

What Happened with the Blake Cottage Appeal

Chapter IX

In the previous chapter we saw how, after my resignation, I returned to my work as Secretary of the Blake Society and my work on the Cottage appeal, following a harrowing process of “negotiation” that was, mainly, a farce. We also were witness to Ms Paige Morgan’s capacity for dishonesty, cunning and crassness in the document she published in our webpage on 16 October, the very day Mr Heath and I signed our agreement to go on working together.

I had resigned more than two weeks before, on a Thursday, and on the following Saturday I still honoured my commitments by running the event I had organized, with the help of Mrs Vinall, taking children from Kids Company to read “The Tyger” to the tigers at London Zoo. We will hear about that event shortly.

On my return to work on 16 October I wrote to the Committee:

I thought you might be happy to hear that, after taking the two weeks' time you suggested to reconsider my decision to resign, I am back as Secretary of the Blake Society.

I am very grateful for your good will and wishes towards finding a solution, and particularly to Antony's most kind and generous help as a mediator.

So we're all back working as usual, which I'm sure is what Blake would want us to do; this evening as you know we had our monthly lecture about Blake as Shaman, and earlier this month we had the Tyger Tiger event at the Zoo. Perhaps this is a good moment to share with you how did that go.

It was a lovely (and hectic) day, different in some ways from what we had imagined: there were few people on a rainy Saturday, so it felt like we had much of the Zoo to ourselves. It was very moving to see those kids reciting the poem to the tigress and her cubs covering from the rain, then showing their illuminated poem through the glass to the imposing father. The youngest child (Jacob), not more than 4, was perhaps the most ecstatic, holding on fervently to the print of Blake's own illuminated poem with a big smile on his face. They tell us in Kids Company that next Monday they were talking about it all day. Thank you Christina for all the work and support!

David Vinall very kindly made a video to document the whole thing that we'll put in our webpage and will share with the Zoo shortly. Meanwhile you can watch it here <https://vimeo.com/108658463>. You will need a password: Lambmak3th33.

Mr Garrido wrote to me (again, the one now accusing me of acting out of resentment):

What a lovely event at the Zoo, very touching to see the children reciting and their drawings are so full of life and innocence. You are showing great nobility in forgiving and putting love into practice. We are lucky to have you back.

with love and friendship,

luis

I responded:

Thank you so much for your very kind email, it is truly comforting. Let's hope we have all learnt from this and that our work does not suffer any further.

Yes, the event at the Zoo was very moving, and I loved their drawings too. It is clear these children come from difficult spaces and that was part of the challenge, yet they were so responsive, it was a very beautiful day.

Mr George Fort wrote to me as well:

I'm so very pleased you've decided to return to the Blake Soc, what fantastic news! I was really hoping that would happen.

And well done on the tiger day - by all accounts it was a great success.

I responded thus:

Thank you so much, George. It's not going to be easy, but I am giving a chance to the renewal of trust for the sake of the BS and the Cottage... let's see how it goes.

Thank you for the support, and I'm truly happy we'll still be able to work together for a bit longer.

Mr Rod Tweedy wrote too:

I just wanted to echo George's sentiments and say how happy I am that you've decided to stay. You bring so much to the society and it would be such a loss without you.

And thank you for the Tyger clip! I entered his vimeo cage and absolutely loved the film - well done to you and Christina and all involved, what a terrific event! I had to pause it to catch this wonderful tyger-kid's poem in the corner of one of the sheets:

stripy tigers hunt and pounce
they're black and orange you better
watch out
they hide in the grass but that's
not it
beyond the world they're everywhere

(especially love that last line!)

I can't help feeling Blake would be so proud and enormously touched by their active responses.

This is from me to Mr Tweedy:

Thank you so much for your kind and supportive words. Today I am sadder than sad, the months from here till January in the BS feel like a slab on my chest but applying again the Buddhist perspective, this will pass too... last night I felt much stronger and surer that I had made the right decision, so let's wait and see. Let's work, that will give us the clue. So I'm ready to be included again in the War team!

And let's make of that event some kind of secret invocation, incantation or whatever, so that we really release all this bloody enslaved energy. Let's try to get some budget for flowers and candles, they are always healing.

Yes, that poem you spotted is wonderful indeed, it was by one of the oldest girls [. . .].

