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JOHN LEIGHTON AND THE *LYRA GERMANICA* AGAIN

D.C. MILLER'S INFORMATIVE ARTICLE on John Leighton's designs for *Lyra Germanica* in a previous number of this journal¹ is weakened by the fact that Miller fails to make it clear, when dealing with the cloth bindings, that he is describing signed binding designs by John Leighton on two entirely different publications, both of which, unfortunately, tend to be described in studies of nineteenth-century bindings² (and in booksellers' catalogues) by the same abbreviated and ambiguous title — *Lyra Germanica*. The ambiguity is not lessened by the fact that the Leighton binding designs which appeared on the cloth covers of the majority of copies of these two closely-related publications are themselves intimately related. Splendidly produced in foolscap quarto, both publications, issued under the artistic superintendence of John Leighton, display binding variants, both in the detail of the blocking of the covers and in, what is more obvious and less important, cloth colour. It seems reasonable to suppose that the cloth colour variations were introduced in the binding-shop because of the availability or non-availability of stocks of various cloths. But the decision to use variations of the same basic cover design for two closely allied but different works by the same author was presumably one taken by Longmans, the publisher, who may have wished to get maximum value out of an expensive but popular artistic cover.

The main purpose of this article, which is based on an examination of multiple copies in public institutions and private collections³, is to attempt to identify the primary design and its secondary variations, and to make a brief note of copies in alternative leather bindings. It is hoped this will elicit further notes on further variants from other collectors and scholars.

A recent article by William B. Todd⁴ uses the variants in one of the binding designs on the series called *Moxon's Miniature Poets* — a binding design also attributed to John Leighton — as an object lesson in the need to examine multiple copies in bibliopagic, as well as bibliographical, studies. The present note underlines that scholarly *moralitas*.

THE PUBLICATIONS

The two *Lyra Germanica* publications under discussion, both edited by Catherine Winkworth, may be briefly, but I think accurately, described as follows: [For the typographical and stylistic detail of the two title-pages, see Figs. I and II.]

A. *Lyra Germanica: Hymns for the Sundays and Chief Festivals of the Christian Year. Translated from the German by Catherine Winkworth. With Illustrations by and engraved under the Superintendence of John Leighton, F.S.A.*

London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1861. pp.xx,272.

Format and collation: Foolscap 4°: [a]⁴b-c⁴, B-2M⁴.

Contents: Half-title, p.[i]; verso half-title, p.[ii] — frontispiece; title-page,

p.[iii]; verso t.p., p.[iv] design including printer's device — R. Clay; dedication to Bunsen, p.[v]; verso of dedication, p.[vi] — list of artists and engravers; preface, pp.vii-xv (dated July, 16, 1855) [The addendum to the preface for the second edition, dated Nov. 30, 1855, is also on p.xv]; contents, pp.xvi-xviii; fly-title, p.xix; verso of fly-title, p.xx — illustration engraved by H. Harral; text, pp.1-265; index, pp.266-72.

Notes: This 1861 edition has engravings within it executed by T. Bolton, J. Cooper, G. & E. Dalziel, G. de Wilde, W. Green, H. Harral, H. Leighton, W. Murden, G. Pearson and J. Swain. The engravings are from designs by E. Armitage, J. Flaxman, M. Lawless, C. Keene, S. Marks and J. Leighton. This veritable galaxy of Victorian book illustration talent enhances a text of English translations of German hymns taken exclusively from Chevalier Bunsen's *Versuch eines allgemeinen Gesang- und Gebetbuchs*, first published in 1833. Winkworth's publication, of which this is *not* the first edition⁵, was dedicated to Bunsen. This edition is superbly printed by the firm of Richard Clay, whose device appears on the verso of the title-page (p.[iv]). The RWP copy has a gift inscription dated 26 December 1860, suggesting that this 1861 edition was available in time for the 1860 Christmas market.

