

**Blake after Blake: A Nation Discovers Genius****Joseph Viscomi \***

I must look on him as one of the most extraordinary persons of the age.

-Charles Lamb

She knew the Latin—that is, “the Lord’s prayer,”  
And Greek—the alphabet—I’m nearly sure

-Byron, *Don Juan*

Blake studies can be said to have begun in 1863 with Alexander Gilchrist’s *Life of Blake*. Its subtitle, *Pictor Ignotus*, is, however, misleading, as modern scholarship has revealed a Blake relatively well known during his life and shortly after his death. [1] He merited 24 pages in Benjamin Heath Malkin’s *A Father’s Memoirs of his Son* (1806); a review, albeit nasty, by Robert Hunt in the *Examiner* (1809) and another, albeit in German, by Henry Crabb Robinson (1811); at least seven obituary notices; 34 pages in Joseph Smith’s *Nollekens and His Times* (1828; 2nd edition 1829); 46 pages in Allan Cunningham’s *Lives of British Artists* (1830; republished 1831, 1837, 1839, 1842, 1844, 1846); reviews of Smith and Cunningham, including “The Inventions of William Blake, Painter and Poet,” in the *London University Magazine* (1830); and entries in various biographical dictionaries and encyclopaedias, including Matthew Pilkington’s *A General Dictionary of Painters* (1840; also 1852 and 1858) and Charles Knight’s *The English Cyclopaedia* (1856). [2] But this kind of documentation merely acknowledges that Blake had a reputation. Indeed, the way in which Blake was known—i.e., word of mouth, biographies, reviews, extracts from the poetry—prevented his works from ever being known well or deeply except by those who knew them first-hand, and that remained a very small number of collectors and friends. To ask how well known Blake was shortly after he died, then, is really to ask *how* Blake was known. Until Gilchrist, with its numerous illustrations and facsimiles, Blake was known almost exclusively through texts—those about him and those few by him. This was as well as many—perhaps most—readers cared to know him. Expectations of knowing otherwise, of becoming

both reader and viewer, must have been low, either because reproductions were costly and inaccurate or because epistemological preconceptions minimized their value—or both. [3]

Today, what is selected for reproduction and how it is reproduced affects the Blake we know and how we know him. The same was true for Gilchrist. In this essay, rather than examine the pre-Gilchrist textual record about Blake, which has been studied in detail, I wish to focus on the pictorial record, which has received very little attention. I wish to speculate on the factors behind and consequences of Gilchrist's selection process by examining the illustrations in the *Life* in light of works reproduced and cited in the main public record before 1863, the people involved in the production of the *Life*, the techniques by which its illustrations were made, and the works prepared for the *Life* but excluded. The works in this last category are in a recently discovered album titled *Blake: Proofs, Photos, Tracings*, compiled by W. J. Linton, the wood engraver responsible for the illustrations, most of which are thought to be wood engravings, but are kerographs, a technique that Linton had invented in 1861. [4] As we shall see, to no small degree, the nature and aesthetic of his new reproductive process affected the kinds of work selected for reproduction.

### **I. Works Cited and Reproduced before 1863**

The idea that Blake was an artist's artist—that is, well respected by other artists but difficult and not likely to have a wide public—was a theme first sounded by Malkin, repeated in the obituaries, and amplified by Smith and Cunningham. Through them and others, the public knew that Blake was an engraver, a painter, an illustrator, and even a poet; the works mentioned most often were Blake's illustrations to Robert Blair's *The Grave* and Edward Young's *Night Thoughts*, the engraving of *Chaucers Canterbury Pilgrims*, the *Illustrations of the Book of Job*, several illuminated books (*Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, *America a Prophecy*, *Europe a Prophecy*, *Gates of Paradise*, *Jerusalem*), and the pencil drawings of Visionary Heads. There were at least "60 instances of poems printed in letterpress" during this period, representing 37 different poems; "The Tyger" was printed at least seven times (Hoover 347; see also Bentley, *Blake Books* 74-75). But with the possible exception of *The Grave*, *Night Thoughts*, and the Book of Job engravings, the published prints that were in reasonably wide circulation, the public did not know what his works looked like, because the illuminated books,

watercolors, and paintings were extremely rare, and Smith and others writing on Blake did not include reproductions of these or his other works.

In fact, only eight of Blake's images were reproduced in England between 1827 and 1863. Five were from the Visionary Heads, redrawn by John Varley, engraved by John Linnell on three plates, and published in Varley's *A Treatise on Zodiacal Physiognomy; Illustrated by Engravings of Heads and Features* (1828). They are *Ghost of a Flea*, the same image with mouth opened (the original drawing has mouth closed with a detail of its open mouth; hence, the second image is a reconstruction), *Cancer*, *Reverse of the Coin of Nebuchadnezzar*, and possibly *Gemini*, which appears based on Blake's "A Girl in Profile, Perhaps Corinna" (Butlin 629.80, Essick, "Marketplace "128). Most of Varley's detailed description of *Ghost of a Flea* was quoted by Robert Southey in *The Doctor* (1834; 2nd edition 1848). The engraving with mouth open was reproduced (engraver unknown) again in the *Art Journal* (1858), with a brief notice of Blake. One wood engraving ("Thenot and Colinet Converse Seated beneath Two Trees") from Thornton's *The Pastorals of Virgil* was reprinted from the original block in the *Athenaeum* (1843). And two designs from Blair's *The Grave, Death's Door* and *Death of the Strong Wicked Man*, were reproduced (engraved "Normand fils") in volumes III and IV respectively of G. Hamilton's *The English School, A Series of The Most Approved Productions In Painting and Sculpture, Executed by British Artists* (1831-32). *Death's Door* was reproduced five more times, in *Howitt's Journal* (1847), engraved by H. Harrison, and, as wood engravings by Linton, in *Illustrated Exhibitor and Magazine of Art* (1852) and *The Ladies' Drawing Room Book* (1852), both from the same block, and, from a different block, in Linton's *Thirty Pictures by Deceased British Artists Engraved Expressly for The Art-Union of London* (1860) and John Jackson and W. A. Chatto's *A Treatise on Woodengraving* (1861).

[5]

Only fourteen reproductions of eight images, including three of *Ghost of a Flea* and six of *Death's Door*, were reproduced before Gilchrist—and four of these were by Linton. Clearly, *Death's Door* was to Blake then what *Ancient of Days* is now, and whatever general fame Blake had was associated with it, his *Grave* designs in general, and his portrait of a ghost of a flea. Given this paucity of Blake reproductions, Samuel Palmer's ecstatic response to the *Life* and its 121 illustrations is understandable. He writes Mrs. Gilchrist:

Surely never book has been put forth more lovingly: the dear Author and the Editor,—Mr. Linton, the Publisher, and Printer, seem all to have laboured at a labour of love: —and instead of being sparingly illustrated, as I understood it was to be, it is, both in quantity and unrivalled quality, the richest Book of all illustrated ones that I have ever seen. It is not a pearl thrown to the swinish many, but a tiara of jewels.—What will they do? turn again and rend, or take kindly to this new and costly diet? [6]

Seventeen of the illustrations are not recorded in the List of Illustrations (xiii-xiv), which Linton wrote and sent to Rossetti by 12 June 1863, and five of the illustrations are not of Blake's works. [7] That final number of 116, however, reflects less diversity and bounty than it might suggest, as is revealed by a close examination of the title page, which Rossetti wrote (DW 487):

Life / of / William Blake, / 'Pictor Ignotus.' / With Selections from his Poems  
and Other Writings / By the Late / Alexander Gilchrist.../ Illustrated from  
Blake's Own Works, / in Facsimile by W. J. Linton, / And in  
Photolithography; /with a few of Blake's Original Plates. / In Two Volumes. /  
Vol.— / London and Cambridge: / Macmillan and Co./ 1863.

We are in the presence of a biographer who knows Robert Browning's poem "Pictor Ignotus," key lines of which Rossetti wanted to include as an epigraph (DW 483), although his suggestion (pace DW) was not followed. [8] We are told that this painter also wrote poetry and that examples of his poetry and art are reproduced. Blake is not identified as a printmaker, but the word "plates" implies as much. Examples of his art and presumably prints are reproduced in "facsimile" and in the new technology of "photolithography," which means that the illustrations duplicate the visual codes of the original medium rather than translate them into another code, like the hatched lines of engraving, and thus will bring the viewer closer to the original than conventional reproductions. Promising even greater fidelity, some illustrations are from Blake's "original plates," implying posthumous impressions. The Selections, compiled and edited by Rossetti, along with the Annotated Catalogue of Blake's Pictures and Drawings, written by William Michael Rossetti, forced Macmillan to publish the biography in two volumes to make room for their contributions without having to cut illustrations. [9]

## II. Types of Illustrations and Reproductive Processes in the *Life of Blake*

For our purposes, the title page's key pieces of information are "original plates," "facsimiles," and Linton. The first refers to the sixteen relief etchings from *Songs* at the end of volume II and three wood engravings from Thornton's *Virgil* in volume I. But both sets of images, with one exception, are from electrotypes cast from the original plates and blocks. [10] The exception, the *Experience* title plate, was printed from a kerograph plate (see below). The electrotypes are identified as being the "original plates" presumably because there is an exact one-to-one correspondence between the plate and its cast and hence, theoretically, the impressions are indistinguishable from the originals. Technically, these images are facsimiles, which by definition reproduce the codes, size, and color of the original. In addition to these 19 electrotypes, there are 14 other illustrations that are facsimiles in this strict sense: eight designs from *For Children*, five drawings, and one engraving. There are also 19 details of designs reproduced to size and style.

The illustrations Gilchrist describes as "Facsimile" are not, strictly speaking, facsimiles, since they are reduced in size. "Facsimile" refers to the "Six Plates in Colour. One from 'America', two from 'Europe', and three from the 'Jerusalem', all reduced" (xiv). These were printed separately and inserted like engravings. "Colour" refers to the reddish brown ink in which they and the electrotypes of the *Songs* were printed, a color used by Tatham in the posthumous copies (but never by Blake) and preferred by Gilchrist, who believed that *Jerusalem* copy I, a posthumous copy, was "so incomparably superior, from this cause [ink color] to any other I have seen, that no one could know the work properly without having examined this copy" (192-93). The "Twenty-one Photo-lithographs from the Originals" (xiv) also fall into this category. Also reduced, these 22 plates (including the title page) were printed in black, but they are "of" the originals and not "from" the originals. There are 13 other illustrations that represent in reduced size an entire composition. Because they are reduced in size, we would today call these 41 illustrations "reproductions."

