

'Theseus and Ariadne': A Newly-Discovered Burne-Jones

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making and sending to England. Those mentioned by Fr. Carroll, and composed by Piranesi out of antique marbles, are very curious, but are not in the taste of every one; he has others which would be esteemed more elegant by gentlemen who are not passionate antiquarians. Here are four or five artists who work these things in a very superior manner. Piranesi has now a modern chimney piece of his own designing, with Rilievos, medallions, and a surprising work on all the parts finished in the manner and with the elegance of the ancients. He is undoubtedly the greatest genius of the age, every thing that comes out of his hands is marked with something superior to any one else, tho' modern things in sculpture make no part of his profession, they are executed under his eye. A Sig.^{re} Cardelli cuts ornaments in marble as fine as the ancients did. Vinelli has made scores of fine chimney pieces for England; I never heard of any one of these artists sending so much as a stone to Norfolk House. They work

on all prices and finish up their pieces with gild bronzes, as directed'.⁴²

⁴² The Thorpe correspondence at Wardour was kindly brought to my attention by Miss Jane Low, Curator of the Print Room, Windsor Castle, and I am very grateful to her for permission to quote this letter. I am also much indebted to her for the many helpful suggestions made throughout the writing of this article.

In addition to those thanked individually in the notes, I am particularly grateful to Mrs Norah King at Gorhambury for her hospitality and enthusiasm in providing all possible information on Viscount Grimston and the chimney-pieces. At Packington Hall, the Earl of Aylesford was both generous and kind in offering much information on Bonomi. I must also thank John Harris of the RIBA and John Hardy of the Victoria and Albert Museum for their many constructive ideas on Piranesi and his interior decoration.

Figs. 12, 13, 23, 24 by courtesy of Country Life. Figs. 14–16 by Angelo Hornak. Figs. 17–19, 21 by courtesy The Trustees of The Pierpont Morgan Library. Figs. 20–22 by courtesy The RIBA.

JOHN CHRISTIAN AND RICHARD DORMENT

'Theseus and Ariadne': A newly-discovered Burne-Jones

TWELVE or so years ago, when the revival of interest in Burne-Jones began, the first task was simply to find the pictures. We were lucky in knowing what to look for. There were a large number of books dating from the period before his reputation declined. The most useful were Lady Burne-Jones's *Memorials* of her husband (1904), and the monographs of Bell (1892–98) and De Lisle (1904), both of which contain lists of pictures and decorative designs, Bell's apparently based on Burne-Jones's own list in a notebook now in the Fitzwilliam Museum. There were also quantities of photographs, many, like the Berlin Photographic Company's series of elephant-folio plates published in 1901, or the work of Frederick Hollyer, whose prints after the drawings still sometimes pass for originals, of the highest quality. Yet despite the artist's immense contemporary reputation, and despite his proximity in time (there were still people living who had known him), changes of taste had long since driven the work itself underground.

Slowly, in the basements of British galleries, in private collections, and in galleries overseas, it has come to light, and once again we are able to assess Burne-Jones's huge and varied output by direct reference to the paintings, drawings and decorative designs. But some regrettable gaps remain. We still lack a number of the early pen and ink drawings, and several of the water-colours of the early 1860's, including the potentially very interesting female half-length *Viridis of Milan*. Missing from the later '60's are the early versions of two major compositions, *The Hours* and *The Mirror of Venus*; and both versions of *St Theophilus and the Angel*, an important work if only because Ruskin discussed it in a lecture (the primary version was in the Street collection and may, therefore, have perished in the last war). Items from the later period which still need to be traced are too numerous to mention individually. They are mainly minor works or

ones in which there was probably a good deal of studio intervention; but they include a few important things like the roundel *Dies Domini* of 1880 (last recorded when sold at Sotheby's in May 1922), and a number of interesting portraits.

