership problems prohibited their use, if indeed the Workshop considered that possibility. The minor textual errors in the electrotypes were hand corrected on the facsimile copperplates,²⁰ and these were printed on hand-made paper in a dull, light brown ink for *Innocence* (illus. 1) and a golden yellow ink for *Experience*.

The prospectus indicates that great pains were taken to match Blake's procedures in the crucial inking and printing stages of production. These were supervised by Paul Ritchie, "master printmaker" at the Etching Workshop and apparently the guiding spirit of the entire project. The borders of the plates, created by Blake's dike method of etching, were wiped clean of ink, as in Blake's pre-1800 pulls, before printing in a rolling press. The inks were prepared to match the colors Blake used in copy B of the *Songs* and to retain the grainy texture characteristic of all his relief prints. The results are wonderfully successful on both counts, but printing and paper vary from Blake's typical practices. Like most of the illuminated books, *Songs* copy B is lightly printed, showing only very slight indentations of the edges of relief plateaus into the paper. The facsimiles show more prominent indentations resulting from less dense paper than Blake's stock, damper paper, and/or greater printing pressure. I rather doubt that this variation from Blake's habits was merely an oversight; perhaps it was necessary to achieve a clear, sharp impression with a

tacky, granular ink on paper with a mottled, uneven surface. The individual pure rag sheets, approximately 21 × 16.5 cm., were manufactured by the Workshop with an *Innocence* or EXPERIENCE watermark and Blake's *Night Thoughts* monogram embossed into the lower right corner. The color of this facsimile paper is very close to that of Blake's unwatermarked leaves in *Songs* copy B, but its texture is clearly much rougher. I wonder if it was necessary to go to all the trouble of making a special paper. I have achieved good results by printing relief etchings on Rives heavy-weight mold-made ivory, a paper with a color similar to most of Blake's and a much smoother texture than the Manchester stock. Blake, after all, did not make his own paper, but used "the most beautiful wove paper that could be procured," as he correctly claims in his 1793 prospectus "To the Public." Perhaps Ritchie and his (anonymous) associates were motivated by the Blake Trust facsimiles, with their special paper and monogram watermark, rather than a requirement prompted by Blake's originals.

Like the Quaritch/Ellis and Young facsimiles, the Manchester plates are available in both colored (illus. 2) and uncolored (illus. 1) versions. In addition to the sixteen monochrome plates, the latter includes an impression in smooth black ink of the first plate of "The Little Girl Lost" with borders printed. Also present are two hand-colored impressions of the same plate, one in imitation of copy B of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* and the other following copy T. Both show all the excellencies of the completely hand-colored issue.

The Manchester group returned to the freehand methods of Blake's first facsimilists for the coloring of their plates. Thanks to Mr. Ritchie's kindness in lending me a selection of plates from the colored issue, I was able to compare them with their models in copy B of the combined *Songs* in the British Museum. This pleasant exercise convinced me that the Manchester facsimiles combine the color accuracy of the Blake Trust volumes with the unreproducible qualities of delicate washes applied without stencils. The shading and transparency of Blake's tints, the blending of one shade into another, and the granular texture of his medium are captured with great skill. The replication of Blake's delicate pen and ink—or perhaps brush and ink²¹—outlining shows equal fidelity to copy B. Blake applied his colors with an extremely dry brush, following the old tradition of watercolor drawing rather than the newer art of watercolor painting with large, wet washes allowed to spread over the paper. Unlike Laing and Hurd, the Manchester artisans do not appear to have been burdened with the conventions of commercial print colorists and could respond directly to these important characteristics of Blake's prints. Even the maculated textures in some of the *Experience* plates of copy B are well represented. These were created in the facsimile by applying washes while the



