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COTTON MATHER'S *WONDERS OF THE INVISIBLE WORLD*:

AN AUTHORITATIVE EDITION

by

PAUL M. WISE

Under the direction of Reiner Smolinski

ABSTRACT

In Wonders of the Invisible World, Cotton Mather applies both his views on witchcraft and his millennial calculations to events at Salem in 1692. Although this infamous treatise served as the official chronicle and apologia of the 1692 witch trials, and excerpts from Wonders of the Invisible World are widely anthologized, no annotated critical edition of the entire work has appeared since the nineteenth century. This present edition seeks to remedy this lacuna in modern scholarship, presenting Mather's seventeenth-century text next to an integrated theory of the natural causes of the Salem witch panic. The likely causes of Salem's bewitchment, viewed alongside Mather's implausible explanations, expose his disingenuousness in writing about Salem.

Chapter one of my introduction posits the probability that a group of conspirators, led by the Rev. Samuel Parris, deliberately orchestrated the "witchcraft" and that a plant, the thorn apple, used in Algonquian initiation rites, caused the initial symptoms of bewitchment (41-193). Chapter two shows that key spectral evidence presented in court

records, some recorded by Mather in Wonders, appears to have been generated by phenomena known in folklore as the “hag,” suffocating nightmares formerly thought to be witch visitations, resulting from what is today termed sleep paralysis (219-314). Deliberate dosing with the thorn apple plant, phenomena associated with “hagging,” and life-saving confessions thus account for most of the spectral evidence generated at Salem.

Chapter three focuses extensively on Mather’s text as a deceptive rewriting of the Salem court records and related documents on witchcraft that Mather synopsisized (324-461). The final section posits a “Scythian” or Eurasian connection between Swedish and Salem witchcraft (409-61). Similarities in shamanic practices witnessed among respective indigenous populations of Lapland, Eurasia, Asia, and New England, including the veneration of deer, the use of drumming and hallucinogenic plants to induce trance, and the handing down of family totems, caused Satan’s ongoing involvement in both the visible and invisible worlds to appear more than theoretical to influential seventeenth-century writers like José Acosta, Johannes Scheffer, Nicholas Fuller, Joseph Mede, Anthony Horneck, inducing Mather to include a lengthy abstract of a Swedish account in Wonders.

INDEX WORDS: Cotton Mather, Salem, witchcraft, folklore, folk magic, Paul Wise, Doctor of Philosophy, Georgia State University, Sweden, Swedish witchcraft, Lapland, Algonquian Indians, Native Americans, Samuel Parris, jimson weed, thorn apple, datura stramonium, hag, hagging, Old Hag, Mara, initiation ceremonies, poisoning, nightmares, huskanaw, Wonders of the Invisible World, fly-agaric mushroom, deer, reindeer, Sami, shamanism, drums

COTTON MATHER'S *WONDERS OF THE INVISIBLE WORLD*:

AN AUTHORITATIVE EDITION

By

PAUL WISE

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

In the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2005

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2005

COTTON MATHER'S *WONDERS OF THE INVISIBLE WORLD*:

AN AUTHORITATIVE EDITION

By

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December 2005

## DEDICATION

To my wife, Sandy, my daughter, Kendra, my parents, Melvin and Emily Wise, my sister, Melanie, and my brother James; and to my friends, Christopher Dean Watts, Marylou Kuestemeyer, and Gilbert and Georgette Fürbringer

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## Preface

The witch panic at Salem in 1692 was not just the result of a miasma of circumstances coincidentally falling into place but something that was also consciously and deliberately kindled, fueled, and manipulated. A main difference between Salem and previous New England witch trials was in its virulence, magnitude, and scope. It was, as the Reverend John Hale of Beverley put it, “a dark dispensation by the Lord, letting loose upon us the Devil *Anno*. 1691. & 92. as we never experienced before” (Modest Enquiry [ix]). The Salem episode is in relation to other New England witch trials analogous to the difference between a fire that occurs naturally from a lightning strike followed by the rainstorm that puts it out and an inferno set deliberately in several places on a windy day in dry season to inflict maximum damage. Richard Godbeer perceives that the Salem witchcraft trials were so damaging because they, unlike other New England trials, contained a strong element not only of maleficia but diabolism (Devil’s Dominion 216). This demonic element emerged from the afflictions of several young women. In his household, where the demonic visitations began, the reverend Samuel Parris appears to have deployed two children, his daughter, Elizabeth, and his niece, Abigail Williams, as afflicted accusers. In addition, Parris compelled his female Indian slave, Tituba, to assume the role of accused, accuser, and confessor. Parris used both Tituba and her husband, John Indian, to exploit common beliefs about Indians and their involvement with devils. Parris used traditional associations between females, Indians, and witchcraft to exonerate his actions and turn any finger-pointing away from himself. In addition to manipulating children and slaves, Parris may have taken traditional, linguistic, and

biblical associations of witches as poisoners as a starting point in fomenting the Salem witch hunt.

Prior historical and contemporary attempts at a theory of what caused the Salem witch outbreak all try to explain in one way or another why the Salem episode was not simply the result of fraud. In that respect, my theory is no exception but relies upon already existing theories. Ironically, it was not the coming of God's Kingdom on earth, as Cotton Mather thought, but the diabolical actions of the Reverend Samuel Parris and his friend, Thomas Putnam, Jr. and their close allies, along with willfully blind theological and governmental support of those actions, which ministers like Mather defended.

Any study of Wonders of the Invisible World must take into consideration the major event that occasioned Cotton Mather's book—the Salem witchcraft trials. Providing a historical record of trials were the major pretext of Mather's book, but they almost always remain a subtext overshadowed by broad theological interpretations of witchcraft and events. Only by comparing what actually did happen with Mather's version of the events can we properly judge his apologia. What appealed to Cotton Mather was that the Salem witch frenzy brought many in New England at once into immanent contact with the invisible world. Proof of the Devil's wrath was proof of God. Mather took a great interest in investigating and documenting that world, for he had at times what he believed to be first-hand encounters with it himself. He thought himself fortunate to be able to witness and document events as they were occurring. He considered Salem a living laboratory for the recording of illustrious providences that would ultimately instill faith and set New England upon a more righteous path. Mather

failed when he let his theology override reason because he considered the two to be identical.

Of course, nothing would have happened the way it did in Salem had it not been for the influence of the Bible. As God's Word, it gave an affirmative answer to the question of the witch's existence. The source of all legal accusations for witchcraft in the Judeo-Christian world was the Bible, though concepts of witchcraft existed universally long before they became enshrined in its pages. Near the end of the sixteenth century, through the seventeenth century and beyond, the translation and interpretation of just what the Bible meant by witch, and what a witch's powers were, came under intense scrutiny and philological debate from men like Johann Weyer, Reginald Scot, Henry Holland, King James I, William Perkins, Thomas Ady, John Webster, and Joseph Glanvill.<sup>1</sup> For many centuries no one had been sure exactly what the Hebrew writers meant by the word witch. The notoriously slippery passage, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Ex. 22.18) is at the root of much misunderstanding because **מכשפה** (*Mecassephah*), translated witch in the King James Version, rendered *φαρμακους* (*pharmakous*) in the Septuagint, and *veneficos* in the Latin translation of the Septuagint, *Editionem Romanam secundum exemplar Vaticanum*, all signified poisoner.<sup>2</sup> In this verse, the King James followed its predecessors verbatim: William Tyndale, the Great Bible, the Bishop's Bible, and the Geneva Bible, all canonized the idea of the malefic witch in league with Satan throughout the English-speaking world. As John Webster commented, the original words had been

wrested and drawn to uphold these Tenants by those Translators that had imbibed these Opinions, and so instead of following the true and genuine signification of the words, they haied them to make good a pre-conceived opinion, and did not simply and plainly render them as they ought to have been (106).

No English translation acknowledged or alluded to the noun's more traditional significance as poisoner. They simply ignored this more provocative meaning.

Reginald Scot (d. 1599)<sup>3</sup> in his Discoverie of Witchcraft also pointed out that Chasaph (from which the feminine form Mecassephah is taken) is Latinized Veneficium, and Anglicized as poisoning (111-112). According to Scot, Josephus (37-?100 A.D.), in Judeorum Antiquitas, clearly took Chasaph in its Scriptural application to mean poisoners: "Let none of the children of Israel have any poison that is deadlie, or prepared to anie hurtfull use. If any be apprehended with such stuffe, let him be put to death, and suffer that which he meant to doo to them, for whom he prepared it" (qtd. in Scot 111). Jerome, in the Latin Vulgate, translated the word maleficos, one who harms, allowing some room for interpretation. As Reginald Scot complained, though, in all the English translations Chasaph was translated witch or witchcraft.<sup>4</sup> Everyone knew, or thought they knew, what that meant: it was a witch who, through a pact with the devil, was able to inflict harm. Biblical exegete and believer in apparitions and witches, Matthew Poole (1624?-1679),<sup>5</sup> also defined the word as

Any person that is in league with the Devil, and by his help either doth any mischief, or discovers and practices things above the reach of other men or



women . . . . The word is of the feminine gender, partly because Women are most prone to these Devilish arts, and most frequently guilty of them; and partly to intimate that no pity should be shewed to such offenders, though they were of the weaker sex. (Annotations Ex. 22.18)

Another biblical commentator, Edward Leigh<sup>6</sup> (1603-1671), in his influential study of Greek and Hebrew words in the Bible, Critica Sacra (1639, 1642), finds similar significance in Chasaph to that of Poole, adding that “it hath a signification of *changing* or *turning*, and is used for unlawfull devilish Arts and Artizens, such as Gods Law condemneeth and punisheth with death.” Leigh also notes, however, that the word is applied in the New Testament “to false teachers, and their crafts,” as in Galatians 3.1 and Revelation 18.23 (118).

English Protestants were not alone in their translation and interpretation of a diabolical witch, however. The Catholic Rheims Douai translated the term in Exodus 22.18 as Inchanters. Luther, too, rendered the Hebrew noun Die Zauberinnen or sorceresses. Calvin, in his sermon on Deuteronomy 18: 10-15, also took the term to mean sorcerer (qtd. in Kors and Peters 267-68). Sixteenth and seventeenth-century translations of witch thus conferred contemporary meanings upon certain words in Scripture that neither the original Hebrew writers, nor the Septuagint, nor the Latin Vulgate may have originally intended.<sup>7</sup> Speaking of various activities of those called “witches,” such as “magician,” “evil-doer,” “enchanter,” “diviner,” “poisoner,” or even “juggler,” Johann Weyer (1515-1588)<sup>8</sup> claimed that the problem lay with translators, who

affirm that these terms denote, without distinction of meaning, the women who are commonly called “witches” or “wise women.” I find . . . that these monstrous persons with their arts, their illusions, and their forbidden forms of divination are represented in differing ways by the Rabbis and the Hebrew interpreters, that our Latin translators use different names to describe them, and that the Greek translation does not agree precisely with the Hebrew or with the Latin translation” (De Praestigiis Demonium 2.1: 93).

The English translation of the word witch therefore introduces a whole host of associative meanings that could only lead to abuse. Were those only who practiced malefic acts with poisons to be executed, or were others, like diviners, healers, or those who shared prophetic dreams with others to be destroyed also? Which of the eight different Hebrew words in the Bible concerning magic and divination was meant by the English word witch?<sup>9</sup> To complicate matters more, apparently not even the translators of the Septuagint knew with certainty what the original Hebrew terms meant, much less those who later translated the Bible into Latin or other languages. The origin of the problem with translating witch predates any of the biblical translations. Naturally, the translators of the Authorized Version had reason not to contradict the views of their king, James I, who had expressed his views of Ex. 22:18 and 1 Sam. 28.7 in his treatise, Demonologie, and had ordained the committee for the new translation. It was James who, in his attack on Scot and Weyer in Demonologie (1597), defended interpretations of diabolical witchcraft. Perhaps because of James’s views, and perhaps because the

translators, too, had certain views of witchcraft, the King James Version let stand the language of its English predecessors in defining a witch primarily as one who performed harmful acts in league with Satan. James' influence, English tradition, and both popular and learned culture at the time encouraged translators to underscore the view of a malefic sorceress in league with the devil into their translations of the Hebrew and Greek words.

In the often debated passage of 1 Sam. 28.7 in which Saul goes to consult the witch of Endor, the Hebrew read אִשָּׁה כַּזְלֵת-אוֹב, "a woman who is a medium,"<sup>10</sup> the Septuagint read γυναικα εγγαστριμυθον and the Vulgate, "mulierem habentem pythonem," both meaning "one that consulteth pythonic spirits."<sup>11</sup> The Authorized Version, however, translated אִשָּׁה כַּזְלֵת-אוֹב as "a woman that hath a familiar spirit," a term with a much broader and more nefarious English connotation of witch, reflecting and reinforcing the largely folk idea that witches were able to control shape-shifting demons known as familiars, supposedly acquired at the time of their pact with Satan. According to Scot and Weyer, the witch, the pythonic spirit, was originally one associated primarily with prophecy and fortunetelling, not performing maleficia or providing wild rides to an orgiastic witches' Sabbath. Matthew Poole drove home the point of the diviner's league with Satan when he defined witch in 1 Sam. 28:7 as "One that converseth with the Devil, and dead mens Ghosts; and by them can discover future things." It was the translators and exegetes, then, who continually dragged the devil into their definitions, not the original Hebrew writers. Poole adds a hefty dose of the misogyny current at the time with his definition of אוֹב (pronounced "ob") or pythonic spirit of foretelling the future, pointing out that the Witch of Endor was a woman,

“[r]ather than a man; for he [Samuel] thought that Sex most likely to be given to those wicked Arts, as being the weaker Sex, and so aptest to be deceived, and most prone to Superstition, and oft times most malicious and revengeful.”<sup>12</sup>

Since nobody knew exactly what the Hebrew writers meant by witch, people relied on their own interpretations based on other criteria, such as experience with witchcraft. Lives literally depended on how others interpreted the word witch. The debate over witchcraft was in great measure a debate over the meaning of words. Why people chose one interpretation over another during controversies gets to the very heart of the matter of why witch hunts came about.

Even though he was well aware that an ancient meaning of Chasaph was poisoner, Cotton Mather was not about to restrict his interpretation of witch to that of some Greek or Latin translations. Near the end of the Salem witch trials, on the last day of November, 1692, while many still languished in the cold jail for witchcraft, Mather took into his home and tried to cure Mercy Short, a seventeen-year-old energumen from Maine who had been captured by the Indians and taken to Canada after they had killed her father, mother, and three siblings. She had been redeemed from the Indians and arrived in Boston in November, 1690, probably working as a domestic servant (Silverman Cotton Mather 120-25; Burr Narratives 259 n. 2). Two years, later, however, Mercy was in the throes of demonic possession. She would have her jaws forced wide open, while Mather and others looked on aghast as specters attempted to pour invisible, whitish, poisonous liquor down her throat. She would then swell up “prodigiously, and bee just like one poisoned with a Dose of Rats-bane.” Oddly, after these “Potions” Mercy Short would

sometimes ask for a little salad oil, which seemed to reduce the swelling. “Behold a Proper Venefic Witchcraft!” Mather exclaimed (265). The incident called to Mather’s mind the relationship between witches and poisons:

Because the Name for Sorcerers in the Bible may signify Poisoners, tis a foolish Thing thence to infer that by witches, the Scripture means no more than such as commit Murders by Poisons. One great Skill, and way of Afflicting People in Witchcraft, is by another sort of Poisoning than what may bee seen by common Eyes. Yea I suppose, all the Bewitched have undergone such Spiritous Infection that wee may count them in a manner poisoned. (A Brand in Burr Narratives 265)

Mather may also have been thinking of the symptoms of the afflicted at Salem. He was not rejecting the idea of witches as poisoners because the effects of bewitchment did not sometimes resemble poisoning, but because he attributed the poisoning to spiritual causes. However, the mysterious appearance of some pins the “standers-by” dug out of Mercy Short’s mouth before the specters who had conveyed them there could force her to swallow them, along with the pins removed from her skin, and the “Bloody Marks” they left behind, may alert us to the fraud perpetrated on Mather and the other observers (Burr Narratives 264). In her fits, Mercy Short would often see the devil “of a Tawney or Indian colour; he wore an high-crowned hat, with strait Hair; and had one Cloven-Foot” (261). This devil brought with him, Mather records, “a considerable Number of Specters, most exactly resembling the persons of several people in the country.” Those names Mather refused to reveal (261). It perhaps never occurred to him that Mercy Short may

have been ingesting actual poison while she convulsed at his house, attributing the cause of her fits instead to demons. Poisonous plants she could have learned about while held captive by the Indians might have been responsible. At any rate, Mercy Short probably knew all along when the specters would begin arriving. Whatever troubled Mercy Short, she was undoubtedly disturbed. Less than a year after her deliverance, Mercy Short was admitted as a full member into Cotton Mather's North Church in Boston (Silverman 124). Her encounter with diabolical "poisoning" shows that both she and Mather were aware of the links between witchcraft and poison and that he was quite familiar with the philological arguments concerning witches as poisoners. In 1698, she was found guilty of adultery and excommunicated by Cotton Mather (Roach 566).

Both Protestants and Catholics recognized the principle of maleficium, the ancient belief that witches were able to perform harmful magic. The idea of maleficium predated both Protestant and Catholic conceptions of witchcraft, however. George Lyman Kittredge asserted that the malefic aspect of witchcraft did not enter England from the Continent but was ancient and innate and developed from two beliefs of "abysmal antiquity": that witches exist and can do bodily harm and that diseases had a supernatural origin (5). As Maryanne Roach puts it, "Most notions about witchcraft came from folklore and pre-dated the religious, legal, and scientific explanations the seventeenth century used to make sense of what everyone 'knew' happened" (Salem Witch Trials xix).

Since the Bible was considered to be true, all folk beliefs concerning witchcraft had to be viewed in its light (Hall, Worlds of Wonder 19). Furthermore, during the

Reformation, Protestants, lacking a single church, church doctrine, or ecclesiastical hierarchy, shifted primary responsibility for the prosecution of witchcraft from ecclesiastical to the civil criminal courts (Kors and Peters 259). However, as Keith Thomas has said, the concept of witchcraft changed during the hundred and twenty years after the accession of Elizabeth I. The change, claims Thomas, can be attributed to the “superimposition of the theological concept of witchcraft upon the ancient belief in the possibility of maleficium. The idea of the witch as a devil-worshipper was a new import from the continent . . .” (455). Witchcraft became heresy, which took precedence over maleficium. The emphasis on heresy, says Thomas, helped spawn the concept of the witches’ Sabbath (438).