Until recently the picture published here, *Theseus and Ariadne* (Fig. 26),¹ would also have appeared on this list. Indeed it would have been one of the most urgently wanted items. Dating from the artist's early period, it promised to be an attractive work as well as being of considerable historical importance. It was all the more intriguing in that it was shrouded in mystery. Although its date suggests that it should, it makes no appearance in the list of early works up to and including 1861 which Burne-Jones made in a sketchbook of this period now in the Victoria and Albert Museum;² and there is only the briefest reference in the artist's record of work in the Fitzwilliam notebook. The picture is listed here under 1861, and the name of the owner – Clabburn – is given, but there are no further details. Bell, no doubt following the Fitzwilliam list, only mentions the picture in passing, referring to 'a *Theseus and Ariadne* in the labyrinth' as one of several pictures 'probably done' in 1861;³ in his list he dates it 1861–62. De Lisle makes no reference to it whatever, either in text or list. And most curious of all, considering how much Burne-Jones's work was reproduced, there was apparently no photograph. Since

¹ Water-colour with body-colour, 567 by 437 mm. Not signed or dated. Apparently in its original frame, the mount inscribed below on a small cartouche: *THESEUS AND ARIADNE*. The authors would like to thank the owners for allowing the picture to be published here, and for kindly supplying photographs.

² E.1 – 1955 (91.D.37).

³ MALCOLM BELL: *Sir Edward Burne-Jones. A Record and Review* [1898 ed.], p.29.

the picture was not shown at the New Gallery commemorative exhibition of 1898–99, there was not even a glimpse to be gained from the photographs taken of the walls when hung for this, as there is in the case of other missing works.⁴

All we had were two drawings, neither of which told us very much, and a tantalising reference in the *Memorials*. The drawings are a half-length sketch of Ariadne, in the Fitzwilliam (Fig.27),⁵ and two studies of a hand holding a ball of thread, in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Fig.28).⁶ The passage from Lady Burne-Jones's biography is as follows:

'One evening towards the end of this year (1862) Mr Ruskin came after dinner and carried us off by appointment to Chelsea, to see the Carlyles, for he wished that his old friend and his young friend should meet. It was no use though; instinct told Edward that Carlyle could not care for the work he was busy about, and he would have protested against Mr Ruskin's taking with him the water-colour of "Theseus and Ariadne", but that it would have made too much of the matter and of his own feeling. The evening passed off safely on its human merits – for it was the living voice of Carlyle that we heard saying "the newspapers were shrill" about something, and with the hand that wrote The French Revolution we saw him carefully reach the kettle from the fire for his wife when she made tea. As for her, she was very kind, taking me into her own room to remove my wraps and helping me to put them on again afterwards with motherly tenderness. There were two other people there, Sir Walter and Lady Trevelyan, and all was friendly. A faint impression remains of Carlyle coming down to the door with pleasant words of parting, and then we went home to the Carlyle of the bookshelves whom we knew so much better than this one.'⁷

Burne-Jones's apprehension about showing his picture to Carlyle is not hard to understand. At Oxford seven or eight years before Carlyle had been one of his greatest heroes. Indeed it was Carlyle, almost as much as Ruskin himself, whose ideas had led him to abandon his intention of going into the Church and become an artist instead. Since then, however, he must have learned of Carlyle's very limited views on painting, his dislike of anything he considered frivolous, fantastic, or effete, anything in fact but the sternest realism. Possibly he had heard Holman Hunt describe the famous occasion when the sage, visiting his studio and seeing *The Light of the World*, had inveighed against its 'empty make-believe, mere pretended fancy, to do the like of which is the worst of occupations for a man to take to'.⁸ At any rate he knew enough to be sure Carlyle would not approve of *Theseus and Ariadne*, a picture in which 'make-believe' and 'fancy' are of the essence.

So much could be sensed before, but the incident comes

to life now that we have the picture itself. It has recently re-appeared in an English private collection, and amply justifies the curiosity which the missing work inspired. It has all the charm and feeling one expects of an early Burne-Jones; an element of surprise in the classical costume of Ariadne; better drawing and a more assured touch than most pictures of this date; and it is, finally, beautifully preserved. Ariadne stands to the left, handing to Theseus the spear with which he is to slay the Minotaur and the thread by which he will find his way out of the labyrinth. This lies behind them, casting regular shadows across the grass, in one of which is seen part of a skeleton, a grisly reminder of the fate others have met at the hands of the monster.