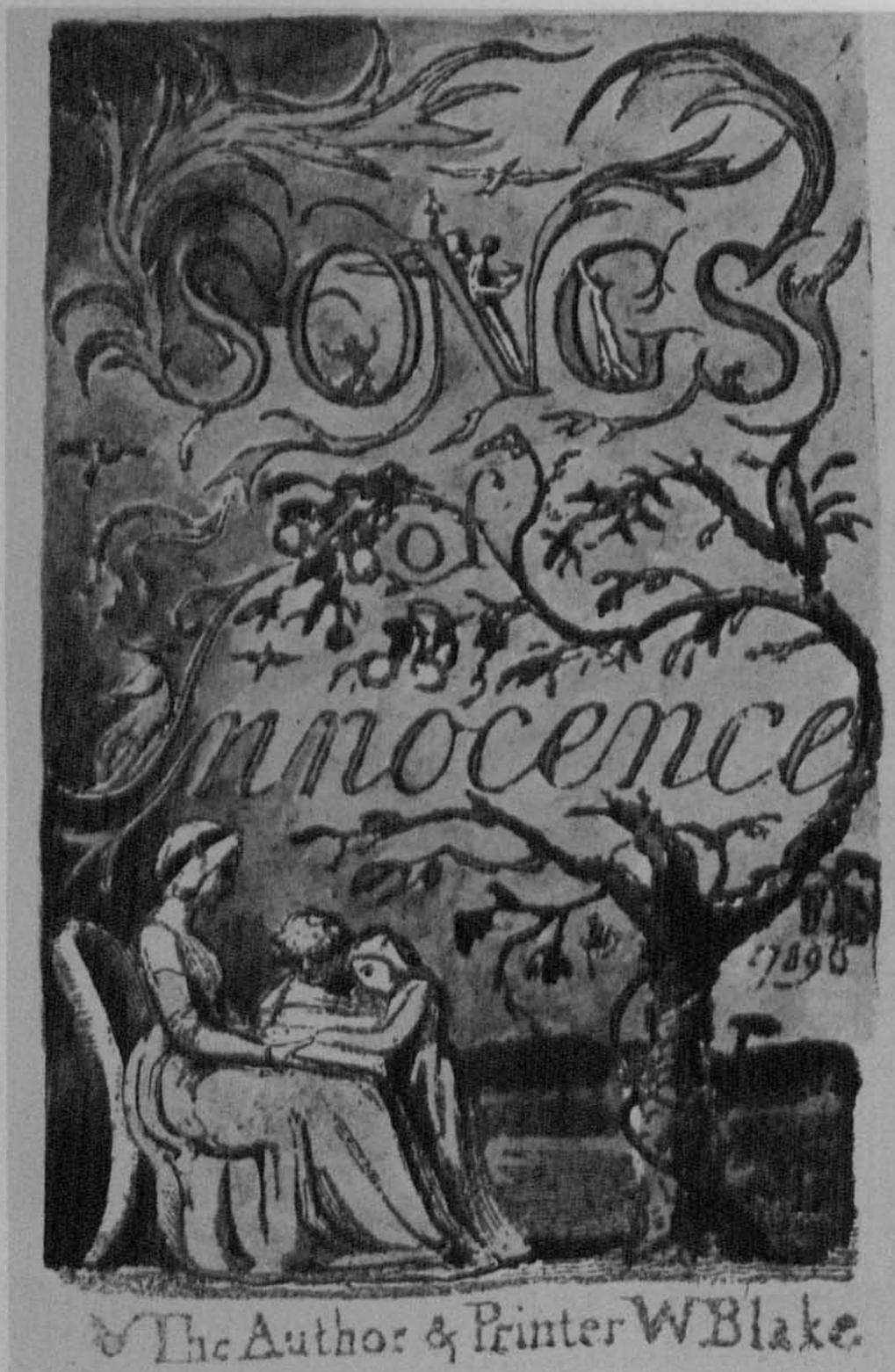
1. Blake. *Songs of Innocence*, title page. Manchester facsimile, based on the Victoria and Albert electrotype, printed in brown ink. Image 11.8 × 7.3 cm.



The Author & Printer W Blake

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2. Blake. *Songs of Innocence*, title page. Manchester facsimile, based on the Victoria and Albert electrotype, printed in brown and hand tinted in imitation of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* copy B. Image 12 × 7.6 cm.