Both Protestants and Catholics believed in the theological idea of a witch’s pact with the devil, who enabled the witch’s powers. This theological concept, however, was an addition to the ancient notion of maleficent magic (Thomas 438). This diabolical pact took the form of an inversion of the Christian’s relationship with God. Stuart Clark asserts that differences between Catholic and Protestant views of witchcraft were mainly those of “scope and accent” (Thinking with Demons 528). Protestants concerned themselves primarily with the covenant between God and the individual soul. Since Protestants were concerned with the relationship between God and the conscience, their view of witchcraft emphasized the connection between the lost soul and the devil, the individual’s pact with Satan. From the very beginning of the Salem afflictions, we find accounts of the devil in some form approaching the potential acolyte, attempting to establish a covenant. As an inversion of the Protestant covenant of grace, the compact

between the witch's soul and the devil assumed paramount importance. Catholics, on the other hand, because of an emphasis upon the sacramental rituals of the Church, viewed witchcraft as a diabolical inversion of the rituals of the mass, taking the form of the witches' Sabbath, the unholy flight there, and the desecration of the sacraments. Despite their differences, both Protestants and Catholics placed primary emphasis on maleficium, the witches' malevolent acts, and considered them blasphemous.

The Protestant viewpoint helps explain Mather's preoccupation with the personal lives and characters of those who were condemned to die as witches. Cotton Mather's primary concern was in presenting evidence other than spectral that had been used to convict Salem's witches.<sup>13</sup> He was also concerned with documenting the state of the souls of the condemned as reflected in their lives and actions. This Calvinist concern with natural depravity is one reason Cotton Mather is so deprecating of George Burroughs, Bridget Bishop, Elizabeth How, Susannah Martin, Martha Carrier, and Giles Corey in the six cases he covers. Mather's loathing for the Reverend George Burroughs, purported ringleader of the covenant of Salem witches, probably had deeper impetus in Burroughs' stance as a radical dissenter. His refusal to take communion, or even to baptize his children, probably indicated he was an Antipaedobaptist, or Baptist (Rosenthal Salem Story 131-133). Baptists, like other religious dissenters, would have been subject to accusations of witchcraft. As Bernard Rosenthal points out, in testimony Mary Lacy, Sr. described the "old Serpent," the devil, baptizing converts at Newberry Falls, a body of water in which he could practice total immersion (133; SWP 2: 514). Evidence of a flawed character was especially pertinent in Burroughs' case because of testimony that he



had also beat his wives. Having to depend solely upon circumstantial and spectral evidence in the case of Susannah Martin, and lacking much evidence of a bad character—except that she had been tried before and acquitted for witchcraft two decades earlier—Mather resorts to manipulating language in the court records to make her seem to confess. Thus, Mather accentuates his witches' morally suspect natures or their reprehensible actions to demonstrate a lack of divine grace. His ability to reconstruct their cases upon recognizable states of natural depravity is part of the reason why Mather chose these individuals as examples. Whatever else they might have been, they seemed unregenerate. Mather chose to write about the trials in which character seemed to play the greatest, and spectral evidence, the least important, role.

Protestant, and especially Puritan, preoccupation with internal states helps explain Mather's repeated exhortations in Wonders of the Invisible World about how individuals ought to conduct themselves so as not to allow the devil a foothold. Mather is concerned with the tensions between the factions for and against the witchcraft trials, and the strife and jealousies among individuals and communities, which he recognized, and which Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum document in Salem Possessed. We find repeated warnings against the legion of moral temptations Satan uses in his assaults, especially in Mather's final sermon in Wonders of the Invisible World, "The Devil Discovered," based on 2 Corinthians 2:11, "We are not Ignorant of his Devices." Mather's sermon is an exposition upon the temptations of Christ, in which he warns his audience to avoid sins that stem from the three temptations Jesus overcame in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1-11): desire for worldly pleasure, profit, and honor, the very enticements that seem to have

spurred the Salem outbreak. Wonders of the Invisible World forms a jeremiad in which the devil's wrath amounts to God's warning against sin, with millennialist implications that Israel's return to God this time will be final.

Catholic viewpoints of witchcraft, on the other hand, help explain the sensational depiction of witches at their nocturnal revelries. Nicolas Rémy's Demonolatreiae (Lyons, 1595) contains extended discussions of witches' ointments used for flying and their poisonous powders used to inflict harm. Francesco Maria Guazzo's Compendium Maleficarum (1608) contains lurid illustrations and titillating descriptions of the witches' Sabbath. Lodovico Maria Sinistrari in Demoniality (1680) takes as his primary subject of discussion the matter of witches' copulation with demons, a diabolical inversion of the sacrament of marriage.<sup>14</sup> Catholic demonologists based their depictions of witchcraft upon belief in the devil's diabolical reversal of Church sacraments: confirmation, the Eucharist, penance, marriage, baptism, holy orders, and anointing of the sick, all of which we see depicted in Satanic form (Clark Thinking with Demons 527-29). Because of its emphasis upon form, Catholicism was able to assimilate the forms of pagan religions on the continent of Europe like those still existing to the north, east, and west of the Holy Roman Empire after Charlemagne was crowned emperor in 800.

Naturally, however, there is some overlap between Catholic and Protestant depictions of the pact with Satan. In Salem, for example, we see inversion of the covenant of grace in which the devil as an attacking demon or witch's specter supposedly tried to make the afflicted "sign the book."<sup>15</sup> Individuals in Salem, some of the accusers insisted, attend witch meetings and partake in a diabolical Lord's Supper and baptism.

They would sometimes ride on poles to these meetings, but such accounts are generally more lavish in Catholic writers than that described by their Protestant counterparts. No less an authority than the Puritan theologian and Church of England clergyman William Perkins, while stressing the league with Satan as the foundation of witchcraft, limits the significance of images of the Sabbath to products of the devil's legerdemains:

When they first beginne to grow in confederacie with the deuill, they are sober, and their understanding, sound . . . but after they be once in the league, and have been intangled in compact with the deuill . . . then reason and understanding may be depraved, memorie weakened, and all the powers of their soule blemished. Thus becoming his vassals, they are deluded, and so intoxicated by him, that they will run into thousands of fantastick imaginations, holding themselves to be transformed into the shapes of other creatures, to be transported in the ayre to other countries, yea to do many strange things, which in truth they do not. (Damned Art 195-96)

These Protestant witch gatherings were, however, nothing like the often bizarre and macabre affairs described by writers like Rémy, Guazzo, and Sinistrari. Catholics, too, depicted individuals who were morally reprehensible and had fallen into various types of sin before being tempted into witchcraft, but according to Stuart Clark, the differences between Protestant and Catholic ideas of witchcraft were general tendencies, primarily ones of degree and emphasis and not of kind. Protestants and Catholics both shared basically the same cosmological viewpoint (Cameron 169). Protestants in

principle “rejected natural power in words, signs, symbols, or any other inanimate thing to cause marvelous transformations,” but insisted that witchcraft depended upon the “co-operation of demons” (Cameron 170). Protestants believed that nothing in the created world contained the power of God: God and His divine power were separate from creation, while Catholics believed that “God had chosen to channel his holiness through the approved rites, through particular people, places, things, words, and ways of doing things” (Cameron 186-87). God’s power could be manifest in objects and in forms like the Church sacraments. Essentially, the differences in views of divine power held by Protestant and Catholics affected their views and depictions of witchcraft. The witches’ Sabbath is important, however, for what it suggests about the pagan origins of demonologists’ views of witchcraft. As we shall see, these pagan origins have much to do with witches and their ancient association with plants. Herbs and plants were themselves thought to contain supernatural properties. They enabled individuals to fly in the company of apparitions by bringing on visions that could be mistaken for reality. The bewitching of oneself and others with herbs, powders, and ointments is possibly a source of the identification of witches with poisons. Nicolas Rémy finds that witches who use their “Cunning, Drugged Powders, Wands, Ointments, and Various Venoms” to harm people also “anooint their entire Bodies with their Magic Ointments” to fly to the Sabbath (2-7 [1.2-3]).

In the chapter “Venefica,” in Witchcraft in Old and New England, Kittredge points out that “poisoners have always been suspected of sorcery and sorcerers of poisoning,” adding that “Venefica as a stock word for ‘witch’ tells its own story” (137).

Reginald Scot spends four chapters (3, 4, 6, and 7) in Book 6 of his Discoverie of Witchcraft recounting incidents of poisoning of men and cattle in history and literature, quoting verses from Ovid relating tales of poisoners and witches. Plato discusses the connection between magic and poisons in The Laws (Book 11), which helps explain the confusion over the translation of witch:

For there are two kinds of poisons used among men, which cannot clearly be distinguished. There is the kind . . . which injures bodies . . . according to a natural law; there is also another kind which persuades the more daring class that they can do injury by sorceries, and incantations, and magic knots, as they are termed, and makes others believe that they above all persons are injured by the powers of the magician.”<sup>16</sup>

As George Lyman Kittredge explained, “witches” were often thought to inflict actual harm with poisons.<sup>17</sup> Many of the poisons that can be used to inflict harm on men and animals are derived from plants. A number of these plants also act as powerful hallucinogens, such as those that enabled witches’ flights to phantasmagorical Sabbaths by the use of ointments and philters (Harner 123-54; Sidky 189-214). These same plants used by shamans in many cultures to bring on trance states, meet tutelary animal spirits, and initiate followers were often used by witches to achieve ecstatic flight and metamorphosis into the shape of animals.

As we shall see, the ecstatic flights often associated with shamanic practices closely resemble the witches’ flights to the Sabbath. The initiatory practices of shamanic groups had both a public and a private component (Eliade 13-14), as did the witches’ pact

with Satan, as described in the Malleus Maleficarum (Kramer and Sprenger 99-104). The formal, public pact with Satan included a solemn ceremony, when witches met “together in conclave” with the devil in an assumed form to recommend the novice for acceptance. They were said to initiate their flights to these devilish revelries by use of an “unguent” (Kramer and Sprenger 107). The private ceremony that took place could “be made to the devil at any hour alone” (Kramer and Sprenger 99). In fact, close affinities exist between the witches’ Sabbath and shamanic techniques of ecstasy. Carlo Ginzberg posits that, in addition to the Church influence in defining the witch’s Sabbath, there existed in Europe and elsewhere a shamanic agrarian cult of the dead, in which certain individuals took ritual ecstatic journeys, likely with the aid of hallucinogenic plants.<sup>18</sup> Noting an affinity between ecstasies of Siberian and Lapland shamans and the flight to the Sabbath, Ginzburg declares that “[t]he folkloric nucleus of the Sabbath—magic flight and metamorphosis—seems to derive from a remote Eurasian substratum” (Ecstasies 136). Ginzburg’s theories become important to this discussion in Chapter Three in the discussion of Cotton Mather’s treatment of Swedish witchcraft. What is most important to this study of Wonders of the Invisible World and Salem was that such poisonous plants as led individuals, both shamans and witches, into ecstatic trances that allowed communication with the invisible world could also be used to “mimic” the pathological symptoms of bewitchment. Thus, it is the ancient figure of the witch as poisoner, as the veneficos of Exodus 22:18, that comprises depictions of both Catholic and Protestant witchcraft: maleficium, the pact with Satan, and aspects of the flight to the witches’ Sabbath.

Sir Robert Filmer (1588?-1653), author of An Advertiesment to the Jury Men of England, Touching Witches (1653), notes the connection between the witch of Exodus 22:18 and those who used plants to achieve strange effects. He raises the issue, too, of what witches were when Exodus was written, compared to what they were considered to be in the seventeenth century, and asks why witches were being put to death based on a verse that describes another kind of “witch,” who never made a pact with the devil, and who (as Filmer implies) may never have existed:

The Septuagent have translated a Witch, and Apothecary, a Druggister, one that compounds poisons, and so the Latin word for a Witch is venefica, a maker of poisons: if any such there ever were, or be that by the help of the Devill do poison, such a one is to be put to death, though there be no Covenant with the Devill, because shee is an Actor, and principall of her selfe, not by any wonder wrought by the Devill, but by the naturall or occult property of the poison. (An Advertiesment to Grand-Jury Men 23)

In spite of elucidations from skeptics like Filmer, however, jurists, translators, and commentators were simply going to interpret the Bible the way they saw fit and not the way the Hebrew writers may have originally intended, even though, as William Perkins insisted, witches were still in his day the same as they were in the days of Moses (Damned Art 185-86).

Nathaniel Hawthorne, the great, great, great grandson of John Hathorne, magistrate at the Salem witch trials, may have suspected a link between plants and the Salem guilt over the witchcraft trials when he placed the poisonous hallucinogenic plant,

“apple-peru,” the thornapple, datura stramonium,<sup>19</sup> known to Native Americans in the Northeast, outside Boston’s prison door and on the first page of the first chapter of The Scarlet Letter. This atropine-laden plant, among others, is common in the area and could have been one of the plants used by Roger Chillingworth to poison the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, causing his hallucination of a crimson “A” in the sky near the end of the novel and a scarlet letter “A” to form on his breast.<sup>20</sup> The yard surrounding the titular house in another Hawthorne novel, The House of the Seven Gables, is also home to deadly weeds: the decay of “petals of flowers and the stalks and seed-vessels of vagrant and lawless plants, more useful after their death” associated with the perennial evil and curse of the Pyncheon house (86) could be descriptive of the flowers and seed pods of apple-peru, or thornapple, as well. The black seeds from the conspicuous seed-pods of the thornapple would indeed be more “useful” after they had matured and fallen to the ground. Hawthorne reinforces that idea of perpetual evil in association with plants in many of his works, including “Rappaccini’s Daughter” in which Doctor Rappaccini believes “all medicinal virtues are comprised within those substances which we term vegetable poisons” (335). These plants he “distils into medicines that are as potent as a charm” (330) and particularly a shrub “that bore a profusion of purple blossoms” (331) and “hung its purple gems beside the marble fountain,” making “a show so resplendent that it seemed enough to illuminate the garden, even had there been no sunshine” ( 332, 331). Even the scent of the plant seems to bring on a hallucinatory state. When a drop from the plant appears to Giovanni to fall upon a lizard’s head, the reptile “contorted itself violently, and then lay motionless in the sunshine” (338). Strange and beautiful



insects appear to Giovanni to seek out the plant. In the end, Giovanni, Beatrice's lover, in her father Rappaccini's eyes, at least, has been initiated into the cult of the flower, through exposure to Beatrice and to the garden, and, as a result, "stands apart from other men" (359). But like Odysseus on Circe's island, Giovanni possesses a secret antidote. The hanging purple flowers Hawthorne describes fit the description of brugmansia, a shrub of the nightshade family bearing trumpet-shaped flowers and a close relative of datura stramonium.

Although many theories have emerged since 1692 about the causes of the witchcraft outbreak at Salem, the main question they attempt to answer concerns the extent of fraud versus the degree of delusion influencing accusers: to what measure did those alleging witchcraft truly believe the claims they were making? If fraud was responsible, what was the impetus? If delusion was to blame, what were its sources? Who or what was responsible? Since the seventeenth century, theories of what happened at Salem tend to fall into one of two camps: those favoring delusion and those favoring fraud. Writers and witnesses nearest to contemporary events who favored delusion blamed it on Satan. These included the Reverends Deodat Lawson, Cotton Mather, and John Hale. Contemporary writers and witnesses through 1700 who blamed the witch craze on deliberate fraud include Boston merchants, Thomas Brattle and Robert Calef. Later eighteenth and nineteenth-century writers who blame the witchcraft on deliberate fraud include Massachusetts governor Thomas Hutchinson (1711-1780), George Bancroft (1800-1891), and Charles W. Upham (1802-1875). Though Upham blamed the outbreak primarily on political rivalries in Salem Village, he paid attention to John Hale's and

Cotton Mather's assertions that some of those afflicted had been dabbling in magic. He became the first to suggest that Tituba and John Indian had started the Salem debacle by teaching magical practices to a circle of girls, including the Reverend Samuel Parris's daughter and niece. In 1869 Samuel Drake then embellished Upham's suggestion, forming the theory that the "circle" of eight young females had met together with books on witchcraft to try to practice magic. The young women thereby deluded themselves into thinking they were bewitched and became the prime movers in the witch hunt.

The problem with writers like Hutchinson and Upham blaming Salem witchcraft entirely on fraud is twofold. The first difficulty is how so many young girls and women living near each other could be so deluded as to send person after person to horrible prisons and death over a nine-month period without any of their company deliberately or inadvertently exposing the cause. The second problem is that so many descriptions of the girls' fits seem to involve pathological states that would not have been easy to mimic. In 1689 Cotton Mather described the afflictions of Martha Goodwin, 13, as being "visited with strange Fits, beyond those that attend an Epilepsy, or a Catalepsy, or those that they call The Diseases of Astonishment" (Memorable Providences, qtd. in Burr, Narratives 101). Subjects soon tire of feigning involuntary convulsions; involuntary ones are hard to mimic. Of the torments of the afflicted, Cotton Mather assured his audience that

Flashy People may Burlesque these Things, but when Hundreds of the most sober People in a Country, where they have as much *Mother-Wit* certainly as the rest of Mankind, know them to be *True*, nothing but the

absurd and froward Spirit of *Sadducism* can question them. (Magnalia 2. 328-29).

The seventeenth century still held ambiguous views about whether or not epilepsy could be attributed to demonic possession. No one doubted that the devil could cause epilepsy, but opinions varied on how much weight to give to arguments for a purely natural origin to epilepsy versus a cause by demons. Most physicians, even in the latter half of the seventeenth century, did not rule out witchcraft and possession in cases of epilepsy. Since no clear taxonomy of epilepsy existed, however, often individuals with convulsions were diagnosed as epileptic, not demon-possessed (Temkin 220-224).

