

W. S. Blake: New Facts and Engravings

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G. E. BENTLEY, JR., (gbentley@chass.utoronto.ca) hopes that his book on Thomas Macklin as printseller and patron will come out in 2016.

- 1 WILLIAM Stadden¹ Blake (1748–1814), engraver and printer of 16 'Change Alley, has a claim upon our attention chiefly because he shares two of his names with William Blake (1757–1827), engraver, printer, artist, and poet. When references of 1770–1827 to engravers named Blake are found, it may be difficult to determine which Blake is intended.² It is therefore useful to record newly discovered facts about W. S. Blake and note differences between his career and that of the poet.
- 2 William Stadder Blake, the son of William and Fanny Blake, was christened on 14 January 1748 in St. Andrew's

I should like to dedicate this note to John Windle. I am also grateful for invaluable advice to Robert N. Essick and Mary Lynn Johnson.

1. There is considerable variation in the spelling of W. S. Blake's middle name: Stadden on his own apprenticeship record and those of several of his apprentices, the trials of 1782 and 1805 at which he testified, and his will; Stadder for his christening; Staddon as a churchwarden.

2. For instance, "Blake the Engraver" whom Joshua Gilpin met on 14 April 1796 was taken to be the poet (G. E. Bentley, Jr., "The Way of a Papermaker with a Poet: Joshua Gilpin, William Blake, and the Arts in 1796," *Notes and Queries* 231 [ns 33.1] [1986]: 80-84) until the discovery of a letter to Gilpin of 13 April 1796 referring to "Blake Engraver & Printer of Exchange Alley, Cornhill" made it clear that the engraver was W. S. Blake (Bentley, "The Way of a Papermaker with a Poet ... Postscript," *Notes and Queries* 231 [ns 33.4] [1986]: 525).

For what was previously known about W. S. Blake in addition to the Gilpin references, see chiefly Bentley, *Blake Records*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004) [hereafter *BR(2)*] 839-40. There are also Bentley, "A Collection of Prosaic William Blakes," *Notes and Queries* 210 (ns 12.5) (1965): 172-78; Bentley, "Trade Cards and the Blake Connection," *Book Collector* 37 (1988): 127-33; Geoffrey Keynes, "Engravers Called Blake," *Times Literary Supplement* 17 Jan. 1942: 36, revised in his *Blake Studies* (1949) 50-55 and (1971) 46-49; Keynes, "'To the Nightingale': Perhaps an Unrecognized Poem by William Blake," *Book Collector* 30 (1981): 335-45; Keynes and Peter Davidson, eds., *A Watch of Nightingales* (London: Stourton Press, 1981); Ruthven Todd, "The Two Blakes," *Times Literary Supplement* 10 Feb. 1945: 72; Janet Warner, "Trade Cards of W. S. Blake," *Book Collector* 32 (1983): 105-07 (two of them reproduced); and Raymond Watkinson, "White on Black," *Times Literary Supplement* 13 Sept. 1974: 980.

Church, Holborn.³ His apprenticeship indenture, with two handsome seals and "This Indenture" in Gothic type, reads:

This Indenture Witneffeth, That [William Stadden Blake Son of Daniel Blake late Citizen and Vintner of London Deceased] doth put himself Apprentice to [Samuel Carr Harper] Citizen and *Clothworker of London* to learn his Art, ... to ferve from the Day of the Date hereof, unto the full End and Term of [Seven] Years And the faid Mafter [In Consideration of Ten Pounds] his faid Appren- tice in the fame Art which he ufeth, ... fhall Teach and In- ftruct, or caufe to be Taught and Instructed *In Witnefs* whereof the Parties above named to thefe Indentures in- terchangeably have put their Hands and Seals,⁴ the [Sec- ond] Day of [December] in the [Second] Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord *GEORGE* the II[I] ... and in the Year of our Lord One Thoufand Seven Hundred and [Sixty One]

[W^m Stadden Blake]

[Har[?] Pollard]⁵

Engraving was important for clothworkers, because engraved designs were extensively printed on cotton and silk.

- 3 In 1795 and 1796 William Staddon Blake was one of two churchwardens in the splendid church of St. Mary Wool- noth.⁶ He married a woman named Sarah, and in his will of 2 November 1795 he left "all" his "Worldly Estate and Ef- fects" to his "beloved Wife Sarah Blake." "Mr. W. S. Blake" died "in 'Change Alley" in September 1814,⁷ and the will was probated on 10 November "by the oath of Sarah Blake Widow."⁸ Sarah Blake was a prosperous woman: in her will, dated 10 June 1825 and probated 27 February 1826,⁹ she left £2000 to her niece Elizabeth Simpson (wife of William
3. International Genealogical Index (IGI) of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints <<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:3MK-BLQ>>. I cannot account for the fact that the father of W. S. Blake is recorded as Daniel Blake in the apprenticeship indenture.
4. The same document was printed twice on one piece of paper, which was then torn in half along an undulating line. The authenticity of the individual documents could be ascertained by fitting the two halves back together. Of course such half-documents tend to survive separately and rarely.
5. All the information here about clothworker apprenticeships derives from the extraordinary generosity of Mary Lynn Johnson.
6. The poet's indenture is not known to have survived; it is hypotheti- cally reconstructed in *BR(2)* 12-14.
7. London Metropolitan Archives, reference COL/CHD/FR/02/0955-0962. The portions in manuscript are given within square brack- ets.
8. J. M. S. Brooke and A. W. C. Hallen, *The Transcript of the Registers of the United Parishes of S. Mary Woolnoth and S. Mary Woolchurch Haw, in the City of London* (London: Bowles & Sons, 1886) xli.
9. *Monthly Magazine* 39, no. 260 (1 Oct. 1814): 283.
8. Quoted from a reproduction of the will in the National Archives, PROB 11/1562/134.
9. National Archives, PROB 11/1708/416.