3. Blake. *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, copy B, title page to *Innocence*. Relief and white-line etching, hand colored. Image 12 × 7.5 cm. Courtesy of the British Museum.

printed impressions were still wet. The antipathy of oily ink to watercolors caused the latter to coalesce into slightly raised and reticulated patterns. Since Muir mentioned surface tension rather than printing methods in his letter about his "Blake Medium," quoted earlier, his success in reproducing color printing may have also depended on reactions among liquids with different properties.

There are of course differences between copy B and the facsimile. The colors are not identical in every case, the pen and ink lines swell or narrow in slightly different ways, and margins of some washes do not correspond exactly to the original.²² Cataloguing these minor variants would serve little purpose, for we cannot expect any hand-made facsimile to match an illuminated book brush-stroke by brush-stroke, reticulation by reticula-



4. Blake. *Songs of Innocence*, title page. Impression in green ink from the Fitzwilliam electrotype and published in W. Blake, *Songs of Innocence and of Experience: Sixteen designs printed from electrotypes of the original plates for Ruthven Todd and Geoffrey Keynes* (Chiswick Press, 1941). Image 11.8 × 7.3 cm.

tion, and magically convert similitude into identity.

A more significant family of variants is an inevitable result of the chosen mode of production. The Manchester *Songs* is a composite facsimile in the sense that the printed images were taken from one source (the electrotypes) and the coloring from another (copy B). The printed images in copy B differ—like every illuminated book—from the etched images on Blake's copperplates (once again because of inking and printing variations) and hence from the electrotype images. Consider, for example, the descending tendril or leaf printed immediately to the right of "1789" on the *Innocence* title-page in *Songs* copy B (illus. 3). This motif does not appear in either the colored facsimile (illus. 2) or the uncolored issue (illus. 1). The absence is not the result of carelessness or a flaw in the Manchester group's photography,

printing, or hand coloring. As a glance at an impression from the electrotype shows (illus. 4), the tendril or leaf is also missing from the source for the printed image in the facsimile.²³ Reaching back still further into the history of the variant, we find that the original Gilchrist electrotype, as printed in his *Life of Blake*, contains the motif (illus. 5). The obverse of this type of variant appears about 4 mm. above the head of the boy looking at the book in the woman's lap. In the facsimiles (illus. 1 and 2) and all electrotype impressions (illus. 4 and 5), there are three branches or leaves in this area; in the original copy B impression (illus. 3), there are only two. Similarly, the flourish extending to the left of the "T" of "The," lower left, reaches further to the left in the Manchester facsimiles than in copy B. The electrotypes are problematically situated between these extremes. Other, lesser printing variants, creating both presences and absences in relation to copy B, appear throughout the facsimile.²⁴

Clearly, there are some features of *Songs* copy B revealed by a simple monochrome reproduction in a magazine but missed by a facsimile produced with enormous care and artistry. Does this mean that the Manchester publication is an expensive failure? Not in the least. We are, however, made aware that this new facsimile shares some generic traits with its hand-crafted predecessors. Like Muir's volumes, it is a recreation of a process as well as a reproduction of images; as much a new edition of an illuminated book, with its own unique qualities, as a reproduction of an existing copy. Like all facsimiles, the Manchester *Songs* does not escape a graphic equivalent of the Heisenberg effect: the closer the reproduction approaches one characteristic of Blake's illuminated books, the more it distorts another. Yet some variants are of the very sort we discover by comparing one original impression with another. The leaf or tendril absent from the facsimile title-page of *Innocence* barely appears in *Innocence* copy S, prints as only two tiny fragments in the combined *Songs* copy AA, and disappears completely in *Innocence* copy U. We are brought to an odd but fortuitous reversal of Heisenberg's principle: by differing in certain respects from its prototype, a facsimile can draw closer to important characteristics of Blake's media—in this case, variation itself.

