

that he had learned of a Mr. Rossetti who had a note book; and after a false start -- calling upon Charles Rossiter who did not care to be identified as a Pre-Raphaelite -- he at last, early in 1859, climbed the stairs of 13 Chatham Place and knocked at the door of Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

This unassuming vignette of Rossetti confirms what we know from other more elaborate and polished accounts: Rossetti's carelessness of behaviour, his complete unselfconsciousness; his irreverent assertiveness, his self-confidence; his commonsensical manner -- more like that of the Exchange than of the studio -- just as brother William says; and not least the extraordinary generosity and trust with which he puts in the hand of a complete stranger the precious book which is now one of the most cherished of Blake documents. This is Rossetti at thirty, still enjoying the support of Ruskin, prolific of painting and poetry, admired mentor of Arthur Hughes, Val Prinsep, William Morris, Burne-Jones, G. P. Boyce -- more than one of whom makes appearances elsewhere in this journal.

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"LA BELLA MANO: PRE-RAPHAELITE PAINTINGS AND DECORATIVE ARTS,"

AN EXHIBITION AT THE VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF ARTS, RICHMOND:

SEPTEMBER 16 THROUGH OCTOBER 24, 1982

Commemorating the centenary of Dante Rossetti's death, the Virginia Museum of Arts last autumn provided the general public in the Southeast, along with students of Pre-Raphaelite art and literature, a unique opportunity to view works by some of the most important Victorian artists and craftsmen. With the crucial assistance of the Delaware Art Museum, the Virginia Museum prepared a small but nonetheless stunning and representative exhibition of Pre-Raphaelite paintings, crafts, and drawings. A great number of the 117 items exhibited came from the prestigious Samuel and Mary R. Bancroft Collection at Delaware. They were supplemented by more recent acquisitions from the same museum. As the first display of major works from the Bancroft Collection to appear outside their permanent home, this exhibition was an especially important event.