



The illustrations of the first Little Gidding Concordance

Citation

Cabot, Nancy G. 1949. The illustrations of the first Little Gidding Concordance. Harvard Library Bulletin III (1), Winter 1949: 139-142.

Permanent link

<https://nrs.harvard.edu/URN-3:HUL.INSTREPOS:37363329>

Terms of Use

This article was downloaded from Harvard University's DASH repository, and is made available under the terms and conditions applicable to Other Posted Material, as set forth at <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:dash.current.terms-of-use#LAA>

Share Your Story

The Harvard community has made this article openly available.
Please share how this access benefits you. [Submit a story](#).

[Accessibility](#)

shocked at the doctrine of necessity on the ground, that they possess most freedom of action, most power of spontaneity; and on what we possess most we reflect the least.

This is followed by an almost illegible date, possibly 'Oct 19,' and signed 'S.T.C.'⁵¹

About a year before publication of the 'reprint' of the 'Introductory Address,' Coleridge wrote in the opening sentence of the penultimate chapter of his *Biographia Literaria*:

In the rifacciamento of THE FRIEND, I have inserted extracts [*sic!*] from the *Conciones ad Populum*, printed, though scarcely published, in the year 1795, in

⁵¹ Henry Nelson Coleridge (*The Friend*, 1837, II, 203) prints the following note to the same passage: 'I hope that this last paragraph, in all the fulness of its contrast with my present convictions, will start up before me whenever I speak, think, or feel intolerantly of persons on account of their doctrines and opinions. 30th Oct. 1818.' This note is reprinted in Sara Coleridge's edition of *Conciones ad Populum* in *Essays on His Own Times*, I, 29. It also appears in later editions of *The Friend*, including that in the standard *Complete Works* (II, 307).

the very heat and height of my anti-ministerial enthusiasm: these in proof that my principles of *politics* have sustained no change.⁵²

When the 'reprint' appeared, it was indeed, as has been demonstrated, a series of extracts from the 'Introductory Address'; not only was this fact unacknowledged by the use of suspension points in the text but it was actually denied in Coleridge's prefatory note ('the only omissions regard the names of persons') and has never been noted by his bibliographers. Coleridge's very protestations force us to question the implications, if not the sincerity, of his famous remark about the Bristol period written some twenty years later:

O! never can I remember those days with either shame or regret. For I was most sincere, most disinterested! My opinions were, indeed in many and most important points erroneous; but my heart was single.⁵³

S. F. JOHNSON

⁵² *Biographia Literaria* (London, 1817), II, 254.

⁵³ The same, I, 168.

The Illustrations of the First Little Gidding Concordance

THE earliest of the Little Gidding Concordances, made, apparently in 1630, by Nicholas Ferrar and his nieces for use at their hourly services, the famous volume borrowed, studied, and annotated by Charles I, was described by the Reverend C. Leslie Craig in the Autumn 1947 issue of the BULLETIN. Unre-

corded since its return by the king, the volume might, it was thought, have perished in 1646, when manor house and church were pillaged by Puritan fanatics. Its surprising reappearance at an English provincial bookshop in 1933, its hairbreadth rescue from domestic service as a blotting pad, and its subsequent elevation

to a position of honor in the Harvard Library read like a bibliophile's dream. Since the publication of Mr Craig's article, a study of the illustrations has made possible the identification of all but one of the 'many beautiful pictures' selected for the Concordance and cut out and mounted by the earnest young people under the guidance of their uncle.

The book is a folio, composed of eighty-six pages, fifty-three of which are supplied with large engravings reduced considerably in size by not very neat trimming. Twenty-three of the illustrations are mounted each on the upper half of a page, the text pasted in double columns beneath; twenty-seven occupy variable central positions, with the text above and below; one is at the bottom of a page; one occupies a full page; and one, composite in form, serves as a heading at the beginning of the work. Titles, cut from their prints, usually appear at the top of the pages, but in one case the title has been applied immediately above a central illustration,¹ and there are four illustrations without title, although one shows possible traces.² Artists' signatures or monograms have been cut off, except in one instance.³ Engravings and text are framed within uneven lines of red ink.⁴

¹ Christ Blessing the Children, p. 50.

² The Adoration of the Shepherds, p. 4 (possible traces of a title); the Transfiguration, p. 39; the Return of the Prodigal Son, p. 48; the Tribute Money, p. 58.