It was powerful to work with them, both in the workshop and at the zoo during these infernal weeks. For we know that all the harm that we cause to each other actually springs from our own pain, and we must be able to look at the scared hurting child in each other when we're hurting --then forgiveness comes much easier. It was important to transform the energy of my own distress (and the rather dark energy of the BS these past month or so) into a gift to children who are so evidently hurting, and to hope that the gift will be a tiny but transformative grain of sand in their lives, somehow, that they may remember back those days with fondness, the memory of having found there something of value.

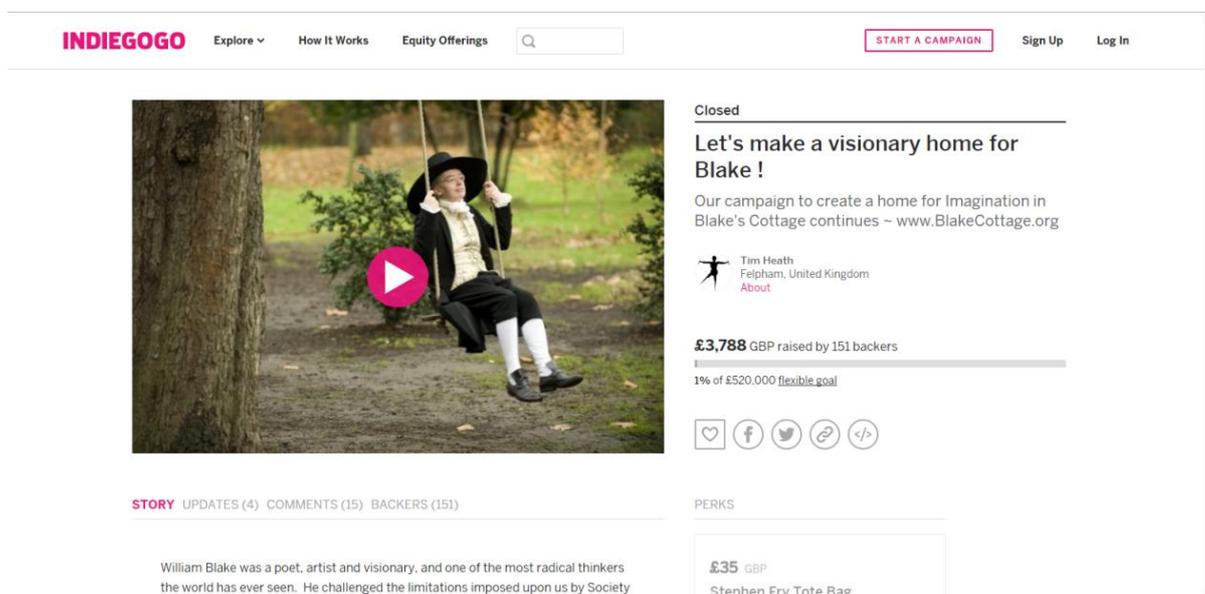
There was, of course, a complete silence from Mr Henry Eliot.

Work for the appeal had now accumulated even more after the fortnight impasse. Revising the Indiegogo page was still pending. As the reader will remember, Mr Heath and I had agreed to work

together on the contents of that page and the script for the video, agreements that were never honoured. When he sent me the link to it, it had nothing to do with the previous work we had done. He had imposed all the contents, that he had been hiding away from me and, I presume, the Big Blake Project too all the while. None of the work I had done for it had been included. I ignore the extent to which Ms Morgan was responsible as well for the dispiriting copy and paste results, with sentences that seemed drawn directly from the dark Satanic mills, such as **“an engine of creativity that shares the artefacts it makes with you”**, but it was a problem that had to be fixed soon, since the page was already online.

It was 17 October. Our deadline to acquire the Cottage was 31 October 2014. I knew that Mr Heath had endeavoured to hide away from me the contents of the page all that time for his own private reasons and that starting from scratch would entail another impossible fight for which we had no time, so I decided to simply edit out the clumsiest parts and try to weave the disjointed text into a coherent whole.