Viscomi's essay, included with both issues of the Manchester facsimile, is an important step in the recovery of Blake's relief-etching technology. He also has some fine things to say about Blake's changing conceptions of an illuminated book; as Viscomi phrases it, a progression from books with the "print-as-page" to an emphasis on the individual "print-as-painting." The author is also a skilled graphic artist, and thus a practical perspective, oriented toward process and materials, comes naturally to him. He rightly avoids making Blake more innovative than necessary. Much of the appeal of relief



5. Blake. *Songs of Innocence*, title page. Impression in reddish-brown ink from an electrotype and published in Alexander Gilchrist, *Life of William Blake* (Macmillan, 1863), volume II. Image 11.8 × 7.4 cm.

etching for the artist using it depends on the direct, straightforward nature of the process. Blake's training in reproductive etching and engraving was an essential prelude to his graphic experiments, but these resulted in simplifications of conventional techniques. (If anyone doubts this, just try engraving and inking an intaglio plate.) In accord with this general approach to the subject, Viscomi comes down firmly on the side of those who believe that Blake wrote his texts backwards on the copperplates. Scholars still holding out for a transfer method will have to come up with some new arguments or evidence if the debate is to continue.²⁵

While many of Viscomi's studio experiments and readings in eighteenth-century engraving manuals reconfirm recently published studies of Blake's techniques, at least in general outline, he does contribute several important insights. He finds that the infrequency of platemakers' marks in *Songs of Experience* indicates that Blake cut his own plates (at least the smaller ones) to size rather than buying them already cut, in which case each plate would bear a mark on its back. Viscomi assembles several good arguments for Blake's use of a simple-solution varnish to paint and draw images on the copper. The older tallow-and-oil solutions do not harden enough to permit the fine white-line work found even in Blake's earliest relief prints. The arguments for Blake's use of a pen, rather than brush, to write in acid-resist are slightly less convincing, but certainly worthy of careful consideration in future studies of the calligraphy of the illuminated books.

Viscomi suggests that Blake's mordant was nitric acid, not one of the weaker sorts of vinegar-based acids buffered with a salt. He claims that Blake needed a "strong acid" for a "long bite" (p. 3) since the plates "had to be bitten deeply" (p. 10). This may be true for some of the earlier relief plates, but the only direct evidence we have about Blake's depth of bite—the *America* copperplate fragment—and the indirect evidence of foul inking of whites indicate a very shallow etch. Further, the weaker acids produce relief edges that are less striated or pitted than edges bitten with nitric. The *America* fragment shows similarly smooth escarpments around relief plateaus. A serious problem in relief work is lifting of the ground around small relief areas, such as letters, during etching. An acid that deposits a salt as it reacts with the metal causes less lifting than one that generates bubbles of gas, as does nitric. Viscomi allows for the possibility that Blake diluted nitric acid with "oil of vitriol (sulfuric acid)" and considerable amounts of water. This would produce, in effect, a weaker acid, possibly with biting characteristics very close to the vinegar-based mordants. The present balance of evidence renders the Scottish verdict of "not proven" appropriate in the case of Blake's acid. The microscopic comparison of the *America* fragment with plates bitten by various

solutions may offer a better verdict. And Viscomi is the right person to make such experiments.

Perhaps Viscomi's most interesting contribution is his statement that Blake used intaglio ink to print his relief plates. This is the sort of proposal that seems so right at first glance that one wonders why it had never been made before. Intaglio ink is much thicker than relief inks, used for type or woodcut printing, and produces, even when printed on dampened paper, the reticulated surfaces so characteristic of Blake's impressions. The textural excellence of the Manchester facsimiles, printed with intaglio ink, as well as my own experiments prompted by Viscomi's essay, convince me that he has discovered an important fact about Blake's techniques.