B. *Lyra Germanica: The Christian Life. Translated from the German by Catherine Winkworth, and illustrated by John Leighton, F.S.A.; E. Armitage, A.R.A.; and F. Madox Brown*

London: Longmans, Green, Reader & Dyer, 1868. pp.xvi, 254 + 2p. advertisement of Longmans books.

Format and collation: Foolscap 4°: [a]-b⁴, B-2K⁴.

Contents: Half-title, p.[i]; verso half-title, p.[ii] — frontispiece engraved by C. Pearson from a design by E. Armitage; title-page, p.[iii]; verso of t.p., p.[iv] — list of artists and engravers, and printer's colophon: R. Clay, Son, and Taylor; preface, pp.v-xi; verso, p.[xii] — artistic device; contents, pp.xiii-xiv; part-title, p.[xv]; verso part-title, p.[xvi] — artistic device; text, pp.1-254; advertisement of Longmans books, pp.[255-6].

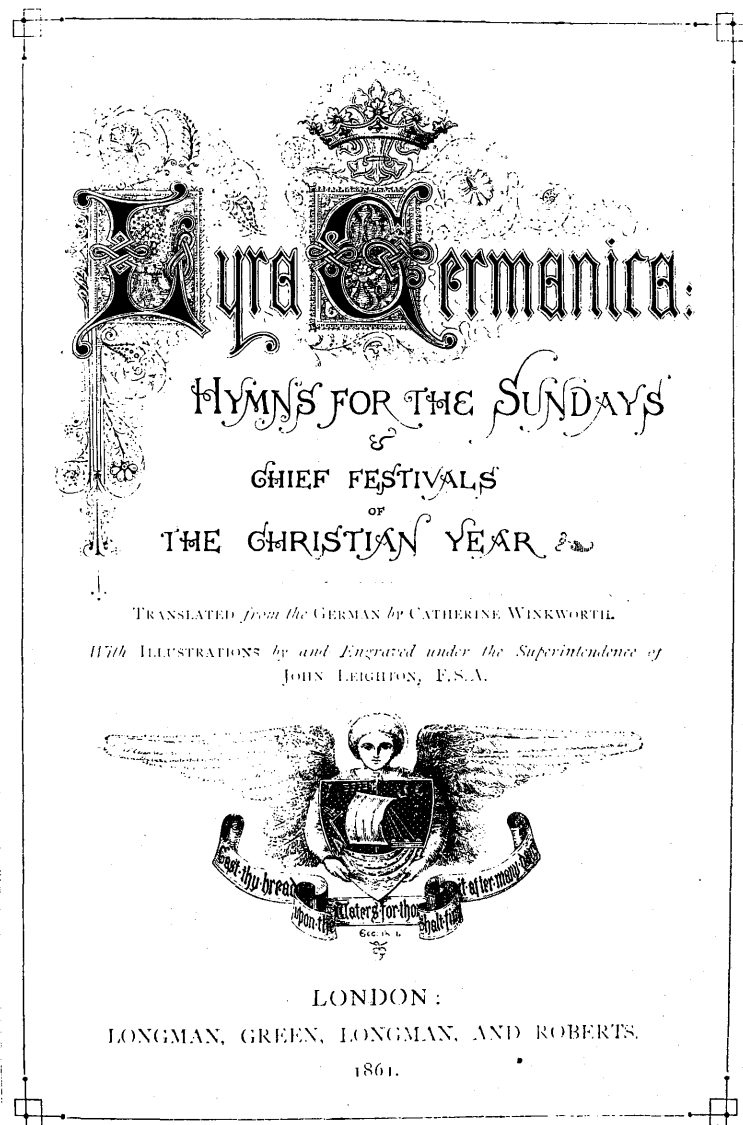


Fig. I

Notes: This 1868 publication contains six illustrations by E. Armitage, three by F. Madox Brown, and the rest by John Leighton. These are engraved by an overlapping, but substantially different, group of engravers from those who engraved the blocks for *Lyra Germanica — The Christian Year*. The list of engravers is as follows: Bolton, Butterworth and Heath, Cooper, Dalziel, Green, H. Leighton, Pearson, Swain, Williamson and Whympier. The Preface in this 1868 illustrated edition is taken from earlier editions of *Lyra Germanica — The Christian Life*, and is dated Alderley Edge, May 19th, 1858. It makes the following major points, differentiating the first series from the second series:

1) Although both series are taken from the same 'rich stores of German hymnology', the hymns in the second series are of a more personal and individual character than those in the first series.

