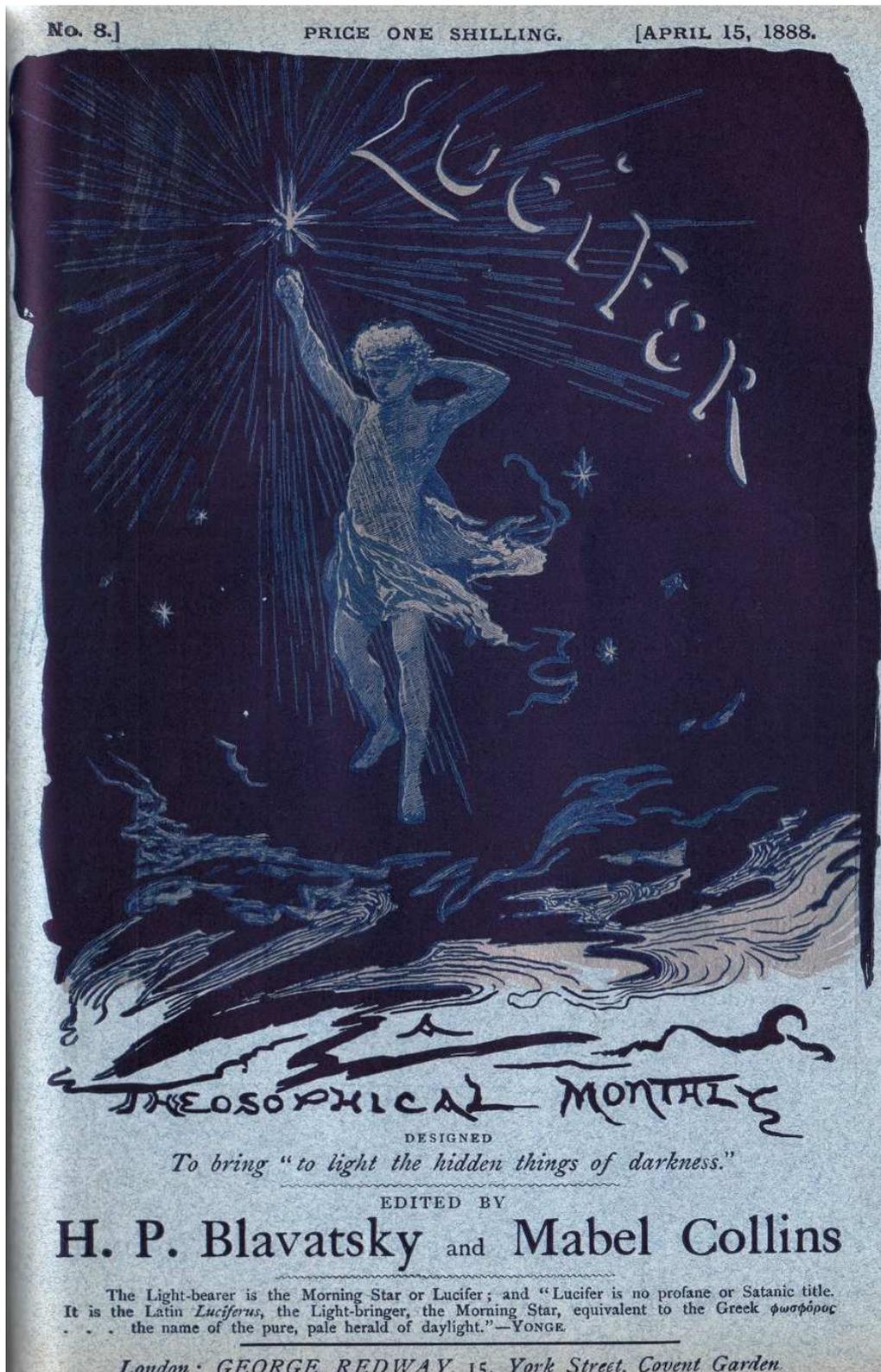


Lucifer: The History of a Cover

The first issue of Lucifer was in London, September 15th, 1887, having H. P. Blavatsky and Mabel Collins as editors until 1889 and the cover was like this one:



From the issue of February 15th, 1889, until the issue of August 15th 1889, H. P. Blavatsky was the single editor of Lucifer. Then from 15th September 1889 until Blavatsky's death in May 1891, Annie Besant was a co-editor. Since Blavatsky's death, Annie Besant became the single editor, until the issue of May 15th 1892, when G. R. S. Mead sub-editor.