The facsimiles (of full designs and details) and reproductions account for 93 of the 116 Blake illustrations. The other kinds of illustrations in the *Life* are details and reconstructions. The former refers to a distinct part of a design, like a vignette or interlinear decoration, or even a small figure, reduced in

size. A dozen of these were printed with the type and, along with many of the details executed to size and style of the original, functioned primarily as ornamental tailpieces, ending 29 of 39 chapters in volume I and interspersed five times among the Selections in volume II. In nearly all cases, lack of space was the reason for the absence of a tailpiece, and in most cases, the need to fill empty space was the reason for its presence. In only five cases does the tailpiece actually fit the subject or theme of the chapter it accompanies. Put another way, 29 of Linton's ornaments illustrate—or, to be more exact, adorn—the *Life*'s two volumes. These were almost certainly designed by Linton after the pages were proofed and reset and the space at the end of the chapter or section was determined. [11]

Reconstructions are of illuminated pages or parts of them, with a typographic text in place of Blake's (e.g., the details from *Visions* plate 3 and *TheL* plate 3 on pages 105, 2:71). The largest approximation is *America* plate 13 (112), a full-page design that was to have “formal type . . . substitute . . . for the author's flowing hand-written poetry” (111). It is so represented in the 1880 edition, but apparently something went wrong in the first edition, where Gilchrist's text instead of Blake's lies within the design, transforming it into a full-page ornament—and an effective advertisement for kerography.

The illustrations break down into five categories: 56 illuminated prints, 43 engravings, 13 drawings, three wood engravings, one watercolor, and no paintings. They were meant to address what Gilchrist recognized as the inherent paradox in “knowing Blake.” He states that two of Blake's watercolors, *Dream of Queen Catherine* and *Oberon and Titania*, both “remarkable displays of imaginative power, and finished examples in the artist's peculiar manner,” were in the 1857 Manchester Art-Treasures Exhibition, but attracted “few gazers, fewer admirers” (3). This, he says, is because Blake's audience “needs to be *read* in Blake,” because one needs “to have familiarized oneself with his unsophisticated, archaic, yet spiritual ‘manner,’—a style *sui generis* as no other artist's ever was,—to be able to sympathize with, or even understand the equally individual strain of thought, of which it is the vehicle “ (3). In short, to see Blake requires knowing him, which in turn requires seeing him. The idea, however, to reproduce Blake primarily in *facsimile*, as opposed to etched or engraved translations, appears to have been Linton's, and the illustration selection appears to have been started Gilchrist and Linton and then supplemented by Rossetti, who in February 1863 “consulted with him . . . about the illustrations” (DW 477). Indeed, “the poet-artist” who edited Gilchrist's manuscript and the Selections

also “took a keen interest in the illustrations for the *Life*” (AG 87), and he, along with his brother, provided Linton “with original drawings, plates, and photographs from which to copy” (Smith, *Radical* 147).

These provisions would have included drawings in the Notebook, probably prints from *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, Book of Job, and other graphic works, and, as we shall see, photographs of illuminated prints. Photographs may seem an unlikely inclusion this early in the 19th century, but in fact it was not unusual for Rossetti to work from photographs (Bartram 135-43) and to have his own paintings and drawings photographed and to inscribe the photographs as gifts (F 2.221, 275, 290, 318, 324, 342, DW 611). For Edward Moxon’s edition of Tennyson’s poems (1857), which heralded in a new school of book illustration with its 54 illustrations by Pre-Raphaelite artists, Rossetti had three of his five pen and ink drawings photographed on the blocks before they were cut. The photographs, which were intended to check the accuracy of the prints, were shown with seven after William Holman Hunt’s designs in the 1857 Pre-Raphaelite exhibition at Russell Place. Rossetti asked Mrs. Gilchrist on 15 January 1862 for a photograph of her husband so he could draw a portrait for the memoir he intended for the *Life* (F 2.449). William Rossetti sent two photographs of “sketches by Blake” to Mrs. Gilchrist, 25 August 1862 (F 2.486), and, in late 1865, Dante had sent photographs of Blake’s work to Charles Eliot Norton, who doesn’t identify but found them “deeply interesting” and “very delightful. I know no pictures so full of poetic feeling or so poetic in conception as his” (Rossetti 169). [12]

Linton and Rossetti’s first contact appears to have been around 1848, when Linton says he lent Charles Wells’ *Stories from Nature* and the drama *Joseph and his Brethren* to Rossetti, who “admired them and talked of illustrating the *Stories* for my engraving; the project, however, fell through” (Linton, *Memories* 65). [13] Linton’s first wood engravings of Rossetti’s designs were in late 1856, when he engraved two and Daziel the other three for the Moxon Tennyson. Rossetti, as an illustrator, was obsessed with detail and notoriously difficult to satisfy. On 18 December 1856, he complains to William Allingham: “But these engravers! What ministers of wrath! Your drawing comes to them. . . delicately, & is hewn in pieces . . . As yet, I fare best with W. J. Linton. He keeps stomach aches for you, but Dalziel deals in fevers & agues”(F 2.146). Writing on the same day to Ford Madox Brown, he states: “Dalziel has sent me a second proof, much better, and I hope further corrections may do even more. But

Linton is the man. I have got also [Linton's] 2nd proof of *Mariana*, which is quiet another thing" (F 2.151). Of his proof of *Marianna in the South*, Rossetti says to Linton on 26 January 1857: "I can see nothing further to do, except perhaps to lighten the end of the nose in the profile still slightly. . . . It is excellent I think, & this profile now peculiarly so" (F 2.168). Linton, who engraved 14 of the designs for the Moxon Tennyson, sent Rossetti a proof of his *Sir Galahad* in January 1857, which Rossetti thought "fine in many respects" (F 2.165), but still annotated it extensively for revisions (Marsh 11-15). Rossetti finally met Linton on 6 February 1857. Writing to William Bell Scott the following day, he says: "Your friend W. J. Linton did two [wood engravings] for me, & I am convinced that he is a long way the best engraver living now that old Thompson is nearly out of the field. . . . He seems a most agreeable fellow. I am hoping to have some impressions of photographs which have been taken from one or two of my blocks, & in such case to send you copies" (F 2.170-71). [14] As noted, he took photographs of three blocks, the ones he gave the Dalziel brothers, another sign of his faith in Linton's skill. Of Rossetti, Linton said "I had great regard, though I saw not much of him. . . . a man of genius both in art and literature; one, however, hindering the other, the literary preponderating, and by which he will be best recollected" (*Memories* 171). [15]

Rossetti next used Linton as his engraver for *Goblin Market*. Dissatisfied with the slow progress of the original engraver, he urged Macmillan in December of 1861 to use Linton, who was then working for him on the *Life*. Eleven months earlier, on behalf of a young artist in search of work, probably W. J. Wiegand (see below), he asked Macmillan if he needed a copyist, but the publisher "said he would speak to Linton," who Rossetti planned to ask as well (F 2.347). This suggests that Linton may have been working for Macmillan at the time and that the publisher, perhaps on Rossetti's recommendation, may have been the one to team illustrator and biographer. However they met, Smith is clearly mistaken about the Rossetti brothers commissioning Linton for Mrs. Gilchrist in 1862 (*Radical* 147), since Linton and Gilchrist were negotiating by 20 April of 1861, when Rossetti offered to secure Mrs. Burne-Jones as "copyist . . . for the Blakes . . . if you & Linton cannot entertain the idea" (F 2.351-52). Within six weeks, Linton had a firm sense of what the *Life* needed in way of illustrations and became, in Rossetti's words, the "middleman." Rossetti, on 30 May 1861, tells his artist friend James Smetham: "I trust Gilchrist's acquaintance may bring you some connection with his Blake book if you care to be

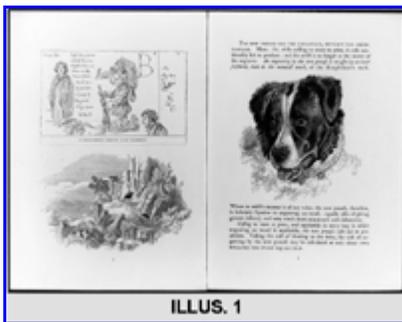
connected with it; and I am sure it will be a first rate work, & that you would be just the man he wants. But there is a middleman—Linton the engraver—so it is not all under Gilchrist’s control” (F 2.370). [16] Linton may have concurred: “With Gilchrist I worked on his *Life of Blake*, having to get up the illustrations. So one Sunday I went with Gilchrist to see Linnell at his house,” where “after dinner we were shown his Blake treasures, his portrait of Blake, the original drawings for the book of Job, proof impressions of the plates, and Blake’s designs for Dante,—taking care not to leave us alone with any” (Linton, *Memories* 181).

Linton was a draughtsman, engraver, printer, publisher, editor, poet, “ardent Republican agitator, and friend of Mazzini and other advanced liberals” (Maré 67). Like Blake, he struggled all his life against the idea that the engraver was a craftsman and not an artist. By 21, “he had become quite outspoken about the merits of white-line [wood engraving], which was ‘quicker and more flexible,’ and the role of the engraver as collaborator/translator with an artist, each a ‘member in the great Guild of Art’ and not ‘mere mechanic’” (Engen *Dictionary* 161). [17] A master of Bewick’s white line (Crane 47), Linton hated using his beloved wood engraving to reproduce pen and ink drawings, for these required producing black lines and going against the nature of the medium, where lines cut with the burin are below the inked surface and hence print white. Kerography, his new facsimile process, which he touted as a replacement for wood engraving, would, ironically, free wood engraving to be the medium of artists and not copyists. In July of 1861, Linton published a sixteen-page pamphlet titled *Specimens of a New Process of Engraving for Surface-Printing*. He no doubt told Gilchrist about his new process that spring, which he described as ideal for facsimilizing line drawings. Gilchrist, who defined relief etchings as facsimiles of drawings (69), would have immediately seen its value to the *Life*.

Linton reproduces “specimens” of kerography to show what it is capable of, and, sounding like Blake in the Prospectus of 1793, defines its advantages as lowering production costs and, most important, eliminating translation. This new process of surface—or relief—printing was intended to “take the place of” wood engravings, whose “*great disadvantage* is, that at best they are only translations—and generally very imperfect translations—of the artist’s drawings on the block” (3). The new process, “while costing no more to print . . . costs considerably less to produce,” but its main advantage is that “the artist is no longer at the mercy of the engraver. *An engraving by the new process*

*is necessarily an exact facsimile, even to the minute touch*, of the draftsman's work, where an artist's manner is of any value, the new process, therefore, is infinitely superior to engraving on wood; capable also of giving greater delicacy, and very much more minuteness and elaborations" (5).