There was, however, an element of great inappropriateness in that page, and it was the way it focused on the person, and even image!, of Mr Heath. This is the image with which the video actually started, and the very first thing one sees even now on opening the page:



The screenshot shows the Indiegogo website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'INDIEGOGO' logo, 'Explore', 'How It Works', 'Equity Offerings', a search bar, and buttons for 'START A CAMPAIGN', 'Sign Up', and 'Log In'. The main content area features a video player with a play button and a progress bar showing '1% of £520,000 flexible goal'. To the right of the video, the campaign title is 'Let's make a visionary home for Blake!', followed by the description 'Our campaign to create a home for Imagination in Blake's Cottage continues - www.BlakeCottage.org'. The creator is identified as 'Tim Heath, Felpham, United Kingdom'. Below the video, there are social media sharing icons and a 'PERKS' section listing a '£35 GBP Stephen Fry Tote Bag'. At the bottom of the video player, there's a 'STORY' section with 'UPDATES (4)', 'COMMENTS (15)', and 'BACKERS (151)'. A small text box at the bottom of the video player reads: 'William Blake was a poet, artist and visionary, and one of the most radical thinkers the world has ever seen. He challenged the limitations imposed upon us by Society'.

The photograph is one from many years ago, of a walk Mr Heath led in Lambeth Palace gardens – the event at which we met, actually –, and he had already included it in a Blake Society calendar of activities in the past. It was wholly inappropriate here, and very worrying, if we add to it the fact that the entire page pointed at Mr Heath, and him only, as the person running the Cottage appeal. There was no mention of the Big Blake Project or me. On the space allocated for the team, there was a one-man team mentioned, and that man was Mr Heath. At the bottom of the page there was a sentence **encouraging people to make the project succeed for Blake’s visionary home... and Tim Heath.**

Before sending to him my actual edits, I rushed to raise my concerns to him, in an email of 1 October. I tried to make clear to him that focusing the page around his person was wrong without igniting another tantrum, so I abstained from mentioning the photograph that he seemed to be so fond of:

I will work on my suggestions for the campaign over the weekend. I have been taking notes and it will take me some time to put them together (today I have a busy day).

However there are two observations about how it is being presented. I hope you won't take them badly.

- In the "Team" area, it looks strange that it is a Team of Tim. I know that's part of the format in the indiegogo page. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to simply point at "leader of the campaign", or contact --something the format may not allow.

But if a team has to be mentioned, then the campaign has involved, and is still involving, other persons -- we all have made it possible, and it would be right to reflect that not only for truthfulness' sake but to give out a message of more strength and joined efforts, that mean solidity.

- The team issue leads to another problem in the final section: "Let's make it happen" ("for Let's make a visionary home for Blake! and Tim Heath!"). I don't think it's appropriate and can be misread, for it is not a personal project as, for instance, an artist making his own comic book or whatever, this is another kind of project. I know it's a fixed section of the indiegogo page, but then it should say "and the team", or only the name of the project if a team is not to be mentioned.

Let me know your thoughts.

Mr Heath's response was thoroughly disingenuous (he was inserting his comments in pink) :

Dear Adriana,

On 17 Oct 2014, at 10:39, Secretary of the Blake Society wrote:

Hi Tim,

I will work on my suggestions for the campaign over the weekend. I have been taking notes and it will take me some time to put them together (today I have a busy day).

However there are two observations about how it is being presented. I hope you won't take them badly.

- In the "Team" area, it looks strange that it is a Team of Tim. I know that's part of the format in the indiegogo page. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to simply point at "leader of the campaign", or contact --something the format may not allow.

This is under Indiegogo control, not mine.

But if a team has to be mentioned, then the campaign has involved, and is still involving, other persons -- we all have made it possible, and it would be right to reflect that not only for truthfulness' sake but to give out a message of more strength and joined efforts, that mean solidity.

- The team issue leads to another problem in the final section: "Let's make it happen" ("for Let's make a visionary home for Blake! and Tim Heath!"). I don't think it's appropriate and can be misread, for it is not a personal project as, for instance, an artist making his own comic book or whatever, this is another kind of project. I know it's a fixed section of the indiegogo page, but then it should say "and the team", or only the name of the project if a team is not to be mentioned.

Again, the peculiar text is autogenerated by Indiegogo.

Let me know your thoughts.