³ The Return of the Prodigal Son, p. 48 (signature).

⁴ The framed spaces of the first fifteen pages or so seem to have been ruled before the mounting of illustrations and text, for pictures and passages frequently overlap the lines. Beginning with the Miraculous Draught of Fishes, p. 18, the framing is

Fifty of the illustrations, including the upper half of the first page (Plate I), have been identified with the series of fifty-one engravings entitled *Vita, passio, et resurrectio Iesu Christi*, designed by Martin de Vos and published by Adriaen Collaert in Antwerp presumably about 1600.⁵ The first engraving of the *Vita* series is a title-print (Plate IIa),⁶ with no engraver's signature. Of the other fifty prints, fourteen were engraved by Adriaen Collaert, six by Hans Collaert II, six by Jean Baptiste Barbé, seventeen by Jacques de Bie, and seven by Cornelis Galle.

This title-page was particularly suited for adaptation as the heading of a Gospel harmony. By the removal of the worldly elements of the arms and dedication, and the substitution of parts of other prints, a completely religious decorative page was composed in the patchwork manner that became characteristic in the later Little Gidding Concordances. A comparison readily shows how the arms were cut away, leaving only the

more symmetrical and suggests a reversal of method, which is obvious on pp. 31 and 40, where red lines are ruled on top of portions of the text.

⁵ Adrien Mourreau says categorically, 'Il fut dédié aux archiducs et parut en 1607, quatre ans après la mort de M. de Vos' (article entitled 'Un artiste anversois au temps des guerres de Flandre: Martin de Vos et ses graveurs,' *L'Art*, LIX, 1894, 470), but gives no evidence for so precise a date. The Archdukes Albert and Isabella were not established as sovereigns of the Netherlands until 1598, so that the dates for the work appearing in Nagler, *Künstler-Lexikon*, XXIII (1924), 344 ('um 1593') and in the British Museum's *General Catalogue of Printed Books*, XL (1940), col. 466 ('1595?') must be too early.

⁶ Reproduced from a copy in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, through the courtesy of the Museum.