Unless the seventeenth century always equated convulsive seizures with bewitchment, the problem remains that, to many contemporaries, the symptoms of those initially afflicted at Salem seemed more than just physical or feigned. Eyewitness accounts of the Salem girls describe contortions that could not be dissembled. It would be completely wrong, however, to say that the girls' fits were always genuine. The girls at Salem often feigned spiritual assault. But such pretended incursions from the invisible world may have been preceded and followed by some genuine disturbances that gave the fraudulent attacks credibility. As Chadwick Hansen puts it, "If you believe in witchcraft and you discover someone has been melting wax images over a slow fire or muttering charms over your nail-parings, the probability is that you will get extremely sick" (10). The same principle is even truer for someone who actually thinks she has experienced "bewitchment" and attributes the cause to a demon or witch.

The Reverend Deodat Lawson was the first to publish an account of the Salem witchcraft outbreak. Lawson's ten-page A Brief and True Narrative (1692) records events from March 19 to April 5, 1692, near the outset of the accusations. This eyewitness appears to be a true believer in witchcraft, and while aware of the potential for fraud, he wrote about the trials from the standpoint of a sympathetic observer—sympathetic to those making the accusations, that is. For Lawson, there was almost no room for fraud, just the delusive machinations of the devil. He considered the fits of the bewitched girls to be real and diabolical. Deodat Lawson's Narrative and Mather's Wonders of the Invisible World were the only contemporary accounts of events to be published in New England before 1700. A sixteen-page tract, Some Miscellany Observations On Our Present Debates Respecting Witchcraft, In a Dialogue Between S. and B. (Salem and Boston) (1692) had to be published in Philadelphia because it condemned the trials and exposed the controversy among factions for and against the trials. A Dialogue Between S. and B. was not a record of events but a theological and practical commentary about witchcraft as it applied to Salem. It was written by the Reverend Samuel Willard (1640-1707), then minister of the Old South Church in Boston. Willard was involved in defending the accused and, as a result, was himself accused of witchcraft. His nephew, John Willard, was sentenced to death for witchcraft (Calef in Burr Narratives 360; Robinson 216). In 1692 Cotton Mather's father, Increase, published Cases of Conscience Concerning Witchcraft and Possessions, which examined the case for spectral evidence and implicitly but strongly criticized the judges' use of spectral evidence in the Salem trials. Increase Mather's book was published soon after Cotton Mather's Wonders of the

Invisible World, causing speculation that Cotton and Increase Mather disagreed over the trials, which both insisted was not the case. Much evidence exists that Cases of Conscience and Wonders of the Invisible World together formed a joint effort by Increase and Cotton Mather to help put an end to the trials. Cases of Conscience helped discredit the use of spectral evidence, while Wonders of the Invisible World defended the judges from possible reprisal for its use, effectively canceling out the opposition from both sides of the debate.<sup>21</sup>

Cotton Mather's Wonders of the Invisible World was the first work after the Salem witch trials to attempt to explain both what had happened in Salem and why. Historians have been doing that ever since. As with Lawson's Narrative, Mather's book is not so much about what happened at Salem from a secular or scientific point of view, but a theological explication of the events. Instead of writing a history of Salem witchcraft trials, Mather presented as fact a version of events based on his theological interpretation of the Salem trials, what led to them, and their implication for New England. He probably never actually attended any of the trials but knew personally many of the key players and depended on eyewitness accounts, word-of-mouth, and court records to garner his information. There is a good deal of evidence, even in Wonders, that he did not totally agree with the outcome. There are reasons to think that had Mather been in charge, the trials would never have happened.

Truth to tell, Mather worked from legal depositions, which were in themselves imperfect. The court recorder's "take" of what happened was not the least compromised by the fact that one of the principal recorders was the Rev. Samuel Parris, who was an

interested party in the proceedings. Thus, Mather had to depend on sources that were anything but objective. By comparing Mather's version with the court records however, we find a good deal of evidence that Mather or his direct source was working from copies of some of the same records of the legal proceedings still extant today. Mather asked court clerk Stephen Sewall for "a narrative of the evidences given in at the trials of half a dozen or, if you please, a dozen, of the principal witches" (Selected Letters 44). Mather reveals that his source for the trials is an "Abridgment collected out of the *Court-Papers*" (WIW 82), meaning that what he received was only part of the record. Simply copying down the records of five or six cases might have been easier and faster for Sewall than trying to summarize them adequately, and Mather had asked Sewall to imagine him "as obstinate a Sadducee and witch advocate as any among us" in compiling the records (Selected Letters 45). The abridgment of the trials Sewall sent Mather is not known to exist, so we have no way to tell (other than by comparison of Mather's version with the court records) how much information he might have been given. What complicates matters is that Cotton Mather believed in witchcraft and was appointed by Lt. Governor Stoughton to be primary defender of the trials in the court of public opinion.

Mather attributed the unusually large outbreak of witchcraft at Salem to the devil's frenetic rage before his binding at Christ's Second Coming and millennial reign on earth, which Mather believed would occur in 1697. The devil's actions were, consequently, like that of any ferocious beast about to be chained. In Mather's view, Satan's rage at the approaching end of his reign was directly responsible for the practice of witchcraft as well as for the increase of neighborly rancor, delusion, outright

vengeance, and bad faith that also impelled the mutual accusations. Such un-Christian circumstances were themselves the result of the devil's great wrath. Mather's fervor for interpreting the events as signs of the coming millennium throughout Wonders becomes apparent. Along with malefic witchcraft and apparitions, the invisible forces moving events forward to their predetermined outcome was one of the invisible "wonders" that were—purportedly, as the title would suggest—the subject of Mather's book. Mather also seems to have been fighting with his conscience and betrays a sense of self-delusion—giving the impression that he was trying to convince himself and others of something he—and they—really did not believe. There is always the sense that some of Mather's zeal is an attempt to disguise serious doubt.

Astronomer and mathematician Thomas Brattle was alone among contemporary writers to have actually written a narrative critique (mostly critical) on the Salem trials. His work was in the form of a letter dated October 8, 1692, to an unknown clergyman and came down strongly on the side of fraud. Brattle suggested that the upper echelon of the Massachusetts Bay colony, who were placed in the position of making decisions about the outcome of people's lives during the trials, engaged in fraud and hypocrisy. Brattle was a fellow of the Royal Society of London, the most esteemed scientific community in Europe, and was influenced greatly by early Enlightenment science. He was quick to point out the judges' faulty methods, the way social class seemed to play a role in who was convicted and who escaped, and the fraudulent and unwarrantable activities of the accusers themselves.

Following the publication of Mather's Wonders and Lawson's Narrative, a Boston haberdasher and Mather's chief nemesis, Robert Calef, brought out in 1700 a quite different version of what, why, and how things occurred at Salem. His mocking More Wonders of the Invisible World had to be published in London to avoid censorship in Boston or the combined clergy's wrath. The work may not have been completely Calef's because he belonged to the party of Elisha Cooke, who opposed the Mathers because of the 1691 charter. Calef insisted that the Salem trials had not been caused by witchcraft, but by excessive "Zeal governed by blindness and passion and led by president<sup>22</sup> . . . [that] precipitated us into far greater wickedness (if not Witchcrafts) than any have been yet proved against those that suffered" (Burr Narratives 299-300). Calef portrayed Cotton Mather as prurient and silly and criticized the Reverend Samuel Parris for countenancing and encouraging the disturbances. More Wonders succeeded in permanently staining Cotton Mather's reputation. Calef's intention was to "expos[e] the Actors" who had "proceeded irregularly," and he blamed the witchcraft trials on the ministers and magistrates who, for vested interest, willingly allowed themselves and others to be deluded (Burr Narratives 300).

Two years after Calef's book appeared in print, the Reverend John Hale, minister of Beverley, near Salem, published A Brief Enquiry Into the Nature of Witchcraft (Boston, 1702). The book was published posthumously, perhaps at Hale's request. An eyewitness to the events at Salem, Hale had been an early supporter of the trials but reflected and changed his opinion after his own wife was accused of witchcraft. Hale tried to put the witch outbreak at Salem into the perspective of former cases of New



England witchcraft and into the nature and history of witchcraft in general. He was especially concerned with precedent for determining whether the devil could assume the specter of an innocent person. Reasoning from both Scripture and from cases culled from the annals of demonology, Hale finally concluded that the devil could both perform acts of maleficia without human aid and assume the shape of innocent people. For example, Satan riddled Job with boils from head to toe without witchcraft. Hale conceded, sadly, that innocent people had probably been executed at Salem. His retrospective took a cold hard look at what had been thought to be witchcraft at Salem and decided that much had been the result of delusion, not actual witchcraft. Hale explained of the episode that “such was the darkness of that day, the tortures and lamentations of the afflicted, and the power of former presidents, that we walked in the clouds and could not see our way (qtd. in Burr, Narratives 427).

In 1764 Thomas Hutchinson (1711-80), governor of Massachusetts from 1760 until the American Revolution, published an interpretation of the entire Salem witch-hunt, biased in favor of Enlightenment values. For Hutchinson, there was no possibility of delusion. He rejected any explanation but fraud and conspiracy. Hutchinson offered his view of what happened in volume two of his History of Massachusetts-Bay. Hutchinson accused the Reverend Samuel Parris of being “over officious” in taking down the examinations of the accused (History II. 21). Writing in the 1760s, Hutchinson admitted that there were still a great number of people “who are willing to suppose the accusers to have been under bodily disorders which affected their imaginations,” but insisted that while such an opinion was kind and charitable, it was “winking the truth out of sight.”

Hutchinson insisted that the “whole was a scene of fraud and imposture” (47). Detecting the conspiratorial nature of events, Hutchinson pointed out that “No body was safe. The most effectual way to prevent an accusation, was to become an accuser” (23).

The next influential writer on Salem was Charles W. Upham, whose Salem Witchcraft (1867) laid the foundation for much modern scholarship. Utilizing original court records, sermons, maps, church records, deeds, and wills, Upham recreated on paper some of the complex historical, social, and economic forces that drove the Salem incidents. He believed most, if not all, of the accusations of the afflicted in Salem to be the result of fraud. He backed off a bit from his general claim of total connivance when it came to the core group of female accusers, however. Upham asserted that “it is almost beyond belief that they were wholly actuated by deliberate and cold-blooded malignity,” claiming that some of the blame could be placed upon “credulity, hallucination, and the delirium of excitement,” leaving room for the specter of delusion in some form (319).

The twentieth century saw a blossoming of explanations of the Salem witchcraft affair and a movement away from an explanation of simple fraud, looking for psychological, sociological, and physiological explanations for the crisis. Bernard Rosenthal points out that the twentieth century became more inclined to pursue “medical models, particularly psychological ones” (33). The best—though far from accurate—account of the Salem ordeal from the first half of the twentieth century was Marion L. Starkey’s The Devil in Massachusetts (1949). Her assessment came down strongly on the side of delusion rather than fraud, and she attributed the Salem debacle to mass hysteria

brought on by the girls' afflictions, which she blamed on individual hysteria that sometimes "verged on the psychotic" (45).

In Witchcraft at Salem (1969) Chadwick Hansen argued that some real practices of witchcraft actually occurred at Salem and that the afflicted knew about it and believed themselves bewitched, much like victims of voodoo, setting off a "psychogenic fear" resulting in pathological behavior. Hansen claims that victims or participants were "not merely overexcited; they were mentally ill" (x). In 1974, Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum's groundbreaking Salem Possessed was published. Building on Charles Upham's work, Boyer and Nissenbaum meticulously reconstructed the social and economic context of the complicated affair that drove the people of Salem Village to behave in insidious ways that perhaps deliberately fomented the witchcraft crisis. For Boyer and Nissenbaum the verdict was fraud, but fraud driven by ungovernable social and economic forces. Linda Caporael's 1976 Science article, "Ergotism: The Satan Loosed in Salem" gave a stunning physiological explanation for the symptoms of the afflicted girls at Salem and hence the crisis. Caporael claimed that convulsive and hallucinogenic effects of the ergot fungus, which may have grown on rye consumed at Salem, was responsible for spreading panic throughout the entire community. However, in 1976, Nicholas P. Spanos and Jack Gottlieb soon answered Caporael's thesis directly in the same publication, Science, pointing out that convulsive ergotism, the kind that causes hallucinations, depends on a deficiency of vitamin A. The Salem diet was rich in vitamin A, they said, so if ergot was a factor, the other form of gangrenous ergot would have emerged instead of, or along with, the convulsive type. Since there is no record of

people's fingers and toes falling off in Salem or in Essex County at the time, which usually happens in cases of gangrenous ergotism, it is not likely that ergot was involved. Additionally, ergot outbreaks are extremely rare in the United States, as medical geographer August Hirsch has pointed out (qtd. in Sidky 178). Caporael also does not explain why only some of the girls in some of the households were affected, while their parents and brothers and sisters remained unaffected. John Demos, in Entertaining Satan (1984), looks at the phenomenon of witchcraft as a process of psychological, sociological, and anthropological forces working together orchestrally to create both accusers and accused. Demos accepted both delusion and hysteria as part of that process.

More recently, two books, Enders A. Robinson's The Devil Discovered (1991), and Bernard Rosenthal's Salem Story (1992) come down squarely on the side of fraud as an explanation. Robinson claims that the witchcraft outbreak was deliberately caused by a "tight-knit conspiracy," centered around the Reverend Samuel Parris and his friend Thomas Putnam, Jr., for revenge and personal and professional hegemony. If the girls were deluded or "hysterical," their hysteria resulted from their manipulation by "subtle means" (137). Bernard Rosenthal teaches a close reading of the Salem trials and points to the many instances of deliberate fraud perpetrated by the girls and those in charge. Mary Beth Norton's In the Devil's Snare (2004) returns to a more sociological model, claiming that Indian wars on the Maine frontier, the resultant psychological shock, and the cultural and economic strains on the Massachusetts colony during the war caused many of the hysterical girls to picture Satan in the form of demonic Indians attacking them.

In bringing out this edition of Cotton Mather's Wonders of the Invisible World, I also offer a hypothesis of what sparked and nourished the Salem witch trials. My theory builds upon the work of many of the authors already mentioned. I believe, along with Enders A. Robinson and Bernard Rosenthal, that fraud in Salem was deliberately perpetrated by a core group of conspirators who recruited a vulnerable group, mostly females, to accuse selected people of witchcraft. The conspirators' motivations for bringing about a witch hunt is well documented in Boyer and Nissenbaum's Salem Possessed. I also believe, along with Marion L. Starkey, Charles W. Upham, Chadwick Hansen, John Demos, and others, that complex, uncontrollable psychological forces were at work. Like Hansen, my own theory postulates that the girls actually thought themselves bewitched—and with good reason. With Linda Caporael, I share the opinion that the very real afflictions of the girls may have had a biological impetus. With Mary Beth Norton, I also think that fear of Indians shaped the form the devil took and kindled the flames of persecution.

I postulate that the afflicted girls were surreptitiously dosed with jimson weed, a hallucinogenic plant that grew in the area. I maintain that Samuel Parris, Thomas Putnam, and Dr. William Griggs administered to the unsuspecting girls measured doses of powdered jimson weed seeds or leaves concealed in items of food and drink. The timed effects and measured dosing with jimson weed explains why the girls could have seemed healthy some times and not at others. It also accounts for the complicity of the afflicted; they may have thought themselves bewitched. In putting forward this theory, I do not claim to have conclusive evidence. Circumstantial evidence, however, is abundant and

physical evidence is waving in the breeze all over Massachusetts. I offer my theory as a plausible explanation for what happened at Salem, not a dogmatic statement that it did happen this way. The theory does, however, explain much previously unaccounted-for circumstances and behavior. I intend to show that such a scenario was quite probable.

Cotton Mather, like other ministers and theologians in the seventeenth century, sought to discover and document empirical evidence of the invisible world to challenge and refute materialist philosophers like Descartes, Spinoza, and Hobbes. Paradoxically, the evidence that appeared in Salem was empirical enough, but all it proved was that the senses and thus the reason could be deluded.

### Notes to the Preface

<sup>1</sup> King James I, Demonologie, 1597; William Perkins, The Damned Art of Witchcraft; Johann Weyer, De Praestigiis Daemonum (1583); Joseph Glanvill Saducismus Triumphatus (1682); Henry Holland Treatise Against Witchcraft (1590); Reginald Scot The Discoverie of Witchcraft (1584); Thomas Ady A Candle in the Dark (1656); and John Webster The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft (1677).

<sup>2</sup> Bryan Walton, Biblia Sacra Polyglotta (London, 1653), 322. See also Edward Leigh, Critica Sacra (London 1650); 117; Weyer 93-94; Scot 111; Holland B4; Perkins 178-189.

<sup>3</sup> Reginald Scot, English skeptical writer on witchcraft, was from Kent. He was probably educated at Oxford. His Discoverie of Witchcraft (1584) was written in refutation of the French demonologist Jean Bodin's *Demonamie* (1580). Scot was greatly influenced by Johann Weyer's *De Praestigiis Daemonum* (1583), which Scot used as a point of departure for his much more skeptical treatise. Both Weyer and Scot maintained that none of the words translated in the Bible as *witch* had the same meaning in the original languages. According to Scot the word appears in several key places of Scripture: Ex. 22.18; Deut 18.10; 2 Sam. 9.22; Dan. 2.2; 2 Chron. 33.6; Isa. 47. 9, 12; Malach. 3.5; Jerem. 27.9; Mich. 5.2; and Nah. 3.4. See The Discoverie of Witchcraft (1584) 111-12.

<sup>4</sup> King James I, Demonologie, 1597; William Perkins, The Damned Art of Witchcraft; Johann Weyer, De Praestigiis Daemonum (1583); Joseph Glanvill Saduscismus Triumphatus (1682); Henry Holland Treatise Against Witchcraft (1590); Reginald Scot The Discoverie of Witchcraft (1584); Thomas Ady A Candle in the Dark (1656); and John Webster The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft (1677).

<sup>5</sup> Matthew Poole, Annotations upon the Holy Bible. London, 1683. According to Increase Mather in An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences (1684), the clergyman and scholar Matthew Poole, of Cambridge University, had years before set in motion an initiative among ministers in England for the recording of illustrious providences, which Mather was now helping to fulfill.

<sup>6</sup> Edward Leigh was an English Puritan theologian and philologist. He was born in Shadwell, Leicestershire and recieved a BA from Magdalen Hall, Oxford in 1620 and an MA in 1623. Critica Sacra, his philological study of the Hebrew and Greek words in the Old and new testaments became a standard reference work. He was the father of English poet, Richard Leigh (1649/50-1728).

<sup>7</sup> Kors and Peters, 266. See also Kors and Peters, “Martin Luther: The Two Kinds of Sorcery and the Reformation.” 261-62.