Woolley Simpson); £1000 to her nephew John Wyatt Lee; thirty acres of land in Great Totham, Essex, to Thomas Lee (son of John Wyatt Lee); stock in the West Middlesex Waterworks Company, London Dock Company, and Waterloo or Strand Bridge Company; messuages or dwellings at 29 and 30 Queen's Row, Walworth, Surrey, to her friend Samuel Willett; and to her sister Frances Maria Lee "my two Leasehold Messuages or Dwellinghouses with the out-buildings and appurtenances thereto respectively belonging being Numbers 16 and 18 in Change Alley Cornhill in the City of London now in the occupations of John Rowe and George Turney."

4 Through the courtesy and initiative of John Windle, a number of new prints by the writing engraver W. S. Blake of 'Change Alley have turned up, and clustering with them are some curious new facts related to him.

Newly Recorded Prints¹⁰

5 "ICHOGRAPHY¹¹ OF CHARLESTON, | South-Carolina, | At the Request of Adam Tunno, Esq. For the use of the | PHENIX FIRE-COMPANY OF LONDON, | Taken from Actual Survey, 2^d August 1788 by | Edmund Petrie." "Publish'd 1st Jan. 1790 by E Petrie N.^o 13 America Square [London]," "Blake & 'Change Alley." 49 x 70 cm. See illus. 1.

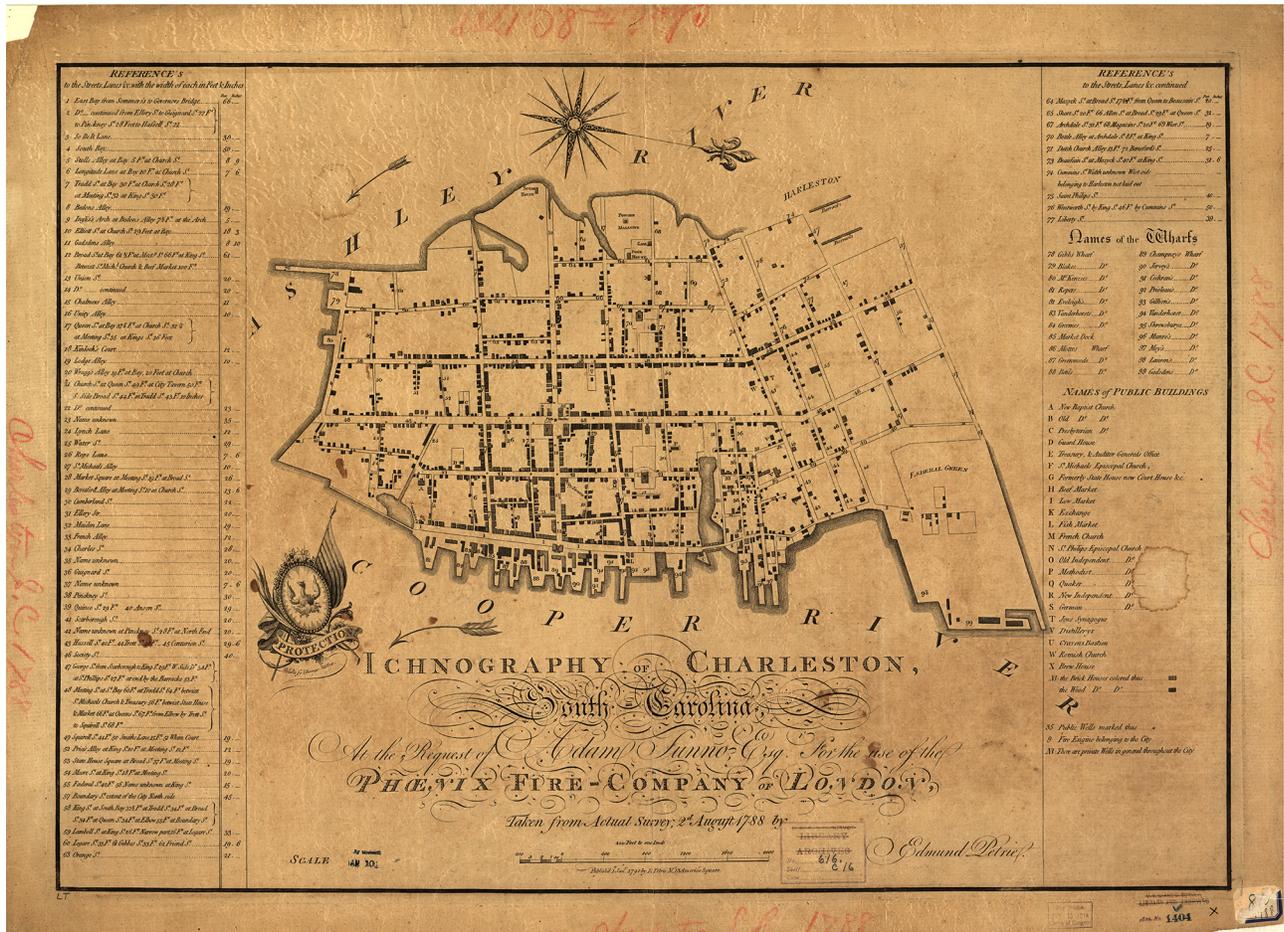
6 "Devonshire Tooth Tincture," c. 1790. 26 x 21 cm. See illus. 2.