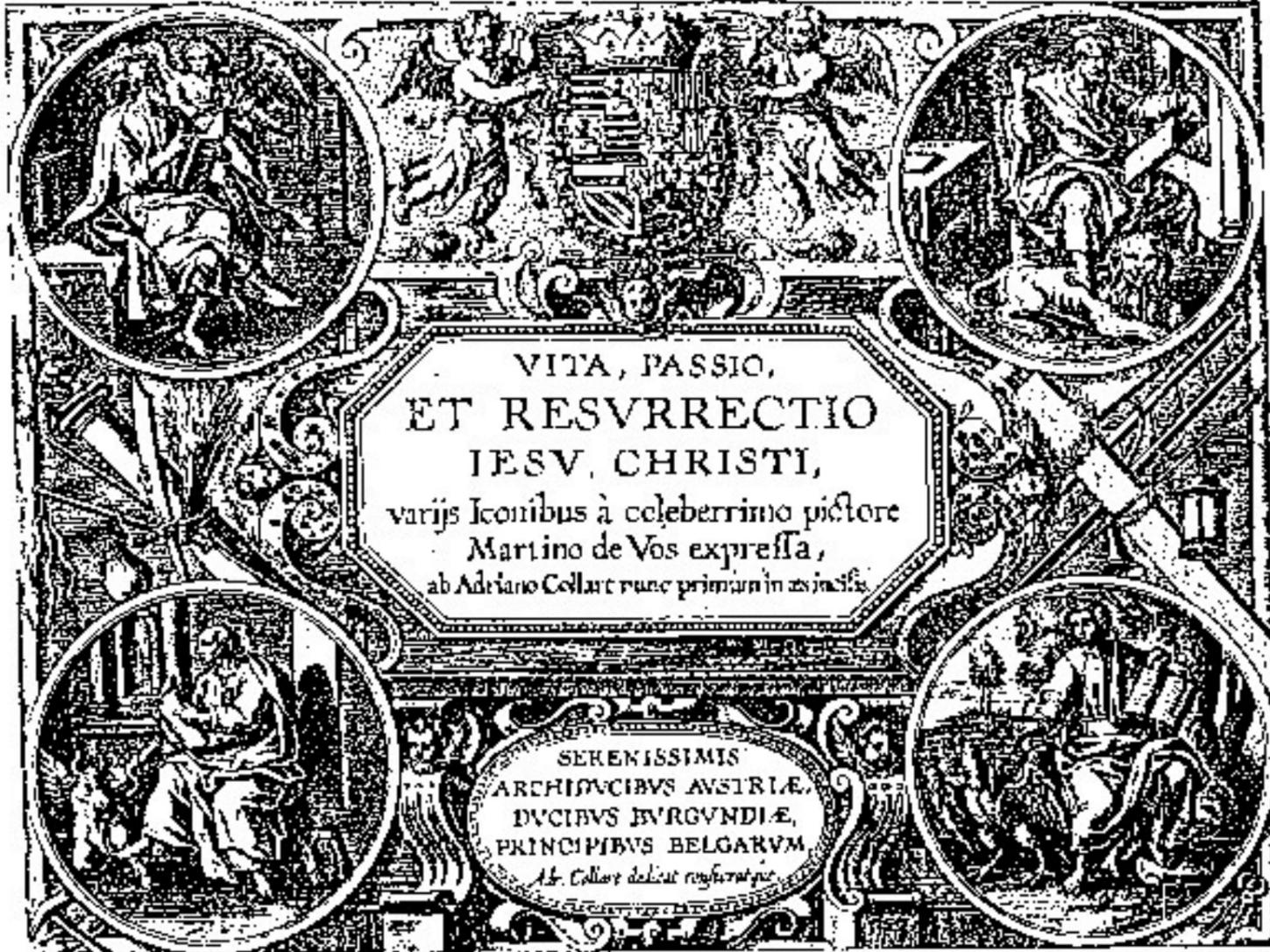


PLATE IIa
Vita . . . Iesu Christi, TITLE-PRINT



PLATE IIb
Passio . . . Iesu Christi, PLATE 12

crown and the pendent 'toison d'or' as indications of what had been replaced. In lieu of the arms, the name of God, inscribed in Hebrew letters, in a radiating glory, was fitted; where its oval shape did not quite fill the space a small clipping of the sun, moon, and stars was inserted. In place of the dedication appears a Crucifixion cut from a different engraving (Plate IIb),⁷ with figures of the Virgin and St John from this same print pasted in the lower corners of the page. The space left by the excised title of the *Vita* was, however, never filled in.

The engraving from which the Christ, Virgin, and St John were taken is to be found in the series entitled *Passio Domini Nostri Jesu Christi*, a set of twenty-two plates engraved after Martin de Vos by Hieronymus Wierix (died 1619). The plates were published in three states, the first without signatures, as illustrated, the second with the signatures 'M. de Vos invent. Hieronymus Wierix fecit. Hans Van Luyck excud.', and the third with the signatures 'H. Wierix f. et C. Visscher ex.'⁸ It has not been possible to date this series precisely.

In the Concordance, after the first page, twenty engravings from the *Vita* follow in the same sequence as in Collaert's series save for the transposition of the two scenes, Christ with Nicodemus, and Christ with the Woman of Samaria, the Little Gidding version adhering strictly to the

order as set forth in the Gospel of St John. Then a print of bolder design and larger scale is introduced, illustrating the Calling of St Matthew. An untrimmed copy of the original print found in the *Thesaurus novi testamenti* of Gerard de Jode, Antwerp (1585?), is signed with the monogram 'H.C.F.' These initials, which appear on a number of prints, are usually called those of Hans Collaert II, although some authorities have attributed them to a Herman Coblent, about whom little is known.⁹ The *Thesaurus novi testamenti* is a collection of engravings by various artists, the prints in many series separately numbered. It is a companion to de Jode's *Thesaurus sacrarum historiarum veteris testamenti*, which is dated 1585. Most of the engravings had been issued previously as single prints, books of prints, or as illustrations in printed books.¹⁰

Seven more prints of the *Vita* follow in order, after which there is a break with a slightly larger engraving, from a different series, a picture of the Return of the Prodigal Son. As already noted, this is one of the engravings mounted without a title, and is also the only engraving in the volume that bears a signature, 'Mart de Vos invent,' inscribed on the masonry wall of the fountain. Comparison with an untrimmed copy¹¹ shows there was no engraver's name, and reveals the title 'Pater, peccavi in celum et coram te, iam non sum dignus vocari filius tuus. Luc. 15.' It is

⁷ Reproduced from a copy in the Pierpont Morgan Library, through the courtesy of the Library.