2) There are no Luther hymns in the second series.

3) The hymns in the second series are from a variety of sources, although many of them are translations of hymns taken from the huge Bunsen collection, which supplied all the originals for the earlier series.

In addition to these textual differences, the illustrations in the second series are entirely different in content, and very often in style, from those in the first series. On the evidence of an inscription in the CUL copy, this 1868 edition could be bought as early as November 1867.

In the light of these facts, it does not make good bibliographical sense to describe, as Miller does, the 1861 first series as 'the first edition of *Lyra Germanica* supervised by John Leighton' (p.15 of his article), and the 1868 second series as 'the new edition of 1868' (pp.16 and 17 of his article). The sentences which begin Miller's last paragraph on p.16, referring as they do to 'the 1861/8' and to the '1868', are particularly unclear. Two entirely different publications are not properly referred to as two different *editions*. They would be much more exactly described by the short titles: *Lyra Germanica — The Christian Year* (foolscap 4° edition), and *Lyra Germanica — The Christian Life* (foolscap 4° edition), successfully differentiating the two publications, and separating Longman's foolscap 4° editions of both series from the numerous 12° and 8° editions which appeared in London and New York from the 1850s to the 1890s.⁶

The lack of clarity in Miller's descriptions is unfortunately carried through to his illustrations. The note on p.19 of his article reads: 'The following illustrations are all from the '5th' edition of 1868: the front cover, cloth binding; leather binding; page 114; page 133; page 45; page 38; page 174.' In actual fact, the illustration of the cloth binding is of a later variation of the original cloth binding of Leighton's edition of *Lyra Germanica — The Christian Year*; the illustration of the leather binding is of the publisher's leather binding of *Lyra Germanica* —