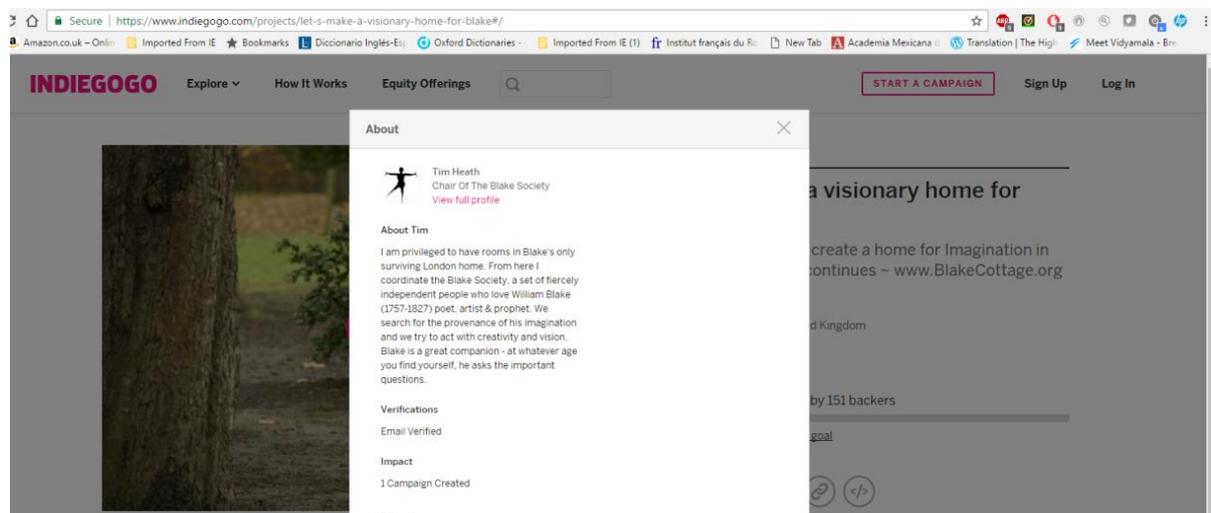
Thank you.

Adriana

Tim

Anyone who's familiar with crowdfunding pages knows, of course, that he was lying.

He refused to make those changes. However, when I started to make public the problems of corruption within the Cottage appeal last year, the "Make it happen for Tim Heath" item disappeared from the Indiegogo page, that has changed often since. Now, for instance, I can't find the "Team" section, which is proof enough that those items *could* be changed. Though the appeal is now closed, Mr Heath may manipulate the page further, and that's why this evidence is important. As of today, 7 April 2017, it still appears as the page of his personal project, as this screenshot shows:



On 18 October I sent him my revisions attached to the following email:

Attached is a revised text for the crowdfunding page. I have tried to make it less fragmentary and flow better. There are also corrections of repetitions, etc., and suggestions so as to make it a bit more compelling regarding who Blake was.

- I think you said the title cannot be changed? I understood the objection to the wordy Heaven/Haven option, it just made the wordplay obvious, but I think the original "Let's Make of Blake's Cottage a Haven" worked.
- We could go into a fascinating discussion as to whether Blake would consider himself someone who kicked against the pricks, just driving them deeper; would he object to Paul's conversion? It would depend of course on which Jesus he'd be talking to, the Church's distorted one or Blakean Jesus. Without context though it makes look Blake more stubborn than rebellious, more into deepening his wounds than into emancipation, that's why I suggest to change that. Also, we're not supporting Blake now ("a genius"), but his spirit and inspiration for this project.
- The engine of creativity, the artefacts... I changed it because it sounds to me closer to the Dark Satanic Mills, something utilitarian, than to imagination and creation.
- What do you think of what I asked yesterday, regarding the two dates we're mentioning as the close of the campaign? It is confusing.
- As you'll see, I am suggesting a link to a new section in the Cottage webpage, about Blake as unrecognised genius.
- I am working on that bit now and tidying up the new parts in the webpage that are a bit disorganised. I will send you my suggested changes shortly.
- As you will see, I suggest adding a couple of illustrations (Los with his hammer is alluding to the forge for creation, and the rewards).

- Note that in the legal note I fixed the inconsistency of typeface.
- Are there more people making films? It would be great if we can have Philip Pullman, Tracy Chevalier, etc.