<sup>8</sup> Johann Weyer, a physician, was born in Grave, Holland. At the age of fourteen he went to Antwerp to study with Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535). He and Englishman Reginald Scot were the most important critics of the witch persecutions in



the sixteenth century. Though Weyer believed in the devil and in demons, he questioned the existence of witches and criticized the idea of their pact with Satan.

<sup>9</sup> See the discussion on the seventeenth-century controversy surrounding the meaning of witch in “Theorising the Witch Hunt: James VI’s Demonology” in Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland: James VI’s Demonology and the North Berwick Witches, Exeter: U of Exeter P, 2000. 327-52, especially 334-41. Reginald Scot and others discuss these eight words in The Discoverie of Witchcraft (1584). These words in Scot and some of the verses where they are found in the Bible are as follows: Chasaph Ex. 22.18 (poisoner) Bk. 6; Ob 1 Sam. 15.23 (pythonist; ventriloquist) Bk. 7; Kasam Deut. 18. 10 (soothsayer) Bk. 9; Onen (diviner) Bk. 10; Nahas Deut. 18.10 (augurer) Bk. 11; Habar Ps. 58.4-5 (charmer) Bk. 12; Hartumin Gen. 41. 8; Exod. 7.13, 24 (magician) Bk. 13; and Iidoni (conjurer) Bk 15.

<sup>10</sup> This translation of the Hebrew phrase is from the New Revised Standard Version.

<sup>11</sup> The Hebrew and Greek, and Vulgate Latin phrases from 1 Samuel 28:7 are taken from Bryan Walton’s Biblica Sacra Polyglotta (1660).

<sup>12</sup> Matthew Poole, Annotations upon the Holy Bible. London, 1683.

<sup>13</sup> Spectral evidence is legal testimony claiming that a witch in ghostly form is accosting and tormenting a victim. Witches were thought to allow the devil or a demon to assume their shape through a pact made between the witch and Satan. There was,

however, no solid biblical evidence for such a pact or for the supposed activities of the witch's specter.

<sup>14</sup> Nicolas Rémy (1530-1612) was born at Charmes in Lorraine and studied law at the University of Toulouse, following a family tradition of the study of law. In 1591 he became Attorney General of Lorraine. On the title page of his Demonolatreiae he claims to have executed over 900 witches in Lorraine in fifteen years; Francesco Maria Guazzo (fl. 1608) was a seventeenth-century friar of Milan of the Order of St. Ambrosius ad Nemos. He cites 322 authorities in his handbook on witchcraft. In 1.11 of the *Compendium Maleficarum* Guazzo repeats the legend that Luther was the progeny of the devil and a nun. Lodovico Maria Sinistrari (1622-1701) was a Franciscan friar and professor of theology at Pavia University. He borrowed from previous writers on witchcraft, including Martin Del Rio (1551-1608), Remy, and Guazzo. His treatise *Demonaility* was unpublished.

<sup>15</sup> Many allusions to signing the devil's book can be found in the Salem court papers. Instances may be located by doing a word search under "sign" on the search engine of the electronic edition of Boyer and Nissenbaum, The Salem Witchcraft Papers located online at the University of Virginia web site:

<<http://etext.virginia.edu/etcbin/ot2www-salem?specfile=/texts/english/salem/public/salem.o2w>>

<sup>16</sup> Plato, Laws, Book 11, Trans. by Benjamin Jewett. September 18, 2005. <[classics.mit.edu/Plato/laws.html](http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/laws.html)>.

<sup>17</sup> See also John Webster, The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft (242, 247) and Michael Dalton, The Country Justice (1690) in which lists of evidence of witchcraft “Powders . . . Pots or Places where their Spirits may be kept, the smell of which will stink detestably” (385) and “by Medicines, Herbs, or other things applied, above the course of Nature, and by the Devils help, and Covenants made with him” (386).

<sup>18</sup> See Carlo Ginzburg, Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches’ Sabbath, especially 182-184, 207-225, and 296-307.

<sup>19</sup> “apple,” *n.*<sup>3</sup>” The Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd. ed. . 1989, OED Online, Oxford University Press, 15 Sept. 2005.

<<http://dictionary.oed.com.dax.lib.unf.edu/cgi/entry/50010758>>.

<sup>20</sup> See Jemshed A. Khan, M.D, “Atropine Poisoning in Hawthorne’s The Scarlet Letter,” New England Journal of Medicine 311.6: 414-6, rpt. “The Scarlet Letter: A is for Atropine” CSA Bulletin. (April-June 2003), 49-55.

<sup>21</sup> On the dates of publication of Cotton Mather’s Wonders of the Invisible World and Increase Mather’s Cases of Conscience, see Holmes, Cotton Mather: A Bibliography of His Works, 3 vols., 3: 1257-58 and Holmes, Increase Mather, A Bibliography of His Works, 2 vols., 1: 106, 123. For a convincing argument of the Mathers’ probable joint effort at calming the contentions over Salem, see David Levin, “Did the Mathers Disagree About the Salem Witch Trials?” Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society 95.1 (1985): 19-37.

<sup>22</sup> Hale means here those who presided over the trials. The OED defines president as “Formerly the title of the chief magistrate in some of the British North American colonies, and in the States to which they gave rise” (3 b.). Before 1800 the term was often used in exchange for Governor. By use of that term Calef was referring obliquely to Lieutenant Governor William Stoughton, named by Governor Phips as chief magistrate of the court of Oyer and Terminer in Salem. Calef may have also been referring to Increase Mather, Cotton Mather’s father, who was president of Harvard College. President also sounds like precedent. Calef might be making a play on words by suggesting that the ministers, in supporting a witch hunt, were looking to the past and not the more enlightened present or future of the colony.

## Chapter 1

### Light on Salem

“Here’s monk’s-hood, that breeds fever in the blood;  
 And deadly nightshade, that makes men see ghosts;  
 And henbane, that will shake them with convulsions; . . .  
 I, Tituba, an Indian and a slave, . . .  
 Can make their daughters see and talk with ghosts,  
 Or fall into delirium. . . .”

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Giles Corey of Salem Farms

“When she had got them into her house, she set them upon benches and seats and mixed them a mess with cheese, honey, meal, and Pramnian [wine] but she drugged it with wicked poisons to make them forget their homes, and when they had drunk she turned them into pigs by a stroke of her wand, and shut them up in her pigsties.”

Homer The Odyssey, Book X

“By the sympathy of your human hearts for sin, ye shall scent out all the places—whether in church, bed-chamber, street, field, or forest—where crime has been committed, and shall exult to behold the whole earth one stain of guilt, one mighty blood-spot.”

Nathaniel Hawthorne, “Young Goodman Brown”

“Were such things here as we do speak about?

Or have we eaten on the insane root

That takes the reason prisoner?”

Wm. Shakespeare, Macbeth

## I. Mixed Motives

On Thursday, January 14, 1692, Cotton Mather addressed his Boston congregation almost prophetically, stating, “A *Sinful* Sleep, is indeed, a *Deadly* Sleep; it is a stupefying, and a venomous Bed of *Night-Shade* whereupon men ly when they Sleep in Sin.”<sup>23</sup> Mather associated the well known cold, soporific effects of the genus nightshade with beds and sin, and we can also guess that he was aware of the traditional connection between witchcraft and plants of the nightshade family. In De Prestaegeous Demonium (1563), one of Mather’s sources for witchcraft lore in Wonders of the Invisible World, the German physician and demonologist Johann Weyer made explicit connections between witches and plants of the nightshade family like henbane, mandrake, and datura.<sup>24</sup> The “sinful sleep” to which Mather ominously refers was, however, just the calm before the storm. The Saturday after Mather preached his sermon urging awakening from Satan’s soporific state, published soon after as A Midnight Cry,<sup>25</sup> two girls, Elizabeth Parris, 9, and Abigail Williams, 11, both living at the home of the Reverend Samuel Parris of Salem Village, started exhibiting vague symptoms and inexplicable “fits.” Abigail was bothered by pains in her head. Both girls began babbling incoherent phrases, unintelligible both to themselves and others. They behaved erratically and unpredictably, already showing the early signs of bewitchment. Apparently, they had already come under attack from the specter of their Indian nurse, Tituba (Roach 7; SWP 3: 753-754). Judging from the girls’ symptoms and behavior, and lacking any other explanation, a physician, probably William Griggs,<sup>26</sup> pronounced the girls to be “under an evil hand.”

Just two months later, on Lecture Day in Salem, Thursday, March 24, 1692, the sinful sleep had been transformed both literally and figuratively into a waking nightmare. Several more people, mostly young women, had come under physical and spiritual attack by the devil in the spectral forms of older women in the neighborhood. Those afflicted included Ann Putnam, 12, daughter of Thomas Putnam, Jr., and two other young women living in his household, Mercy Lewis, 17, and Mary Walcott, 17, as well as Elizabeth Hubbard, 18, the great niece of Dr. Grigg's wife.

The Reverend Deodat Lawson, former Salem Village pastor (1683-1688) had come to preach in Salem Village as part of a mission to assess the potency and nature of the witchcraft outbreak. Addressing the congregation of the Reverend Samuel Parris, quoting Revelation 12.12, Lawson declared, "The Devil has come down in great wrath," expressing the view of the devil of Ephesians 2.2 as prince of the power of the air. Three days later, on Sunday, the Reverend Samuel Parris declared before the same enthralled and perhaps frightened congregation that "The Devil has been raised among us." Parris's words suggest a conjurer calling up Satan from the bottomless pit, like a spirit in the form of Samuel ascending from the earth and appearing before Saul and the Witch of Endor (1 Sam. 28.13-14).

When seeking for initial causes of the witchcraft manifestation at Salem, we must look closely at where and how the fits and accusations began. The witchcraft outbreak had its genesis in and around the homes of Samuel Parris and his ally Thomas Putnam, and from their houses the demonic invasion disseminated. As often happens in witchcraft cases, the devil's arrival commenced with spectral attacks from people known to the



afflicted. These specters grievously “tortured, consumed, wasted, pined, afflicted, and tormented” their victims, as a typical legal indictment for witchcraft in Salem reads, bringing about uncontrollable fits (SWP 3: 914-915). Formal legal accusations ensued against the tormentors, whom the afflicted were able to identify by spectral shapes resembling their physical appearance. This testimony was known as spectral evidence.<sup>27</sup> The first accused was Tituba,<sup>28</sup> a slave in the Parris household, followed by two other neighborhood women, Sarah Good (38) and Sarah Osborne (49).<sup>29</sup> As events unfolded, ministers and others who came to the Salem Village parsonage to observe the afflicted girls also concluded their symptoms to be the result of witchcraft, though a group of ministers urged caution in taking legal action and advised the Reverend Parris to “sit still and wait upon the Providence of God, to see what time might discover” (Hale Modest Enquiry 23). Later, some would write about what they had first witnessed. The Reverend John Hale of Beverley, an eyewitness to events, described the girls’ symptoms:

In the latter end of the year 1691,<sup>30</sup> Mr. Samuel Paris, Pastor of the Church in Salem-Village, had a Daughter of Nine and a Niece of about Eleven years of Age, sadly Afflicted of they knew not what Distempers . . . .

These children were bitten and pinched by invisible agents; their arms, necks, and backs turned this way and that way, and returned back again, so as it was impossible for them to do of themselves, and beyond the power of any Epileptick Fits, or natural Disease to effect. Sometimes they were taken dumb, their mouths stopped, their throats choaked, their limbs

wracked and tormented so as might move an heart of stone, to sympathize with them, with bowels of compassion for them. I will not enlarge in the description of their cruel Sufferings, because they were in all things afflicted as bad as John Goodwins Children at Boston, in the year 1689.

(A Modest Inquiry in Burr Narratives 413)

Everyone in the area around Salem and Boston knew of the bewitchment of the children of Boston mason John Goodwin. Cotton Mather had been directly involved in the case and had written a famous account, Memorable Providences Relating to Witchcrafts and Possessions, published first in Boston (1689) then in London (1691), about the Goodwin children's bewitchment by Mary Glover, the mother of the Goodwins' cleaning woman. Some laundry had gone missing in the Goodwin household, and the eldest child, 13-year-old Martha Goodwin, questioned the washerwoman, fearing she had stolen it. When the washerwoman's mother, in her daughter's defense, used abusive language against Martha, the girl's health suddenly deteriorated and she became bothered by strange fits, assessed "beyond those that Attend an Epilepsy, or a Catalepsy, or those they call diseases of astonishment" (Mather, Memorable Providences in Burr Narratives 101). Before long, one of Martha's sisters and two brothers also came down with strange afflictions. An eminent Boston physician, Thomas Oakes, examined the children and diagnosed the cause of their distempers as witchcraft. Mather visited the Goodwin children repeatedly and finally took Martha Goodwin into his home in an attempt to effect a cure, eventually succeeding. In the mean time, Mary Glover was hanged for witchcraft. The Goodwin children and Mather's Memorable Providences had

taught everyone in the region what witchcraft looked like. Mather's book had also showed a proper way to treat bewitchment.

The Rev. John Hale was not the only eyewitness to give an account of the Salem Village girls' extraordinary behavior. Robert Calef, in More Wonders of the Invisible World (London, 1700), ridiculing the view of witchcraft taken by the judges in 1692 and Cotton Mather in his 1692 Wonders, describes the girls' actions more skeptically. He also provides some further insight into their "fits":

It was the latter end of February 1691, when divers young Persons belonging to Mr. Parris's Family and one or more of the Neighbourhood, began to Act, after a strange and unusual manner, viz. as by getting into Holes, and creeping under Chairs and Stools, and to use sundry odd Postures and Antick Gestures, uttering foolish, ridiculous Speeches, which neither they themselves nor any others could make sense of; the Physicians that were called could assign no reason for this; but it seems one of them, having recourse to the old shift, told them he was afraid they were Bewitched[.] (Burr, Narratives 341-342)

"Bewitched" was not exactly the term the physician—perhaps Griggs—had used, however. He said they were "under an evil hand," incorporating a metonym for the demonic forces, but perhaps obliquely referring to the evil hand of another person. Griggs's choice of words raises the question: if he meant bewitchment, why didn't he just say bewitchment? Could Griggs have alluded to the hand of the Reverend Samuel Parris? Were not two of the afflicted girls being raised under his tutelage? Before long, one of

Dr. Griggs's charges, his wife's niece, Elizabeth Hubbard, also became afflicted. Griggs might have known more than he said.

Deodat Lawson also describes his visit to Reverend Parris's home and the actions of Abigail Williams, Parris's "niece,"<sup>31</sup> on March 19, 1692.

in the beginning of the Evening, I went to give Mr. P. a visit. When I was there, his Kins-woman, Abigail Williams, (about 12 years of age,) had a grievous fit; she was at first hurried with Violence to and fro in the room, (though Mus. Ingerson endeavoured to hold her,) sometimes making as if she would fly, stretching up her arms as high as she could and crying "Whish, Whish, Whish!" several times; Presently after she said there was Goodw. N. [Goodwife Rebecca Nurse] and said, "Do you not see her? Why there she stands!" And the said Goodw. N. offered her The Book, but she was resolved she would not take it, saying Often, "I wont, I wont, I wont, take it, I do not know what Book it is: I am sure it is none of Gods Book, it is the Divel's Book, for ought I know." After that, she run to the Fire, and begun to throw Fire Brands, about the house; and run against the Back, as if she would run up Chimney, and, as they said, she had attempted to go into the Fire in other Fits. (Burr Narratives 153-54)

We cannot know Abigail's exact mental state, but it does seem more than coincidental for whoever might want to foment a witchcraft outbreak that just when the Reverend Lawson came to visit, Abigail would be seen fending off the devil. On one level Abigail's performance seems contrived. Abigail is tempted to sign the devil's book

but still defends God's word as righteous. She is summoned by Satan while keeping one foot upon the solid rock. Abigail's outburst against Rebecca Nurse's specter seems glib, pat, and contrived, but contrived by whom? Abigail's other actions such as running into the fire seem to mimic those displayed by the Goodwin children three years earlier.

However, throwing firebrands about a wooden house involves excessive risks just to feign the symptoms of bewitchment. If she was making a point, it must have been an important one to risk burning the house down. Children have been burned to death simply by getting too close to the hearth and catching their clothes on fire. On one level, Abigail might have been pretending or acting on cue, but did she really know exactly what she was saying or doing at the time or could she have been out of her head? In yet another account of the initial outbreak, the Reverend Deodat Lawson describes those stricken:

Their motions and Fits are Preternatural, both as to the manner, which is so strange as a well person could not Screw their Body into; and as to the violence also it is preternatural, being much beyond the Ordinary force of the same person when they are in their right mind. (Burr Narratives 162)

In writing of Salem's afflicted, Cotton Mather declared that "the Houses of the Good People there, are fill'd with the doleful Shrieks of their Children and Servants, Tormented by Invisible Hands, with Tortures altogether preternatural" (WIW [xiii]). Obviously, Mather thought at least some of the afflictions were not a hoax. Even though judge Samuel Sewall had repented publicly of his part in the witchcraft trials on January 14, 1697, five years after the Salem outbreak, Mather always insisted on the validity of the victims' bewitchment. In 1697 he wrote,

The afflicted Wretches were horribly *Distorted* and *Convulsed*; they were Pinched Black and Blew; *Pins* would be run everywhere in their Flesh; they would be *scalded* until they had *Blisters* raised on them; and a thousand other things before Hundreds of Witnesses were done unto them, evidently *Præternatural* . . . . (Pietas in Patriam 69)

Thirty years later, in his “Triparadisus,” Cotton Mather still insisted that the devil had been let loose in the 1690s.<sup>32</sup> Eager to show to show that their symptoms were more than imaginary, Mather insists some were tangibly real. All his life he maintained that the afflictions of many of those at Salem were more than sheer nonsense or deception. Mather recalls what many of the afflicted had actually claimed to see—a notion residing in the popular imagination—a guise of the devil as an Indian.