SOLD HERE, | THE | Devonshire | Tooth Tincture; | Which immediately relieves the most violent Tooth-ache; it cures the Scurvy¹² | in the Gums; fastens Teeth that are loose; pre-

10. For previously recorded prints and trade cards, see Bentley, "A Collection of Prosaic William Blakes" 175-76 and "Trade Cards and the Blake Connection" 130-32, and Warner.

11. Ground plan (OED).

12. OED says that scurvy is characterized by "tenderness of the gums."



1. "Ichnography of Charleston," 1790. 49 x 70 cm. Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division. G3914.C3G475 1788.P4.

SOLD HERE,
THE
Devonshire
Tooth-Tincture;

Which immediately relieves the most violent Tooth-ache; it cures the Scurvy in the Gums; fastens Teeth that are loose; prevents those which are decaying from becoming Worse; restores them to their pristine Colour; and renders the most Offensive Breath in a short time delicately Sweet.

ALSO,
THE
Devonshire
Tooth-Powder;

Which speedily cleans, whitens, and beautifies the Teeth, without impairing the Enamel.

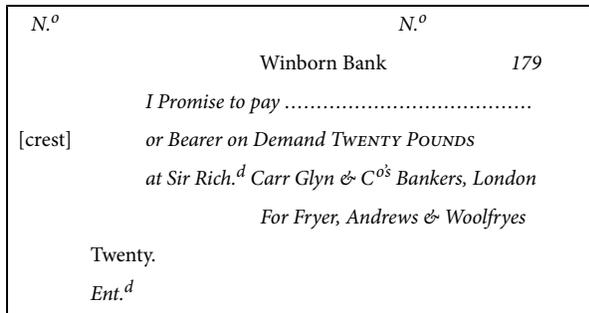
J. Blake, Jr. Change Alley.

2. "Devonshire Tooth Tincture," c. 1790. 26 x 21 cm. Victoria University in the University of Toronto. Blake Suppl. no. 344 (Box 14).

vents those which are | decaying from becoming Worse; re-stores them to their pristine Colour, | and renders the most Offensive Breath in a short time | delicately Sweet. | ALSO, | THE | Devonshire | Tooth-Powder, | Which speedily cleans, whitens, and beautifies the Teeth, without | impairing the Enamel. | Blake *fc* Change Alley.¹³

The advertisement is written in a variety of scripts in differing sizes; the most ornamental are the first “Devonshire” and “Tooth-Powder.” The only other decorations are curlicues and a variety of flicks or tiny circles, which are pervasive. The whole is quite handsome.¹⁴ The date is probably in the early 1790s, when there was a flurry of advertisements for Devonshire Tooth Tincture in terms very like those of the W. S. Blake print.¹⁵

- 7 A bank note with a crest (perhaps “FAW”) with, beneath it, “Blake *fc* Change Alley”.¹⁶ 10.7 x 21.5 cm. The whole form reads:



13. The “Devonshire Tooth Tincture” was generously drawn to my attention on 31 Jan. 2012 by John Windle (through Robert Brandeis), who sent me a reproduction and sold it to the library of Victoria University in the University of Toronto. I subsequently discovered (1 Feb. 2012) that it was offered and reproduced online by Grosvenor Prints, stock no. 9938, £280.

14. For Moore & Co.’s handsome advertisement for carpets (?1797) by the poet-engraver William Blake, see Robert N. Essick, *The Separate Plates of William Blake: A Catalogue* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983) 47-49 and pl. 24.

15. *Argus* 12, 16, 18-19, 23, 27 Nov., 4-5, 10, 15-18, 28 Dec. 1789, 1-2, 7-8, 15, 25 Jan., 5, 9, 12, 16 Feb., 5 March, 19 Oct., 1 Dec. 1790, 11 March 1791, 7, 15 Jan. 1793; *Morning Post* 27 April 1793; *St. James’s Chronicle* 18 Jan. 1791, 14 Feb. 1792; *Star* 19 Jan. 1793; and *World* 21 Oct. 1789. The short “s” in the text of the W. S. Blake engraving suggests a date after 1800, while the archaic long “s” in “Blake *fc*” suggests a date before 1800.