The colour harmony is strong and original. The dominant notes are the russet brown of Ariadne's cloak, picked up again in her auburn hair and some small red flowers in the foreground; and the cold steel blue of Theseus's armour, echoed in the sky, the spearhead, and more foreground flowers. To these deep tones the white of Ariadne's tunic offers a relieving foil; while a neutral background is provided by the dull green of the foliage.

In technique the picture is typical of Burne-Jones at this date. The medium is water-colour, but water-colour used to resemble oil. The design is first laid in with a warm transparent brown, much of which shows through in the final effect and unifies the tone. Body-colour is used extensively, often, as in the background foliage or the chain-mail of the armour, to model the forms which are later glazed with a colour wash. Some other ingredient – probably ox-gall – seems to be added to the water to give greater density, and it may be this which causes a delicate craquelure over certain areas, a characteristic feature of Burne-Jones's early water-colours.⁹

The picture appears to be neither signed nor dated, but dating presents few problems. Though Burne-Jones was not always accurate in dating the early entries in the Fitzwilliam notebook (he only began to keep it in 1872 and was relying on memory for the previous entries) there is no reason to doubt him here. On stylistic grounds the picture fits well with others of 1861. The warm russet tones, for instance, are found again in the Victoria and Albert *Merlin and Nimue*, the Carlisle *Goldfish Pool*, or *The Forge of Cupid*, in a private collection, all of which date from this year. Yet a marked technical advance on these pictures suggests it was the last to be painted, and indeed it may well have been finished the following year. The date given in Bell's list is 1861–62; and if Bell's reputation for accuracy suggests this was little more than a happy guess, then there are other clues. Possibly the omission from the list in the Victoria and Albert sketchbook, which goes no further than 1861, is significant here; and the fact that the picture was taken to show Carlyle at the end of 1862 may indicate that it was then only recently finished. Certainly there are formal links with pictures in progress at this time. The foreground, with its softly modelled foliage and powdering of flowers, is very similar to that of the well-known *Fair Rosamund*, probably started in 1862 but dated 1863, when

⁹ The *Idyll* in the Birmingham City Art Gallery (91'24) and the *Eleanor and Rosamund* in the Tate (3822), both of 1862, are notable examples.

⁴ Several sets of these photographs seem to have been made and bound in book form. One of the photographs is reproduced in MARTIN HARRISON and BILL WATERS: *Burne-Jones* [1973], Fig.258.

⁵ No.723. Pencil, 153 by 229 mm.

⁶ E.2881 – 1927. Pencil, 125 by 130 mm. (sight size), the lower L corner cut off diagonally.

⁷ G[EOGIANA] B[URNE]-J[ONES]: *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones* [1904], I, pp.257–58.

⁸ W. HOLMAN HUNT: *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood* [1905], I, pp.355–56.

26.



26. *Theseus and Ariadne*, by Edward Burne-Jones. Water-colour with body-colour, 56.7 by 43.7 cm. (Private Collection, England).

27. Study for *Theseus and Ariadne*, by Edward Burne-Jones. Pencil, 15.3 by 22.9 cm. (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge).

28. Study for *Theseus and Ariadne*, by Edward Burne-Jones. Pencil, 12.5 by 13 cm. (Victoria and Albert Museum).

27.