The People that were *infected* and *infested* with *Dæmons* . . . arrived unto such a *Refining Alteration* upon their Eyes, that they could see their Tormentors; they saw a *Devil* of a little stature, and of a Tawny *Colour*, attended still with *Spectres*, that appeared in more Humane Circumstances. (Pietas in Patriam 69)

The devil is often portrayed in English witchcraft narratives as a “black man,”<sup>33</sup> but in New England the devil or black man frequently takes on the appearance of an Indian. In Wonders of the Invisible World Cotton Mather made a stark identification between the two. Noting that the “*Black man*” is the name the “Witches call the Devil,” he adds that “they generally say he resembles an *Indian*” (100). Drawing attention to the ties between Satan and the Indians, Mather was voicing belief in an alliance between them, supported

by the millennialist views of Joseph Mede, who claimed the aboriginal Americans, as minions of Gog and Magog, were to rise up against the saved nations at the final Battle of Armageddon at the end of the millennium (Smolinski “The Bang or the Whimper” Trip paradisus 41). The idea of an alliance between the devil and Indians also had widespread popular support in New England. The word black is frequently used to describe the appearance of Indians. For example, the accused Salem Village witch Sarah Osborne claimed that “shee was frighted one time in her sleep and either saw or dreamed that shee saw a thing like an indian all black which did pinch her in her neck and pulled her by the back part of her head to the dore of the house” (SWP 2: 611). Cotton Mather’s bewitched charge Mercy Short described “A Short and a Black Man” . . . “not of a Negro, but of A Tawney, or and Indian coulour; he wore an high-crowned Hat, with strait Hair; and had one Cloven-Foot” (Burr Narratives 261).

Even in Salem when the devil was described as a black man, it often meant what we would call tawny.<sup>34</sup> That many of the bewitched would see the devil as an Indian was not unusual, because the people of Massachusetts were currently engaged in a war against the French and Indians on the Maine frontier and were told repeatedly by their ministers that both the Indians and the “Papist” French were in league with Satan. Like so much that is ambiguous in Mather’s writings about witchcraft, his description above of the altered eyes of the tormented can be taken in two ways: primarily, that the possessed had gained through their ordeal the ability of second sight—actually seeing the invisible world. Mather’s description also suggests perhaps that the physical appearance of the

victims' eyes may have been altered in some way, perhaps due to mydriasis, or enlarged pupils, a common symptom of atropine ingestion.

As Mather probably knew, some plants within the solanaceae, or nightshade family, are capable of causing two types of “alteration of the eyes”: spiritual and physical. One of these plants, Atropa belladonna, or deadly nightshade, gets part of its name from women in Italy who used the juice of the plant to dilate their pupils and make their eyes appear larger, hence the name, *bella donna*, or beautiful woman. Belladonna, along with other plants of the nightshade family like mandrake, henbane, and datura are believed to have been an ingredient in witch ointment, spread on the skin by certain individuals to produce vivid dreams, magical flights of fancy, or trance-like states. The journey produced by the substance seemed so real that some have been unable to distinguish whether such flights actually occurred or were imaginary. Whether these flights took place in the body, or the imagination, or both, also became a point of controversy within Church doctrine in the Middle Ages.<sup>35</sup> English Royal Society confrere, Church of England clergyman, and demonologist Joseph Glanvill (1636-1680)<sup>36</sup> writes about the use of such flying oil among witches in Sadducismus Triumphatus (London, 1681) saying, “their Foreheads are anointed with greenish Oyl that they have from the Spirit which smells raw. [Then] [t]hey for the most part are carried in the Air” (151). The popular idea of the witch riding on a broomstick is thought to originate from women who would rub witches' ointment on the end of a broomstick and insert it into the vagina where the substance was easily absorbed into the bloodstream through the vaginal membranes. These drug-induced flights are thought to be a major



cause in the idea of copulating with the devil and causing flight to the witches' Sabbath (Harner "Hallucinogens" 125-50; Sidky 42, 202-11 ff.). Historian Carlo Ginsburg claims that details of the witches' Sabbath may have been the invention of demonologists, based on preexisting folk beliefs involving imaginary flight enabled by the use of hallucinogenic substances (see Ecstasies 296-307). Such substances could easily be used to induce the symptoms of bewitchment.

Hallucinogenic substances not only served as vehicles to witch meetings but also opened the eyes to the invisible world of demons and spirits generally. Since the anticholinergic alkaloids responsible for such hallucinations are also very toxic, certain unwanted symptoms might also appear, like thirst, dry mouth, fever, red skin, dizziness, urinary retention, blurred vision, dilated pupils, rapid heartbeat, nausea, vomiting, decrease of short-term memory and recall, hallucinations, convulsions, delirium, coma, and death. By generating the symptoms listed above, along with spectral sight and a sense of transvection across vast distances, the effects of anticholinergic alkaloids contained in nightshades might easily be mistaken for bewitchment ("Jimsonweed").

Chadwick Hansen, author of Witchcraft At Salem, succinctly summarizes the "fits" the girls experienced. He gathered his evidence from a variety of accounts, including court records. Symptoms included "temporary loss of hearing, speech, and sight; loss of memory, so that some of the girls could not recall what had happened to them in their fits; a choking sensation in the throat; loss of appetite. Later came terrifying hallucinations" (1). Hansen's list coincides with the major symptoms of ingestion of tropane alkaloids found in plants of the nightshade family.

Two facets of the girl's behavior do not add up to mere imposture. First, the girls were said and thought by many to have exhibited symptoms beyond their ability to mimic. Second, witchcraft was a capital offence. Even if the girls were mimicking their symptoms—and often they seem to be—no explanation exists as to why they would go to such extraordinary lengths to deceive when the penalty, according to the famous barrister Michael Dalton,<sup>37</sup> for “bearing FALSE-WITNESSE wittingly and . . . of purpose to take away a man's life” was hanging.<sup>38</sup> The afflicted frequently seem to have been willing players in some sort of deception, however.

Writing in 1870, Samuel Fowler debunks the modern tendency of writers on Salem to attribute everything that happened to fraud and deception. Fowler writes that “No man of any reputation that lived in that generation, and saw what transpired at Salem Village and its vicinity, doubted that there was some influence then exerted which could not be explained by the known laws of matter or mind” (“Introduction” 382 ). Perhaps the initial afflictions, at least, did have an empirical basis: The “afflicted” girls who were the original and by far the most frequent and important accusers could have been surreptitiously poisoned intentionally with a powerful hallucinogen to make them believe they had been bewitched. They were then coached into making accusations both during their fits and afterwards.

On Sunday, March 20, when Reverend Deodat Lawson came to preach in Salem Village, Abigail Williams, Ann Putnam, Mary Walcott, Mercy Lewis, and Elizabeth Hubbard were present and exhibiting “sore fits” (Lawson in Burr Narratives). It was the ideal place and time to stage fits to show members of the congregation who hadn't yet

witnessed their afflictions that they were truly bewitched. Martha Corey, a member of Parris's own congregation, had been indicted, and it was now time to expose her in church: the one place a church member had refuge (Robbins 143). What Abigail did then could have been beyond her control. She seemed especially distracted and verbally belligerent. Her behavior shows genuine aggression, especially considering that everyone knew what the minister was going to do next. After a Psalm was sung she cried out to Lawson, "Now stand up and name your text" (Lawson in Burr Narratives 154). After Lawson read the text, Abigail uttered audibly to the minister at the pulpit before the congregation, "It is a long text" (154). Perhaps she was acting out what she had often longed to perform through uncomfortable and boring church services, but why was she acting up at this time? Did time seem like an eternity to Abigail?

The exact ambience in a village Congregational church of the seventeenth century, where the men sat apart from the women, is now unknown, but to interrupt a minister belligerently in the midst of church services even today would seem an audacious act. People today might suspect mental disturbance or drugs. If others joined in creating the disturbance, as happened that day in Salem, people today might suspect collusion and drugs. What might have lowered the threshold of Abigail's normal inhibitions or have spurred her to act out was that she had been encouraged by someone to do so. At the afternoon service, when Rev. Lawson referred to his doctrine, Abigail said to him, "I know no Doctrine you had, If you did name one, I have forgot it" (154). Perhaps she was belligerently telling the truth. Perhaps she remembered nothing about it.

During Lawson's Sunday afternoon sermon, Goodwife Martha Corey, against whom the Putnams had, on Saturday, just filed a complaint for witchcraft, was again attending the service at the meetinghouse. Abigail Williams accused Corey's specter of having a familiar: "Look where Goodwife Cory Sits on the Beam suckling her Yellow bird betwixt her fingers." With Abigail in the lead, Ann Putnam, daughter of Thomas Putnam, Jr., chimed in, confirming the presence of the spectral yellow bird, adding that it sat on Martha Corey's hat as it "hung on a pin in the pulpit" (Lawson in Burr Narratives 154). Either by contrivance or shared perception, both seem to have witnessed the same yellow bird. The girls were continuing the "yellow bird" motif begun by Tituba at her examination and confession three weeks earlier on March 1 (see SWP 3: 749, 751-52). From Lawson's account, at least, Abigail on this occasion appears to have been the most disruptive. It seems possible that Samuel Parris was pulling the strings behind this disruption since it was led by his niece and happened in his church. Both he and Thomas Putnam could have colluded by secretly administering a substance to both girls known to cause strange symptoms and behavior so Lawson and the entire congregation could witness the effects.

Could Abigail have actually thought she had seen Martha Corey's specter on the beam sucking a yellow bird between her fingers? She would, perhaps, if she had believed Tituba's confession of March 7, sensed that her own afflictions were real, and had been hallucinating. If she was, it seems not unlikely that she would envision the same specter of Martha Corey and the same yellow bird described by Tituba (cited in SWP III: 749, 751-52). But can people "choose" their hallucinations or can they be "chosen" for them?

H. Sidky points out that what one experiences on a hallucinogen is “subject to a wide variety of extra-pharmacological variables.” The “cultural input” is at least as important in determining the content of the subjective experience as is the hallucinatory state itself created by the drug. Sidky concludes, “It would be expected, then, that chemical psychosis expresses itself in accordance with the socio-cultural and symbolic frame of reference of the person undergoing such an experience” (177). Living in a culture that believed in and expected to see witches’ specters would likely cause people to hallucinate witches if their minds were in a hallucinatory state. They would have seen what they expected to see. If Abigail were expecting (or expected by others) to see Corey’s apparition and Tituba’s yellow bird at the same time she was hallucinating, could she have “seen” them? It is likely she was expected to see them.

Were some of the other accusers at Salem hallucinating? Were they also expecting to see witches with yellow birds? Were they just lying? If they were hallucinating it is probable they would have hallucinated witches and demons. In a society that considered very real what we today identify as a hallucination, such spectral sightings must have been more facile and accepted and, therefore, more prevalent than they are today, especially if they were brought on without the subjects’ knowledge by a powerful hallucinogen.

Twelve-year-old Ann Putnam, Jr., seems to have been the third girl to come down with fits on Thursday, the 25<sup>th</sup> of February, when she thought Sarah Good was pinching her and trying to make her to “sign the book.” Two days later, the fourth girl to experience bewitchment was Elizabeth Hubbard. Her symptoms began to manifest

themselves on February 27 when Elizabeth returned home from an errand to John Proctor's, where her friend Mary Warren lived, a distance of a little over three miles as the nearest road wound. Crossing the village on her way home from Dr. Griggs's house, she thought she was being stalked by a wolf who (Elizabeth thought) was really Sarah Good. These four afflicted were soon joined by two other young women from Thomas Putnam's household, Mercy Lewis, 19, and Mary Walcott, 18. Of the six original girls to make accusations, three were orphans living as servants in the homes of people not their parents.

Were the girls and women counterfeiting? Were their fits real? Were their fits accompanied by true physical symptoms and hallucinations, or were they just the result of "hysteria," now termed conversion disorder? Even if some of the symptoms were affected, did the girls actually have something to be hysterical about? Did they actually "see," "hear," and "feel," or think they heard, saw, and felt the touch of specters? General agreement exists among most scholars on Salem that a combination of fraud and uncontrollable delusion existed,<sup>39</sup> that the symptoms may have been by turns both genuine and imitated. Perhaps these "fits" were real at times and feigned at others, timed for inflicting the most damage on the accused. Did the girls sometimes really think themselves bewitched? If so, did they model their simulated behavior on the recall of sensations experienced or suppositions made while experiencing actual fits? A scenario involving shammed fits based on real ones seems especially likely when it became necessary to reproduce evidence, as during court proceedings in which the girls often testified while exhibiting fits in tandem and on cue. Exhibiting abundant evidence of

contrivance, several girls would join together in court at once to mimic the actions of the accused on the witness stand, as if their actions were being controlled by the devil's accomplice. According to Norman Gevitz, however, despite evidence of dissembling, "the vivid demonstrations of fitful agony by the Salem Village girls convinced most observers that whatever the cause of their distempers, their illnesses were quite real" (18). Even to feign hallucinations for a long period of time might involve a type of mental illness, depending upon the source of the dissemblance. If we suppose some of their fits actually involved symptoms beyond their control, what would have caused these girls and women to suffer distressing mental and physical afflictions judged beyond their ability to dissemble, including visual, tactile, and auditory hallucinations?

Almost all scholars agree that whatever else caused the witchcraft outbreak in Salem, there certainly was fraud. Evidence of fraud should lead investigators to search for other abuses. In search of who or what may have unleashed the demonic forces and caused them to erupt and continue to break out so forcefully in Salem, we must look for a motive, means, and opportunity. As a result of what began in Salem Village, 200 people were accused, at least 150 were jailed, 20 were executed, and four died in prison. Many were intimidated into confessing. More people were executed in Salem for witchcraft than all the people who had been executed in New England for witchcraft combined since its colonization. Whatever drove such a large-scale witch hunt forward must have seemed to some significant and real.

Besides the accused, the accusers also were tormented, especially the half-dozen or so core group including Elizabeth Parris, Abigail Williams, Ann Putnam, Jr., Elizabeth

Hubbard, Mercy Lewis, and Mary Walcott. Even if the accusations were simply the result of fraud, what could make adolescent girls deliberately and willfully replicate symptoms of bewitchment and make allegations based on what they had either heard, read about, or experienced for which perpetrators were known to be hanged?

A partial answer to the question about motives can be given if we look at the dynamics of spectral—or any other—accusations. Once the accusers made a serious accusation that was a lie, they had to keep lying to avoid exposing themselves. The same principle is true when they were telling the truth. Once they made an accusation, whether it was true or false, they had to make their story and its presentation appear consistent with their claims. Convincing others with spectral evidence was especially difficult, though, because there was little or no physical evidence upon which to base claims: specters are by definition nonphysical and are usually experienced only by their victims at certain times and places. They are seldom seen by people other than the ones being tormented, those who are the accusers.

If those testifying had truly experienced what they believed was bewitchment, they may well have experienced uncontrollable fear or panic afterwards. In court, however, they may not have been under the direct physical influence of what had originally caused the bewitchment. Testifying about a spectral attack some time in the past begs the question, “Who is afflicting you now?” Even if they had experienced spectral assault in the recent past, but were not at the moment they were testifying, and if they told the truth, they would have had to answer, “They are not here right now” or “They are gone.” Such statements might not hold much sway in court—people might not



believed them. If someone's life was at stake, the judge, jury, or courtroom audience may have decided that the specter had been an anomaly, possibly an imaginary phenomenon; or worse, there might not actually have been a specter at all. The accusers could just be making it up. They might have to stretch the truth sometimes by reliving the symptoms of bewitchment to convince the judge and jury to convict the accused tormentor. If the female accusers at Salem knew from the beginning that they were lying about the specters, they would have already dealt with lying. But if they were convinced they had really been tormented by specters, they might do whatever was necessary to end the affliction. They would obtain all the help they could in fighting the devil.

Nobody believes in an absent specter. To prove a specter existed and obtain a conviction, regardless of their motivation, the girls might have had to simulate spectral torment in the presence of witnesses such as the judge and jury. Ironically, the only way to thwart Satan might have been to use Satan's own method: deception.

They might have addressed the issue of the absent specter by imagining that their encounters with the specters were ongoing—happening at the moment the accusers were testifying. The specter that can be really convincing is the one who manifests itself in court. There was, therefore, a built-in imperative to create physical evidence in support of spectral accusations that the girls needed to fulfill. How could anyone do that except by producing—or in the case of one who is telling the truth about a specter in the past—reproducing the physical effects? Since most people in 1692 believed in specters, showing physical evidence might not have been too difficult. That is exactly what the girls and those who manipulated them did. They often feigned affliction, pretending a

witch tormented them while they were testifying. That does not mean they were never afflicted. It just means it might not have been right then. All this discussion might seem like a silly exercise in logic, but the imperative to produce tangible as well as imaginary evidence must lie at the center of why the girls made such a show of their accusations in court.

Since Puritans like most in the seventeenth century were superstitious, seeing evidence of a specter actually carried more weight than other types of evidence. Even if spectral evidence contained an element of doubt, still it was doubt and not total disbelief. Spectral evidence gave a supernatural dimension linking evidence that might otherwise have seemed just coincidental.

Nineteenth-century writer Charles W. Upham poses the central question of fraud versus hysteria at the Salem trials as poignantly and as completely as any writer on the subject of Salem witchcraft:

It is almost beyond belief that they [the initial female accusers] were wholly actuated by deliberate and cold-blooded malignity. Their crime would, in that view, have been without a parallel in monstrosity of wickedness, and beyond what can be imagined of the guiltiest and most depraved natures. For myself, I am unable to determine how much may be attributed to credulity, hallucination, and the delirium of excitement, or to deliberate malice and falsehood. There is too much evidence of guile and conspiracy to attribute all their actions and declarations to delusion; and their conduct throughout was stamped with a bold assurance and

audacious bearing. With one or two slight and momentary exceptions, there was a total absence of compunction of commiseration, and a reckless disregard of the agonies and destruction they were scattering around them. (Salem Witchcraft 2: 4)<sup>40</sup>

Bold assurance and an audacious bearing bespeaks conviction. Upham perceives another important component—conspiracy: “There is reason to fear, that there were some behind them giving direction to the accusations and managing the frightful machinery, all the way through” (Salem Witchcraft 2: 390). Upham elaborates on the point that events did not seem to be occurring randomly:

As further proof that the girls were under the guidance of older heads, it is obvious, that there was, in the order of the proceedings, a skilful arrangement of times, sequences, and concurrents, that cannot be ascribed to them. No novelist or dramatist ever laid his plot deeper, distributed his characters more artistically, or conducted more methodically the progress of his story. (Salem Witchcraft 2: 390)

Because witchcraft was a capital offence, executions and ruined lives were the logical outcome of the girls’ claims. What outcome could be worth the risk of getting innocent people executed at the risk of being hanged for bearing false witness or of damning one’s soul? Cynical adults might be capable of such actions, but how would so many very young and naïve adolescents lacking a strong motive be capable of countenancing such cold-blooded maliciousness without being coerced? If the accusers’ claims were fraudulent, they ran the risk of betrayal by one of their own breaking ranks.