16. Three examples of the form (CIB.853-55) are in the online catalogue of the British Museum, Department of Coins and Medals, “modern reproduction using original printing plates.” They were acquired from the IFS School of Finance, which perhaps owns the copperplate itself. “179” is the date that the bearer is to fill in.

On 5 April 1797 “W. S. BLAKE, (Writing Engraver)” signed a testimonial for Alexander Tilloch’s “Specimen ... to prevent the forgery of Bank Notes” (BR[2] 78). See “Curious New Facts about W. S. Blake,” below, for the trial of James Rowe for having forged an order for payment of £30.

The Glynn bank was in Birchin Lane, around the corner from Exchange Alley.

- 8 “General Washington”, an engraving with a thirty-two-line dedication to Washington (“died ... upon the 15.th day of December 1799”), imprint “London, Published by W. S. Blake, 16, Change Alley Friday, June 27, 1800.” 58.1 x 44.4 cm. See illus. 3.

- 9 “Portrait of Jos.^h Capper Esq.^r of the Horns Kennington.” “Publish’d as the Act directs by W. S. Blake Oct. 1804.”¹⁷ 7.7 x 7.5 cm.

Joseph Capper (1726/7–1804) was a prosperous, eccentric, cantankerous retired grocer (he left £30,000) who lived at the Horns tavern, Kennington. “A favourite diversion of his was killing flies in the parlour with his cane.”¹⁸

- 10 “RICHMOND [coat of arms] YORKSHIRE. | This Plate is Humbly dedicated to the R.^t Hon.^{ble} Lord Dundas [coat of arms] by his Lordships most Obedient & Faithful Humble Servant. | G. E. Towry | Pub by W. S. Blake Change Alley 27 Jan.^y 1809.” Colored aquatint, not signed by designer or engraver (perhaps engraved by W. S. Blake, who was a writing engraver). No watermark; paper size 37.5 x 46.5 cm.; copperplate size 29.7 x 43.5 cm. See illus. 4.

- 11 A view of a broad city street with carriages, surrounded by an urn, an hourglass, a skull, a scythe, a fire-axe, and an ornamental vase with St. George spearing a very modest dragon and a label “Albion” (probably for the Albion Insurance Company). The engraving is signed Richard “Corbould del” and “Blake *fc* Change Alley” (c. 1814).¹⁹ 13.5 x 20.3 cm.

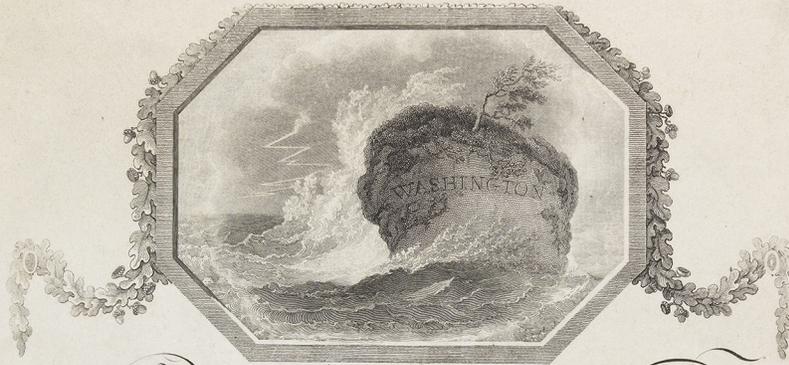
A letter of 13 April 1796 from Corbould to Gilpin recommends “M.^r Blake Engraver & Printer of Exchange Alley, Cornhill who being more immediately in that line of engraving that will suit for the larger Drawing.”²⁰

17. The print also appeared in William Granger, *New, Original and Complete Wonderful Museum and Magazine Extraordinary* 3 (1805), at p. 1693, where it is inscribed “Republihd by Hogg & C^o July 1 1805.”

18. Anon., “The Late Joseph Capper, Esq.: An Eccentric Character,” *Sporting Magazine* 25 (Jan. 1805): 179-80.

19. Robert N. Essick has two W. S. Blake prints designed by Corbould for the Albion Insurance Company (one the engraving described here). See his “Blake in the Marketplace, 1997,” *Blake* 31.4 (spring 1998): 123, with a reproduction of this print at p. 129.

20. Quoted from the manuscript in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (see Bentley, “The Way of a Papermaker with a Poet ... Postscript”).