28.



it was bought by Ruskin's father.¹⁰ Both the type of the background foliage and the method of modelling this in thick body-colour, later to be glazed, are found again in *The Madness of Sir Tristram*, also of late 1862.¹¹ This picture, which is painted directly on top of a stained-glass cartoon, suggests that Burne-Jones derived the idea of laying in his pictures with a brown monochrome underpainting from his glass cartoons, which at this stage were invariably drawn in sepia wash and sometimes have a little colour added. But this was only one means by which he arrived at the method: the traditional oil technique of working in semi-transparent colour over an underpainting, which the result immediately recalls, was clearly also in his mind. In the summer of 1862 he spent several weeks in Venice, and the copies he made there after the great Venetian masters, especially Tintoretto, show him striving, though working in water-colour, to re-create the effect of the dark canvases. It is not surprising that the pictures worked on immediately after his return (among which we are proposing to include *Theseus and Ariadne*) should retain this quality. Indeed a remark in a letter he wrote to Ruskin from Venice about the copies he was making underlines the connexion. The work, he said, 'does one good. Directly my eyes close a canvas appears and I scrawl away with brown and white'.¹²

Before the picture re-appeared only two connected studies were known. Now three more can be identified. All are among the large group of early drawings in the Victoria and Albert Museum. One (Fig.29) is for the two hands of Theseus.¹³ Fairfax Murray has inscribed it as being for the contemporary *Eleanor and Rosamund* (Tate Gallery). This is understandable since the Queen in that picture is also holding a ball of thread, and indeed the subject in general has much in common with that of our picture. But the connexion with the figure of Theseus is beyond dispute. The other two drawings were not previously related to any picture. One is for Theseus's left hand and arm (Fig.30).¹⁴ It is interesting in that he wears a soft sleeve, not the armour found in the picture; but presumably this was simply the dress worn by the sitter and does not imply an alteration in the conception of the figure. The other drawing (Fig.31)¹⁵ is a study for the right hand of Ariadne holding the spear. Further studies – and more important ones than these – must have been made, and with any luck may yet come to light. It would be surprising if there had not been at least one each for the heads, one for the armour of Theseus, and one for Ariadne's dress.

So much for the picture itself. What of its historical con-

text? It always seemed likely to be a transitional work, and this proves to be the case. It marks an important stage in the artist's early development, the moment when he began to break away from the conventions Rossetti had established in the late 1850's, and move, albeit tentatively, towards the prevailing classicism of the '60's.

The picture's roots, of course, lie deep in Rossetian Pre-Raphaelitism, that cramped, enclosed, mysterious, richly coloured world of the master's 'Froissartian' water-colours, the Oxford Union frescoes, *The Defence of Guinevere*, or Red House. It is perhaps worth noting here that its original owner, the Norwich shawl manufacturer W. H. Clabburn, was also a patron of Rossetti, buying an oil version of his *Mary Magdalene at the Door of Simon the Pharisee*, the elaborate pen and ink drawing dated 1858, now in the Fitzwilliam. It is possible, therefore, that Rossetti introduced Clabburn to Burne-Jones, as he did so many of his follower's early patrons. We cannot, however, assume this. Clabburn's replica of *Mary Magdalene* was not commissioned till 1863, and not delivered till '65; so it could have been Burne-Jones who introduced Clabburn to Rossetti.¹⁶

Whatever the case, the influence of Rossetti in *Theseus and Ariadne* is obvious, both in terms of general qualities like the rich, sombre colour, and such details as the red hair of Ariadne, that almost obligatory reference to the charms of Miss Siddal, who had done so much to inspire the vision of the whole Pre-Raphaelite circle. The theme of the maze or labyrinth is also something which surely derived from Rossetti. Here was an extension, full of dramatic possibilities of those airless closets and secret passages in which he loved to enclose his figures. It is interesting that Hampton Court seems to have been a favourite haunt of Rossetti and his friends at this time. There are a number of references to their going there, and in October 1860 Rossetti, Burne-Jones and their wives actually got 'lost' in the maze.¹⁷ That this, or a similar, experience impressed itself on Rossetti's imagination is suggested by a story told by Bell Scott in his *Autobiographical Notes*. According to Scott, Rossetti, wanting to draw a labyrinth in his design for the frontispiece to Christina Rossetti's *Prince's Progress* (1865), preferred to take it from a plan in a 6d guide to the maze rather than make a sketch on the spot.¹⁸ We cannot illustrate Burne-Jones's debt to the maze so graphically, but it seems that its impact on him was no less strong. Time and again at this period he returns to the theme of a labyrinth as a place of danger, where a victim is doomed to meet some hideous fate. The most notable example is a series of designs illustrating the story of Fair Rosamund and Queen Eleanor. There are patent similarities between this

¹⁰ Private collection, London. For a good colour reproduction, see the cover of the catalogue of the Burne-Jones Exhibition held at the Mappin Art Gallery, Sheffield, October–November 1971.