To minimize their pangs of conscience, the accusers—or most of them—would have to convince themselves they were telling the truth or that the end justified the means. Who or what—other than folk beliefs in demons, witches, and malefic magic in tandem with the Bible’s teachings about witchcraft—could be ultimately responsible for such accusations?<sup>41</sup> To shed fresh light on these issues, we must determine motives, means, and opportunities as they emerge from reconstructing the chronology of the events. Who might have benefited from accusing others of witchcraft? Why would they have done it? When, where, and how did these initial fits and accusations take place? Who was present or absent? Who had the desire, know-how, and ability to create or display the manifestations of bewitchment? If we treat Salem Village as a crime scene, and the fits and accusations as possible crimes or the result of crimes, we can possibly discover the motives behind the accusations. At least two types of crime could be present: one involving the generation of symptoms in the afflicted (possible fraud or abuse) and the other involving false accusations against supposed witches resulting in their jailing and executions.

Examining how and where the symptoms and the accusations got started and who was actually present helps pinpoint the instigation behind the outbreak. The fits of the first accusers, Elizabeth Parris, 9, and Abigail Williams, 11 (both living in the home of the Reverend Samuel Parris) began around January 20, 1691/2 and lasted in the case of Abigail Williams until at least August when George Burroughs was tried and executed. Abigail then disappeared from the role of active accuser. Betty’s accusations ceased much sooner, but hers is a special case and we will look at it again. Since we can assume

that most of the claims were false in the sense that the accused were not responsible for the girls' afflictions through magical means, who would have benefited from making accusations? Parris's charges, Elizabeth and Abigail, would seem to have had little cause to name anyone—unless they had other motives like fear. Even then, how would they have known whom to name? Most of the other, older girls, Mercy Lewis, Mary Walcott, Elizabeth Hubbard, and later Mary Warren, who weren't even living with their parents, had little or nothing to gain from blaming anyone except a chance for the weakest in the village suddenly to gain tremendous power over others, especially respected members of the community. The girls certainly did become notorious by claiming second sight and the ability to identify witches. If they were creating a witch hunt just to gain recognition and power, they would not have believed their own claims. Lacking belief in their own claims would have made them vulnerable and more likely to openly admit their fraud. Would the chance of increased celebrity based on completely false claims have been worth the risk of infamy, a guilty conscience, and possible prosecution for murder? On August 25, 1706 Ann Putnam, Jr. joined the church at Salem Village and made an apology for her actions fourteen years earlier in front of the entire congregation. What she said included the following:

I justly fear I have been instrumental, with others, though ignorantly and unwittingly, to bringing upon myself and this land the guilt of innocent blood; though what was said or done by me against any person I can truly and uprightly say, before God and man, I did it not out of any anger, malice, or ill-will to any person, for I had no such thing against one of

them; but what I did was ignorantly, being deluded by Satan. (Upham  
Salem Witchcraft 2: 510).

If Ann had been deluded by others into truly believing herself bewitched, as might have occurred by being dosed with a delirium-producing hallucinogen, for instance, she might have made such an admission as the one above. Why would she have wanted to declare her innocence before God and join the church if it were simply to harbor another lie? Eliminating the allure of the performance of evil for its own sake, what could these girls have expected to gain? The first two girls afflicted, Elizabeth and Abigail, exhibited symptoms at least a month before naming anyone. Looking at the circumstances at the beginning of the complaints we find some possible answers to our questions. As Elaine Breslaw sees it,

A major clue to an understanding of what happened, why the Salem experience was unique, and what Tituba's specific role was in this incident, is in the sequence of the early events. It is particularly important to sort out what happened between the end of December and the beginning of March, and to concentrate attention on the week between the witchcake incident and the conclusion of Tituba's testimony a few days later. (Tituba  
 104 )

Perhaps we can find the devil in the details. Either Tituba or her husband John Indian, or both, were involved in the famous witch cake incident.<sup>42</sup> Why did Tituba or John Indian bake the witch cake and what was its significance? It is said they fed it to the dog, either to determine if the witch's evil contained in the girl's urine would afflict the dog or to

expose the witch to further torment after baking her “bewitchment” contained in the girls’ urine in the fire, or both. Torturing the witch’s power contained in the urine of the afflicted was thought to draw out and expose the witch.<sup>43</sup> We never hear about the results of that experiment. Things may have gone well for the dog or maybe not. According to Keith Thomas it was common to “boil, bake, bury, or otherwise deal with, a sample of the victim’s urine.” Once this was done, the witch was supposed to be tormented, usually by being unable to urinate, until she revealed herself (Religion 543-44).

Breslaw concludes that from the end of December until February the girls’ symptoms were limited to “inexplicable pains and sensations” affecting only two girls, Betty Parris and Abigail Williams. After Mary Sibley baked the witch cake on February 25, however, symptoms intensified sharply, involving contorted limbs, convulsions, and hallucinations. By February 27, the afflictions had spread to both Ann Putnam and Elizabeth Hubbard. No formal accusations were made against any alleged witches until February 29 when Elizabeth Parris, Abigail Williams, and Ann Putnam, Jr., named the shapes of Tituba, Sarah Good, and Sarah Osburn as their tormentors. The witch cake, reportedly rye bread baked with the girls’ urine, had no real medicinal power to create the symptoms of witchcraft. The witch cake had only the power to create psychosomatic symptoms—unless it or something else had been laced with a hallucinogen of some kind and the girls had drunk or eaten it.

Whatever was intended, the countermagic performed in baking the witch cake worked. The witches began to reveal themselves to the newly acquired spectral sight of the afflicted. The witch cake signaled serious new developments, however, for the girls’

torments increased and they began to see, hear, feel, and identify specters. The intensification of the girls' afflictions following the witch cake incident provides circumstantial evidence that a witch cake could have been either deployed or exploited as a red herring to divert attention from what was secretly occurring. It may have been that the witch cake incident was timed to accompany an increase in whatever was causing the girls afflictions.

On March 27, 1692, Samuel Parris publicly reprimanded his church member Mary Sibley before the congregation for instructing his servant John Indian to bake the witch cake. Parris described to his congregation the preternatural vexation the incident triggered:

Nay it never broke forth to any considerable light, untill Diabolical means was used by the making of a Cake by my Indian man, who had his direction from this our sister Mary Sibly: Since wch Apparitions have been plenty, & exceeding much mischief hath followed.” (Salem Village Church Record March 27, 1692)

Parris made certain that everyone knew the afflictions had increased as a result of this dabbling in magic and quickly blamed the witch cake incident for the increase in frequency and vehemence of the apparitions. Mary Sibley took most of the public blame for baking the witch cake in the beginning, but Parris needed a believable first witch on whom to pin the afflictions of the girls. Mary Sibley, who allegedly gave John Indian or Tituba instructions for baking the witch cake, might have served the purpose, but she was Parris's supporter and a member of his church. Sibley would have been an inadequate



candidate to be charged with witchcraft. Since Tituba or John Indian had baked the witch cake from a recipe supplied by Mary Sibley, Tituba was the perfect choice as a scapegoat. Her gender and ethnicity would have spoken for her guilt just as it did for those writing later about the incident. Apparently, the girls held no one responsible until after the adults became involved in the issue of the witch cake.

Deodat Lawson confirms the chain of events: since Parris's "Indian Man and Woman, made a Cake of Rye Meal and the Childrens water, baked it in the Ashes, and gave it to a Dog . . . they have discovered, and seen particular persons hurting of them" ("Brief and True Narrative" in Burr Narratives 162-63). Perhaps Lawson wanted to emphasize the cake's supernatural and demonic impact on the girls to create a pretext for why the girls saw spectral forms of certain people afflicting them.

As Elaine Breslaw has pointed out, at the time of the witch cake on February 25 the girls' symptoms changed from "inexplicable pains and sensations" affecting only Elizabeth Parris, Abigail Williams, Ann Putnam, Jr., and Elizabeth Hubbard to "some of the more bizarre physical symptoms that involved disjointed limbs, choking sensations, convulsions, and possible hallucinations" (Breslaw 105). That day, the Reverend and Mrs. Parris had been out to a neighboring town to attend Thursday Lecture and came home to find the girls' condition had worsened. Now Betty Parris and Abigail Williams could actually see the specters tormenting them. On that same day Ann Putnam, daughter of Thomas Putnam, and Elizabeth Hubbard, the great niece of Dr. Griggs's wife, also became afflicted.<sup>44</sup> Oddly, Betty Parris's older brother Thomas, 11, and sister Susannah, 5, both living at the parsonage with Betty and Abigail, were spared (Roach 18-19; Gragg

32, 36 n. 40). Perhaps Thomas was spared because Parris would not have wanted to risk hurting his son and heir, and the testimony of five-year-old Susannah might have been too unpredictable or unreliable to be useful.

That the symptoms of Abigail Williams and Betty Parris markedly worsened on the same day as the witch cake seems more a coincidence than a coordinated effort of some kind. That Reverend and Mrs. Parris happened to be absent to a neighboring town on Lecture Day when the witch cake was baked and let loose the devil simultaneously in three locations—including two miles to the east and two miles to the northwest of the Parris parsonage—also seems curious. Actually, another kind of “witch cake” may have been “baked” that day. The “witch cake,” a form of countermagic, could have just been a cover-up for what actually coincided that day: lacing the girls’ food or drink with some substance causing delirium and hallucinations. It would not necessarily have been a cake, but something the girls ate or drank laced with a hallucinogen—possibly placed there by Parris—and designed to accompany the witch cake. For instance, powdered jimson weed seeds, which are strongly hallucinogenic, would be indistinguishable in whole rye meal or flour, and anything made with the rye laced with jimson weed in some form would have caused symptoms in anyone who ate it (including the dog). Jimson weed or datura stramonium, also known as “Angel Trumpet,” “Devil’s Apple,” and “Thornapple,” can easily be administered by drying the leaves, flowers, or root and crushing them into powder or by parching and grinding the seeds which can then be hidden in food or drink.<sup>45</sup> The witch cake incident was probably not the first time the girls were deliberately exposed to some level of datura stramonium poisoning since Parris had

probably already begun experimenting with the substance on the girls, who complained of vague afflictions for more than a month prior to the witch cake.

It might have seemed providential somehow to Samuel Parris that the use of a cake made of wholesome rye grain could be used to mask another kind of “bad” seed. For Parris especially, bringing about a witch hunt had the potential to strengthen his own position and that of his agrarian supporters relative to the faction that opposed him. By showing that witchcraft really existed and that his views and those of the farmers were more valid than the secular and material interests of Salem Town, Parris believed he could more readily defeat those in his congregation who had made his position precarious. He could also use his strengthened position to threaten those who opposed him with the specter of witchcraft accusations.

Beginning with Charles Upham in the nineteenth century, tradition has blamed Tituba for initiating the witchcraft outbreak by telling the girls ghost and witch stories, or teaching them magical practices, voodoo rituals and the like, but there is no evidence that she did so. In fact, evidence exonerates Tituba, at least, from blame. After Tituba was jailed, Betty Parris went to live with Stephen Sewall in Salem Town. Perhaps Parris felt he could not trust a nine-year-old with secrets. Strangely, after Betty left the Parris household there is no record of Betty making any further accusations, and her symptoms soon ceased. Relief did not come to another young girl who stayed in the Parris household, Abigail Williams, however. She remained with Parris, and her symptoms and accusations increased. Since Tituba, along with Good and Osborn, was sent to jail on March 7 and stayed in jail for the remainder of the trials, we can eliminate Tituba as a

suspect for any further source of trouble in Salem Village households. The situation does cause us to look more closely at another person, however: Samuel Parris. Abigail Williams still lived with Parris and still had fits, even though her cousin had moved away and was cured, and Tituba was out of the picture.

Why did Parris send his own daughter away? Could he have done it under pressure, resulting from Cotton Mather's offer to take in some of the afflicted, which he had refused? Mather had cured Martha Goodwin by taking her away from the site of possession in Boston. Could Parris have been afraid that if he didn't act to send one of the girls away, and she got better, someone would point a finger at him? Could it have been that Parris was not willing to risk damaging his own son or daughters but was willing to victimize his orphaned "neice" to carry out his own ends to arouse an epidemic of witchcraft to make Salem Villagers turn to him, the minister, for guidance, spiritual support and assistance in time of crisis?

It is revealing that of the eight girls responsible for most of the accusations, two, Betty Parris and Abigail Williams, came from Samuel Parris's house; three, Ann Putnam, Mercy Lewis, and Mary Walcott, lived with Thomas Putnam. Mary Walcott's mother was dead, and her father, Jonathan Walcott, and stepmother Deliverance [Putnam] Walcott, sister of Thomas Putnam, Jr., lived next door to the Reverend Samuel Parris. Elizabeth Hubbard, another of the bewitched, lived with Dr. Griggs and his wife, Elizabeth's great aunt. Of these eight girls, two, Mercy Lewis and Elizabeth Hubbard, were orphans, and only two (Ann Putnam, Jr. and Betty Parris) lived with their parents.

All the parental guardians of the main accusers were supporters of what was known as the Parris faction in Salem Village.

In determining probable suspects at Salem Village, we must consider chronology and logistics. Reverend Samuel Parris, Thomas Putnam, and Dr. William Griggs—all had ample opportunities for influencing the females in their households. Parris also exhibited megalomaniacal tendencies in identifying himself with Christ, accompanied by a sense of persecution and entitlement. Thomas Putnam harbored smoldering rage and had an axe to grind with members of his own extended family. Of the first three male heads-of-household from which initial fits and accusations arose, we have a minister, the major farmer in the village and supplier of grain and other foodstuffs, and an elderly doctor newly arrived in Salem Village in need of patients. The witchcraft epidemic broke out at the same time in these three households on February 29.

It seems telling that the first sets of accusations of witchcraft against others came from the households of those who were essentially allies in a personal and class power struggle. It is also revealing that the accusations in both households were made by girls. To prove that witchcraft existed was to confirm that the old Puritan interpretation was right and that new, more skeptical viewpoints were wrong. It would be necessary for Parris and Putnam to resort to methods of witchcraft to demonstrate its efficacy.

The potential among these heads-of-households for benefiting in some way from a witchcraft epidemic causes us to look for the appearance of fraud. In looking at possible sources supplying evidence of fraud, we can turn to Cotton Mather's Wonders of the Invisible World. Significantly, Mather chose not to address the origin of the outbreak. He

knew too much about cause and effect to have inadvertently ignored the situation, however. Mather often tells us more by what he doesn't reveal than by what he does; his silence is often a form of revelation.

There are notable absences in Mather's account of the witchcraft episode of 1692: first is the utter lack of specifics in Wonders as to when, where, or how the initial accusations began. Neither those initially accused—Tituba Sarah Good, Sarah Osborne—nor the initial accusers—Samuel Parris, Abigail Williams, Elizabeth Parris, and Elizabeth Hubbard—is ever mentioned. Mather also ignores the more controversial trials and focuses mainly on later, more sensational, less controversial ones, those that depended less than others upon spectral evidence and more upon the accused person's reputedly bad character.<sup>46</sup> It was some of the most controversial trials, like those of Rebecca Nurse and her sisters Sarah Cloyce and Mary Easty, that most reveal the elements of over-zealous spectral evidence and foul play, and these Mather omits.

Deodat Lawson's 10-page account of part of that initial phase of fits and accusations, partially quoted above, was also published in Boston in 1692, entitled A Brief and True Narrative of Witchcraft at Salem Village. Both the Boston and first London editions of Mather's Wonders were post-dated 1693. Lawson's account was published again in London in 1693.<sup>47</sup> No other account describing the fits of the initial afflicted, telling where and how the accusations began, was published until seven years after the trials had ended. These first two accounts, Mather's and Lawson's, had been sympathetic to the trials and the truth of witchcraft. Then in 1700, Cotton Mather's skeptical nemesis Robert Calef published his More Wonders of the Invisible World, and

in 1702 John Hale published his tortured Inquiry into the Nature of Witchcraft, both dealing with the Salem trials. For seven years or more Lawson's Narrative and Mather's Wonders had been the only accounts of Salem witchcraft appearing in print. We know, however, that people like Thomas Brattle circulated manuscripts even if they were never printed, which doubtless had an effect in shaping opinion. On October 12 Governor Phips put a stop to the printing of "any discourses one way or other" about the trials in an attempt to quiet the disputes. The day before that, however, Lieutenant Governor William Stoughton and justice Samuel Sewall's names were printed at the bottom of a joint statement near the end of Wonders of the Invisible World stamped "Boston Octob. 11" stating that "*at the Direction of His EXCELLENCY the Governour*" the author had written the book and added that "*Upon Perusal thereof, We find the Matters of Fact and Evidence, Truly reported. And a Prospect given, of the, Methods of Conviction, used in the Proceedings of the Court at Salem* (147). Clearly, Mather's book had official sanction. Fuller and more skeptical accounts of the very early part of the episode were not widely available until after 1700—at least eight years after the trials.

It is telling of Wonders of the Invisible World that Mather does not really investigate the thorny details concerning witchcraft and that his work does not include more information about the beginning of the Salem ordeal. Most witchcraft narratives of the time covering trials that resulted in executions narrated how the accusations got started.<sup>48</sup> It would only make good narrative sense to do so. It would also make good scientific sense if the object was to make an empirical case for witchcraft. According to George Lyman Kittredge, a typical case of witchcraft involved maleficium, pure and

simple. It began with what sounded like a threat by a suspected witch and ended with harm being done to goods, animals, or people through supernatural means (Witchcraft 6-8). But unlike Kittredge's "typical case," the first accusations, made against Tituba, Sarah Good, and Sarah Osborne by the initial accusers, Abigail Williams, Elizabeth Parris, Ann Putnam, and Elizabeth Hubbard involved only apparitional sightings and subsequent pinching and tormenting by specters. The testimony against the three women did not involve an initial threat. Perhaps the lack of physical evidence was another reason Cotton Mather was reluctant to tell how the accusations got started.