This was his response, with a further nonsensical justification about the focus of the page on him:

- Dear Adriana,
-
- Again please use Track Changes.
-
- Your article (redrafting your film script) would make an excellent blog.
-
- Please post it on our website.
-
- This is an internet campaign, so the more active we are in social media space the better. For example, the question in your first email about 'credibility and the Team' is answered in internet terms by the fact that people are talking about the campaign.

I sent him the document again with track changes (it can be accessed through this link, <https://blakecottage.files.wordpress.com/2016/06/indiegogo-comments-adriana-track-changes.pdf>; if the link fails you can find it in the Documents section. I include it because that is further evidence of the “Make it happen for Tim Heath” phrase in the original page, which I have highlighted), along with more edits to our webpage (the document I had finished off for Ms Morgan, to which yet a further clumsy paragraph had been added as mentioned before). After that, the Cottage section in the Blake Society’s webpage was the product of my work up till the day the Cottage was purchased.

Mr Heath had also mentioned that it would be important to keep a blog with updates on the Cottage or material relevant to Blake in Felpham, so in the following email I also sent him an article that you can read in the Documents section, <https://blakecottage.files.wordpress.com/2016/07/3-blakes-difficult-journey-through-this-world.pdf>.

I still didn’t know that Ms Morgan had already inaugurated that blog with her infamous article.

Finally, I am attaching a revised version of the Cottage page, changes (very few) in red and an added illustration, as well as a page on "Blake's difficult journey through this world" that could be accessed both via the webpage and the indiegogo page.

Let me know your thoughts about this and my earlier emails today.

Most of my edits were accepted.



It’s time now to talk about the video in the indiegogo page. Surely the reader remembers that Mr Heath had ignored the two drafts of scripts that I had worked on following our work agreements, and that he had surrounded the making of the video with mystery, actively hiding whatever he was doing both from me and the Big Blake Project, until the moment the page went online.

The general secrecy obeyed his having hijacked the campaign with Ms Morgan. For the video there was yet a further reason.

As we have seen, the first image of the video is an old photograph of Mr Heath vaguely impersonating William Blake. The next thing we see is a young actress, cross-dressing as Blake, with an identical costume. We know that Mr Heath had been keen on having a famous actress cross-

dressing as Blake, and that she had not been accessible. He therefore engaged, surrounded by absolute secrecy, another of his female friends.

Since the launch of the campaign in Parliament he had mentioned to Mr Eliot and me that he had invited an actress friend of his to attend in the disguise of a wealthy donor, but she had other commitments. On the café conversation in July, when Mr Heath informed me that he would go on his six-week retreat and that he was pushing Ms Morgan into the appeal, he mentioned this actress again – a friend of his from his Quaker circle, that he was hoping would appear in the video if the famous actress refused.

Back then I recognized in his delivery all the familiar signs of one of Mr Heath's infatuations, and his urge to draw yet another romantic interest into the sphere of his work around Blake. I had witnessed that behaviour before at least twice, once around someone he invited to the Committee, then again around someone who was already very close to the Blake Society (in both cases his fantasies weren't corresponded in the least.)

I don't want to be unfair in this testimony. I ignore completely how that video was made or by whom, as well as what's the nature of this actress's relationship with Mr Heath, or even if there is, or was, any relationship at all. I am sure that she had no way to know that she was participating in a video made in secret and actively hiding from Mr Heath's co-campaigners. She had no way to know either of the accumulation of unethical actions and corruption that were taking place in the Cottage appeal, and therefore she's entirely innocent of any complicity or wrongdoing, something I must emphasize.

I see myself in the need to mention her though, so that the reader understands the predatory nature of Mr Heath's work around William Blake, the degree to which he allows it and the games he likes to play to disrupt serious work, and how much is at stake in Blake's Cottage now.

In any case, the Cottage appeal continued. From that day on, Mr Heath and I were working together on a daily basis. Our webpage, blog and rewards scheme were updated by both of us every single day. I kept on contacting artists to invite them to contribute with rewards. I wrote another in-depth article for the blog, "The Gate is Open", that you can read as well in the Documents section in this webpage (<https://blakecottage.files.wordpress.com/2016/07/2-the-gate-is-open.pdf>). I sent hundreds and hundreds of emails to the press, organisations interested in Blake, potential donors, my contacts who were distributing the Indiegogo page through their social media. I kept on collecting cheques from donors arriving at St James's Church and keeping a record of those donations, writing "thank you" letters to these donors, depositing the cheques in the bank. I was of course also doing all the secretarial stuff for the Blake Society.