General Washington

This great and good man died at his seat in the Province of Virginia, upon the 15th day of December 1799, in the 68th year of his age, after an illness of only four and twenty hours. This illustrious General and Politician was characterized by such rare endowments and such fortunate temperament that every action of his life was equally exempted from vice and from weakness. The powers of his mind, and the dispositions of his heart, were admirably suited to each other. It was the union of the most consummate prudence with the most perfect moderation. His views, though large and liberal, were never extravagant. His virtues, though comprehensive and beneficent, were discriminating, judicious and practical. HIS character had nothing in it to dazzle by wildness, and surprise by eccentricity, it was of a higher order of moral beauty, it included every thing great and elevated, had no false and tinsel ornaments, and was incapable of change from the varying accidents of manners, of opinions and times. General Washington, placed in circumstances of the most trying difficulty at the commencement of the American contest, accepted that situation which was preeminent in danger and responsibility. His perseverance overcame every obstacle; His moderation conciliated every opposition. His genius supplied every resource. His enlarged view could plan, revise, and improve, every branch of civil and military operation; he had the superior courage which can act or forbear to act, as true policy dictates, careless of the reproaches of ignorance. He knew how to conquer by waiting, in spite of obloquy for the moment of victory, and he merited true praise by despising undeserved censure. His prudent firmness, in the most arduous moments of the great struggle, proved the salvation of the cause which he supported. HIS conduct was on all occasions guided by the most pure disinterestedness. He ever acted as if his country's welfare, and that alone, was the moving spring. He performed great actions, He persevered in a course of laborious utility with an equanimity that neither sought distinction nor was flattered by it. His reward was in the consciousness of his own rectitude, and in the success of his patriotic efforts. As his devotion to the chief power was the unbiased choice of his countrymen, his exercise of it was agreeable to the purity of its origin. His prudent administration consolidated and enlarged the dominions of an infant Republic. Voluntarily resigning the magistracy, which he had filled with such distinguished honor, he enjoyed the unequalled satisfaction of leaving to the State he had contributed to establish, the fruits of his wisdom and the example of his virtues. It is some consolation, amid so many instances of violent ambition, and the criminal thirst of power, to find a character whom it is honorable to admire and virtuous to imitate. A Conqueror for the Freedom of his Country! A Legislator for its security! A Magistrate for its happiness! His glories were never sullied by those excesses into which the highest qualities are apt to degenerate. With the greatest virtues, he was exempt from their corresponding vices. His fame, bounded by no country, will be confined to no age. The character of GENERAL WASHINGTON will be transmitted to posterity, and the memory of his virtues, while patriotism and virtue are held sacred among men, will remain undiminished.

London, Published by



W. P. Blake, 16 Change Alley, Friday June 7, 1800.

3. "General Washington," 1800. 58.1 x 44.4 cm. © Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. P.588-1985, from the Keynes collection. The last three lines of the elegant calligraphy overlap the image of the heraldic eagle. The image at the top represents a storm-racked islet identified as "WASHINGTON".



4. "Richmond Yorkshire," 1809. Paper size 37.5 x 46.5 cm.; copperplate size 29.7 x 43.5 cm. G. E. Bentley, Jr., destined for Victoria University in the University of Toronto.

W. S. Blake's Apprentices

- 12 William Blake the poet had only one apprentice, Thomas Owen in 1788–95, and this fact was reported only a few years ago.²¹ W. S. Blake, on the other hand, had at least eleven apprentices from 1771 to 1806:

Apprentice	Fee	Dates of Service
Powell, Thomas ^[a]		5 Feb. 1771–12 April 1774
Kidgell, John ^[b]		6 April 1773–4 March 1777

Holmes, Samuel ^[c]		13 March 1783–March 1790
Ottway, Thomas	£30	6 July 1786–July 1793
Girtin, Jn ^o	£45	5 July 1787–July 1794
Bowler, Robert Ewen ^[d]	£40	3 Feb. 1788–Feb. 1795
Chaplain, Benjamin ^[e]	£ 2	1 Dec. 1790–Nov. 1797
Kirkham, Majer	£10	8 Dec. 1796–Dec. 1803
Delaforce, Joseph ^[f]	£ 2	1 Nov. 1797–Oct. 1804
Delaforce, Thomas	£ 2	1 Dec. 1797–Nov. 1804
Rowe, Jn ^o ^[g]	£10	4 July 1799–July 1806

21. David Alexander, "William Blake, graveur d'interprétation," *William Blake (1757–1827): Le Génie visionnaire du romantisme anglais* (Paris: Petit Palais/Paris Musées, [2009]) 79–81, 210–11.

a. Thomas Powell was bound (2 Aug. 1768) to John Banister and turned over first (5 Feb. 1771) to W. S. Blake and then (12 April 1774) to John Powell, jackmaker, citizen, and farrier (*Stationers'*

Company Apprentices 1701–1800, ed. D. F. McKenzie [Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1978] 38).

b. John Kidgell was bound (6 Feb. 1770) to Charles Rivington II, turned over (5 March 1771) to John Banister and then (6 April 1773) to W. S. Blake; he was made free on 4 March 1777 (McKenzie 38).

c. Information about W. S. Blake's clothworker apprentices comes from the National Archives, Board of Stamps, Apprenticeship Books, IR 1, piece 31 (Holmes), 33 (Girtin, Ottway), 37 (Kirkham), and 38 (Rowe).

d. The father of Robert Ewen Bowler was "William Bowler of Fashion Lane London Vintner," according to the indenture.

e. The father of Benjamin Chaplain was "James Chaplain of the Parish of Saint Bridget of London Tinplate worker." W. S. Blake undertook the apprenticeship "in consideration of Two pounds as being perpetual Charity Money paid by the Langbourn Ward School in London," according to the indenture.

