

A Bookbinder and his Client

FROM A LITTLE RESEARCH in my correspondence files I learn that Garth, by which name I was soon invited to address him, first wrote to me on January 21, 1969. My name and address had been given to him by Hugh Elliott, a London dealer, who told him that a number of books he (Garth) had bought had been restored by me. From then on I worked for him directly until the last months of his life when, astonishingly, his enthusiasm for books and collecting was undiminished. The amount of work was not great, but it came in a steady flow, usually with fairly vague instructions incorporating the ever-welcome phrase, "I leave it to your discretion."

My relationship with Garth, a bookman through and through, was the happiest and most rewarding I have ever

had with a collector. In the nature of things, I must occasionally have produced work which did not totally delight him, but never once did he indicate that this was the case; indeed, his expressed appreciation of even the most mundane of my efforts was effusive and rather embarrassing. He visited my bindery several times, on the last occasion with his son, Garth, and about eight years ago I was privileged to be Garth and Pauline's house guest at Hill Drive where, of course, I found many old friends on their shelves.

I lament the loss of a thoroughly nice man who was a good friend and considerate customer, and I am grateful for this opportunity to say so.

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London

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I. THE PROJECT

William Blake is best known as a lyrical poet and a painter, and is well represented in the second capacity in the Tate Gallery. A much less important part of his artistic output is much less well known, that is, his Illuminated Books, including The Songs of Innocence and of Experience and the so-called Prophetic Books, beginning with the Book of Thel and The Marriage of Heaven and Hell and culminating towards the end of his life in his greatest work, Jerusalem. These books were mostly etched on copper and printed in monochrome and were then coloured by hand. This was a laborious process, and ~~but~~ if the books exist in more than a few copies, all showing individual variations.

Keynes Collection, item 273. Autograph notes of Sir Geoffrey Keynes setting out the program for the Blake Trust. Keynes was about to destroy the notebooks preserving these and other notes in 1976, when he realized that Dr. Huston might like to have them, and through his interest, they now have been saved for posterity.