The appearance of a first-rate scholarly essay as part of a high-quality facsimile publication calls to mind the relationship between these two types of endeavors. The activities necessary for producing a facsimile can themselves lead to insights about the originals. In a footnote, Viscomi mentions that Paul Ritchie came upon his wet-ink method of creating reticulated colors by studying the mottled black areas of "Infant Sorrow" and "London" in *Songs* copy B. He found that they lie on top of ink-printed surfaces, and thus could not have been printed in the same pull with the basic ink image. Indeed, Blake himself may have applied washes over wet impressions to produce small areas of reticulated textures generally assumed to be definitive evidence of color printing.²⁶ Further, the scholar need not limit his use or evaluation of facsimiles only to their utility as (ultimately unsatisfactory) substitutes for the originals. They can remind us of the inherent differences among media and the importance of the physical properties of an image in the production of meaning. The relationship between a facsimile and its prototype involves us in the same complex issues of identity and difference, production and reproduction, we encounter in the study of "different" copies of the "same" illuminated book. Like Blake's illustrations to other poets' texts, facsimiles are visual commentaries on the works they reproduce. Like other critics, they offer intriguing combinations of truth and error, insight and blindness, sometimes calling into question what we mean by each term in such polarities. The history of facsimiles of the illuminated books is an integral part of the more general history of Blake criticism.

A financial end-note is called for by the price of the Manchester facsimiles, enough to give pause to even the wealthiest rare book librarian. Someone building a comprehensive collection of Blake facsimiles must of course acquire copies of both issues. Less ambitious collectors or institutions concentrating on books for scholars and students could do without the "Monochrome Edition," although that means missing the lovely facsimile of the first plate of "The Little Girl Lost" from copy T, not included in the colored issue. Monochrome

impressions of the original electrotypes (as distinct from the Manchester group's relief-etched facsimiles of impressions from electrotypes of the original electrotypes mold-made from Blake's plates) are available in Gilchrist's *Life of Blake*, 1863 and 1880. Acceptable copies of Gilchrist are still available on the antiquarian book market for less than \$450. The "Facsimile Edition" is a far more important work. I have emphasized here its slight variations from the original to exemplify some general observations on media and the replication of images—not to dissuade potential purchasers. The Manchester colored issue is in many ways one of the most accurate facsimiles ever published and beyond question the most accurate hand-colored reproduction of plates from an illuminated book. To my eyes, it is also one of the two or three most beautiful facsimiles when considered as a work of graphic art independent of its relationship to its prototype. These exceptional qualities justify its considerable cost. Some money can be saved by opting for the issue without the full-leather portfolio which, with its three covers, rounded hinges, dark brown leaves, and tip-in mounts, reminds me of an old family photo album. The gold-stamped decorations—the *Innocence* title page on the front cover, *Experience* on the inner cover—are well done, but a bit over-done for my tastes. When Viscomi's pamphlet is inserted in the pocket apparently provided for that purpose, the portfolio is a little too thick to permit closing completely its nicely restrained, cloth-covered box. Two hundred copies of the pamphlet were printed, which I hope means that some copies will be distributed independent of the Manchester volumes. It deserves a wider audience than the seventy-five lucky owners of the facsimiles and should be read by anyone interested in the art and craft of Blake's illuminated books.

¹ The substance of this small advertising flyer was repeated in Hotten's list of new and forthcoming volumes bound at the end of some of his publications.

² See Morton D. Paley, "John Camden Hotten, A. C. Swinburne, and the Blake Facsimiles of 1868," *Bulletin of the New York Public Library*, 79 (1976), 259–96, esp. pp. 279, 284.

³ As he entered in his diary on 3 June 1867; see W. M. Rossetti, *Rossetti Papers 1862 to 1870* (London: Sands & Co., 1903), p. 234.

⁴ Not including "Little Tom the Sailor" and a single plate of "The Act of Creation" (i.e., the frontispiece to *Europe*). Geoffrey Keynes, *Blake Studies*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 109, states that the "Little Tom" facsimile was produced "by the firm of Emery Walker & Boutell." However, it is listed as one of Muir's "Works in Preparation" in the Quaritch advertisement of November 1886 (see below), as one of Muir's published works in Quaritch's sale catalogue of February 1891, item 118, and as one of Muir's productions on the printed front cover of his facsimiles of *Europe* (September 1887) and *The Song of Los* (November 1890).