Kerography can also do "every thing which can be etched on steel or copper. The only limit to its use is the capability of surface-printing. For whatever can be printed from block in relief, with type or separately, by hand-press or by steam, the new process is available" (8-9). It also had advantages "Over lithography: —Cheapness in printing, greater delicacy and sharpness of line, greater certainty and regularity of impression" (15). Linton reproduces a sketch by the novelist and illustrator Thackeray in facsimile. On the sketch, Thackeray writes: "Dear Sir. Will this print in relief? If so, one might write and draw on the same plate. Send me, if possible, a proof of this, and oblige.—yours W. M. T" (illus.



1). It is a drawing of a boy and a caricature of a man, and it is the only specimen with text, which, even without Thackeray's comment about combining text with image, exemplifies its use to reproduce handwritten text. [18]

Kerography, which Linton does not explain technically, is a black line method and, not surprisingly, more complicated than he lets on. A copper plate is given "an ordinary black etching ground" and coated with a layer of white wax, onto which the tracing is transferred so that the design on the plate is in the same direction as the original. The design is incised through the wax and ground with an etching needle, "bitten in by acid in the same way as an etching, and then a cast taken from it, which would give the lines in relief, and this cast would be produced in hard metal, and probably electrotyped to print from in the ordinary way" (Crane 56). Because the cast reverses the image, the print is the same direction as the original. The technique approximates drawing, in that the design on the wax ground "would appear in black line, so that the artist could see the effect pretty much as when printed, or as when drawing on paper" (Crane 56). The technique is ideal for reproducing flat, non-tonal line work, which, of course, practically defines Blake's relief-etched plates. It "can be worked at hand-press or machine, with type or without" (Linton, *Specimens* 3), which made reconstructions and tailpieces possible. Crane describes kerography as "to some extent an anticipation of some of the later mechanical processes of engraving

metal plates of zinc or copper so as to adapt them to surface-printing, although in this case without any photographic agency” (56). [19]

The “new process” may not have required a “photographic agency,” i.e., a plate sensitized to accept a projected photographic negative, but it did use photographs. As noted, the Rossetti brothers supplied Linton with “original drawings, plates, and photographs from which to copy.” At first, this claim appears based not on material fact but on kerography’s need for models to trace. But an album of Linton’s preliminary studies for the *Life* has recently come to light. Titled *Blake: Proofs, Photos, Tracings*, it is written in the spiky calligraphy that Linton used for the fly-titles (following the tables of contents) in volumes I and II of the *Life*. “Proofs” refers to kerographic impressions from the *Life*; “photos” refers to black-and-white photographs of illuminated plates that were reduced in size to fit the *Life*’s pages and *reversed*, which means their texts were backwards and that the tracings of these images—which are not extant—had to be counterproofed onto the kerographic plate to provide a print in the same direction as the original; and “tracings” refers to the tracings in pencil and/or in pen and ink on transparent paper that were made of original images or photographs. [20] The tracings and proofs were Linton’s doing, no doubt, but the photographs appear to have been Rossetti’s. Together, these 72 proofs, photographs, and tracings help to clarify puzzling omissions in the *Life*, such as the *Ancient of Days* and *Urizen* designs, and to explain references in the correspondence among the participants to works apparently planned for the *Life* but not extant, such as *Thel* facsimiles and Book of Job border designs. They also reveal the originals that Linton copied, the unseen steps behind his facsimile-making technique, and, most interestingly, works initially selected but excluded from the *Life*. [21]

### III. Works Selected for *The Life of Blake*

Cunningham concludes his biographical sketch by asserting that if the public could see the Blake of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, *Gates of Paradise*, and the *Illustrations to the Book of Job*, “his best and most intelligible” works, then it would see that Blake “was the possessor of very lofty faculties, with no common skill in art, and moreover that, both in thought and mode of treatment, he was a decided original” (181). These three works account for 60 of the 93 facsimiles and reproductions in the *Life*—including one headpiece and nine tailpieces.

The seven pages from *Innocence* and nine from *Experience* came from “ten plates” (*Life* 126), since many of the original plates were etched on both sides. Only nine plates were used, however, because the *Experience* title plate (which was probably on the verso of the “Introduction” to *Experience*, which was not reproduced) was missing. The title plate is a kerograph facsimile, most likely from a tracing of the title plate in *Songs* copy T, which was then in the British Museum. In the facsimile, the date is missing, as are the bun on the female mourner’s hair and the flourish on the “T” in the colophon, and there are added lines in the back wall and columns. [22] The *Experience* impressions from the electrotypes, but not the title plate or the *Innocence* impressions, are in the Album.

*Gates of Paradise* appears to have made everyone’s top 10 Blake list, though none of the early commentators appears to have realized that *For Children* and *For the Sexes* are different works, the former executed in 1793 with 18 plates and the latter consisting of these eighteen plates in their second states, executed c. 1818, and three new text plates. Gilchrist described the former as a “singularly beautiful and characteristic volume, preeminently marked by significance and simplicity” (*Life* 101). Mrs. Gilchrist found a note to “Look in the Gates of Paradise for headings to Chapters,” which she believed “must refer to illustrations, as there is little or no letter-press” (AG 123). She had “Mr Denman’s” copy, which she thought must be “imperfect,” “for I find it spoken of as ‘one of Blake’s most beautiful and characteristic books . . . a little foolscap octavo containing sixteen plates of emblems accompanied by verse, with a title or motto to each plate’” (AG 123). Denman, possibly a relative of Maria Denman, sister-in-law of Flaxman, is not recorded in *Blake Books* as owning a copy of *Gates*, but apparently owned a copy of *For Children*; the missing plates, the “Keys to the Gates” and “The Accuser of this World,” were transcribed in the *Life* probably from Linnell’s *For the Sexes* copy B. Linton executed convincing kerograph facsimiles, presumably of Denman’s copy, of plates 1, 2, 4, 9, 10, 14, and 16 in their first states, impressions of which are in the Album. The other possible model is *For Children* copy B, which was in the British Museum as of July 1862.

Including Job engravings was an easy decision. Smith notes that they “received the highest congratulations” from respected Royal Academicians (474), and Cunningham found them to be “very rare, very beautiful, and very peculiar,” and in “the earlier fashion of workmanship,” bearing “no resemblance whatever to the polished and graceful style which now prevails” (177). Ruskin, in his

*Elements of Drawing* (1857), claims that “in expressing conditions of glaring and flickering light,” Blake, in his Job engravings, “is greater than Rembrandt” (XV 223). According to Gilchrist, the engravings, “taken as a grand harmonious whole, [are] an instance of rare individual genius, of the highest art with whatever compared, that certainly constitutes his masterpiece” (137). And it could be taken as a whole because it was the only series reproduced in its entirety—which may have prevented the inclusion of *The* facsimiles (see below). It is not clear, however, who decided to include the entire series or who decided on photolithography. Linton’s comments in the List of Illustrations (xiii) probably reveal part of the original plan for kerographic plates and the revision: “Three Plates From Job. . . . Two only the centres the same size as the originals, and one reduced to show border. These Plates are given in duplicate in the Series rendered by Photolithography.” [23]

Rossetti began “the Job chapter” at the end of October 1862, instead of the “memoir” of Gilchrist, because that “would be the best decision, as certainly the book would not be complete without some decided notice of the Job, according to Gilchrist’s original intention” (F 2.500). He sent it to Mrs. Gilchrist on 13 December 1862 (F 2.509). He states: “Except the *Grave*, these designs must be known to a larger circle than any other series by Blake; and yet they are by no means so familiar as to render unnecessary such imperfect reproduction of their intricate beauties as the scheme of this work made possible, or even the still more shadowy presentation of verbal description” (*Life* 285). By “imperfect reproduction,” Rossetti appears to be referring to Linton’s kerographs, because the first time he saw a photolithographic proof was a week later, on 19 December 1862: “The proof you send me is quite a decided improvement, I think, on the other method. Indeed, allowing forth necessary limitation of mechanical means, it seems to me even remarkably successful. I should be much interested to know exactly *what* the process is” (F 2.517). By 11 February, he knows it is photolithography but questions the wisdom of reproducing all the plates: the *Life* “might have been spared . . . without much loss” the “thickening process” of “the *whole Job* series by that photographic method of which specimens would have been sufficient, being of course imperfect though surprising” (DW 475). The decisions to have Job reproduced in the new technique of photolithography and in its entirety appear to have been neither Rossetti’s nor Linton’s and possibly made after they finished their work on Job, presumably by Macmillan or Mrs. Gilchrist. [24]

Linton's "imperfect reproductions" were of the center designs of plates 5 and 14, the vignette of plate 15, and the whole design of plate 8. The angels bordering the heading for chapter 1 came from plate 18, and, as noted, the true-size figures used in nine tailpieces came from plate 12. The Album contains impressions of plates 5 and 14, a reduced photograph of plate 8, and tracings of all the borders except one (see below).

Slightly more than half of the illustrations in the *Life* are from *Songs*, *Gates*, and the Book of Job. But if the public were to judge Blake's "worth by his *Urizen*, his *Prophecies of Europe and America*, and his *Jerusalem*, our conclusion would be very unfavourable": i.e., that he "was unmeaning, mystical, and extravagant, and that his original mode of working out his conceptions was little better than a brilliant way of animating absurdity" (Cunningham 181-82). Gilchrist appears to take this as a challenge, without challenging the idea that the prophecies are incomprehensible, because despite the poetry, the illuminated books provide possibly his firmest grounds for considering Blake an artist. He reproduces many of the illuminated designs described by Cunningham and Smith, along with a selection of his own.