¹¹ Reproduced in JOHN CHRISTIAN: 'Early German Sources for Pre-Raphaelite Designs', *The Art Quarterly*, Vol. XXXVI, Nos. 1–2 [1973], Fig. 20.

¹² *Memorials*, I, p. 246. A number of Burne-Jones's Venetian copies of 1862 are in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and one after Tintoretto's *Visitation* in the Scuola di S. Rocco is at the Ruskin Galleries, Bembidge.

¹³ E.2858–1927. Pencil, 142 by 63 mm. (sight size). Inscribed in brown ink by Fairfax Murray *Q Eleanor and Fair Rosamond* between the two studies, and *E.B.J.* lower R.

¹⁴ E.2840–1927, Pencil, 113 by 137 mm. (sight size), the lower L corner cut off diagonally. The artist's initials added by Charles Fairfax Murray upper R.

¹⁵ E.2838–1927. Pencil, 52 by 88 mm. (sight size). Inscribed *E.B.J.* upper L in Fairfax Murray's hand.

¹⁶ See VIRGINIA SURTEES: *Dante Gabriel Rossetti* [1971], Cat. p. 65, No. 109 R.2. W. H. Clabburn was also a patron of Frederick Sandys. Portraits of him (1870), his wife (1869) and sons were shown at the Sandys exhibition, Brighton Museum and Art Gallery, May–July, 1974, cat. Nos. 95, 107–110 (all reproduced). A letter from Clabburn to Fairfax Murray in the John Rylands Library, Manchester, shows that he sold *Theseus and Ariadne* and Rossetti's *Mary Magdalene* to Murray in September 1872 for £300. *Theseus and Ariadne* subsequently belonged to Sir Henry Tate. It is interesting to note that in 1898, a year after the Tate Gallery was founded, Burne-Jones told his assistant T. M. Rooke that Tate 'hates me (and) won't have anything of mine in his gallery.'

¹⁷ *Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, ed. O. DOUGHTY and J. R. WAHL [1965–67], I, p. 381.

¹⁸ WILLIAM BELL SCOTT: *Autobiographical Notes* [1892], II, p. 45. For the *Prince's Progress* design, see SURTEES, *op. cit.*, Cat. No. 186 and Fig. 276. A plan such as Rossetti must have used appears in HENRY COLE'S *Hand-book to Hampton Court* [1841], between pp. 102 and 103.

subject and that of Theseus and Ariadne: Rosamund Clifford, the mistress of Henry II, lives in a 'bower' or maze at Woodstock; this can only be penetrated by following a thread; the angry Queen, discovering the secret, so deals with Rosamund that she 'lives not long after'. The story was a favourite with the Pre-Raphaelites; it was also treated by Bell Scott, Arthur Hughes, Swinburne, Rossetti, and Frederick Sandys. But for Burne-Jones it seems to have held some special attraction and between 1861 and 1863 he returned to it on no less than five occasions. Another picture somewhat related in theme is the *Fatima* (Bluebeard's wife), a water-colour of 1862.¹⁹ In this the heroine is seen pausing at the end of a long passage to place the key in the lock of the closet where her husband's former wives lie murdered.