Further, I have in my collection impressions in light brown ink of the "Little Tom" head and tailpieces (the latter hand-tinted in gray and black) acquired as part of a batch of Muir's trial proofs, including plates from his *There is No Natural Religion* facsimile used as backing sheets for the "Little Tom" prints. Perhaps Muir was hired by Emery Walker to produce the lithographic facsimile, first published in *The Century Guild Hobby Horse*, 1 (October 1886), and Muir subsequently printed it "on old hand-made paper" (Quaritch's November 1886 advertisement) for sale as part of his own series. For a discussion of the various issues of Muir's "Act of Creation," see Essick, *The Separate Plates of William Blake: A Catalogue* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1983), pp. 258–60.

⁵ I am grateful to Raymond Lister for supplying me with photocopies of these two Pearson prospectuses in his collection.

⁶ No publisher or facsimilist is named, but on the cover of his *Song of Los* facsimile (1890), Muir states that he has not "issued *Jerusalem* because Mr. Pearson's excellent facsimile can be had by all." Further, E. W. Hooper, who purchased copy D of *Jerusalem* (now in the Harvard University Library) from Pearson, wrote that it was the original from which the bookdealer had made a reproduction. See Morton D. Paley, "A Victorian Blake Facsimile," *Blakel An Illustrated Quarterly*, 15 (1981), 27.

⁷ According to Muir in a letter of 28 December 1885 to the Editor of *The Athenaeum*, as quoted in G. E. Bentley, Jr., *Blake Books* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), p. 488.

⁸ The flyer was reissued, with more titles listed as "already issued," in November 1886. According to Geoffrey Keynes, *A Bibliography of William Blake* (New York: Grolier Club, 1921), p. 295, there is also a flyer dated May 1887, but this I have not seen. Quaritch also advertised Muir's facsimiles in his general catalogue of February 1891, items 107–19, and Muir produced Quaritch's 1927 facsimiles of *The Songs of Innocence* and *The Songs of Experience*.

⁹ In my collection are Muir's monochrome drawings for eighteen plates from *Songs of Experience* and a completely hand-drawn color facsimile of *The First Book of Urizen*. Raymond Lister owns Muir's hand-drawn and colored facsimile of *The Book of Thel*. This fragmentary evidence does not of course prove that Muir made monochrome drawings and/or color mock-ups for all his facsimiles.

¹⁰ Bentley, *Blake Books*, p. 89 and in subsequent notes on coloring, describes copy R as "water-coloured by Blake or by his wife" because of the appearance of the "BM copy" of Muir's facsimile (p. 90, n. 15). However, the original issue of the Muir facsimile, dated January 1887 on the printed front wrapper, is printed in greenish blue and uncolored. The later, colored copies, such as the one at the British Museum, have their colors based on those in *America* copy A (as Bentley correctly notes, p. 489). When Quaritch offered copy R for £36 in his General Catalogue of 1887, item 10251, he described it simply as "18 designs printed in blue." Quaritch was too sharp a dealer not to describe the book as "splendidly colored in brilliant hues by Blake himself" (or some such piece of puffery) if it had the least hint of color. All evidence recorded by those who actually saw copy R, untraced since 1887, indicates that it was printed in blue or blue-green ink and was not colored. It is so described in Geoffrey Keynes and Edwin Wolf 2nd, *William Blake's Illuminated Books: A Census* (New York: Grolier Club, 1953), p. 48.

¹¹ A copy is an attempt to impose the appearance of one medium on another, whereas an imitation "consists either in the interfusion of the SAME throughout the radically DIFFERENT, or of the different throughout a base radically the same." See Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, ed. James Engell and W. Jackson Bate (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1983), II, 72.

¹² Muir's facsimiles seem to have been projects for family and friends. The printed front wrapper of *The Song of Los* facsimile credits its production to "W. C. Ward, E. Druitt, H. T. Muir, S. E. Muir, and Wm Muir." In my collection are very skillful hand-

painted copies of the frontispiece to *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* from the "Large Book of Designs" (copy A) and the design only of plate 3 from the same book in the "Small Book of Designs" (copy A), both in the British Museum since 1856. Each is signed "E. [i.e., Elizabeth] Druitt" and dated 1884. Three completely hand-executed copies of designs from *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* in the Beinecke Library, Yale University, are signed by William Muir. I know nothing about the abilities of the other participants or how the work was divided among them.