*Visions*, not mentioned in the obituaries, Smith, or Cunningham, [25] "partakes of the same delicate mystic beauty as *TheL*, but tends also towards the incoherence of the writings which immediately followed it" (*Life* 106). The "designs . . . are magnificent in energy and portentousness. . . . The title-page is of great beauty; the words are written over rainbow and cloud, from the centre of which emerges an old man in fire, other figures floating round. We give two specimens. One (page 105) illustrates the Argument [plate 3] we have quoted; the other (page 98), an incident in the poem (also quoted), where the eagles of Theotormon rend the flesh of Oothoon [plate 7]" (109). The first "specimen"—a telling echo of Linton's pamphlet on kerography—is actually a reconstruction; it is true size and the only one in the chapter discussing *Visions*; the second is a much reduced detail used as a tailpiece for chapter 11. Figures from the title page were used for the *Life*'s fly-title in volume II (with the space between the figures reduced) and for the tailpieces for chapters 17 and 26, the latter to size. A reduced figure of Oothoon in flames and cloud, from plate 11, ends volume II, and is placed under the spiky lettering of "The End," in imitation of the *Visions*' ending. All but the reconstruction on page 105 are ornaments whose inclusion appears almost random, determined by the need to fill space rather than

illustrate text.

Also in the Album is the tracing of *America* plate 13 used to create the reconstruction on page 112. It is true size, in black wash over pencil, probably of copy F, “Mr. Monckton Milnes superb copy” (*Life* 111-112), and squared for reduction (illus. 2). In the space for text are handwritten instructions: “Chap 14 / size of page / from America.” Linton also reproduced *America* plate 7, which is not described but is positioned exactly: “Facing page 112. . . we give the fac-simile of a whole page from the *America*, an exact fac-simile both as regards drawing and writing (though reduced to about half the size of the original)” (111). Plate 13, as noted, has Gilchrist’s text instead of Blake’s, but the original plan was to create facing pages like those in *America* copy F. But what an odd sight that would have been, with plate 13 followed by plate 7, one in black ink and the other in reddish brown, one with a letterpress text and the other with Blake’s handwritten text. (They are sequential in the 1880 edition.) Gilchrist also singles out plates 14 and 18, but the only other illustration from *America* is of parts of the title plate, whose adult figures and flying children ornament the *Life*’s fly-title in volume I. This is Linton’s second title page, because Rossetti found the first to be “no facsimile from anything of Blake’s, but a sort of design by someone else, and I think creates an unfavourable impression as to the faithfulness of the work generally” (DW 481). [26]

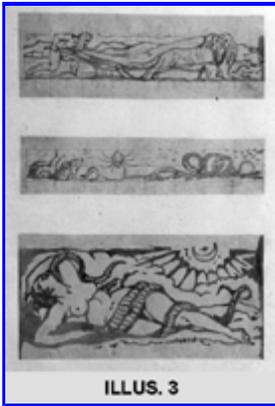


Smith singles out *Europe* plate 12 in color-printed copy D, which depicts “two angels pouring out the black spotted plague upon England . . . in which the fore-shortening of the legs, the grandeur of their positions, and the harmony with which they are adapted to each other and to their curved trumpets, are perfectly admirable” (479). Cunningham describes the same plate (178). Linton executed a kerograph reproduction of this plate, along with one of plate 15. Proofs of both plates and letterpress inscriptions are in the Album. The former is titled “BLIGHTED MAISE. —From EUROPE.” and the latter is “SPIDER’S WEB.—From EUROPE.” As printed in the *Life*, “Blighted Maise” and the periods in both inscriptions were deleted, the title no doubt on instructions from Rossetti, who recognized it as “one of the foolish titles written in pencil at haphazard in the Museum copy of *Europe* [copy D] by a Mr. Palgrave to whom the copy belonged formerly. This ought to be corrected if possible” (DW 483). [27]

There is no preparatory material for *Milton* in the Album, though Linton reproduced the vignette of Blake's Felpham cottage (pl. 40) as the tailpiece for the chapter on *Jerusalem* and *Milton* (198), a chapter which Rossetti finished (Dorfman 81). [28] *Milton*, not mentioned by the previous commentators, seems to have completely baffled Gilchrist. It "has no perceptible affinity with its title, so the designs it contains seem unconnected with the text. This principle of independence is carried even into Blake's own portrait of his cottage at Felpham, p. 198, which bears no accurate resemblance to the real place. In beauty, the drawings do not rank with Blake's most notable works" (195). Among the most "notable works," though, was *Jerusalem*, represented in the Life by three reproductions, six reconstructions, three details, one headpiece, and five ornamental tailpieces—and an unused photograph and tracing in the Album (see below). This attention to the pictorial is warranted, according to Cunningham and Gilchrist, for the images, and not the verses, are where Blake's genius lies. *Jerusalem* is an "extensive and strange work . . . The crowning defect is obscurity; . . . Yet, if the work be looked at for form and effect rather than for meaning, many figures may be pronounced worthy of Michael Angelo" (Cunningham 160-61). Gilchrist similarly evaluates form separately from content, questioning how "a man of Blake's high gifts ever came to produce such; nay, to consider this, as he really did, his greatest work," while also noting that what is true of Blake's designs in *Jerusalem* is true of all of his art (192). [29]

Rossetti, examining *Jerusalem* copy A at the British Museum (F 2.492, 496), described a dozen plates and eight vignettes, including "the Crucifixion [plate 76]," "an eagle-headed creature" [plate 78]," "serpent-women . . . coiled with serpents [plate 63, 75]," "Assyrian-looking human-visaged bulls . . . yoked to the plough or the chariot [plates 33, 46]," "rough intersecting circles, each containing some hint of an angel [plate 75]," all "unmistakable exponents of genius" (194-195). Linton reproduced plates 39, 76, and 78, and arranged on page 194 the vignettes from plates 33, 75, and 98 in loose imitation of an illuminated page. The marginal decorations from plates 12, 5, and 7 accompany the text from plate 27 ("To the Jews") to reconstruct the look of illuminated pages (186-88). The top vignettes from plates 3 and 77 are also reconstructed with type (183, 2.2). He reproduced the illustration from plate 32, "Jerusalem and her three daughters" (193), and figures from plates 3, 9, 8, 12, and 62 as tailpieces (with those from plates 3 and 9 reproduced true size), and from plate 58 as a headpiece (27, 50, 75, 186, 209,

216, 51). In the Album are impressions of plates 39 and 76, a proof impression of plate 78, and true-size tracings (ink over pencil and squared for reduction) of the marginal designs from plates 12, 5, 7, 77, 75, 33, 98, and 62 (illus. 3).



The controversial *Canterbury Pilgrims* engraving was another obvious choice. The reproduction, a special project, was engraved in outline by Charles Simms, 1861, with details of eleven heads (from the Sompnour to the three priests) below the design, and printed on a long sheet (22.2 x 25.cm) folded into

the book at page 230, within chapter 35, "Appeal to the Public, 1808-10." It is described in the List of Illustrations as "Reduced from Blake's large Plate. The Heads under it done the size and in the style of the original." Another engraving whose heads were reproduced "the size and in the style of the original" was *The Accusers*, from 1793, which is not described in the text. Listed as "A Plate (part of it)" (xiii) and used as a tailpiece to end the chapter on Visionary Heads, it is basically an ornament. The only other facsimile of an engraving might as well have been a detail. It is the tiny (3.2 x 8.0 cm) calling card that Blake executed in 1827 for George Cumberland (356), an impression of which is in the Album. The other project from the end of Blake's life, the Dante illustrations, consisting of 102 watercolors and seven engravings, has only one work reproduced, *The Circle of the Traitors*, reduced 66% but in the style of the engraving (334).

Nor are the illustrations to *Night Thoughts*, the work mentioned in the obits and other early commentaries, represented. This, however, is less surprising, since Gilchrist, like Cunningham, considered them failures: "looked at merely as marginal book illustrations, the engravings are *not* strikingly successful. The space to be filled in these folio pages is of itself too large, and the size of the outlines is aesthetically anything but a gain" (140). The "whole series exemplifies . . . [h]ow little Blake was adapted to ingratiate himself with the public" (140). According to William Rossetti, Linnell thought so little of them that he refused to believe that they were engraved by Blake. [30] *The Grave* is barely present in the *Life*. Gilchrist describes seven designs but reproduces only two, *Death's Door* very much reduced in outline (a mere 6.5 x 4.1 cm.) and used as a tailpiece ending the chapter that discusses *The Grave*, and the vignette of angels and old man from *Death of the Good Man* used as a tailpiece ending

the chapter on Blake's death. The latter was executed by Linton as a favor to Mrs. Gilchrist (Smith, *Radical* 147). These are the only two designs Cunningham singles out. Upon closer look, *The Grave*'s near absence may not be so puzzling. Because his drawings for the *Grave* were "really published and pushed in the regular way, Blake is most widely known—known at all, I may say—to the public at large. It is the only volume, with his name on its title-page, which is *not* 'scarce'" (*Life* 200).

Engravings, though given short shrift, fare much better than the watercolor drawings and tempera paintings. A dozen or so of the former are mentioned or briefly described. *Jacob's Dream*, for example, is "a poetic and beautiful composition" (216), the *Whore of Babylon* is a "grandly-conceived scene from the apocalyptic vision" (242), and *Dream of Queen Katherine* is "among Blake's most highly finished and elaborate water-colour drawings, and one of his most beautiful and imaginative" (358). But only the 1805 version of *Pestilence* (Butlin 193), entitled *Plague*, is reproduced, and that much reduced, ornamented above and below the frame with details of two heads (54). An impression from the *Life* is in the Album. Gilchrist mentions the 118 Gray illustrations in passing (333) and was unaware of the 537 *Night Thoughts* illustrations, assuming that "a complete set of drawings . . . had been made" for the 43 *Night Thoughts* engravings only, "which were afterwards sold . . . and passed into one of the royal collections" (139-140). Neither series is recorded in William Rossetti's Catalogue. These are serious omissions, as the two series account for more than half of all of Blake's extant watercolors. Nor did Gilchrist or William Rossetti know of Joseph Thomas's sets of Milton illustrations (*Comus*, *Paradise Lost*, and *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*). Gilchrist mentions *Paradise Regained* and the Butts set of illustrations to *Paradise Lost* only in passing (335); William Rossetti felt that the former was "less inspired than usual and comparatively tame" (Gohdes and Baum 11). [31]

Drawings, less substantial and consequential than Blake's literary and biblical watercolors and paintings, were better represented, probably because Linton had access to Blake's Notebook—and a reproductive technique more suitable to line. Five of the thirteen drawings in the *Life* are from the Notebook (pages 17, 44, 74, 67, and 75), all to size and all used as tailpieces (60, 89, 137, 172, 182), with only the drawing of Nebuchadnezzar, "a fac-simile of what was probably the original sketch for" *Marriage* plate 24, fitting the chapter in which it appears (89). The drawing on page 137 looks like flames because it turns the hairs of an Urizenic beard (Notebook 75) upside down. A pen-and-ink wash

drawing for Wollstonecraft's *Original Stories for Children* (91) and a pencil drawing of Mrs. Blake's portrait (318) are also reproduced. The other six drawings, much reduced, are from the Visionary Heads, three of which were mentioned by Cunningham. The *Ghost of a Flea* is reproduced with mouth open, as in Varley. Reproduced as headpiece to the chapter on the Visionary Heads is "Five Visionary Heads of Women," which was owned by Mrs. Gilchrist. Pencil tracings of this drawing, to size and squared for reduction, and of the drawing from Notebook 17 are in the Album.