The Big Blake Project were working frantically too. Mr Heath's policy of division, engaging with us separately, was still firmly in place.

On 20 October, on updating the webpage, I found by accident the article that Ms Morgan had published on the 16th. I was not sure whether if I found it thoroughly disgusting or thoroughly ridiculous. It was obviously both things. But to start fighting again, with 11 days left to gather the funds for the Cottage, didn't seem an option. Not only would it end up ruining the project – I was sure that another fight would land me in hospital.

I did write to Mr Vinall though, the following day, to raise the alarm. Hadn't he firmly told me that Mr Heath's and Ms Morgan's dishonesty had set a precedent, and that if they incurred in it again the Committee would take action?

I write to say that I've been working on the campaign again since the weekend and, apart from an issue about which Tim is not being clear, all seems to be going well: many of my suggestions incorporated in the contents of the campaign including a new article, etc.

Yet, last night I found out that on the very day we signed the agreement the trust and good will that it meant to restore had already been breached - by Paige's interference, with Tim's connivance. I won't tell you the details now, I am too drained by the whole thing.

But I want to ask you to please include in the minutes my suggested amendment mentioning trust. I do not think Tim has taken on board the seriousness of what has happened, so it matters to make explicit that the agreement was signed in good faith, in the understanding that work without trust is not possible.

I have not mentioned anything to him, as it clearly would lead nowhere. I will ignore it for the time being -- I have already written to my contacts with the link for the campaign, if I walked out now and went through the whole miserable process again it would kill me. So the way I see things now, some good has happened with our agreement, and a degree of integrity has been restored to the campaign by my being back in it: the one person there at the moment working in good will and with a sense of ethics for a common goal.

Over the weekend I recovered my enthusiasm for a project I helped conceive and very dear to my heart. I will work *as if* I trust, because our negotiation should have been in that spirit, and you never know, hard work together even in hostility may work the miracle and make people cast off their Spectre. It is a project I still believe in, and the damage that I'd do now to it and to the morale of the BS by walking out when we've just gone through such gruelling weeks of negotiation would be lethal.

I'm afraid on Tim's side there was a disregard of both your and my efforts these past weeks, to an extent, as he's unwilling to face the root of the problem. Then again, he's been collaborative and sensible in other ways, and the cunning displayed in this breach of trust is as twisted as it is stupid, so its potential harm should be put in perspective and not overblown. So I will say nothing now, will go on working, but I will indeed mention it in our next Committee meeting.

I think it's fair that you know this is happening, and I think that to keep my amendment in the minutes can be a reminder of the spirit we should be working in.

Mr Vinall's response ? The action to be taken after the precedents we had was thrown out the window. He invoked Mr Heath's prerogative to approve whatever was said in the Committee and put all the pressure back on me again : I had to make it work, I had to accept whatever happened.

I would like Mr Vinall to answer even now, why, instead of his lame response below, didn't he cast a vote of no confidence against the Chair immediately, didn't challenge Ms Morgan, didn't raise the alarm in the Committee. Incredibly, he didn't even ask me what exactly had happened. He only saw the article when I showed it to him when we met along with Mrs Vinall two months later –he didn't hide then how revolting he found the whole thing.

I understand that he must have been tired from the wretched negotiation process, that he may not have wanted to know anything more, but very serious things were happening, and he was a Trustee in a Charity. *He had responsibilities*. What was he thinking of ?

Dear Adriana,

I can see how you feel, but I think you're handling it in the right way.

I have no problem over your wording for the minutes of the next meeting. But they need to be approved by Tim or debated and (in the final extreme)voted on by the Committee. All I'll say is that trust is founded in actions not words, and the wording of texts can't bring it about if the spirit is lacking. Also if we want to achieve things we sometimes have to work with people we don't entirely trust.