Cotton Mather's Memorable Providences (1689), on the other hand, had revealed the circumstances around which Martha Goodwin fell ill as a result of the "very bad language" Goody Glover bestowed upon her (Burr Narratives 100-01). In other words, the events related in Memorable Providences began with a physical occurrence. Mather described the beginning of the episode as it proceeded chronologically, incorporating the hanging of Glover in the course of the narrative: the afflictions did not stop with the death of Glover. Another famous case, the 1664 trial related in the anonymous tract A Trial of Witches at the Assizes at Bury St. Edmunds (1682) concerns how the accusations against accused witches Amy Duny and Rose Cullender began with the old woman, Duny, nursing an infant, William Durent, who soon became ill. A Tryal of Witches at the Assizes, which Mather summarizes at length in Wonders just before his accounts of five of the Salem trials, was presided over by Barron of the Exchequer and later Attorney General, the revered Matthew Hale. Both Mather and the Salem judges used the trial to exemplify how a witch trial should be conducted. Mather used it to demonstrate that the



Salem judges had followed authoritative precedent. The anonymous narrator of the 1682 account of the Bury St. Edmunds witches reveals details of the early outbreak of the 1664 events beginning with a threat by Duny followed shortly by the affliction of several people and the death of one. A Tryal then continues its thread of narrative to the bitter end—the conviction and hanging of two witches. Most witchcraft narratives reveal the occasion of the initial outbreak; Mather’s version of what happened at Salem, however, does not.

In Wonders of the Invisible World, Mather records only a précis of the proceedings of five of the Salem trials of some of the most notorious and uncontroversial cases. That omission brings up the point that, as an accurate record of the trials, Mather’s book is woefully inadequate. If we had no record but Mather’s book to tell us about the Salem trials, we would know practically nothing about them. Mather omits fifteen of the twenty capital cases and provides little explanation about how the trials came to be other than that they were the result of general sinning, backsliding, falling away from Grace, and the devil’s uncontrollable fury at the imminence of Christ’s return. Mather believed that the millennium was fast approaching; he expected it to begin in 1697, an imperative which helped to explain Satan’s viciousness against the “first-born” of the English settlements.

Mather distances himself from the beginnings of the Salem witchcraft outbreak. He never mentions the minister at Salem Village, Samuel Parris, in whose home the afflictions and accusations started. Mather refers only once, third hand, to a letter from a “Mr. Putman” (Mather’s misspelling for Putnam, as if he didn’t know who he was),

“written to my Honorable Friend Samuel Sewall” concerning Putnam’s daughter (WIW 145-46). Thomas Putnam had written an account of a dream had by his daughter Ann after Giles Corey had been pressed to death for refusing to enter a plea. The dream involved the appearance of a ghostly servant of Corey’s who claimed Corey had murdered him by pressing him to death with his feet. Thomas Putnam wrote the letter to Sewall following the grizzly and prolonged torture by pressing to death used against Corey to extract his confession, which (ironically) would have saved his life. Corey never confessed. After the public witnessed two days of Corey’s slow suffocation under a pile of stones, the release of this letter was, no doubt, intended to try to dispel public outrage at Corey’s death. Samuel Sewall, who condemned Corey, had been one of the judges on the Court of Oyer and Terminer. That letter was Mather’s only reference to a Putnam. Mather perhaps distanced himself even more by mentioning Putnam in this offhand way than by not mentioning him at all. Even though Ann Putnam made the most accusations, Mather never really discusses her. To anyone who knew about the Salem trials at the time, Mather’s silence in Wonders about the initial phase revealed his ambiguous—if not ambidextrous—presentation of the matter.

This deliberate lacunae of the initial events at Salem in Mather’s account exposes not only the controversy surrounding the trials but also his purpose: He wanted to hide the real causes behind moralizing and chiliastic homilies. Wonders of the Invisible World is pieced together with various sermons he delivered at the time. Mather sought to protect the judges and magistrates by making the case for witchcraft seem as factual as possible. He did not want to inflame the embers of controversy, but to extinguish them. Mather’s

primary aim in Wonders, then, as always, was to relate his own religious ideology by using the witch trials as a medium. Secondly, Mather omitted any account of the beginning of the trials, probably because he knew that episode was the most significant, potentially damning, and controversial portion of the affair and that any description of it would arouse more emotion and controversy. Describing the origins of the accusations might have involved the dangerous task of taking sides, incurring the risk of spawning more public and private debate or rebuttal—perhaps further tainting the judges’ and even Mather’s own reputations. A rehashing of events by as prominent a figure as Mather could have led to further recriminations for the sake of vengeance alone. Mather was wise to avoid the issue if he wanted the conflict to be over, because it was around the figures of Samuel Parris and Thomas Putnam that so much of the controversy swirled that had sparked and fueled the trials. Mather deftly avoided spinning such a wheel-within-a-wheel—as Thomas Putnam had termed it in his April 21 letter to John Hathorne and Jonathan Corwin (SWP 1: 165-66)—especially since two key figures in the trials—Samuel Parris and George Burroughs—were members of his own calling. Mather certainly did not want to protect Burroughs—quite the contrary. Mather singles him out and tries to blot out his name from the scroll of the living by giving him as “G.B.,” initials only. Mather simply did not want the ministerial calling to be tainted by Parris and—especially—Burroughs, since Burroughs had once been pastor of Salem Village’s Congregational church, the same one that Parris now led.

What evidence suggests that Reverend Samuel Parris and those in his circle might have been driven to foment the witchcraft accusations? Parris became the fourth minister

of the church at Salem Village in 1689. The church had been established in 1672 and had a long history of factional dispute. Three ministers, James Bayley (1672-1679), George Burroughs (1680-1683), and Deodat Lawson (1684-1688), all of whom had preceded Parris, left because of factional dispute. George Burroughs, the second pastor at Salem Village, came to be seen by many as the ringleader of the covenant of witches at Salem and was hauled back from his home in Wells, Maine, tried and executed for witchcraft on August 19, 1692. At the end of 1691, just before the girls' afflictions began, Parris's position as pastor of the church in Salem Village also became threatened. Parris was strongly allied with the Putnams, the largest farmers in Salem Village. The members of the Porter faction, allied with the mercantile interests of Salem Town and not with the agrarian interests of Salem Village, opposed the ordination of Reverend Parris as pastor from the beginning. A meeting on October 8, 1691 and a vote by the inhabitants for the village rates committee saw the defeat of five of Parris's supporters and the election of five members opposed to the Parris-Putnam faction. As a result of this shift in power, Parris was on the verge of losing his job. This election brought into power people allied with those whose interests lay with the mercantile economy of Salem Town and not with the agrarian economy of Salem Village. An independent church and pastor eventually meant an independent town, and Salem Town was not ready to let the Village split off. At that meeting the five new members of the village rates committee voted to stop collecting taxes to pay Parris's salary. For one thing, Parris had initially made what some considered excessive demands for salary and accommodations. He had even gotten the Putnam faction of the church membership to vote to break a previously binding legal

agreement saying that the parsonage was to be owned by the church and give Parris outright ownership and control of the village parsonage. The new village rates committee now voted to review the terms of Parris's contract. Parris faced not only temporary loss of his salary but a possible loss of his job as well. Not only had Parris been an unsuccessful West Indies trader and planter and an unsuccessful merchant in Boston, he was also failing in his business dealings with Salem Village.

Samuel Parris was not going to be pushed around, however. He had good motivation to fight back. The second son of a London merchant, Parris actually received a substantial inheritance, which included 20 acres in St. Peter's Parish, land in Bridgetown, and 176 acres in Barbadoes worth perhaps £7000 (Gragg 13).<sup>49</sup> Unfortunately for Parris, however, the devastating hurricane that hit Barbados in 1675 and killed at least 200 people was centered near Samuel Parris's farm and caused massive devastation and economic loss (14). That hurricane, falling sugar prices, and unfair competition from an extremely wealthy elite probably factored into Parris's decision to leave Barbados in 1680 after a stay of about seven years. He arrived in Boston in later 1680 and set himself up as a merchant, but again met with failure after seeming promise, facing lawsuits. As Parris's biographer, Larry Gragg, summarizes it, "legal problems, the negative image of merchants, the realization that he would not gain great success as a merchant or perhaps a combination of those factors caused Parris once again to reconsider his career choice" (32).

Commerce, not the ministry, had been Parris's first choice as a profession. Having failed as a merchant, Parris chose to do what many second sons in England and America

did and continued to do until the laws and customs of `primogeniture changed: chose the ministry. He apparently never finished his degree at Harvard, however. He was now 36 years old and may have viewed the ministry as his last chance for a new beginning. If Parris was to be opposed, he was to go down fighting. His previous life prepared him for the haggling and struggle necessary to guard his interests.

By examining Parris's sermon notes for the period immediately preceding the Salem trials, we detect the sermons reflecting Parris's changing situation in relation to village politics. Parris always identifies his interests with those of Christ's, and we see him preparing his flock for a major confrontation with the devil. Parris saw himself as the persecuted Christ figure among a den of thieves, the Porter faction who opposed him, the mercantile, secular interests of Salem Town—a group professing righteousness but actually of the devil's party—the party of Mammon bent on tearing down both him and His church. In fact, Parris's notes and comments in his sermon notebooks concerning the actions of those opposing him are often a striking depiction of his own flawed personality, though he may not have realized it. He identified his struggle to keep his job as part and parcel of the cosmic struggle between God and Satan. The Porter faction takeover and the threat to his job, status, and income now forced Parris's hand. He simply had to act to turn his situation around. To do this Parris used the tools at his disposal—his knowledge of the Bible and of the world, and his roles as shepherd of the church in Salem Village, spiritual exemplar, and protector of the flock against Satan's wiles. To Parris, the ends—that of continuing his mission as pastor at Salem Village, and overcoming satanic forces that opposed him—justified whatever means necessary to accomplish the goal.

From the very beginning of his ministry at Salem Village, the Rev. Parris saw himself as a type of Joshua figure, a prophetic warrior in the cosmic battle between God and Satan. In his ordination sermon on September 9, 1689, the Rev. Parris took as his text Joshua 5.9, “And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you.” Parris exhorted “all who belong to this small Congregation” to “meet God in the gracious work that he is this day about of Rolling away your reproach from off of you, by getting into the covenant of grace & so coming under the Seals of the covenant” (Sermon Notebook 38, 49). Joshua 5.9 refers to the circumcision of the second generation of Israelites at their camp at Gilgal, those who were born after the Exodus from Egypt. The Israelites’ position changed from that of bond slaves in Egypt to God’s chosen by renewal of His covenant. The reproach that the Lord had rolled away from the Salem villagers was the secular influence of Salem Town. With Parris’s ordination Salem Village church became an independent, covenanted Church of Christ, whose members were now allowed to receive communion (Gragg 50). Salem Village had also come one step closer to becoming autonomous.

The maintenance of the established covenant at Salem Village was essential, so much so, argued Parris, that “The very Seals of the covenant whereby we are initiated into & confirmed in an interest in Christ is as holy Calvin says worth an hundred lives” (Sermon Notebook 49). Parris saw his own church as a type of Gilgal—the place where Joshua began his base of operations in the Promised Land—part of a new generation of believers formed originally by members of the Salem church but who were not corrupted by their secular interests. It was the Putnam faction, those who had pushed for the

ordination of the Reverend Samuel Parris, who wanted autonomy. The Porter faction had desired to remain linked with the churches in Salem Town.

In his next recorded sermon, that of September 24, 1689, Parris chose as his text the first part of Jeremiah 48.10, “Cursed be he who doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully” (52). How much Parris, essentially a failed merchant doing the Lord’s work under a cloak of deception, may have been thinking of himself as a fraudulent figure standing before this congregation preaching, is anyone’s guess. Commenting on the second part of the verse that reads, “and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood,” Parris concludes, “A curse there is on such as Shed not blood when they have commission from God . . .” (53).

The spilling of blood, though performed by humans, Parris emphasizes, is sometimes required by God. Parris refers later in the sermon to another verse, Jeremiah 50.25, prophesying the destruction of Babylon, adding, “The destruction of Babylon is called the work of the Lord. Though man may be made use of in it, yet it is God’s work . . .” (Sermon Notebook 53). Parris clearly saw himself as carrying out the will of God and considered the faction that now opposed him as his potential Babylon, threatening to exile him and his followers from the land of promise. Parris also sees himself as the chosen instrument of the Lord’s vengeance. God would enable him to take responsibility for protecting Jerusalem by any means necessary, even through the use of bloodshed. From the beginning of his ministry Parris had felt threatened. From the end of 1691 to February 1691/2 his situation became even more precarious. As God’s instrument, he would be willing to go to any extreme to continue His errand. In his desperate bid to keep



his job, Parris would even attempt what he accused his parishioner Mary Sibley of doing—that of “going to the devil for help against the devil.”<sup>50</sup>

Samuel Parris was not unique in pointing out the sinful behavior in his congregation for which he himself was guilty. The tendency to blame others for the very things we are guilty of is a psychological principle recognized in the New Testament. In his desperation, Parris may have forgotten Romans 2.1: “Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.”

We can spot signs of approaching crisis by the tone and subject of Parris’s sermons, which shift abruptly from a series based on Christ’s life, concluding with his August 30, 1691, sermon on Matthew 28.6 on the resurrection and the October 11<sup>th</sup> 1691 sermon on John 27.27 on Christ’s ascension, the latter delivered immediately after the October 8 rate committee vote explained before. In the next sermon he recorded, that of November 22, 1691, Parris preached on Psalm 110.1 on God’s retribution against the enemies of Israel: “The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, untill I make thine enemies thy footstool” (Parris Sermon Notebook 170). Considering the seriousness of what was going on in Parris’s life at the time, he could only have intended the analogy between himself and the Psalmist. Parris’s ecclesiastical concerns had shifted abruptly from that of praise of glorious new beginnings of renewal in Christ to that of gloating over the defeat of one’s enemies. Parris continued preaching on this same topic and verse from Psalms, on the morning of January 3, 1691-2 and on February 14, 1691/2, part of a new series of sermons spanning three months, based on one text about the defeat and

humiliation of the Lord's enemies. By February, 1692, Parris's situation began to seem even more tenuous. Whether his congregation knew it or not, the symptoms of witchcraft had already broken out in the Reverend's own home. Parris clearly sees himself and his church mirrored in the biblical texts he chose for his sermons.

Next, in his sermon of February 14, Parris, quotes Matthew 16.18, reminding his congregation that "Christ calls the Church my People: & he tells us that no enemies shall overthrow his Church" (Sermon Notebook 187). Referring to Rev. 3.21, Parris instructs his congregation that the Word of God "teacheth us to War a good warfare, to subdue all our Spiritual enemies, if we would reign with Christ in his Kingdom." Parris continues with words that sound like a threatening drumbeat, telling his followers not to be ashamed or be "offended at the present low condition of the Church in the midst of its enemies," adding ominously, "Oh shortly the case will be far otherwise" (Sermon Notebook 191). Parris had just delivered a statement intended to be a self-fulfilling prophecy. At the time Parris preached this sermon, on February 14, both Betty Parris and Abigail Williams had become noticeably ill in his home. How far Parris might have been willing to go to overthrow his enemies and win back his church for himself and the Lord is apparent in his subsequent words and actions.

The next sermon entry in Parris's notebook is that of March 27, 1691/2. This sermon was preached after his slave Tituba and two more women, Martha Corey and Rebecca Nurse, had been arrested for witchcraft, and directly concerns the diabolical outbreak. Parris's text is John 6. 70: "Have I not chosen you twelve, & one of you is a Devil." One of Parris's own congregation, Martha Corey, and another member of the

Salem Town church who often attended services at Parris's church in the Village, Rebecca Nurse, were among those now arrested and jailed on witchcraft charges. They had been indicted as a result of complaints made on behalf of Parris's niece Abigail, Thomas Putnam's child Ann, Jr., his servant Mercy Lewis, another girl living at his house, Mary Walcott, and Dr. Griggs's niece and servant, Elizabeth Hubbard. Parris's sermon heading reads, "Occasioned by dreadfull Witchcraft broke out here a few weeks past, & one Member of this Church, & another of Salem upon publick examination by Civil Authority vehemently suspected for shee-Witches, & upon it Committed" (Sermon Notebook 194). Parris never mentions it in his sermon, but everyone in his congregation knew that one of the main accusers—Abigail Williams—lived at the minister's house. Just a week before, Abigail Williams, Ann Putnam, Elizabeth Hubbard, and other had disrupted the worship service and the Reverend Lawson's sermon with insolent outbursts.

How could Parris gain recognition, keep his job, divert negative attention from himself and place it upon Satan in their midst, be depended upon for guidance through this ordeal, and at the same time punish and overcome those who had become his enemies? Orchestrating a witchcraft outbreak might be one desperate way to do it. As Charles W. Upham puts it, "Events were ripening that were to give him a new and fearful strength, and open a scene in which he was to act a part destined to attract the notice of the world" (Salem Witchcraft 317). For Parris, struggling to keep his job in the face of grand opposition, what was required was a 1692 minister's version of a smoke screen. Parris may have thought that a true instance of witchcraft would strengthen the faith of his congregation and make it more likely that they would turn to him, the Lord's servant,

for protection after seeing the effects of the invisible world themselves. He had in fact devised means to control events he was planning, the witch hunt that would bring him added authority and notoriety. Since Thomas Hobbes and his materialist disciples had severely challenged the existence of the invisible world in Leviathan books three and four, the entire basis for the witchcraft treatises and providence tales of witches and apparitions so prevalent at the time was to prove—scientifically by providing empirical evidence—that witches, apparitions, and demons did exist. Parris was helping to provide that proof, evidence of the invisible world that would shore up the faith of any doubting Thomases in Salem Village, Town, or Boston. Ironically, a witchcraft outbreak would increase their faith, or so he thought. Faith in the invisible world would be a cohesive factor at a time when the Salem Village church needed unity. The struggle among the congregation was between the agrarian interests with old-style Puritan faith and folk belief in magic and the mercantile interests favoring greater secularization, which needed to be decided in favor of the former. The conservatives' side needed a boost. When we read the successful Boston merchant and Royal Society confrere, mathematician, and astronomer Thomas Brattle's letter about the Salem witch craze written to an anonymous clergyman near the end of that crisis, and notice his rational approach to the witchcraft episode, we can see the rationalism that the Parris and the Putnam faction were up against:

I never thought Judges infallible; but reckoned that they, as well as private men, might err; and that when they were guilty of erring, standers by, who possibly had not half their judgment, might, notwithstanding, be able to

detect and behold their errors. (Brattle, “Letter” qtd. in Burr Narratives 169)

Brattle thought not demons, but humans were responsible for the witchcraft outbreak—particularly hypocrites. Brattle’s viewpoint represented the threatening secular, scientific viewpoint that a witchcraft crisis would attempt to counter. The old-style Puritan faith had to be proven right for Parris to save himself and his church. If this viewpoint prevailed, Parris would be in a position of greater strength.

