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JOHN MARTIN
VISIONARY PRINTMAKER

by
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with accompanying essays by

J. Dustin Wees and Richard A. Burnett

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1816.5
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A4
1992

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C.W.40.

C.W.40. [Raphael conversing with Adam and Eve], 1824/1826

Mezzotint with etching,

platemark: 10 x 14 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (254 x 358 mm.);

image: 7 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (193 x 276 mm.)

Fully lettered proof

Lettered: *Designed & Engraved by J. Martin Esqr./Book 5 line 519./Proof/London. Published by Septimus Prowett 23, Old Bond Street. 1826.*

Balston 9a4(A)

Lent by Michael J. Campbell

Begun in pure mezzotint alone, this larger version of *Raphael conversing with Adam and Eve* shares the same strange printing history which is described in the entry for C.W.60, following.¹

It appears that no "formal" lettered proofs were issued of this engraving and that the earliest proof impressions found in elephant folio sets bear the word "Proof" inscribed in pencil by hand.² Other elephant folio impressions are known which bear an engraved word "Proof" which appears to have been "scratched" on to the printing plate in a fine and uneven manner. Impressions with this scratched word "Proof" can be found with traces of the printer's name J. Lahee just visible at the right of the title space.³

On later impressions the line "Printed by Chatfield & Co." appears and all vestige of the scratched "Proof" has disappeared. Only a very few impressions with the scratched "Proof" seem to have been pulled and it is rare for them to be found amongst the remaining sets of proof impressions bound into Charles Whittingham's 1846 edition of *Paradise Lost* (the second edition to contain Martin's larger plates). Pencil inscribed proofs of this engraving are exceptionally rare.

The etched trees silhouetted against the sky in this image were added to the plate only after the design had been completed in mezzotint.⁴ In common with all of the works in which Martin used this combined technique, this produced highly effective contrast and recession in early proof impressions, but increasingly displeasing results in later printings.

1. This printing history and strange absence of proofs is also shared by C.W.66, *Satan tempting Eve*, from the larger series. Similarly C.W.60. and C.W.66. from the smaller series.
2. Impressions of this nature can be found in The Royal Library, Windsor Castle and the collection of Michael J. Campbell.
3. Collection of Michael J. Campbell.
4. An early working proof prior to any of the etched work is in the collection of Michael J. Campbell.