#### IV. Works in Linton's Album but not in *The Life of Blake*

As we have seen, Gilchrist reproduces designs from nearly all the books or series listed in the public record, and in many instances reproduces the specific work mentioned or described. The inclusions are less surprising, however, than the exclusions, particularly when the works were in the Album. These include posthumous impressions of "A Divine Image" and "A Little Boy Lost." The former, only the seventh impression extant, was not mentioned in the *Life* and appears not to have been known to Gilchrist. A penis has been added to the kneeling figure in "A Divine Image," drawn in black ink with touches of white highlight. Left and top margins were partly wiped of ink. It appears likely that these were considered for kerographs, which would have given the *Life 18 Songs* facsimiles. [32]

As noted, Gilchrist thought the *Visions* title page was "of great beauty" (*Life* 109), though it was not reproduced. A tracing of it in ink over pencil (probably of copy A or B, the British Museum copies) is in the Album (illus. 4). It provided the ornaments for volume II's fly-title and the tailpieces for chapters 17 and 26. More of the *Visions* might have made it into the *Life* had Mrs. Gilchrist not feared that the publisher, Macmillan, would censure her. William Rossetti had written insightfully about *Visions*' posing a "formidable question" about how "ascetic doctrines in theology and morals have involved the relation of the sexes," a question "in whose cause [Blake] is never tired of uprearing the banner of heresy and nonconformity" (AG 127). Mrs. Gilchrist replies that she was "afraid to adopt entirely" his "most vigorous and admirable" commentary because "it was no use to put in what I was perfectly certain Macmillan (who reads all the Proofs) would take out again. I am certain of this from past experiences." The sheets had already been



set up twice and kept production at a standstill for three weeks, so, to prevent further delay, she therefore ‘reduced the subject’ to still less—to a very shadowy condition indeed—but left enough, I trust, for the cause of truth and honesty. It might be well perhaps to mention to Mr. Swinburne, if he is so kind as to do what was proposed, that it would be perfectly useless to attempt to handle this side of Blake’s writings—that Mr. Macmillan is far more inexorable against any shade of heterodoxy in morals than in religion.... (AG 128)

Swinburne, who was interested in writing about Blake’s ideas on religion and sex, referred to Mrs. Gilchrist as “Virtuous editor” (Swinburne, *Letters* 1:59). [33]

From *America*, Smith singles out plate 14 (“another instance of Mr. Blake’s favourite figure of the old man entering at Death’s door”) and plate 15, whose “tail-piece represents the bottom of the sea, with various fishes coming together to prey upon a dead body. The head piece is another dead body lying on the surface of the waters, with an eagle feeding upon it with outstretched wings” (477). Both Cunningham and Gilchrist repeat this description (178, 113). Despite—or because of—the attention paid to plate 15, it was *not* reproduced. A reversed photograph of this plate, however, reduced to the size of the kerographic reproductions, is in Linton’s Album, the first step in the selection process (illus. 5). Also



in the Album are reduced, reversed photographs of *Europe* plate 10 and—to no surprise at all—the *Ancient of Days*. These photographs are of a monochrome copy, possibly copy a, which was probably the model for the reproductions of *Europe* plates 12 and 15.

Today, *Ancient of Days* is Blake’s best-known image. Even then, it must have been well known. Smith states that if he were to compare Blake’s “giant forms . . . to the style of any preceding artist, Michel Angelo, Sir Joshua’s

favourite, would be the one; and were I to select a specimen as a corroboration of this opinion, I should instance the figure personifying the ‘Ancient of Days,’ . . . In my mind, his knowledge of drawing, as well as design, displayed in this figure, must at once convince the informed reader of his extraordinary abilities” (466). It was Blake’s “favourite” (Smith 478, Cunningham 179). Gilchrist also quotes Smith on the subject (127-128). Its absence from the *Life* is a mystery. Why include “Spider’s Web” instead?

Did Rossetti or Macmillan veto the choice—or was it Linton who decided not to take it to the tracing stage? In any event, the *Ancient of Days* had to wait till 1878 to be lithographically reproduced, as the frontispiece to *Europe*, in *Works by William Blake* (dated 1876 on the title page).

Also missing, but not unexpectedly, is *Urizen*. It was not mentioned in the obituaries or by Smith, though Cunningham had seen a copy and Gilchrist had examined Milnes's beautiful late copy G. To Cunningham, "Urizen, has the merit or the fault of surpassing all human comprehension. . . . nor does the strange kind of prose which is intermingled with the figures serve to enlighten us. . . . He swims in gulphs of fire—descends in cataracts of flame—holds combats with scaly serpents, or writhes in anguish without any visible cause [plates 12? 6, 25, 7]" (155-156). According to Gilchrist, *Urizen*, like "its predecessors . . . is shapeless, unfathomable; but in the heaping up of gloomy and terrible images, the *America* and *Europe* are even exceeded" (130-31). The figures are "howling, weeping, writhing, or chained to rocks, or hurled headlong into the abyss. . . . an old, amphibious-looking giant, with rueful visage, letting himself sink slowly through the waters like a frog [plate 12]; a skeleton coiled round resembling a fossil giant imbedded in the rock [plate 8], etc." (131-32). In the Album are a reversed photograph, to size of the original, of plate 12, pasted in upside down, so the figure looks like he is sinking, and a tracing in ink over pencil of the skeleton in plate 8 (illus. 6). The latter work is inscribed "from Europe." The model for the photograph and tracing was Milnes's copy G.

Milnes also owned a color-printed copy of *Marriage* (F), which Gilchrist alone praised highly. *Marriage* has no illustrations in the *Life* other than the running figure from plate 3 used as an unlisted tailpiece (241). It has no preparatory material in the Album. This is another odd omission, given Gilchrist's commentary: "In the track of the mystical *Book of Thel* came in 1790 the still more mystical *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, . . . perhaps the most curious and significant, while it is certainly the most daring in conception and gorgeous in illustration of all Blake's works" (78). Gilchrist quotes the text extensively (78-86) and describes all the designs (86-89). "The power of these wild utterances is enhanced to the utmost by the rich adornments of design and colour in which they are set—designs as imaginative as the text, colour which has the lustre of jewels" (86).



Perhaps Gilchrist—or Mrs. Gilchrist or Rossetti—suspected that the nudity (plates 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 14, 21, 24) would make reproductions unacceptable to Macmillan. Palmer told Mrs. Gilchrist that there was much that “would at once exclude the work from every drawing-room table in England” (Bentley, *Blake Records* 319n1). Fear of censure may have kept Linton from reproducing *Jerusalem* plate 63, one of the “serpent-women . . . coiled with serpents” singled out by Rossetti (194). Linton had prepared a tracing of this vignette to size, in ink over pencil, but did not square it for reduction (illus. 3). A reversed, reduced photograph of plate 46, described by Rossetti as “Assyrian-looking human-visaged bulls . . . yoked to the plough or the chariot” (194), is also in the Album.

As noted, the kerographic “facsimiles” were printed on separate leaves in reddish-brown ink but described as being “in colour” (xiv). It appears, though, that Mrs. Gilchrist and Linton had planned to produce all of *TheL* in color, possibly because Mrs. Gilchrist, in going through Gilchrist’s notes, found “that *TheL* was to be given entire” (AG 124). Whether this referred to texts or illustrations is not clear; the text eventually was reproduced, but the illustrations appear to have been derailed by Rossetti, who, in January 1863, writes Mrs. Gilchrist:

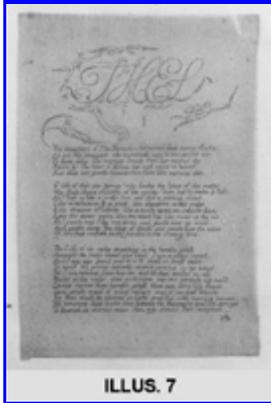
How about *The Book of TheL*? Where is it to come in the volume? If it is to be a facsimile affair it had better not interrupt the comfort of Part II but seek some corner of its own . . . It would have been much better to let it take its place with the other writings and leave the attempts at colour alone, as it is sure to be a failure. (DW 473)

The subject of *TheL* was also discussed in an undated February letter:

If anything were to be omitted the *Revolution* extracts and the *TheL* are the only things which would be no *very* desperate loss, but you told me of some plan going on with the *TheL* which no doubt puts this out of the question—a plan of colouring—of a very hopeless nature (as well as expensive) by the bye, and likely to serve no purpose except to produce an impression of Blake’s coloured works at their worst instead of their best. (DW 475)

Rossetti apparently lost no time speaking with Linton as well, for in an undated February 1863 letter to Mrs. Gilchrist he states: “I have heard nothing of the two volume plan, but spoke of it to Linton the

other day—he having written to me about the illustrations over which I went and consulted with him. The Plates of the *Songs*, *Thel*, and *Job*, are all to come together at the end, and I shall preface them with a few remarks. The *Thel* fortunately is only to be printed in (brown) monochrome. The illustrations on the whole are more satisfactory than I had anticipated” (DW 477). Apparently, Rossetti either convinced Linton that *Thel*, were it to be printed, should resemble the other reproductions and facsimiles, in reddish-brown ink, or Mrs. Gilchrist misspoke. But it is not clear from Rossetti’s comments whether the

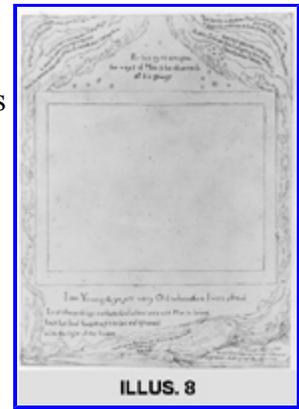


*Thel* was executed. The prints themselves are not known, but true-size pencil tracings for all the plates except the motto are in the Album. The tracing of plate 3 was used to create the reconstruction (2.71), unlisted in the *Life* (illus. 7).