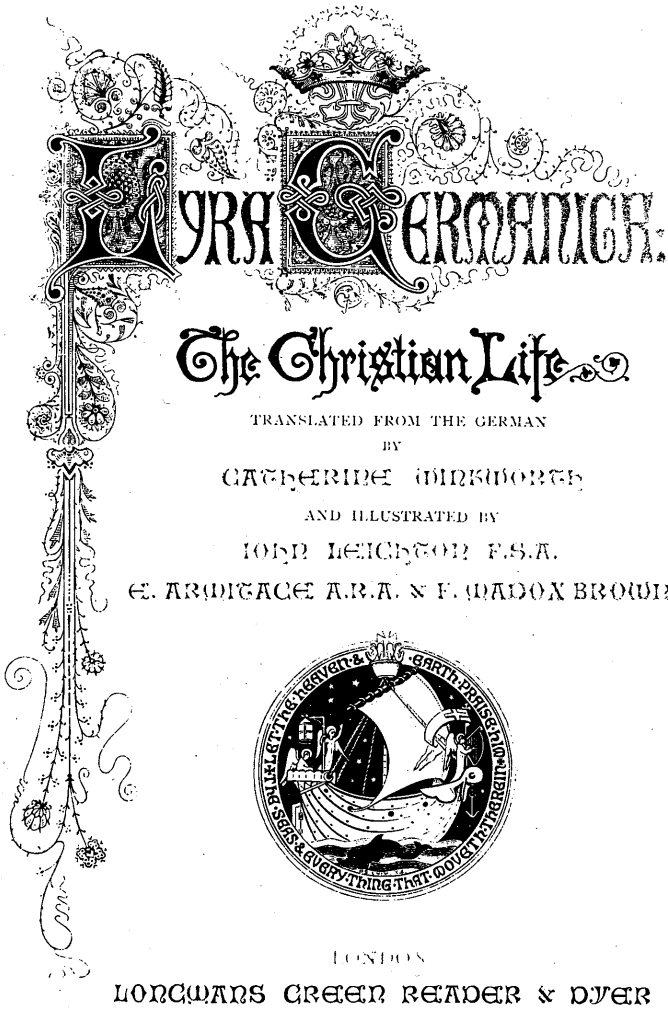


Fig. II

The Christian Life, and of the five internal illustrations, the two Flaxman *bas relief* illustrations, engraved by Bolton, are from *Lyra Germanica — The Christian Year* (1861), and the other three, designed by Ford Madox Brown, and engraved by Bolton & Swain, are from *Lyra Germanica — The Christian Life* (1868).

THE BINDING VARIANTS

A. *Lyra Germanica — The Christian Year*, 1861.

(Illustration III). In a dark green ribbed morocco grain cloth, with a mandorla-shaped red cloth onlay on front and back covers. The front cover is blocked in gilt; the mandorla onlay blocked in gilt and blind. The back cover is treated in the same way. Two rectangular blocks, at the head and foot of the central panel, contain the words 'Lyra' and 'Germanica' respectively. The binding is signed in a circular enclosure below the central panel. The spine is blocked in gilt, and its design features three ovals, the top one of which contains the words 'Lyra Germanica' and 'Winkworth'; the second one contains a star, eagle and triangle design, and the bottom one has the words: 'Illustrated by John Leighton etc.' Bevelled boards, a.e.g., red endpapers.

The CUL copy described above, which was skilfully repaired in 1982, carries the binder's ticket of Edmonds and Remnant. The RWP, NLS and Pantazzi copies are of the same design but executed in a dark brown, purple-hued cloth, with violet/blue end-papers. They also carry the Edmonds and Remnant ticket.

I believe this to be the primary state of Leighton's binding design for the cloth covered foolscap 4° edition of *Lyra Germanica — the Christian Year*. It does not seem possible to put the cloth colour variations in chronological order.

I have not personally seen any leather bindings for this 1861 production. It is certain, however, from advertisements, that later editions of the Leighton-designed version were also issued in alternative leather trade bindings, some of which were executed by the firm of Rivière, and this may also be true of the 1861 edition. An *Athenaeum* advertisement, 14 November, 1868 reads as follows:

LYRA GERMANICA, the Christian Year. Translated by Catherine Winkworth: with 125 Illustrations on Wood drawn by J. Leighton, F.S.A. Quarto. 21s cloth, or 42s bound in morocco by Rivière.

Lyra Germanica — The Christian Life was advertised on the same day in the same way. But in the actual advertisements of Longmans books at the back of the 1868 edition of *Lyra Germanica — The Christian Life*, three different binding styles are offered: the Gothic cloth version at 21s., an antique morocco cover at 36s., and in 'morocco elegant' by Rivière at 42s.