f. According to his apprenticeship indenture, "Joseph Delaforce Son of Thomas Delaforce of Mile End New Town in the Parish of Saint Dunstan Stepney County of Middlesex Weaver ... [was apprenticed] in Consideration of the Sum of two Pounds being Charity money paid by the Trustees of Langbourn Ward Charity School ... the first Day of November in the thirty eighth year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord GEORGE the Third one Thoufand Seven Hundred and ninety seven." That for Thomas Delaforce differs only in date.

g. After the death of W. S. Blake in 1814, Rowe's style became "I. Rowe Engraver and Printer Change Alley Apprentice & Successor to the late Mr. Blake." In 1817 he printed James Ackland, *True Patriotism! A Poem of the Nineteenth Century* (London: Printed for the Author, by John Rowe, 16, 'Change-Alley, Cornhill, 1817), 24pp. Rowe was recorded at 16 Change Alley as an engraver and printer in 1819–24 and, as Rowe, Kentish & Osborne, as a banknote engraver and printer in 1825–48 (William B. Todd, *A Directory of Printers and Others in Allied Trades London and Vicinity 1800–1840* [London: Printing Historical Society, 1972] 165).

Of these apprentices, Bowler, Chaplain, Joseph and Thomas Delaforce, Girtin, Holmes, Kirkham, Ottway, and Rowe were apprenticed as clothworkers, while Kidgell and Powell were stationers turned over from masters in the Stationers' Company. The forms of clothworker indenture in 1783–99 differed only in minor ways from that of 1761.

- 13 It was customary in the book trades for boys to be apprenticed to members of the Stationers' Company. However, exceptions were not rare. In 1792, for instance, nineteen engravers and printers were apprenticed to members of the guilds of barbers, cooks, frameworkers, knitters, girdlers, goldsmiths, haberdashers, leathersellers, loriners,²² merchant tailors, and musicians.²³ Note that this list does not include apprentices in the Clothworkers' Guild, to which W. S. Blake and nine of his apprentices belonged. Some boys were nominally apprenticed to a member of the Sta-

22. A loriner or lorimer was a maker of small ironware, as in horse bridles, according to the *OED*.

23. Ian Maxted, *The London Book Trades 1775–1800: A Preliminary Checklist of Members* (Folkestone: Dawson, 1977) xxvii–xxviii (Table 8: The livery companies and the London book trades in 1792).

tioners' Guild and a month later turned over to the real master (practicing in the book trades) such as a nominal grocer.²⁴

W. S. Blake's Addresses

- 14 William Staden Blake, engraver, citizen, and clothworker of Butcher Hall, Newgate Street [Horwood D2], took Powell (1771) and Kidgell (1773) as apprentices.²⁵ He identified himself as an engraver of Abchurch Lane [Horwood E2 (illus. 5)]²⁶ at the trial at which he testified in 1782.²⁷ His Exchange ('Change) Alley address²⁸ is one street south of Cornhill,²⁹ stretching two blocks between Birchin Lane to the east and a tiny unnamed lane to the west (see illus. 5). The "Post Office" is just across Lombard Street to the south; on the north side of Cornhill is the "Royal Exchange," just north of this is the "Bank of England," and one street to the north of the east end of Cornhill is Threadneedle Street.
- 15 Exchange Alley was notorious as the site of the coffeehouses that evolved into the stock market. Thomas Mortimer, *Every Man His Own Broker: or, A Guide to Exchange-Alley. In Which the Nature of the Several Funds, Vulgarly Called the Stocks, Is Clearly Explained*, 7th ed. (London: S. Hooper, 1769) has a chapter "Of the Mystery and Iniquity of Stock-Jobbing" The only member of the Stationers' Company recorded in Exchange Alley in the eighteenth century is Thomas Smith in 1782,³⁰ but "A List of the Brokers of the City of London," *London Chronicle* (23–25 Dec. 1762): 612, gives "Hooker Francis, at Mr. Henry Gretton's, Engraver, in Exchange alley."³¹

24. Cyprian Blagden, "The Stationers' Company in the Eighteenth Century," *Guildhall Miscellany* no. 10 (Sept. 1959): 40.

25. McKenzie 38.

26. For trade cards that he signed with this address, see Bentley, "Trade Cards and the Blake Connection" 129–32.

27. See "Curious New Facts about W. S. Blake," below, for the trial of John Hevey.

28. He is the "Blake, Wm", engraver, at no. 16 Exchange (or 'Change) Alley recorded in *Barclay's British Directory* (1785); John Pendred, *The London and Country Printers, Booksellers and Stationers Vade Mecum* (1785); *Andrews's New London Directory* (1789: William Stretton Blake), (1790: William Stratton Blake); *Bailey's London Directory* (1790); *Holden's London Directory* (1790); *Wakefield's Merchant and Tradesman's General Directory for London* (1790); *Universal British Directory* 1 (1790); *Holden's Triennial Directory* (London, 1799, 1802–20); *New Annual Directory for the Year[s] 1801, 1803, 1806–16*; *Boyle's City & Commercial Companion to the Court Guide for the Year 1803*; *Kent's Directory for the Year[s] 1806, 1810, 1814–16*.