The Album also contains, most surprisingly, pencil tracings of the borders of all the *Job* plates except plate 4, all drawn true size (approximately 21.9 x 17.1 cm.) and not squared for reduction (illus. 8). The borders for plates 5 and 14 are

pasted over Linton’s facsimiles of the central designs of

these plates. It appears that Linton intended to use the borders, reduced in size, as page designs like his *America* plate 13 (112). [34] Rossetti’s letters to Gilchrist on 18 June and 23 August of 1861 suggests the same: “Wiegand brought me . . . another plate he is doing for your book, a *Job* border with the *America* head-piece in the middle” (F 2.374). “Wiegand was here yesterday, and said several *Job* drawings were gone to be bitten in; and that a lot more are of various kinds. .



. . Linton sent me a book of specimens of his new style” (F 2.396). [35] Apparently, Wiegand was assisting Linton in preparing the tracings (“drawings”) for kerographic plates (“bitten in”) that were meant as decorative borders but which were ultimately rejected by either Macmillan or Rossetti, probably because, by December of 1862, *Job* was being reproduced in its entirety in the new technique of photolithography (F 2.517).

## Conclusion

The 116 illustrations picture 22 different works or series, of which nine are illuminated books and nearly all the others are engravings and drawings. Only one watercolor is reproduced. This was the

first time the general public saw reproductions of Blake's art *and* poetry, though given what was actually reproduced, they saw mostly Blake's graphic art and the art of his poetry. Gilchrist seems keenly aware of the need to reproduce the poetry visually, but also of the limitations of his facsimiles, or "specimens": "Of the beauty of most of these designs, in their finished state, it would be quite impossible to obtain any notion, without the necessary adjunct of colour. The specimens . . . can at best only show form and arrangement—the groundwork of the pages; the frames as it were in which the verses are set" (111). Nevertheless, for a public that had never seen an illuminated plate, these were indeed worth a thousand words. Readers, not knowing what to expect, expected very little—and the question of accuracy did not haunt editors then as it does now. [36] Gilchrist, however, appears motivated less by editorial concerns about authorial intentions than by his locating in book illustrations the true genius of Blake. The poet he praises and represents in the Selections is the lyrical poet, with works taken exclusively from *Poetical Sketches*, *Songs of Innocence*, *Songs of Experience*, *Book of Thel*, and the Notebook. The poet of *Visions*, *America*, *Europe*, *Urizen*, *Milton*, and *Jerusalem* eludes—and often embarrasses—him as well as Rossetti. These "incomprehensible" texts, divorced from their original forms, put Blake at a particular disadvantage that is, fortunately, more than countered by the "sublime" artwork. What Cunningham said of the *Ancient of Days* was said and felt to be equally true of these "Prophetic Books": "admired less for its meaning than the grandeur of its outline" (178).

In his Supplementary chapter, Rossetti agrees with Smith about Blake's being a great colorist (475, 482) and acknowledges that to know Blake's art requires studying more than just reproductions and facsimiles. He advises "the reader who wishes to study Blake as a colourist" to go the things themselves, to the British Museum Print Room (373). He cautions, however, that "All those in the collection are not equally valuable, since the various copies of Blake's own colouring differ extremely in finish and richness . . . and some others of his works are there represented by copies which, I feel convinced, are not coloured by Blake's hand at all, but got up more or less in his manner, and brought into the market after his death" (373). He thinks the museum's copy of *Songs* (T1-2) is a poor one, but singles out two volumes, *Song of Los* (A) and *Small Book of Designs* (A), the latter described in Smith as "coloured . . . with a degree of splendour and force, as almost to resemble sketches in oil colours" (479). Rossetti describes three in detail and four more generally, and, overall, prefers color-

printed designs to those washed in watercolors (*Life* 374-75). [37]

Even without color, the illuminated plates are, relatively speaking, well represented, in appearance and in numbers, perhaps because Gilchrist agreed with Smith that

Blake's talent is not to be seen in his engravings from the designs of other artists, though he certainly honestly endeavoured to copy the beauties of Stothard, Flaxman, and those masters set before him by the few publishers who employed him; but his own engravings from his own mind are the productions which the man of true feeling must ever admire, and the predictions of Fuseli and Flaxman may hereafter be verified—'That a time will come when Blake's finest works will be as much sought after and treasured up in the portfolios of men of mind, as those of Michel Angelo are at present'. (474)

But one must wonder whether reproductive technology was also driving the selection process. Linton's new process of kerography was best adapted for line work and not tone, and thus drawings, relief etchings, etchings, and engravings were more easily and successfully reproduced in facsimile than watercolors and paintings. The public now knew more about Blake, more facts and stories of his life, more of what he wrote and executed as printmaker and painter, but the works that they were able to see and read for themselves were mostly the poems, in letterpress, reconstruction, reproduction, and facsimile. The consequence is that Blake, the unknown painter, is portrayed primarily as printmaker-poet.

There is no doubt that the *Life* stimulated an interest in Blake's poetry and, in doing so, raised the question of how it was to be represented, in type or in facsimile. By 1868, Swinburne, in his *William Blake: A Critical Essay*, had provided the rationalization for editing Blake without images, for turning to Blake's advantage the limitations of print technology as a means for reproducing Blake pictorially (Eaves 109-114). Reproducing images required skilled artisans or new technologies, both of which increased the cost of production. Printing the poetry in type provided Blake with a much larger audience and enabled him to enter the canon. As Eaves notes, technological and economic "necessity favored a literary Blake; a printed edition went to the top of the post-Gilchrist agenda. . . . Here is the straight road of literacy and legibility. A succession of editors, including William Rossetti (1874),

Sampson (1905), Keynes (1925), and Plowman (1927), opened the way for the next (and perhaps the last) generation of Blake's literary editors, notably David V. Erdman and G. E. Bentley, Jr." (114).

On the other hand, the *Life*, with its reproductions and facsimiles, created an interest in the poetry as originally presented. It gave rise to the idea that abstracting texts typographically from artifacts in which they are embodied (and versioned) ignored and distorted Blake's original intentions and the way meaning in illuminated books is created. The first to produce a full color facsimile was Swinburne's own publisher, John Camden Hotten. His color lithographic facsimile of *Marriage* copy F, also produced in 1868, would have been the first in what was to have been a complete series had the lithographer, Henry Bellars, not died. [38] A succession of lithographic facsimiles followed in the next two decades, including John Pearson's *Jerusalem* (1877), *Works by William Blake* (1878), William Muir's series of facsimiles from the Edmonton Press (1880s), and the third volume of Ellis and Yeats's *The Works of William Blake* (1893). The rationalization for the William Blake Trust facsimiles, beginning in the 1950s, and the digital facsimiles of the William Blake Archive, beginning in the 1990s, can be traced back to Gilchrist's and Linton's editorial example, if not their understanding or critique of Blake's poetry.

Gilchrist's taste and preferences, along with those of the Rossettis, his wife, illustrator, publisher, and the first biographers, all affected the List of Illustrations. So, too, did a reproductive technology that favored line over tone. With the exception of the Job border tracings, which were in effect made redundant, the seventeen illustrations in Linton's Album that did not appear in the *Life* are all from illuminated plates. They were all considered candidates for the *Life*, with the photographs making it past the first jury and the tracings past the second. Their exclusion may have been due to subject matter or lack of space, and possibly not Linton's or Rossetti's decision. But their existence—and the absence of tracings and photographs of watercolor drawings and paintings other than *Pestilence*—reinforces the argument that Gilchrist and the others preferred the printmaker-poet to the painter. The kinds of images that could get through the technological filter more or less intact were relief etchings reproduced as kerographs or lithographs, and as a consequence, while the poetry was making its way into printed editions, this area of Blake's artistic production was the first to be reproduced and quickly dominated Blake reproductions after the *Life*. Given the kinds of works represented in the *Life* and immediately

afterwards, Blake's greatness as an artist appeared to lie primarily in the art of the book. It took another century and advances in photomechanical reproduction to create a more balanced picture of Blake and reveal that his greatness as an artist also lies in his painting.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Linton, *Specimens of a New Process of Engraving for Surface-Printing*. Pages 4 and 5, showing three specimens of kerographs imitating pencil drawing, lithograph, and wood engraving, including "An Experimental Drawing by Mr. Thackeray."

2. *America a Prophecy*, plate 13. Tracing in ink over pencil, squared for reduction, 23.3 x 17.2 cm. The design was reproduced in the *Life* at page 112, reduced to 17.3 x 11.5 cm. The model was R. M. Milnes's copy F.

3. *Jerusalem* plates 33, 98, 63. Tracings in ink over pencil, to size, on three strips of transparent paper, 14.7 x 5.1 cm, 14.7 x 3.5 cm, 14.8 x 7.6 cm. The first and second vignettes were squared for reduction and used in the *Life* at page 194, reduced to 2.3 x 10.6 cm and 1.5 x 10.6 cm respectively. The third and perhaps the most erotic of the *Jerusalem* vignettes was not squared or used in the *Life*. The model was R. M. Milnes's copy I.

4. *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*, plate 2. Tracing in pencil, to size, trimmed to 17 x 12.8 cm. The figure of Oothoon running was reproduced to size in the *Life* at page 124; the fiends in the clouds were used in the fly-title in volume II, where they are reproduced to size but in an altered arrangement; the reclining figure at left was reproduced reduced at page 160. The model was copy A or B, both in the British Museum.

5. *America a Prophecy*, plate 15. Reversed photograph, trimmed to within the plate borders, 15.6 x 11.4 cm, with tear in lines 7-8. Not reproduced in the *Life*. The model was R. M. Milnes's copy F.

6. *Urizen* plate 8. Tracing in ink over pencil, to size, 11.4 x 9.9 cm, on transparent paper, 14.0 x 12.7 cm, misidentified in pencil as "from Europe." Not reproduced in the *Life*. The model was R. M. Milnes's copy G.

7. *The Book of Thel*, plate 3. Tracing in pencil (tear in the top right corner), to size on sheet 18.5 x 12.8 cm. Top vignette only used in reconstruction in *Life* at page 271. The model was either R. M. Milnes's copy B or British Museum's copy D.

8. *Illustrations of the Book of Job*, plate 12. Tracing in pencil, to size, 21.9 x 17.1 cm. Figures from the border were used as tailpieces throughout the *Life*, at pages 11, 42, 118, 126, 233, 248, 297, 2111, and 2116.