It may not be irrelevant to note also that in Ruskin's allusive mind a connexion existed between the Hampton Court maze and Chaucer's version of the story of Theseus and Ariadne in *The Legend of Good Women*.²⁰ This was a period of very close association between Ruskin and Burne-Jones. Besides ties of admiration and friendship, Ruskin was trying to influence the painter, urging him to abandon the stylistic eccentricities that had flourished in Rossetti's circle in the late 1850's and adopt a softer, broader manner exhibiting, as he put it, more 'classical grace and tranquility'. With this end in view he may well have suggested that Burne-Jones should turn to Chaucer, the poet of Spring-like moods in whom he himself was already deeply interested. Certainly this was the period when Burne-Jones began the long series of paintings and decorative designs inspired by the poet that was to span the rest of his career and culminate in the set of illustrations to the Kelmscott *Chaucer*, published in 1896, two years before his death. His first Chaucerian design seems to have been the water-colour *Cupid's Forge* of 1861, the subject of which is taken from *The Parlement of Foules*; and *Theseus and Ariadne* is almost certainly the second. In this case the connexion is not quite so close. Burne-Jones paraphrases Chaucer's account, making Ariadne hand Theseus the spear and thread herself where in Chaucer they are given to him, at her request, by the gaoler. There is some comparison here with another drawing of 1861, an amusing design for a tile showing Theseus and the Minotaur playing hide-and-seek in the labyrinth (Fig.32).²¹ This again is not exactly an illustration but rather a sort of gloss on Chaucer's text. But designs more specifically related were soon to follow: indeed of all Chaucer's poems the *Legend* clearly occupied Burne-Jones's thoughts more than any other at this time. The Fitzwilliam work-list records 'many large cartoons for Chaucer's dream of good women' under 1862. These were intended for a tapestry, a sketch for which is illustrated here (Fig.33).²² Whether the project in fact dates

from this year, or the date Burne-Jones gives is a year too early, it was certainly much in the air in 1863 when Burne-Jones – significantly, perhaps, in the present context – offered to have the hangings made for Ruskin. They were to adorn a house which, he hoped, Ruskin would take in England rather than settling, as he threatened to do, in Switzerland; and the work was in fact started by the girls of Winnington Hall in Cheshire.²³ In 1864 Burne-Jones adapted the designs for a series of stained-glass panels made by the Morris firm for the Combination Room at Peterhouse, Cambridge.²⁴ Two easel pictures treating the general theme of Chaucer's vision followed in 1865 and 1871; and in 1870 another of the individual stories became the subject of a painting, the well-known *Phyllis and Demophoön* at Birmingham.

We have touched on two aspects of classicism in *Theseus and Ariadne* – Ruskin's idea of 'classical grace' and the subject-matter of Chaucer's poem. It is interesting that Burne-Jones already seems to have been attracted to the semi-Christian, semi-pagan spirit so characteristic of Chaucer, underlining the duality – still rather crudely at this stage – by giving classical costume to Ariadne and medieval armour to Theseus. Taking his cue both from Chaucer and the Renaissance masters he came to admire so much, it was here, ultimately, that he was to find a means of reconciling the rival claims of the gothic and classical worlds.

But our picture also seems to show something of the conflict the process involved. This indeed may be said of many artists' work in the 1860's, for classicism, though it had its private application for Burne-Jones, also wore a more public aspect. One thinks now of the wind of new ideas blowing from across the Channel. After an exhaustive continental training, Leighton was more or less settled in London by the late 1850's. Poynter, Du Maurier and Whistler, all of whom had studied in Paris under the academic painter Charles Gleyre, and Thomas Armstrong, whose training, almost as long and varied as Leighton's, had included a period in the *atelier* of Ary Scheffer, followed him in 1860. There was much to-ing and fro-ing between this group and the indigenous Pre-Raphaelites. They mixed socially, in each other's studios, at artistic centres like Little Holland House, at the Hogarth Club; they shared the same patrons and worked on the same commissions. Since the Pre-Raphaelites were already established, their ideas tended at first to prevail in the process of stylistic integration which resulted from the mixing of the two groups. But it was not long before the influence began running the other way. This is certainly true of Burne-Jones, at just the time that concerns us here. The classical dress of Ariadne would have been inconceivable for him a year or two earlier, and it is no accident that in a contemporary sketchbook in the V. and A. (the one we have already noted as containing a list of early pictures which does *not*, however, include *Theseus and Ariadne*) he made a series of copies from Thomas Hope's *Costume of the Ancients*, a book first published in 1809 especially

¹⁹ Private collection. No.163 in the exhibition *George Howard and his Circle*, held at the Carlisle City Art Gallery, 1968, and reproduced in the catalogue.