29. Cornhill is continuous with Leadenhall Street to the east and Poultry and Cheapside to the west.

30. McKenzie 324.

31. Gretton (1730–90) is recorded in Maxted (96) at 14 Fenchurch Street (1772–77), 7 Abchurch Lane, Lombard Street (1778–84), Fenchurch Street (1792), and 40 Fenchurch Street (1794–1830 [sic]).



5. The location of Exchange Alley (its length marked by red dots). Detail of R. Horwood, *Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, the Borough of Southwark, and Parts Adjoining Shewing Every House* (London, 1792–99), sheet E2. Victoria University in the University of Toronto. Blake no. 1160.

Curious New Facts about W. S. Blake

16 He was the printer of

- (1) *Printed Statement of a Mechanical Experiment for Ascertaining the Difference in Strength between Grimshaw, Webster, and Co.'s Patent Machine-Laid-Rope, and That Made in the Usual Way, at Durand's Wharf, Rotherhithe, 29th. October 1802* (W. S. Blake, Change Alley, Cornhill, 1802), 2 pp.
- (2) "SIR WILLIAM CURTIS, BAR.^T Alderman & Representative of the City of London", "Thomas Lawrence Esq.^F R.A. pinx.^t", "Will.^m Sharp, Member of the Imperial & Royal Academy of Vienna, sculpt.", "Publish'd by W. S. Blake, Change Alley, London, March 1, 1814"³² 62.3 x 38.3 cm. Sir William (1752–1829) was a rich banker, Lord Mayor (1795–96), and head of the City Tories.
- (3) "St. Mary Magdalen's Taunton from an original drawing by the late Alexander Poole Moore; pubd. by W. S. Blake, Change Alley, 1 Aug. 1809."³³

32. Three copies are in the British Museum (1838,0714.132, 1841,0313.123, 1841,0313.124). There is also a copy in the London Metropolitan Archives, reference SC/GL/POR/B/008/M0001735CL/A.
 33. London Metropolitan Archives, reference SC/GL/PR/DEW/LA/914/SOM/TAU/K1290477.

- 17 At the trial at the Old Bailey of John Hevey for forgery on 20 February 1782, "William Stadden Blake ... engraver in Abchurch-lane," testified that "Hevey applied to him to engrave the plate about the middle of July last, and printed about five hundred of them," for which Hevey paid him £3.3.0.³⁴

- 18 Joseph Delaforce (age 22), the former apprentice of W. S. Blake,³⁵ called on Sunday morning, 9 June 1805, at 16 'Change Alley to see "my fellow-apprentice" John Rowe. Clearly he was expected and suspected, and his coming had been prepared for: Blake said that "the time before he took four" guineas. Therefore a hole was drilled through a panel from the countinghouse of Mr. Turner³⁶ adjacent to the parlor, and Turner's clerk, William Tagg, was set to keep watch. Blake had scratched tiny numbers on sixteen guineas, and

34. *The Proceedings of the Old Bailey, London's Central Criminal Court, 1674 to 1913* <<http://www.oldbaileyonline.org>>, reference t17820220-63. Blake was not implicated in the forgery.

35. Delaforce said that he had "the copy of my freedom" in his pocket-book.

36. William Turner, 16 Change Alley, presumably a clerk or accountant, gave £10.10.0 to the eye hospital for several years (see "W. S. Blake and Charity," below).

on Saturday night he put them in a drawer, which he locked. Delaforce asked to see Rowe, and, while the servant went to fetch him, Tagg saw Delaforce come into the parlor, force open the drawer, and take something. The constable was summoned, five guineas were impounded, and the numbers on the coins were found to correspond to those missing from the drawer. Delaforce was tried on 10 July 1805 at the Old Bailey for stealing them. He was convicted and sentenced to death, but he was recommended to mercy on account of his youth.³⁷ In January 1807 he was transported for life to New South Wales, Australia, on the ship *Duke of Portland*.³⁸ At the trial, Blake testified that in his premises “the ground floor consists of the shop, the parlour, and an accompting-house.” “The parlour is in St. Edmund the King [parish], and the other part is in St. Mary Woolnoth.” He said that he had no business partner.

- 19 James Rowe was indicted at the Old Bailey for having forged and counterfeited on 9 July 1805 an “order for payment of 30l. signed William Stadden Blake, with intent to defraud Sir Richard Carr Glyn, Bart. [(1755–1838), the great banker, formerly Lord Mayor] Charles Mills, and Thomas Halifax” of Birch Lane, which forms one terminus of Exchange Alley. W. S. Blake was a witness; a bank clerk also testified that Blake “had cash in our house” and had dealt with the bank for “some years.” At the trial on 18 September 1805 Rowe was found not guilty.³⁹ Perhaps he was a relative of Blake’s apprentice John Rowe.