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## NOTES

[\*] *Blake, Empire, and Nation*. Eds. Steven Clarke and David Worrall. London: Palgrave, 2003.

[1] The history of Blake's reception between his death in 1827 and his biography in 1863 has been presented in admirable detail by Deborah Dorfman, *Blake in the 19th Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969) and, especially, Suzanne R. Hoover, “William Blake in the Wilderness: A Closer Look at his Reputation 1827 – 1863,” *William Blake: Essays in Honour of Sir Geoffrey Keynes*, eds. Morton D. Paley and Michael Phillips (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), 310-48. See also G. E. Bentley Jr., *Blake Books* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 15-24, *Blake Records* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), and *William Blake: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975). The main pre-1863 texts on Blake are reproduced in facsimile in Joseph Wittreich, *19th Century Accounts of William Blake* (Gainesville, Florida: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1970). All references to Malkin, Smith, and Cunningham are to this volume, followed by the page numbers of the original publications.

[2] Cunningham's biography is 51 pages long in the second edition, also 1830 (reprinted 1880, 1886, and 1893), because Cunningham added seven poems and six paragraphs on the poetry that soften somewhat his initial harsh criticism. The seven poems are from *Poetical Sketches* and the *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*. Cunningham's sketch had the most currency but was actually the least informed. “The Tiger” (sic) is mistakenly assumed to be one of the *Poetical Sketches*, the year of Blake's death is given as 1828, *Europe* and *America* are said to have been executed *after* the “*Inventions*” to the *Book of Job*, and *Jerusalem* and *Milton* before *The Grave*. Numerous works are described without first-hand examination. Smith knew Blake and saw his works, but his detailed descriptions of *Experience*, *Europe*, *America*, and the *Small* and *Large Book of Designs* were written by Richard Thomas, librarian of the London Institute.

[3] To see how image can be interpreted as decorative and text as authentic and essential, how an “antivisual tradition identifies reality with ideas in language and associates pictures with excess and the ornamentation or distortion of reality, and thus with entertainment, fantasy, and luxury,” see Morris Eaves, “Graphicality: Multimedia Fables for ‘Textual’ Critics,” *Reimagining Textuality: Textual Studies in the Late Age of Print*, eds. Neil Fraistat and Elizabeth Bergmann Loiseaux (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), 109. Eaves’s primary objective is to explain how Swinburne could “rationalize the editorial separation” of image and word in the typographic editions of Blake’s poetry (113).

[4] See F. B. Smith, *Radical Artisan, William James Linton 1812-97* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1973), 146-47; see also Linton, *Three Score and Ten Years: 1820-1890 Recollections* (London: Lawrence and Bullen, 1895, reprinted as *Memories*, New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1970), 181, and Walter Crane, *An Artist’s Reminiscences* (London: Methuen, 1907), 57. Crane, who was an apprentice of Linton’s from 1859 through 1862, when Linton worked on the *Life*, claims unequivocally that all the illustrations executed by Linton are kerographs.

[5] Details from Job engravings (angels from plates 5, 15, and 16) were reproduced in Anna Brownell Jameson, *Sacred and Legendary Art* (London, 1848). In America, eleven of the twelve *Grave* designs (minus plate 3) were re-engraved one-quarter size by A. L. Dick in 1847, reissued in 1858; two of these plates were reproduced in 1858 in *Littell’s Living Age* magazine, published in Boston (see Bentley, *Blake Books* 534, 720, 730).

[6] Palmer and other young artists who befriended Blake in the last years of his life called him the “Interpreter” and themselves the “Ancients.” He was also John Linnell’s son-in-law and, like Linnell, provided Gilchrist with much first-hand information about Blake. His letter is from November 1863 and is quoted from Herbert Gilchrist, *Anne Gilchrist, Her Life and Writings* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1887), 143. Hereafter cited as AG.

[7] Oswald Doughty and John Robert Wahl, eds., *Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, volume II, 1861-1867 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 489. Hereafter cited as DW. Volume I and most of volume II of this four volume edition has now been superseded by William E. Fredeman, ed. *The Correspondence of Dante Gabriel Rossetti: The Formative Years, 1835-1862*, volume I, 1835-54, volume II, 1855-61 (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2002). Hereafter cited as F 1 and F 2.

[8] The lines are: “The sanctuary’s gloom at least shall ward / Vain tongues from where my pictures stand apart.” Doughty and Wahl state that the suggestion was followed in both the 1863 and 1880 editions (483n3). They are mistaken.

[9] Gilchrist had intended a two-part biography in one volume, with selections from the poetry to go in Part II. But he died suddenly of scarlet fever on 30 November 1861, leaving the biography almost completed but the Selections only sketched out and unedited. Rossetti, who lent Gilchrist Blake’s Notebook (then called the Rossetti Manuscript), had been advising him about Blake’s poetry since November 1860 (F 2.326). On 5 December 1861, one week after Gilchrist died, Rossetti offered Mrs. Gilchrist his and his brother’s assistance in completing the *Life* (F 2.425). A little more than two months later, on 11 February 1862, Rossetti’s wife Elizabeth (Lizzie) died of an overdose of laudanum. He and Mrs. Gilchrist appear to have worked on the *Life*, at least in part, to ward off grief. On 2 March, he tells her: “But I already begin to find the inactive moments the most unbearable and must hope for the power, . . . of working steadily without delay” (F 2.457). He tells Linton that “the only possible refuge will be in work” (F 2.459). On the first anniversary of Lizzie’s death, he writes Mrs. Gilchrist that “it would be an infinite pity” if the *Life* should not come thoroughly and include a properly and competently edited collection of his writings. Indeed I almost fancy that the really best plan, if this curtailment is to take

place, would be to include no unpublished matter [poems in the Notebook] and let that come harmoniously as a whole in some separate form which I should see to, having always meant to do so. To mutilate the Songs would be a real sin, . . . If anything were to be omitted the *Revolution* extracts and the *Thel* are the only things which would be no *very* desperate loss. . . . (DW 475)

[10] See Bentley, *Blake Books* 429, for a history of the electrotypes, and Robert N. Essick, “The Virgil Wood Engravings in Alexander Gilchrist’s *Life of William Blake*,” *The Book Collector* 40 (1991), 579-81. Electrotypes could be mounted on blocks to be type-high and thus printed with the type.

[11] At the time of Gilchrist’s death, only eight chapters had been set in type (*Life* v). These eight have five tailpieces, though probably not when proofed. The final number and placement of tailpieces—and presumably their creation, which was usually size specific—could not have been selected until the chapters were proofed and set for final printing. F. B. Smith believes that the tailpieces in volume II “at pages 24, 97, 111, and 116 reveal Linton’s usual wispy line and moreover do not . . . appear elsewhere in Blake’s oeuvre” (*Radical* 147-48). Actually, the last three are from the Book of Job plate 12; the first one, though, and the tailpieces at 307 and 367 (a slouching figure, a sunset, and cliffs, respectively) are almost certainly by Linton. Smith suggests that “his High Victorian embellishments may have rendered Blake a little less alien to the public of the 1860s and 1880s” (*Radical*, 148). Linton was particularly fond of the angelic figures in Job plate 12, taking nine of the ornamental tailpieces from it. See Robert Gleckner, “W. J. Linton’s Tailpieces in Gilchrist’s *Life of William Blake*,” *Blake, An Illustrated Quarterly* 57 (Spring 1981), 208-211.

[12] For the use of photography in Rossetti’s work and the other Pre-Raphaelite artists, see Michael Bartram, *The Pre Raphaelite Camera, Aspects of Victorian Photography* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1985).

[13] Linton published a few of the stories in the *Illustrated Family Journal* and the *Illuminated Magazine*, both of which he edited in 1845. Rossetti, who expresses his admiration for Wells in early 1848 but does not mention the Linton connection, introduced Wells to Morris and Swinburne, who wrote a preface to the drama when republished in 1876. Rossetti praises both of Well’s works in his Supplementary chapter in the *Life* (381-82) as yet other examples of neglected genius.

[14] “Thompson” is John Thompson (1785-1866), with whom Linton studied for two years (1836-38) and whom he described in his *Masters of Wood Engraving* (1889) as “beyond question entitled to rank above all the men who have engraved in wood” (Engen, *Dictionary* 161). In the letter to Scott, Rossetti penned a little poem addressed to the Dalziel brothers: “O woodman, spare that block, / O gash not anyhow! / It took 10 days by clock— / I’d fain protect it now. / (Chorus of wild laughter. / The curtain falls” (F 2.170). In defense of the Dalziel brothers, Edward and George, who had the “most influential and successful firm of wood engravers, draughtsmen, printers and publishers of the period” (Engen, *Dictionary* 62), Rossetti’s first drawing for them on wood was an engraver’s nightmare, with wash, pencil, colored chalk, and pen and ink, which do not reduce well to the black and white of wood engraving (Engen, *Pre-Raphaelite Print* 94).

[15] In March of 1857, Linton and Rossetti began planning an edition of the Brownings to be illustrated by PreRaphaelite artists, comparable to the Moxon Tennyson, but nothing came of the project (F 2.176). Rossetti produced only four more drawings on the block, two for Christina Rossetti’s *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862) and two designs for her *Prince’s Progress and Other Poems* in 1866 (Parker 54, 63), three of which Linton engraved.

[16] Smetham did not contribute any illustrations to the *Life*, but his review essay from 1869 in the *London Quarterly Review* was reprinted in the 1880 edition. See Frances Carey, “James Smetham

(1821-89) and Gilchrist's *Life of Blake*" *Blake Newsletter* 8/3-4 (Summer-Fall 1974), 17-25.

[17] For similarities between Linton and Blake regarding the engraver as artist rather than copyist and the domination of line over tone, see Robert Gleckner, "W. J. Linton, a Latter-day Blake." *Bulletin of Research in the Humanities* 85 (1982): 220-221.

[18] Ruskin is said to have "heard of the process and called . . . for instruction in its technique" (Smith, *Radical* 146; see also Crane 57). Rossetti writes Gilchrist on 23 August 1861 that "Linton sent me a book of specimens of his new style, but I must say I think no better of it. However, I must try to do the drawings for my book that way if at all, as I have no time for a longer process" (F 2.396). Rossetti is referring to the illustrated title plate (*The Rose Garden*) he prepared for his *The Early Italian Poets*. On 27 October, though, he tells his publisher, William Smith Williams: "I am sorry to say Linton's plan has not succeeded with me." He proposes using wood engraving, the "longer process," or "adopt[ing] the photograph plan you proposed, or else omit it altogether" (F 2.412). The photographic process was not identified and the drawing was not included.