On May 15th, 1892, the cover was this one (*no clue or hint is given about who designed this new one cover and when it replaced the initial and original 1887 cover*), the gold used on the highlights/enhances of the cover being replaced by yellow ink:



On June 15th, 1893 the cover was similar to the latest one, until September 15th 1893:

VOL. XII.—No. 70.] ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE. [JUNE 15TH, 1893.



THEOSOPHICAL MONTHLY
FOUNDED BY H. P. BLAVATSKY.
DESIGNED TO "BRING TO LIGHT THE HIDDEN THINGS OF DARKNESS."
"I, Jesus, . . . am the bright, the Morning Star."
The Light-bearer is the Morning Star, or Lucifer; and "Lucifer is no profane or Satanic title. It is the Latin *Luciferus*, the Light-bringer, the Morning Star, equivalent to the Greek *Φωσφόρος* . . . the name of the pure, pale herald of Daylight."—YONGE.
Editor, ANNIE BESANT. Sub-Editor, G. R. S. MEAD.
London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 7, Duke Street, Adelphi, W.C. New York: The Path Office, 144, Madison Avenue.
Entered at Stationers' Hall. Madras: Headquarters of the Theosophical Society, Adyar. [ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.]

The cover was then replaced on October 15th, 1893 by this one:

VOL. XIII.—No. 77.] ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE. [JANUARY 15TH, 1894.



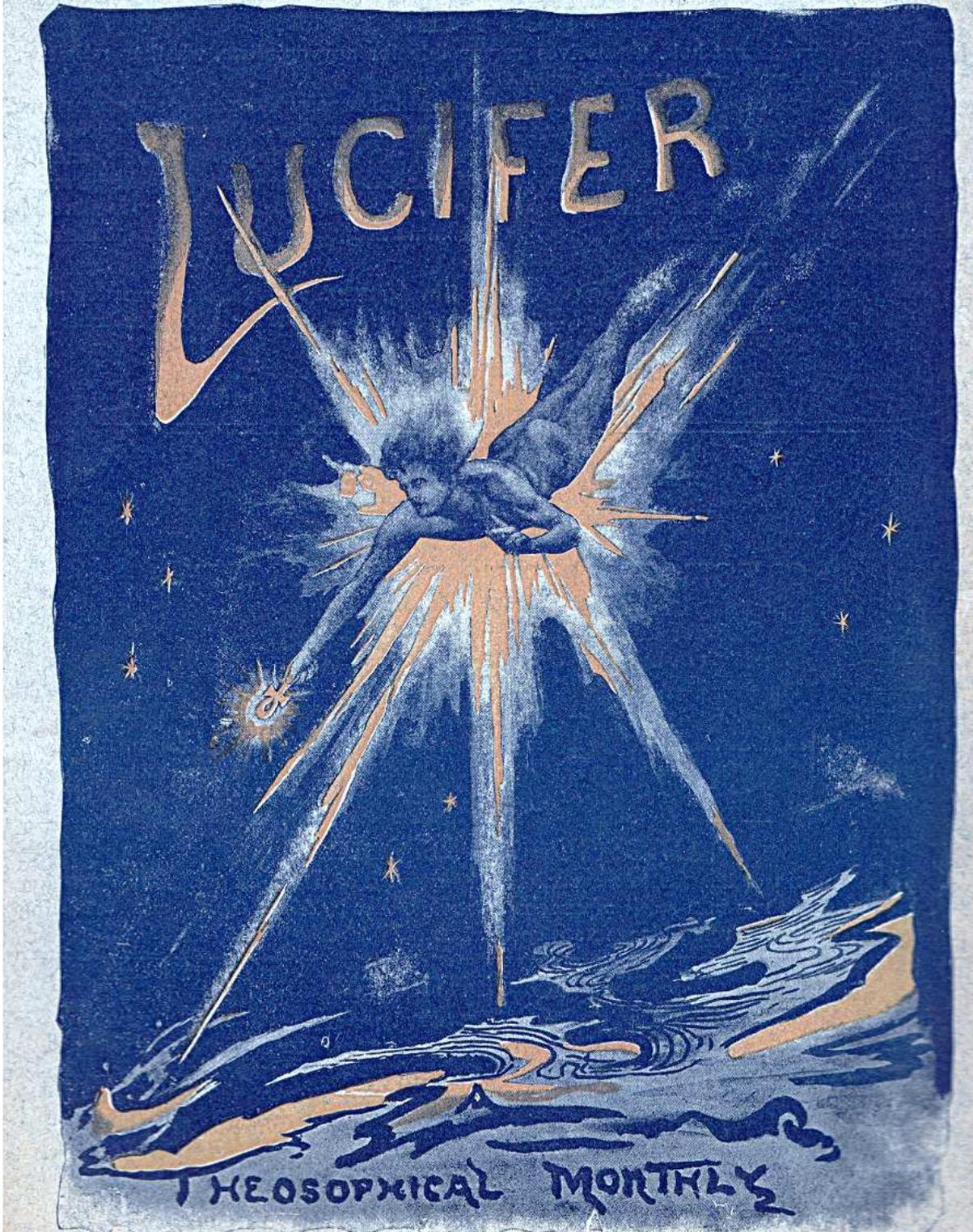
FOUNDED BY H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Designed to "bring to light the hidden things of darkness." "I, Jesus, . . . am the bright, the Morning Star."
The Light-bearer is the Morning Star, or Lucifer; and "Lucifer is no profane or Satanic title. It is the Latin *Luciferus*, the Light-bearer, the Morning Star, equivalent to the Greek *Φωσφόρος* . . . the name of the pure, pale herald of Daylight."—YONGE.