²⁰ See *Fors Clavigera* 23, November 1872 (*Works of John Ruskin*, ed. E. T. COOK and ALEXANDER WEDDERBURN [1903–12], XXVII, pp.406–08) and *Praeterita*, II, Ch.1 (*Works*, XXXV, pp.246–47).

²¹ City Art Gallery, Birmingham. No.594'27. Pencil, pen and ink, and (very roughly applied) brown wash, 254 by 251 mm. The date 1861 is written on the back and the design is entered in Burne-Jones's account book with Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co. (Fitzwilliam Museum) under January 1862. For other tile designs of this period based on the *Legend of Good Women*, see HARRISON and WATERS, *op. cit.*, Figs.87–88.

²² City Art Gallery, Birmingham. No.13'04. Pencil, 267 by 356 mm.

²³ See *Memorials*, I, pp.266ff. A number of Burne-Jones's cartoons for the tapestry survive, in the Ashmolean Museum, the William Morris Gallery at Walthamstow, the Ruskin Galleries, Bembridge, and elsewhere.

²⁴ See A. CHARLES SEWTER: *The Stained Glass of William Morris and his Circle*, Yale University Press [1974], p.30 and Figs. 197–203.

for the use of artists. Several of the plates illustrating female costume offer points of comparison with the dress worn by Ariadne, although none is perhaps close enough to warrant a definite connexion. It is also surely significant that the same sketchbook contains numerous copies after Flaxman’s engravings to Hesiod and Aeschylus, for Flaxman was still much admired in the Paris studios, as he had been, of course, by Ingres himself. One of Burne-Jones’s new friends might well have suggested he should look carefully at these designs.

To trace these various strands is interesting in connexion with Burne-Jones; but it is all the more rewarding here since our picture happens to spring from a particularly rich cultural milieu. The 1860’s are a fascinating but bewilderingly complex period for students of nineteenth-century painting in England – at least so far as ideal figure subjects are concerned. Many cross-currents were in play and artists found themselves blown in many contrary directions before, by the end of the decade, like ships after a storm, they were able to sail away on their appointed courses. No one stood quite at the central point; it was indeed symptomatic that no such thing existed. But if anyone came near to doing so it was surely Burne-Jones. Deeply entrenched in Pre-Raphaelite traditions, and still eager to follow the precepts of Ruskin, one of his earliest heroes, he was yet keenly aware of the new ideals, being drawn to them both by an inherent interest in formal values for their own sake and, no doubt, the fact that he was closer in age to the classical men than to his Pre-Raphaelite masters. In *Theseus and Ariadne* we begin to see some of these tensions at work. It says much for the spirit of the time, for example, that Ruskin, who seems to stand behind the picture at so many points, neither liked Flaxman’s engravings nor had much sympathy with the work of the men trained abroad. When the full history of this phase of English art comes to be written, it may well prove one of the most valuable documents we have. Meanwhile, we may be thankful that so charming and distinguished a picture has come to light.

Shorter Notices

Documents on the Sangallo Family at Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi

BY ALISON LUCHS

THERE has never been reason to doubt that Giuliano da Sangallo designed the beautiful Ionic cortile in front of the Florentine church of Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi (formerly Cestello, a church of the Cistercian order). The high quality and classicizing nature of its conception support Vasari’s attribution to him, in addition to the fact that Vasari had Giuliano’s son Francesco for an informant. But up to now, documentation of Giuliano’s presence at Cestello has been lacking.¹

A search through an account book of the late fifteenth century

¹ See VASARI-MILANESI IV, 270, and W. KALLAB: *Vasaristudien*, Vienna and Leipzig [1908], p.277. The best summary of evidence and bibliography on Cestello is still in W. and E. PAATZ: *Die Kirchen von Florenz*, Frankfurt am Main [1952], v. IV, pp.90ff.; see also G. MARCHINI: *Giuliano da Sangallo*, Florence [1942], pp.11ff. and 85, and G. MOROZZI *et al.*: *Il Restauro dei Monumenti dal 1944 al 1968*, Florence [1968] (exhibition catalogue), pp.37–40.

in the Cistercian archive in Florence, however, turned up the following note:²

Spese fatte per la muraglia di Cestello deono dare adi 22 di febraio 1490 f(iorini) 15 doro in oro per loro a guliano e/antonio da sanghallo maestri, di legname p(er) ’l Magisterio dun modello e di loro fatica lire 97 soldi 10.