Let us not forget that we were still talking of minutes for a future meeting that Mr Heath and Mr Vinall had already decided should be worded *in advance*. I responded to him on 22 October:

Thank you very much. I understand what you're saying. I also understand that Tim may not approve the minutes.

I will not approve them myself without the amendment, I know actions and not words are the foundation of trust, but words do have a weight and minutes are at least an attempt at reflecting the reality of actions. So if need be, they'll have to be debated.

I think too I am handling things in the right way, but if Tim fails to see that --and I fear he will-- we as a Committee will have to face the fact that there is something deeply rotten at its core.

The breach of trust has been as I say both gross and childish, and precisely on the day we signed the agreement. As if they thought they'd "caught me" --me, the one who gave Tim a chance because the Committee asked me to, for the project and the BS's sake.

What they think they're getting away with, gross lies included, can be dismantled in a minute. We may have to face, sooner or later, not only Paige's lack of probity, unreliability and why her presence poisons our work, but more importantly, since Paige after all is a victim in a way of Tim's, who has led her to believe she can have such power within the Society because of their private reasons, Tim's lack of probity and whether if he has the moral stance to be chairman at all.

I will work in the right spirit, but even as I do so, even as I sign an agreement after two weeks of utmost distress, that you could witness, I am on the receiving end of childish plots and schemes, as if I were being punished. The consequences are serious. I am the Secretary, I have worked impeccably for the Society all these years, I entered these negotiations in good will. So it is not only me who's being attacked and betrayed, and not only mine, and your good will during negotiations that have been mocked: it is the Blake Society as a whole that is being damaged.

(By the way, the matter Tim is not being clear about that I mentioned earlier is becoming bigger as he's refusing to respond --it involves an insult, and great dishonesty, towards three of the people who've been supporting the campaign since the summer, simply because they were invited by me).

As you see the matter is serious and may be beyond everybody's good will. I will bide my time, I will work, I will wait, but the issue at hand will be disclosed. What is rotten in the Society is doing us all great damage, and it is soiling all we do. Work indeed is very near impossible.

Thank you again, and let's go on hoping that by some miracle work heals, and Spectres awake.

Mr Vinall didn't respond. No comment at all. I was raising rather serious issues within the Blake Society that he chose to ignore. No one can say that Mr Vinall, or the Committee for that matter, didn't know the problems we were facing, or that they didn't collude, willingly, by turning a blind eye.

The insult to some of my contacts that I mention refers to Mr Heath's refusal for several days to mention them in the Indiegogo page (and as we know I had been denied access to its administration), despite the public support and good will they had shown so far. He had not even acknowledged my repeated requests for us to honour their generosity.



All the above is pretty depressing, but I'm afraid that there is still more mire to expose before we close this chapter.

As I have said, two days after my resignation I still carried through the Tyger event at London Zoo, with the committed assistance of Mrs Vinall.

That project had been itself problematic. It was one of the events I had proposed for 2013, but had to be carried forward for 2014 because of its complexity. It had also gone through a fair amount of Mr Heath's confusing duplicity: while he was extremely supportive for the project on the one hand, on the other he was simultaneously disloyal and bent on boycotting it. When I told him at the beginning of 2014 that I would leave the Blake Society the following year, Mr Heath's support for the project stopped. He even told me he would not attend, a way of disparaging it since he never, ever missed any of the Blake Society events. Back then I had told him that his presence would be important and he should be there. He didn't answer and all the work for the event, including engaging with the leader of the workshop with the Kids Company children prior to the event, was carried out by me and Mrs Vinall in the wretched circumstances that have been described in this testimony (by then I asked him myself not to be present).

It was, despite those circumstances, the tension within the Committee, my exhaustion and ill health, a very beautiful day, of which Mr Heath knew nothing apart from what I shared with the Committee in my email. He did not even thank us, something that, understandably, hurt Mrs Vinall.

At the AGM on January 2015, when I left the Society, I seem to remember that the event was mentioned, but in any case, it was deleted from the Chair's report in the minutes (I have the original document in case they decide to alter them now), and in the report of 2014 in the Blake Society's printed programme of events for 2015. It wasn't mentioned either in the Chair's report to St James's Church in Piccadilly. It was as if it had never happened, that event that I had managed to lead to its conclusion despite the enormous distress that the Blake Society was causing me at the moment.