¹³ Muir's letter is now kept with the copy of his *Song of Los* facsimile in the Newberry Library, Chicago (case Y185.B579.vol. 2, #4).

¹⁴ For a description of photographic line block processes, see Geoffrey Wakeman, *Victorian Book Illustrations: The Technical Revolution* (Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1973), pp. 130-40, 163. The shaded areas in the Quaritch/Ellis plates are not composed of dots, as in halftones, but are unevenly mottled surfaces, probably the unfortunate result of using a black/white line process for reproducing a colored print with many intermediate tones.

¹⁵ Only the uncolored issue and its title page are recorded in Bentley, *Blake Books*, p. 436 no. 173.

¹⁶ My standard of comparison here and elsewhere is posthumous copy h of the *Songs* which, though poorly inked, gives a good indication of the relief forms on the plates because of high printing pressure that embossed the relief plateaus into the paper.

¹⁷ For a description and early history of this process, see Wakeman, pp. 111-18. Collotype is a relief process and produces a slightly grainy, non-glossy surface ideally suited for the reproduction of Blake's reticulated inks (see discussion below) and dry watercolor washes. The actual process does not of course parallel the methods or materials of relief etching.

¹⁸ Facts about production procedures not evident from the finished prints are taken from the four-page prospectus or Viscomi's pamphlet.

¹⁹ This is the method used for the *Songs* plates printed in Essick, *William Blake's Relief Inventions* (Los Angeles: Press of the Pegacycle Lady, 1978).

²⁰ These variants are listed in Essick, *William Blake Printmaker* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1980), p. 95.

²¹ Much of what has generally been called pen-and-ink work in Blake's watercolor drawings and prints may have been executed with a small, pointed brush, called a "pencil" in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This possibility was suggested to me by Ruth Fine, Curator of the Rosenwald Collection at the National Gallery of Art and an artist in her own right.

²² A few examples of differences in coloring follow:
Innocence title-page. Blue between legs of piper in *I of Innocence* not in facsimile (see illus. 2 and 3). Perhaps one of the few cases in which the variation resulted from an oversight rather than the limitations of hand coloring as a reproductive technique.

"On Another's Sorrow." Dark olive green in lower right corner becomes dark brown in facsimile.

Experience title-page. Shadow over lower legs of prone figures little too purple in facsimile. Slight differences in location of dark colors, lower right.

"The Human Abstract." Black below figure more maculated in original.

"Infant Sorrow." Very thin, pale ivory wash upper left not in facsimile. Mottled texture on floor along lower margin and left of woman becomes fuzzy or continuous wash in facsimile.

"The Little Girl Lost," first plate. The subtlety of Blake's tones here defeats any facsimile process. Tone of peach color left of girl's left hip too deep, bold in facsimile. In facsimile of copy T included in "Monochrome Edition," framing lines not quite orange enough.

"The Little Girl Found," second plate. Brush-stroke pattern of blue above base of tendril, lower left, varies from original in

placement. Pen and ink outlining sharper, narrower in facsimile (see note 21 for a possible reason for this difference).

"My Pretty Rose Tree." Shadow lower left corner becomes part of vegetation in facsimile. Broad line (wash applied with a brush?) on right outline of bowed figure's head rendered as narrow pen and ink line in facsimile.

"Ah! Sun-Flower." Reticulated olive left and below title too smooth, light, and green in facsimile.

Complete halftones of *Songs* copy B appear in David Bindman, *The Complete Graphic Works of William Blake* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978), pls. 214-68. A color microfilm, with poor color fidelity, was produced by Micro Methods Ltd. some years ago.

²⁵ The impression reproduced here, illus. 4, is from the electrotype in the Fitzwilliam Museum, the first set made from the original Clay & Son set used in Gilchrist's *Life*. The Victoria and Albert set, used for the Manchester facsimile, was made from the Clay & Son plates in 1947. There are minor differences between the printing surfaces of the electrotype sets, but perhaps no more than between any two impressions from the same electrotype. For the history of the electrotypes, see Keynes, *Blake Studies*, p. 125.