Editor, ANNIE BESANT. Sub-Editor, G. R. S. MEAD.

The cover being more yellow goldish, as this one shows for April 15th 1894 issue:

Vol. XIV.—No. 80.] ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE. [APRIL 15TH, 1894.



FOUNDED BY H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Designed to "bring to light the hidden things of darkness." "I, Jesus . . . am the bright, the Morning Star."
The Light-bearer is the Morning Star, or Lucifer; and "Lucifer is no profane or Satanic title. It is the Latin *Luciferus*, the Light-bringer, the Morning Star, equivalent to the Greek *Φωσφόρος* . . . the name of the pure, pale herald of Daylight."—YONGE.

Editor, ANNIE BESANT. Sub-Editor, G. R. S. MEAD.

We know that Reginald Willoughby Machell (1854-1927) made this new design for the cover of "Lucifer" that came out in October 15th, 1893.

He sent the drawing of the new cover to Annie Besant and it had a cost of £5.¹

On this issue of Lucifer, we see more details about this new cover:

"On The Watch-Tower: With this issue, Lucifer appears in a new cover, designed by our artistic colleague, R. Machell. Lucifer should have put on his new dress with the last number, the first of the volume, but the fates were against us and the plate on the Atlantic. No doubt some of our readers will lament the absence of the familiar figure on the cover, and others will have many criticisms to pass on the new plate, for theosophical tastes are difficult to satisfy, and theosophical criticisms on all subjects many and various. But the second drawing of the old plate never gave real satisfaction, and we received such friendly enquiries as, "When are you going to take that butcher boy off the cover?"—and various other kind suggestions. For one alteration, however, we are unquestionably justified. The bronzing has been entirely abandoned, for the process is now found to be dangerous to health, and means three days' illness for those employed upon it."

Reginald Willoughby Machell was born in Barrow-upon-Humber, Lincolnshire, England, on the 20th June, 1854. He died on the 8th October 1927 at Point Loma, San Diego, California.

His first connection with Theosophy occurred when in 1886 he met H. P. Blavatsky² when he visited her at her house in Lansdowne Road and joined the Theosophical Society in 1888, attending the meetings of the Blavatsky Lodge.

In July 1890, the new Lecture Hall of The Theosophical Society (Blavatsky Lodge) at 19, Avenue Road, was inaugurated with decorations made by R. Machell."³

In 1892 it is described that R. Machell was responsible for making the sketch for the design of H. P. Blavatsky's Ashes Urn, which was then executed in Lund, Sweden by Sculptor Sven Bengtsson, also this year he made the pictorial cover and the illustrations for H. P. Blavatsky's "Nightmare Tales", illustrating the stories and capital letters on the beginning of each one.

He went then to Point Loma, California, where he was an active artist, sculpture and painter, working at The Point Loma Theosophical Society / Universal Brotherhood led by Katherine Tingley, until his death in 1927.

Joma Sipe, March 2021

(all original covers from my personal collection)

¹ "R. W. Machell Diary", 1893-year page.

² "The Theosophical Path", vol. XX, n. 1, Jan 1921, page 18 and n. 3, March 1921, pages 217-219

³ "Theosophical Siftings", vol. III, 1890-1891, page 3 and 23 / "Lucifer", July 1890, page 436.