However, a few months later, when Mr Heath got involved in the organisation of the festival to accompany the major exhibition on Blake in Oxford, that he had kept again hidden from the Committee even though the organizers had explicitly invited the Blake Society to participate, part of the Tyger project was stolen for one of the festival's events. This too upset Mrs Vinall.

**Tyger, Tyger
Saturday Children's
Events**

When / Where:
Saturday 24th January, 2-5pm
Blackwell's Bookshop, Oxford
FREE



Children - join us for an afternoon of "Tyger" activities inspired by William Blake's poem "The Tyger." At 2pm, there will be Tyger potato printing for under 7s. At 3.30pm you can enjoy a reading of "The Tiger Who Came To Tea". Then at 4pm, over 7s can take part in our Tyger Tyger poetry workshop where we'll be learning the first verse of the poem off by heart.

Then, a long time after the hell through which the Tyger project was safely seen through, the Blake Society's newsletter included an item about an interview that RTÉ Radio, a division of the Irish national broadcasting organization, had made to Mr Heath about Blake's house in South Molton Street. It was included in The Poetry Programme, broadcast on 2 April 2016 (time mark 19.18). I am including the link here:

<http://www.rte.ie/radio1/the-poetry-programme/programmes/2016/0402/778093-the-poetry-programme-saturday-2-april-2016/>

I found it very disturbing to listen to.

Mr Heath was commenting on Blake's poem "London", about the plight of chimney sweepers mentioned there and how harsh London was for children in Blake's time, with child workers, child prostitutes and Chimney sweeps, "because you needed small bodies to climb up the chimneys". He then goes on to make some extraordinary remarks, that I am transcribing here: **"this was a dirty, dangerous job, yet Blake wouldn't have had one of these children in his own houses"**. There seems to be something missing in the program, perhaps badly edited, and then, out of the blue Mr Heath says: **"for the society approached the charity for troubled young children Kids Company, and we invited a dozen of these young children to accompany us to the London zoo, and we gave them a copy of Blake's poem "Tyger Tyger burning bright", and we asked them to read it face to face with a tiger"**.

The use of the first person plural was of course an insulting appropriation of a project that he had disregarded so openly in that horrible year. Most disturbing was also the over-the-top theatricality with which Mr Heath delivered those lines. He continued claiming that **"The keeper took them behind the walls [?. audio not clear] so they had a special introduction to the tigers"**.

This was part of the plan but it never actually happened because we ran out of time. The Chair of course didn't know, because he wasn't there and showed no interest whatsoever in what had happened during the event. In his interview though he continued with: **"there was an outpouring of fascinating, creative work, so the tiger provoked imagination in the children"**. **"There are many ways of**

understanding William Blake. [. . .] you can see how it [his work] might have transformed your life. And we hope that in years to come, when these troubled young children will look back and will have seen it as a transformative moment in their lives”.

These claims were made with more of the same histrionics, and he was talking about an “outpouring of fascinating creative work” that he never saw, nor cared to see. I found the cynicism, the theatricality, the lack of accuracy, the appropriation of the project, quite sinister. Mr Heath had been after all viciously bullying me on the very same day that we carried out the workshop with Kids Company in preparation for this event. I don't know either why he came up with such a long tirade about the Blake Society protecting children, and I don't like it.

This would be by no means the only appropriation of the work of the person that Mr Heath and the Blake Society have been bullying and slandering all this time. I have given other examples in this testimony. I should also add that one of the artists in my list of contacts for the Cottage appeal would later become judge of the Blake Society's Tithe Grant. They then befriended a young musician that I had contacted and who was supporting our campaign, whom I had proposed also for the 2014 annual lecture, and whom both Mr Heath and Mr Eliot had disparaged. In the end, he was part of the pilgrimage to Blake's Cottage last year that involved Mr Eliot and that the Blake Cottage Trust has been boasting about in the press. In fact, this is one of my contacts mentioned above that Mr Heath refused to even have mentioned in the Indiegogo page for several days.

The next chapters in this testimony will show how, despite all this horror, the Cottage appeal managed to continue until the end of 2014; then how the issues of secrecy and lack of transparency came up again, until I finally left the appeal and the Society. Sure enough, Mr Eliot and Mr Vinal will make an appearance again.