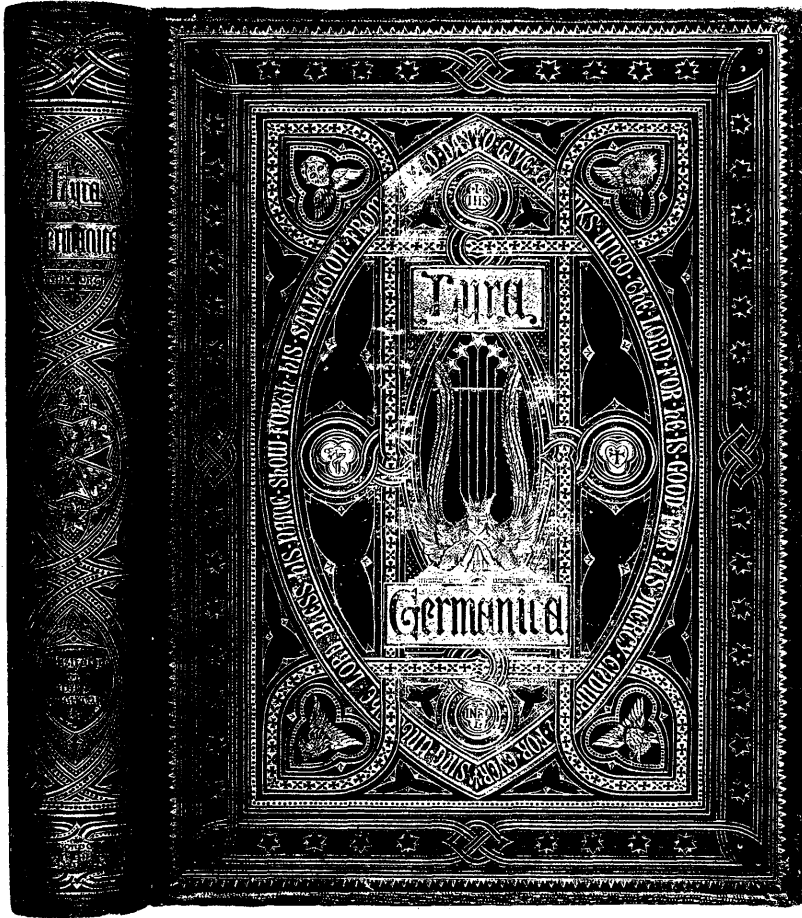


Fig. III
(Actual size: 232 × 169mm.)

B. *Lyra Germanica* – *The Christian Year*, 1865 (Fourth Edition).

The Pantazzi copy of this edition is not bound in Leighton cloth. The brown morocco full leather binding is by Hayday & Co., and was probably made for an individual purchaser.

C. *Lyra Germanica* – *The Christian Year*, 1868 (Fifth Edition).

On the evidence of Miller's article, and the accompanying illustration, an edition of 1868 was issued in a cloth variant of Leighton's original design. This featured the words *Lyra Germanica* in a rectangle above the angel figure, and the words *The Christian Year* in the rectangle below. Miller describes this binding on p.16 of his article. The Pantazzi copy of this edition is yet another variant. The design is the same but it is executed in red pebble-grain cloth. The front cover and spine carry the Leighton design in gilt and blind. The back cover is decorated in blind only. I have not seen an advertisement, but I presume this was a cheaper re-issue.

D. *Lyra Germanica* – *The Christian Life*, 1868.

(Illustration IV). In a dark green morocco grained cloth, with a mandorla-shaped red cloth onlay on both front and back covers. The front cover is blocked in gilt, and the mandorla onlay in gilt and blind on both front and back. Two rectangular blocks, at the head and foot of the central panel, contain the words 'Lyra Germanica' and 'The Christian Life' respectively. The binding is signed in a circular enclosure below the central panel. The spine features three decorated ovals, the top one of which contains the words 'Lyra Germanica' and 'Winkworth'; the central one contains the words 'The Christian Life', and the third one contains the words 'with illustrations by John Leighton and others'. Bevelled boards, a.e.g., red endpapers.

The CUL copy, described above, carries the ticket of Edmonds and Remnant. I believe this to be the first state of the 1868 *Lyra Germanica* – *The Christian Life* version of the binding. The MC copy is identical. The NLS copy is in blue cloth with red onlay.

E. The STAUL copy is in a full morocco leather binding with an overall diaper design. This is a copy of the binding described and illustrated by D.C. Miller. The absence of a binder's ticket does not allow us to equate it automatically with either of the alternative leather bindings at 36s or 42s described in the advertisements. As it appears on a number of copies I suspect it is a leather 'trade' binding. Miller (p.16) attributes this unsigned design to Leighton. I know of no evidence, stylistic or external, for this particular attribution.