[19] Crane notes that he executed a head of a dog "more or less after Landseer" as one of the specimens (57) and that Linton invented kerography "in association with a man named Hancock, who prepared the plates" (56). See Gavin Bridson and Geoffrey Wakeman, *Printmaking & Picture Printing: A Bibliographical Guide to Artistic & Industrial Techniques in Britain, 1750-1900* (Oxford: Plough Press, 1984), 104-07, for other experiments in creating relief surfaces for line drawings. The method was too cumbersome to succeed and could not compete with lithography, which also duplicates drawings without translating them, or with photolithography and photoengraving, which eliminated even the need to redraw the original image.

[20] The Album is 33 x 26.7 cm and consists of fifty-nine unnumbered pages (counting the title page) in eight gatherings, stitched individually and taped together. The first and last leaves are pasted down to brown paper that was used as a cover. All tracings, photographs, and proofs were trimmed and pasted down on the recto of the leaves. Images small enough to fit the *Life*'s pages were traced directly; for those that were too large, either the works were reduced photographically and the photograph traced, or the tracing of the original was squared for reduction, which means that it was redrawn on paper with a smaller grid.

[21] Linton moved to New York City in 1866 and a few years later to a cottage in Hamden outside of New Haven, where he set up the Appledore Press (thought to be the first private press in America, Maré 67), and lived a Blakean life of poet-craftsman, printing his own illustrated books and poems. He received an honorary Masters of Arts degree from Yale in 1891, and was the first wood engraver elected to the American Academy of Arts (1880). I began looking through the Linton papers at Yale University in the summer of 1989, when I suspected Linton may have been responsible for a series of facsimiles of *There is No Natural Religion* that had been taken as authentic copies; see Viscomi, *Blake and the Idea of the Book* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), chapter 21. The Album is in Yale's Beinecke Library, "the Gift of Alfred E. Hamill, Yale 1905," given apparently in 1940 but uncatalogued until its re-discovery in 1989. It was not part of the Appledore Press or Hamden Cottage material as originally received. A more recent addition to the Linton Archive at the Beinecke Library is "A Collection of 109 pieces consisting of manuscripts, engravings, scrapbooks, correspondence, photographs, pamphlets, broadsides, clippings and periodicals by and about William James Linton." These are in four boxes and are from the estate of Mrs. Harry Cook, May 1980.

[22] Bentley could not explain the discrepancy between the facsimile and original and guessed correctly that the *Experience* title plate was from a nineteenth-century facsimile (*Blake Books* 429 n5).

[23] Rossetti interprets Linton's comments on the Job as his not giving up: "I received the list of

illustrations from Linton, and am sending it on to the Printer—I see he still includes the *Job* Plates which he copied, in spite of the photolithographs which might be considered to supersede them. But certainly it seemed a pity to leave them out after the trouble and expense” (12 June 1863, to Mrs. Gilchrist, DW 489).

[24] Rossetti at first thought the photolithographs were an unnecessary indulgence, but then found them pleasing, “being, though blurry, very full of colour, and not losing perhaps by reduction but getting concentrated in a pleasant way” (DW 477). Linton’s three *Job* facsimiles were removed in the 1880 edition, no doubt because of redundancy, and the photolithographs were replaced with photointaglios, which are sharper and less muddy. Linton’s *Job* vignettes and tailpieces, though, remained. Linton was no doubt opposed to the photolithographs—indeed, to photomechanical reproductions in general and the use of photographic technology in wood engraving in particular. Photographs freed the designer, in that he could work on paper any size instead of the block and retain the drawing for comparison, and could reverse the design mechanically. But it was the death knell for wood engraving as an art and industry. Linton wrote insightfully late in his life about photography’s negative effect on art: “The Engraver: His Function and Status,” *Scribner’s Monthly* 16 (1878), 237-42, and “Art in Engraving on Wood,” *Atlantic Monthly* 43 (1879), 705-15. Eight articles written in 1880 for the *American Art Review* were issued as *History of Wood-engraving in America* (Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1882).

[25] Nor are *All Religions are One*, *There is No Natural Religion*, *Book of Los*, *Book of Ahania*, or *Song of Los*. Gilchrist mentions the last two books but does not know of the other three, though W. M. Rossetti lists the second in his catalogue.

[26] In 1861, Macmillan also rejected a Linton design for another book, “a delicate, Blakean vignette of two floating nudes.” Macmillan “ordered its omission, despite Linton’s protest: ‘it would simply give offence. . . it may be an artistic wonder, but I confess that to myself its appropriate place would be as the tailpiece of some work of French ‘facetiae’” (Smith, *Radical* 145).

[27] Rossetti is correct; the inscription was not Blake’s, but neither was it Palgrave’s. It appears certainly to be by George Cumberland (Bentley, *Blake Books* 159 n2). Linton reused the kerograph of *Europe* plate 12 for the title page to his *Famine: a Mask* (1875, printed 1886), replacing Blake’s text with his own (see Smith, *Radical* 196).

[28] Linton most likely used *Milton* copy A, which was acquired by the British Museum Print Room in 1859.

[29] Gilchrist may have spoken about *Jerusalem* to Tatham, whose manuscript *Life of Blake* resurfaced in late 1863 (*Rossetti Papers*, 41), too late to be helpful to Gilchrist or his editors. Tatham interpreted *Jerusalem* as proof of the “authenticity” of Blake’s visions and believed that many of its “sublime” and “awful diagrams of an eternal phantasy” were “never surpassed” by “Michael Angelo, Julio Romano or any other great man . . . Even supposing the poetry to be the mere vehicle or a mere alloy for the sake of producing or combining these wonderful thoughts, it should at all events be looked upon with some respect” (Wittreich 217-28).

[30] See *Letters of William Michael Rossetti Concerning Whitman, Blake, and Shelley to Anne Gilchrist and her Son Herbert Gilchrist*, eds. Clarence Gohdes and Paull Franklin Baum (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1931), 11.

[31] One learns from Gilchrist that Blake painted, but learns relatively little about what. Gilchrist is biographer first and foremost: “Many of the almost numberless host of Blake’s water-colour drawings, on high scriptural and poetic themes, or *frescoes*, as he called those (even on *paper*) more richly

coloured, and with more impasto than the rest, continued to be produced; some for Mr. Butts, some to lie on hand; all now widely dispersed, nearly all undated, unhappily, though mostly *signed*. If men would but realize the possible value of a *date!*”(245). This from a man who disdained footnotes.

[32] Both impressions are printed in black ink on thick white, unmarked wove paper. “A Divine Image” measures 11.2 x 6.8 cm., which is the same as Keynes and Morgan pulls, on a leaf of 20.9 x 16.5 cm., and “A Little Lost Boy” measures 11.1 x 6.8 cm. on a 17.4 x 12.1 cm. sheet.

[33] Mrs. Gilchrist “found . . . the only place where dear Alec had left an absolute blank that must be filled in—was for some account of Blake’s mystic writings, or ‘prophetic Books,’ as he called them” (AG 125). To William Rossetti, she admitted: “I look forward with immense interest and curiosity to reading Mr Swinburne’s interpretation of the Prophetic Books; not without a lurking suspicion, though, he may have been insensibly led here and there to *create* a meaning out of his own great abundance” (*Rossetti Papers* 27). It was not only the prophetic poems, though, that concerned Macmillan. Wishing for “a less shuddering publisher,” Dante Rossetti asked Mrs. Gilchrist to “make a stand for the passage from *The Everlasting Gospel* about the Woman taken in Adultery. It is one of the finest things Blake ever wrote, and if there is anything to shock ordinary readers it is merely in the opening, which could be omitted, and the poem made to begin with ‘Jesus sat in Moses’ chair’ etc.”(DW 471, 465-66). For an example of Macmillan censuring Linton, see note 26.

[34] Gleckner assumed that Linton had executed “wood engravings” of “the entire series” (“Tailpieces” 208), based on the presence of tailpieces from a plate not reproduced in the *Life*.

[35] In AG 89, “Wiegand” is misspelled “Weigall,” and in DW 418, it is misspelled “Wigand.” Dorfman, referring to him as Weigall, identifies him as an engraver (5), but she apparently confuses him with Charles Harvey Weigall, who was a watercolorist and engraver born in 1794 and would have been around 67 years old in 1861. William Rossetti identifies him as “Wigand” and as “a young man known more particularly to some of my aunts” (*Rossetti Papers* 223). He sat for the head of Boswell in Dante Rossetti’s *Dr. Johnson at the Mitre*. Fredeman identifies him as W. J. Wiegand, a young artist befriended by Rossetti in January 1861 and for whom Rossetti sought employment with Macmillan (F 2.347n2). By June, he appears to have been assisting Linton, possibly as a copyist in preparation of kerographic plates.

[36] Rossetti writes Mrs. Gilchrist that he “should like to have the opportunity of writing a head-note [to *The*] and revising its text as to punctuation etc., as all Blake’s writings greatly need this kind of attention” (DW 473). He is well known to have “corrected” Blake’s punctuation, spelling, grammar, even word choice and order—what Gilchrist referred to as “technical flaws and impediments” (4). No doubt, a poet as disciplined as Rossetti, whose verses are syntactically tight, agreed with Gilchrist and thought that an untutored genius like Blake required a little help in doing what he would have done had he been better trained. Linton, on the other hand, tried to reproduce Blake as accurately as possible, but because the reproductions were done by hand, they vary subtly from the originals.

[37] William Rossetti admits the same preference at a more basic level, liking the color-printed drawings and illuminated books more than the watercolors: “It has already been explained elsewhere that the most complete, solid, and powerful works in colour left by Blake are to be found among his colour-printed designs. His water-colours are all, comparatively speaking, washy and slight; but some have a general character of strength, brilliancy, etc. of execution; and these may be spoken of below, with the needful implied reservation, as strong and brilliant” (*Life* 2.199).

[38] See Morton Paley, “John Camden Hotten, A. C. Swinburne, and the Blake Facsimiles of 1868,” *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* 79 (1976): 259-96. Swinburne’s *William Blake: A Critical*

*Essay* (London, 1868), which began as a review of the *Life* and centers on the *Marriage*, was published with a color facsimile of the title plate of *Marriage* copy F.