⁸ Louis Joseph Alvin, *Catalogue raisonné de l'œuvre des trois frères Jean, Jérôme & Antoine Wierix* (Brussels, 1856), p. 65.

⁹ Nagler, *Die Monogrammisten* (Munich, 1858-79), III, 283; Thieme-Becker, VII (1912), 130.

¹⁰ *British Museum. General Catalogue of Printed Books*, XVIII (1937), col. 1956.

¹¹ In the Pierpont Morgan Library.

number seven of a series not yet identified.

Following three more scenes from the *Vita* comes the only Italian engraving used in the book, again mounted without title, a version of the Tribute Money by Martino Rota, after the painting in the National Gallery, London, traditionally ascribed to Titian. The engraving is on a big scale, inconsistent in style with the other pictures, and because of its size occupies the entire page even after the removal of a classical entablature with three panels bearing an eight-line inscription and signatures. The date of the engraving has not been determined.

The Concordance then returns once more to the *Vita* prints, but with the next four pictures reverses the *Vita* order to conform with the sequence of events in the Gospels, so that in the Concordance the scene of the Widow's Mite precedes that of Jesus Foretelling the Destruction of the Temple, and the Washing of the Disciples' Feet precedes the Last Supper. Thereafter the Concordance follows the *Vita* prints and order to the end, except for the omission of the last but one of the *Vita* series, Christ's Descent into Limbo, which may have been judged inappropriate to the needs of the community.

Nicholas Ferrar, when he set about the compilation of this first Concordance, had conveniently at hand a collection of engravings of Scriptural subjects, acquired during his travels as a young man, from 1613 to 1618, to regain his health. In the words of Dr Peckard:

In his travels through Holland, Germany, Italy, and Spain, Mr. Ferrar pur-

chased many rare articles of curiosity, many scarce and valuable books, and learned treatises in the languages of those different countries. In collecting which he certainly had a principal eye to those which treated the subjects of a Spiritual Life, Devotion, and Religious retirement. He bought also a very great number of Prints engraved by the best masters of that time; all relative to historical passages of the old and new Testament. Indeed he let nothing of this sort that was valuable escape him. And this great treasure of Rarities, Books, and Prints, upon his return home, he had the satisfaction to find were safely arrived there before him.

Very little indeed of this treasure is now remaining. The Ferrar family being firm in their loyalty to the King, their house at Gidding was plundered in the Civil Wars; and in a wanton devastation, all these things perished, except some of the Prints, not of great value, still in possession of the Editor.¹²

Whatever Nicholas may originally have thought of his prints as works of art, it is obvious that by the time he settled at Little Gidding and set about the production of the first Concordance he was concerned solely with the graphic portrayal of sacred story, sacrificing any other consideration to the exigencies of illustration, by means of the 'Knives & Cizers' of his assiduous nieces.

NANCY G. CAROT

¹² *Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Nicholas Ferrar* (Cambridge, 1790), pp. 88-89. Actually the destruction had begun much earlier; the propitiatory sacrifice of what must have included a part of this 'treasure' is described in Blackstone, *Ferrar Papers*, pp. 60-64. On his deathbed Nicholas Ferrar gave his brother John explicit directions as to his burial in front of Little Gidding Church. 'When you have measured out the place for my grave, then goe & take out of my Study, those three great Hampers full

List of Contributors

HENRY R. SHEPLEY, Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch & Abbott, Boston, Massachusetts

KEYES D. METCALF, Professor of Bibliography, Director of the Harvard University Library, and Librarian of Harvard College

MICHAEL J. WALSH, Goodspeed's Book Shop, Boston, Massachusetts

HAMILTON VAUGHAN BAIL, Treasurer of the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

MARGARET CURRIER, Librarian of the Peabody Museum, Harvard University

MERTON M. SEALTS, JR, Assistant Professor of English, Lawrence College

S. F. JOHNSON, Instructor and Tutor in the Department of English, Harvard University

NANCY G. CABOT, Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts

HERMAN W. LIEBERT, Research Assistant, Yale University

HYDER E. ROLLINS, Gurney Professor of English Literature, Harvard University

ELEANOR N. LITTLE, Treasure Room, Law School Library, Harvard University