This debt to the Sangallo brothers in 1491 (modern style) for a model of unspecified nature is the only mention of work by them in this account book, or any other Cistercian *filza* examined so far. It by no means resolves the complex problem of the exact date and extent of their participation in the renovation of Cestello which began in 1479. This and other questions relating to the church and Renaissance artistic patronage there will be discussed in a forthcoming study.³

Another document in the Cistercian archive indicates that the two large plan drawings of the Cestello church and convent in the Uffizi,⁴ both by Francesco da Sangallo and one bearing his signature (Fig.36), represent more than a tribute by Giuliano’s son to the work of his father and uncle. This document is an agreement of 18th May 1561 between the Cistercians and ‘Maestro Jacopo di Biagio muratore’ to realign two doorways into the inner cloister of the convent, thus creating an uninterrupted vista from the street through the cloister into the vineyard on the opposite side. It mentions ‘Maestro Francesco da Sanghallo’ as present at arrangements for this work made a few days earlier.⁵

While Francesco is not specifically named as the architect, the more complete of the drawings by him corresponds to the result of the proposed change, even to a fine line drawn through the centre of the inner cloister into the doorway to the ‘oroto’ (visible in the original), representing the line of vision provided by the new positions of the street and cloister doorways. The Cistercians were not exceptional for the Renaissance in recording full details of agreements with the workmen who executed projects for them, while mentioning the designing architect only barely, if at all. Thus the assumption seems reasonable that the Uffizi drawings were made in connection with the 1561 project, and that to work out this project the Cistercians had turned to the son of the architect who had served them so well in another generation.

² Archivio di Stato, Firenze, Compagnie Religiose Soppresse C. XVIII 501: 355, fol. 122.

³ ALISON LUCHS: *Cestello: A Cistercian Church of the Florentine Renaissance*, doctoral dissertation (Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore; under direction of Professor Egon Verheyen). I am grateful to the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., for supporting this research with a Chester Dale Fellowship.

⁴ Uffizi 1533A and 275A, cited in P. N. FERRI: *Indice Geografico-Analitico dei Disegni di Architettura Civile e Militare esistenti nella R. Galleria degli Uffizi in Firenze*, Rome [1885], p.52; each is executed in brown ink and bistre on several sheets of white paper joined together; the larger and more complete, 275A, bears Francesco’s signature and measures 884 by 900 mm. in total. It regularizes and idealizes the Cestello complex heavily, perhaps in relation to an older plan or to some sixteenth-century project for more ambitious adjustments.

⁵ *yh8 addi 18 di maggio 1561*
Manifestasi per la presente iscritta come el Rdo. don dionisio abate/di Settimo e venuto in concordia con maestro Jacopo di biagio muratore/di tramutare la porta grande da via del ministero di cestello/e mettella nel dritto a punto della porta dell’orto e chosi anchora/lusco che entra nel chioistro ritirallo e rimuovello che anchora quello venga a punto in detto dritto che si dica achorda dalla porta/dell’orto isino alla porta della via. Come tutto si ragono govedi passato presente M.o franc. o da Sanghallo . . .

Archivio di Stato, Firenze, Compagnie Religiose Soppresse C. XVIII 390: 10 (pages unnumbered).

Thanks are due to Professor Gino Corti for his help with this transcription. For a clearer description of the change in the cloister and the vista it created see the document published by C. VON FABRICZY: ‘Memorie sulla chiesa di S. Maria Maddalena de’ Pazzi a Firenze . . .’, *L’Arte*, 9 [1906], p.261.