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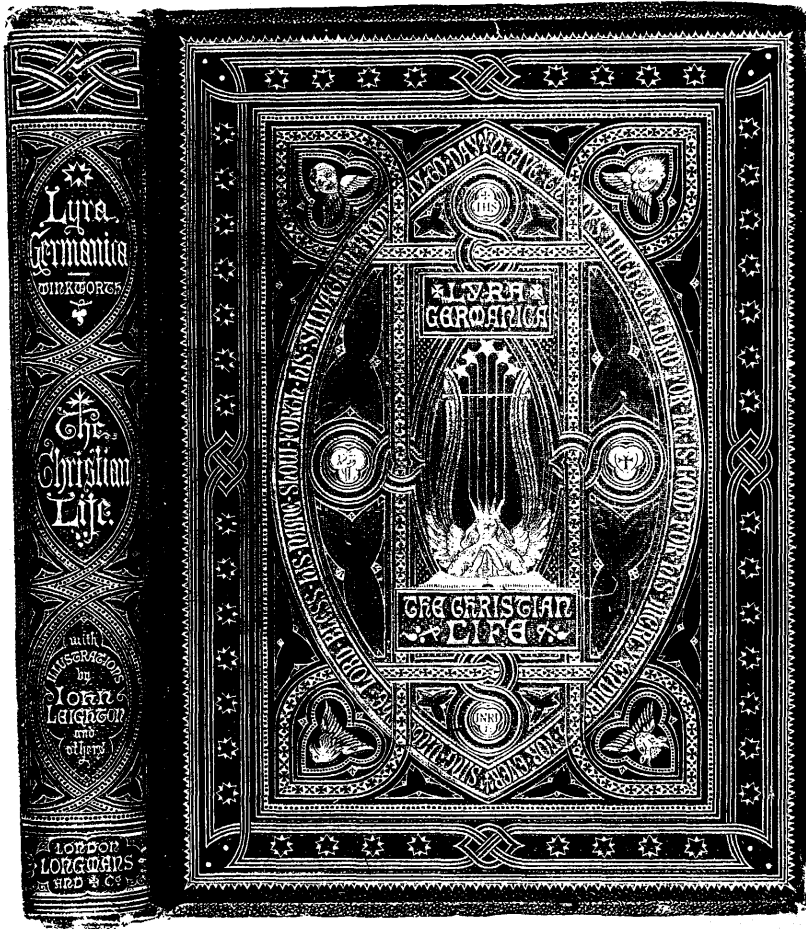


Fig.IV
(Actual size: 232 × 169mm.)

NOTES

¹ *BSANZ Bulletin*, v.7(1983), 15-18.

² e.g. R. McLean, *Victorian Publishers' Bookbindings in Cloth and Leather* (London, 1974), p.131.

³ Copies of both *Lyra Germanica - The Christian Year* and *Lyra Germanica - The Christian Life* were examined through the courtesy of their custodians and owners, and are referred to as follows:

CUL — Copy in Calgary University Library.

NLS — Copy in the National Library of Scotland.

Pantazzi — Copy in the Pantazzi collection of signed bindings gifted to the Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto Library.

MC — Copy in the R. McLean collection in the library of Massey College, University of Toronto.

RWP — Copy in the possession of Professor R.W. Peattie, Department of English, University of Calgary.

STAUL — Copy in the possession of the University Library, St. Andrews, Scotland.

I owe special thanks to Ms. Polly Steele, University of Calgary, and Dr Desmond Neill, Massey College, University of Toronto.

⁴ W.B. Todd, 'Books in Series' in *Collectible Books. Some New Paths*, ed. J. Peters. (N.Y. and London, 1979), pp.68-94.

⁵ The first 8° edition from Longmans is dated 1855.

⁶ There are useful listings in *BMC*, *NUC* and *The English Catalogue of Books*, but a full bibliography of editions of the writings of the Winkworths remains a *desideratum*.

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