W. S. Blake and Charity

- 20 W. S. Blake was described in 1825 as “Mr. Blake, of Change Alley, a jocosse and excellent man, now deceased, who employed much of his time and means in kind offices to others.”⁴⁰ “Blake, W. S. 16, Change-alley” gave £1.1.0 to the London Infirmary for Curing Diseases of the Eye in 1807, 1808, 1809, 1810, 1812, and 1813, and after his death “Blake, Mrs, Change-alley” gave the same sum in 1814 and 1815.⁴¹ Notice the appropriateness of an eye hospital to an engraver. William Stadden Blake was also a trustee of Mr. Richard Smith’s charity for the poor of the parish of St. Mary Woolnoth.⁴² *The Examiner* no. 171 (7 April 1811):

37. *The Proceedings of the Old Bailey*, reference t18050710-3.

38. *Convict Records* <<http://www.convictrecords.com.au>>, under Joseph Delaforce.

39. *The Proceedings of the Old Bailey*, reference t18050918-33.

40. Article on William Sharp in *The Annual Biography and Obituary, for the Year 1825* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1825) 246.

41. *London Infirmary for Curing Diseases of the Eye* (1808) 20, (1809) 23, (1810) 14, (1811) 17, (1813) 14, (1814) 14, (1815) 22, (1816) 15.

42. *Accounts and Papers, Seven Volumes. (3.) Relating to Charities and Charitable Donations, for the Benefit of the Poor and Other Persons in England and Wales*, vol. 20 (1829) 266.

218 lists “Mr. Blake, Engraver, Change-alley” as taking subscriptions for the late Joseph Clarendon Smith.

- 21 All this information about the writing engraver W. S. Blake helps to provide a context for the poet and engraver William Blake.

Other Interloping Engravers Named Blake during the Poet’s Lifetime

E. Blake (fl. 1824–27)

- 22 The six prints signed “Blake *del et sc.*” or “Blake *sc.*” in *The Seaman’s Recorder; or, Authentic and Interesting Narratives of Popular Shipwrecks, and Other Calamities Incident to a Life of Maritime [sic] Enterprise*, 3 vols. (1824–25)⁴³ were probably engraved by the “E. Blake” who signed plates (1825–27) for W. West’s *Theatrical Characters*.⁴⁴ “Interior of the Sessions House, Old Bailey” (c. 1824), signed “Blake *del et sc.*”, is also probably by E. Blake.
- 23 “KANGKOOK” (the dandy Major General Sir Henry Frederick Cooke [1784–1837]), a colored print signed “Blake *fc.*” on the ground at bottom right, inscribed “London, Pub.^d Dec.^r 17, 1824 by S. W. Fores”, “41 Piccadilly, corner of Sackville Street.” Platemark 31.5 x 20.3 cm. The style of the engraving and the formation of the signature seem to be those of E. Blake: in “Blake *fc.*” the leftward flourishes from the top and bottom of the “B” and the two-stroke looped “k” are very like those in “Blake *fc.*” (“Lord Byron in a Storm,” *The Seaman’s Recorder* vol. 2 [1825], at p. 1), “E Blake *fc.*” (“M.^r. Huntley, as Bagzed,” *West’s Theatrical Characters* [1825]), and “Blake *fect.*” (“M.^r. H. Kemble, as Masaniello,” *West’s Theatrical Characters* [1825]).⁴⁵ The date of the print (“1824”) means that it cannot be by W. S. Blake, who died in 1814. An earlier engraving⁴⁶ of “KANGKOOK” is inscribed “Drawn Etch^d & Pub^d ^Dec.^r 1819^ by Rich Dighton” (on the grass at the bottom right), platemark 28.7 x 19.5 cm. (Bentley copy). The two versions of “Kangkook” exhibit minor design differences.

43. Bentley, “Byron, Shelley, Wordsworth, Blake, and *The Seaman’s Recorder*,” *Studies in Romanticism* 9.1 (1970): 21–36, and *Blake Books* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977) 613–14.

44. Christopher Heppner, “Blake and *The Seaman’s Recorder*: The Letter and the Spirit in a Problem of Attribution,” *Blake* 12.1 (summer 1978): 15–17.

45. See Heppner 16–17.

46. The differing plate sizes indicate that these are separate engravings.

47. A copy in the British Museum has “Pub^d by T. M^cLean Haymarket”.

T. J. Blake (fl. ?1780s)

24 T. J. Blake signed⁴⁸

“An | *ACCURATE MAP* | of | CANAAN, | divided into the |
TWELVE TRIBES | of | ISRAEL”, “*T. J. Blake sculp*”, no imprint
(?1780), 22.3 x 16.4 cm.

“*A NEW AND CORRECT CHART | OF THE | WEST-INDIA-IS-*
LANDS, | including | THE GULF and WINDWARD PASSAGE; |
Regulated and Ascertained by Astronomical Observations, |
BY JOHN HAMILTON MOORE. | — | LONDON, | *Printed for,*
and Sold by JOHN HAMILTON MOORE, N.º 104, Minories, |
and GEORGE ROBINSON, Pater-noster-Row. | — | Publishd as
the Act directs. 14.th Sept.^r 1784. | T. J. Blake Sculp. N.º 12
Great Wild Street. | Drury Lane.”

48. See also the rather crude trade card of W.^m Goodcheape “Engraved
by T. J. Blake N.º 18 Hosier Lane, West Smithfield”, recorded in Bent-
ley, “Trade Cards and the Blake Connection” 132.