²⁴ A few of the more easily describable printing differences between the Manchester *Songs* and copy B follow:

"Infant Sorrow." End of title, last three lines of text lower left weakly printed in original; bold and clear in facsimile. In a sense, the facsimile has corrected what is, from a conventional perspective, a "flaw" in Blake's impression.

"The Human Abstract." Shadow of dike border, particularly above "The" in title, printed at top in original; none in facsimile.

"The Little Girl Lost," first plate, facsimile of copy T in "Monochrome Edition." In original, dike border prints on all sides, as in most of Blake's nineteenth-century impressions. Not printed in facsimile, but partly painted in by hand.

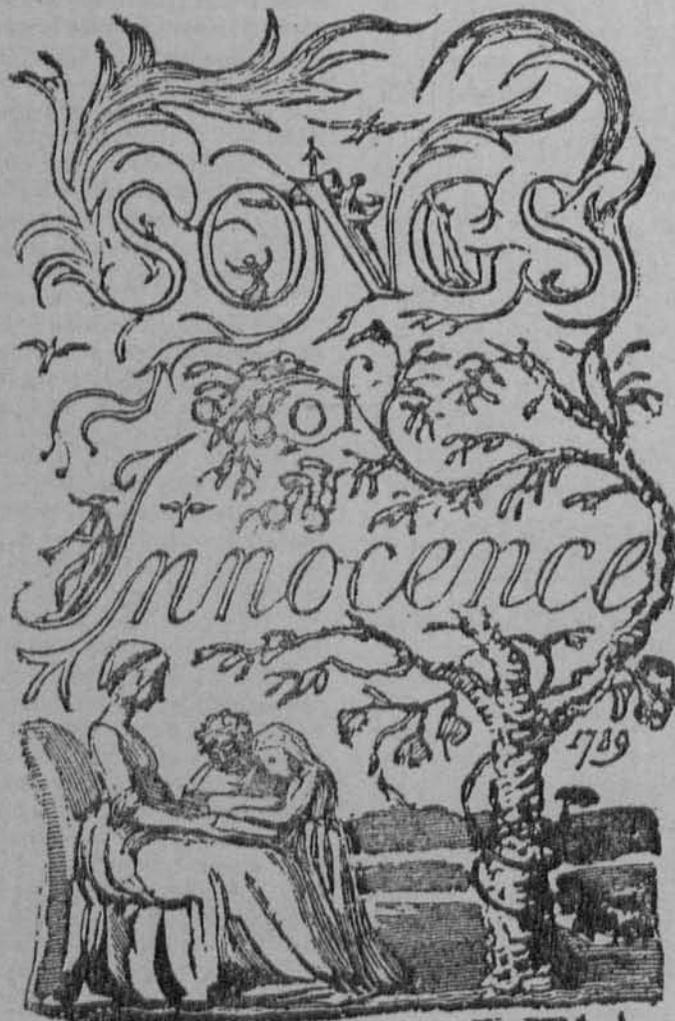
"My Pretty Rose Tree." Right wing of large bird above prone figure's lower legs hardly printed in original and partly covered by blue wash. Clearly printed in facsimile.

"Ah! Sun-Flower." Spiral tendril left of lines 5-7 not printed in original but drawn in by hand; clearly printed in facsimile.

"The Lilly." Tendril arching around left side and top of catchword only a ghostly shadow in original; clearly printed in facsimile.

²⁵ In *William Blake Printmaker*, p. 90, I argued for reverse writing directly on the plate, but allowed for the possibility that Blake might have transferred his texts to the plates in chalk or pencil by one of the conventional methods before working over the letters in acid-resist. I now think that even this type of transfer is highly unlikely. As Viscomi notes, a chalk or pencil residue on the copper would have inhibited the firm bond between metal and resist essential for etching.

²⁶ Besides washing over wet ink, other alternatives to color printing productive of similar effects are printing size-colors over ink with a second pull through the press (although this seems very unlikely in copy B) and blotting size-colors first applied directly on the impression with a brush.



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