But wouldn’t people have been suspicious of a witchcraft outbreak starting in the home of a minister? Wouldn’t it make them question Parris or his piety that Satan should make his initial invasion there? On the contrary, the devil had a reputation for attacking that which was most righteous and holy. Why else would “Lightnings and Thunderbolts fall more upon Churches, than upon Castles”?<sup>51</sup> Cotton Mather explained why the Devil would want to attack New England, a land of uprightness. In Wonders of the Invisible World, Mather quotes the venerable Richard Baxter who, in his preface to the second edition of Mather’s Memorable Providences (London, 1691) about the possession of the Goodwin children, had written these words:

*If any are Scandalized, that New-England, a place of as serious Piety, as any I can hear of, under Heaven, should be Troubled so much with Witches, I think, tis no Wonder: Where will the Devil show most Malice, but where he is Hated, and Hateth Most. (qtd. In WIW ix)*

Parris could plausibly say that the devil had attacked him and his family first because as a minister he represented the community’s figure of foremost righteousness. It

would be Parris who most hated the devil and whom the devil most needed to destroy. A minister would naturally be the devil's primary target. Parris and his embattled supporters were potential captives in Babylon, an exiled remnant threatened with false gods and tempted by mammon. It was obvious why Satan was attacking them: they were now the only remnant of the pious settlers still fulfilling the original errand. The geographic position to the west of Salem Town bordered by a wilderness threatened by satanic Indians made their position akin to that of the first planters. They were the still-visible saints Cotton Mather described in his initial section of Wonders, "Enchantments Encountered":

The *New-Englanders*, are a People of God settled in those, which were once the *Devils* Territories; and it may easily be supposed that the *Devil* was Exceedingly disturbed, when he perceived such a people here accomplishing the Promise of old made unto our Blessed Jesus *That He should have the Utmost parts of the Earth for His Possession*. ([xi-xii])

Of course, their exalted position was largely Parris's propaganda. Many people who took part in the witchcraft outbreak and sided with Parris in making accusations were behaving like anything but charitable Christians. Parris certainly was in a position of strength, however, to take up arms against the devil. Most of the Village church members were on his side. Ministers like George Burroughs, later arrested, tried, and executed for witchcraft, had literally taken up arms during an Indian attack on Falmouth, Maine on September 20, 1689 and had been commended for his actions at the fight by Colonel Benjamin Church (Norton 100). As a minister in the seventeenth century, Parris would

have possessed an intricate knowledge about witchcraft, its connection with the Indians, along with the ethos necessary to use that knowledge to fight the devil. At the beginning of the witchcraft examinations, to keep current, he obtained a copy of William Perkins's A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft (1608). He also studied the newly published The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits (1691) by Richard Baxter, filled with descriptions of various effects of witchcraft (Gragg 116; 134; 149 n. 18). As minister at Salem village, father figure to one of the main accusers, and a scribe for the initial proceedings, Parris would not likely have been the one to be "cried out upon." Instead, he would have been exempt from blame. It was not the minister responsible but the devils of hell causing

Some scores of People, first about *Salem*, the Centre and first Born, of all the Towns in the Colony, and afterwards in several of the Places . . . [to be] arrested with many *Praternatural Vexations* upon their Bodies and a variety of cruel Torments , which were evidently inflicted from the *Daemons of the Invisible World*. (Mather, C. Pietas in Patriam 68-69)

The next household in Salem Village to initiate the witchcraft outbreak was that of Thomas Putnam, Jr., one of Rev. Parris's chief supporters. In Putnam, we see the thirst for revenge and the hope and determination of getting back that which he felt had been stolen from him. If we find in the Reverend Parris's words and actions the motivation and willingness to boldly and cynically use religion and his position as pastor as tools to enkindle a witch hunt, in Parris's accomplice, Thomas Putnam, Jr., we find the ruthless inclination to go after certain people—including those who stood in his way—to try to

obtain the property he felt he was entitled to. The people singled out for prosecution were connected with those whom the Putnams had feuded with over property. Tracing conflict in and between families concerned with Salem witchcraft in 1692, Enders A. Robinson reveals that “the people involved knew that certain families were being attacked in the witch hunt” (60). These people included (among others) members of the Towne family, with whom the Putnams had a long-standing land dispute. Members of the Towne family the Putnams named as witches were Rebecca (Towne) Nurse, and her sisters Mary (Towne) Easty and Sarah (Towne) Cloyce. The conflict over land rights also involved other families too, including the Howe, Hobbs, and Wildes families of Topsfield (Robinson 61), all three of whom included women who were named as witches. In both Parris and Putnam we spot a willingness to sacrifice people for property.

The most vitriolic dispute, however, involved Thomas Putnam Jr.’s half brother, Joseph Putnam. As the eldest son of the family patriarch, Thomas Putnam, Sr., Thomas Putnam, Jr. could have expected to inherit the lion’s share of the estate upon his father’s death. The Putnams were the second richest family in Salem Village after the Porters (Boyer and Nissenbaum Salem Possessed 111). But when Thomas Jr.’s mother died, the elder Thomas in 1666 married Mary Veren, the widow of Nathaniel Veren, a Salem sea captain with two brothers who were prosperous Salem merchants (Boyer and Nissenbaum Salem Possessed 136). In 1669, Mary Veren Putnam gave birth to Thomas Sr.’s son, Joseph. When Thomas Sr. died, the property was left not to his eldest son Thomas, Jr., and his younger brother, Edward, but to Joseph, their 16-year-old half brother. Without doubt the older Putnams were furious. They petitioned unsuccessfully to



have the will annulled. The signatures on the petition included the names of Thomas Putnam, Jr., his brother Edward Putnam, and their brothers-in-law Jonathan Walcott and William Trask (Boyer and Nissenbaum *Salem Possessed* 137). Jonathan Walcott was the father of Mary Walcott, who became one of the primary accusers in the Salem trials. This biblical reenactment of a favored younger brother winning the father's inheritance may have been enough to make the other brothers want to harm or greatly humiliate Joseph Putnam. In 1690, Joseph married Elizabeth, daughter of the rich Salem merchant, Israel Porter. What had happened certainly was impetus for revenge, and a certain kind of revenge. If Joseph Putnam or Mary Veren simply died, the property would never have gone back to Thomas Putnam, his brothers, or their descendants. That might not have been the case if Joseph Putnam eventually had his property confiscated because of a conviction for witchcraft.

Aside from getting simple revenge for being deprived of their property in the first place, by staging a witchcraft outbreak, Thomas and Edward Putnam might have hoped eventually to get all of their property back—and then some. One way they might have accomplished that was to intimidate Joseph Putnam and Mary Veren, who had “stolen” it. Thomas and Edward Putnam probably hoped to scare them into leaving Salem Village voluntarily to avoid prosecution. According to Charles W. Upham, for six months during the Salem prosecutions, Joseph Putnam kept a horse always saddled and ready and his family armed to be able to escape at a moment's notice should he or his family be brought up on charges (*Salem Witchcraft* 626). Clearly, Joseph Putnam knew what it was all about. There was not much chance of him leaving the area without a real threat, but it

might have been worth it to Thomas Putnam just to put the fear of God into Joseph and his family. If Joseph Putnam, his mother, Mary Veren, and his wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Israel Porter, had escaped after they had been indicted, or had been convicted of witchcraft, their property would have been confiscated and might easily have fallen back into the hands of Thomas, Jr., and the other Putnams to whom it “rightfully” belonged. The unholy grail Thomas Putnam sought in making witchcraft accusations was probably the property of his estranged half brother Joseph Putnam. Revenge and a chance to regain his father’s property may have seemed worth the risk. Historically, the acquisition of property has been an impetus for accusing others of witchcraft.<sup>52</sup> Governor Phips wrote back to the government in England that in his absence, Lieutenant Governor William Stoughton “hath from the beginning hurried on these matters [of prosecuting witchcraft] with great precipitancy and by his warrant hath caused the estates, goods and chattels of the executed to be seized and disposed of without my knowledge or consent” (qtd. in Burr Narratives 201).

According to Bernard Rosenthal, at the time of the witch trials there were in effect in Massachusetts for the acquisition of property as the result of a witchcraft conviction. Some laws were passed in October, 1692 after Governor William Phips had essentially stopped the trials. The property of the convicted appears to have been confiscated by Sheriff George Corwin, nephew of Jonathan Corwin, a judge on the Court of Oyer and Terminer, who apparently disposed of property, not as English law would have it but as Corwin himself saw fit (Salem Story 195-201). Later Governor William Phips sharply criticized Corwin for his handling of the property. Undoubtedly, Thomas Putnam knew of

Corwin's actions, and since he was Corwin's friend, may have hoped to use Corwin to get back the property that had gone to Joseph Putnam and his mother Mary Veren once Joseph had been convicted for witchcraft.

It's interesting to speculate whether the attainment of property was not somehow behind the unusual condition at Salem that the lives of confessors were spared (but at the forfeiture of property), while those who insisted on their innocence were executed but their surviving relatives were able to keep their property. Giles Corey, who snubbed the court and refused to enter a plea to save his property for his children, was tortured by being pressed to death. All along the accused had been urged by the judges to confess, and no one who confessed and stuck with that confession was executed. There is also another explanation as to why some would not confess: if one saved one's life through a lie, a true saint would forfeit his or her life in the hereafter.

Whatever plans Thomas Putnam might have had for getting back "his" property through the witchcraft convictions never materialized. Reasons for this failure include the connectedness of Joseph Putnam to the centers of power in Salem and the fact that the witch accusations spread beyond Putnam's and Parris's control. Helped along by multiple sensational confessions and the naming of others, the second, Andover, phase of the Salem debacle took on more of the characteristics of a traditional witch panic, assuming a life of its own. Putnam had probably hoped to retain a guiding hand in the accusations by targeting precisely those whom he would name. When Andover constable Joseph Ballard came to Salem to try to get some of the afflicted who supposedly possessed second sight to identify the source of his wife's illness, two young people, probably either Abigail

Williams and Mary Walcott, or Elizabeth Hubbard and Mercy Lewis, went to Andover to identify witches there. At first two, then, later, more of the afflicted came and began to identify the specters tormenting those in Andover, greatly broadening the witch panic. The Andover phase resulted in at least 50 more incarcerations, many in the month of July. In a way Thomas Putnam became a victim of his own success in helping foment the outbreak. The Andover phase, which began in mid-July, was responsible for scores of accusations and confessions, but to Thomas Putnam, the results were disappointing. Those jailed weren't the ones he had most hoped to identify as witches. He still had not attained the conviction, abdication, or hanging of Joseph Putnam.

The witchcraft debacle at Salem was ignited, stoked, and fueled by the afflictions of the initial accusers, most of whom believed they either were or had been bewitched. We find the hand of Samuel Parris, Thomas Putnam, and their close allies in the entire episode, though the outbreak finally became so widespread that no one could have controlled it. The need for confession in order to save one's life became a self-perpetuating driving force, and the original, hallucinogenic spark became secondary, used only to guide the outbreak to a specific target, if necessary. As Bernard Rosenthal evaluates it,

We do not need to look for exotic theories to explain the behavior of the "girls of Salem" once the rules became clear. Thus, a script emerged in which accused, accuser, and the judiciary had a vested interest: The accusers and the judiciary needed the ritual of confession to legitimize

their activities, and the confessors needed the continuation of the ritual to avoid the gallows. (Salem Story 50)

The orchestrated drugging of the girls explains why the Salem witch scare was taken so seriously by the judges and ministers concerned, even though witchcraft cases were winding down all over Europe and the Atlantic world. The administration of the devil's weed may explain why the Salem witch scare was larger than all the rest of New England's witch panics combined. The ability to cause fits that would be taken for witchcraft was a powerful tool in the hands of Parris, Putnam, and their allies. The confessions and accusations in Andover and elsewhere beyond Salem Village are filled with the most lurid and fantastic details ever to appear in the witchcraft records of New England, with witches' flights and diabolical communions, baptisms, and meetings in the field next to the Reverend Parris's house with hundreds of witches present. What occurred in Salem had happened throughout the history of witchcraft: witch confessions were always filled with graphic detail either as a result of the accused agreeing to what the judges described or from attempts of the accused to make their accounts seem genuine enough to convince the judges that they were now telling the truth—to stop the torture. Salem was exceptional, however, in that the scores of people who made confessions were able to save their lives. Perhaps the judges needed that much affirmation to prove they were correct; perhaps it was to extract property; perhaps both. The descriptions of New England witch meetings were much more subdued, however, than in their European counterparts, seeming a genuine mockery of Congregational church meetings (Godbeer “Covenants” 65).

After the last eight witches were executed on September 22, fierce opposition arose from the pen of Increase Mather in the form of a book Cases of Conscience, with the preface written by Cotton Mather and signed by 14 ministers in the area implicitly criticizing the judges' use of spectral evidence. The judges' idea was that Satan could only use the soul or image of individuals if they had signed his book. Hence an afflicted person seeing the specter of someone else could serve as proof of the accused's guilt. Only after the ministers became convinced that Satan might also be permitted (by God) to impersonate an innocent person did the clergy oppose the court proceedings. Resistance from the ministers, along with accusations against his own wife for witchcraft, played a major role in Governor William Phips putting a halt to proceedings by October 12, 1692 (Burr Narratives 197-98, 201 n. 2; Norton 279). Clearly, both Samuel Parris and Thomas Putnam had similar economic motives in bringing about a witch hunt, and the appearance of collusion and coordination of efforts shows up time and again in a chronological reading of events, suggesting each as the other's active accomplice.<sup>53</sup>

Another of the core group of "conspirators" was Dr. William Griggs. He is also a suspect in lending a hand in fomenting the witchcraft crisis, because he was new to Salem Village. Not much is known about Griggs. He was about 77 years old in 1692 (Robinson 117). He was probably a self-taught physician in need of the good graces of powerful people in the Village like the Reverend Parris and the Putnams. He owned about nine books on physic (Perley History 127). His children were grown, and his wife Rachael's great niece, Elizabeth Hubbard, an orphan like many of the "afflicted" girls, lived with the Griggses in the role of servant. Seventeen-year-old Elizabeth Hubbard was

responsible for a great number of legal complaints, 40 in all (Norton 321). Whenever we see Elizabeth Hubbard accusing someone, we can suspect William Griggs. Along with Abigail Williams, Elizabeth Parris, and Ann Putnam, Elizabeth Hubbard was among the four girls initially to experience fits virtually simultaneously. Griggs's motive in the accusations may have been the need to cast his lot with Parris and the Putnams, since he was new to the Village and needed their support because he was not particularly well off (Robinson 117). Not going along with Parris's and Putnam's wishes might have had severe consequences as well. He was also a great help to Parris and Putnam. They needed Griggs to furnish the detailed medical knowledge required to administer and handle the primary modus of the witchcraft stratagem. Another of Griggs's motives might have been to eliminate competition by midwives in the area (Robinson 118). Midwives were experienced with herbs, including those that facilitated abortions. Dr. Griggs, who is traditionally the physician believed to have pronounced the girls as being "under an evil hand," possessed the knowledge of herbs and their preparation that played a crucial role in fomenting the witch panic.

## II. A Means to the End

But what were the means whereby people like Samuel Parris, Thomas Putnam, Dr. William Griggs, and others could have caused the symptoms of witchcraft? In his sermon of March 27, 1691/2, Samuel Parris had taken as his text John 6.70, “Have not I chosen you twelve, & one of you is a devil” (Sermon Notebook 194). In this sermon, written on the occasion of the public examination of the “shee-witches” Rebecca Nurse, a church member of Salem Town, who often attended church at the Village, and Martha Corey, a member of his own church, Parris declared, “Christ knows how many devils there are in His Churches.” In his sermon Parris chose also to expound upon another verse of Scripture, this time alluding to Jesus’s parable of the tares in Matthew 13. 38-43. Jesus interprets for the crowds the symbolism of the weeds among the good crops:

The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of the world. (Matt. 13. 38-40)

Parris adds, “The Church consists of good; & bad: as a Garden that has weeds as well as flowers & as a field that has Wheat as well as Tares” (196). He then alludes to the passage in Jeremiah 24.1-4, the parable of the figs, which compares a bowl of good figs at the peak of ripeness to evil figs in another bowl, which cannot be eaten. One bowl represented the saved remnant, the other the damned. Parris’s extensive use of plant imagery—perhaps disguising veiled threats—is interesting.



A reductively literal reading of this passage might suggest that the devil is responsible for the weeds that choke the fields while Christ sows the seed for the good edible corn. Certainly, this passage of Scripture might be partially responsible for Satan's (and witches') traditional association with noisome plants, since witches were considered foremost among those of the devil's party. Since Parris associated the weeds among the field of good corn with the lost in their midst, he might have extrapolated from this passage of Scripture the message that literal weeds were the just desserts of literal sinners—especially sinners who opposed him. All were of the devil. Most likely, Parris chose to highlight the parable of the tares because it reflected his own recently acquired experience in handling tares. Some of the afflicted girls could also be considered “weeds.” Mercy Lewis, Mary Warren, and Elizabeth Hubbard were orphaned servants. Lewis's parents had been killed in an Indian attack in Falmouth, Maine. Abigail Williams's exact relationship with the family of the Rev. Samuel Parris is unknown. All the core afflicted accusers were girls and women in subservient positions.

Parris's attitude toward what sinners deserved—sinners, of course defined as the people who opposed him—could have been much like the derisive attitude expressed by Mercy Short toward the later executed witch Sarah Good as early as June, 1692. Good was jailed in Boston on suspicion of witchcraft, and when Mercy Short was sent by her mistress to the prison on an errand, she encountered the accused witch Sarah Good of Salem Village, who asked her for a little tobacco. Picking up a handful of wood shavings, Short threw them at her, saying, “That's tobacco enough for you” (Mather, C. “A Brand

Pluck'd Out of the Burning" in Burr Narratives 259-260). Mercy Short immediately after came down with fits similar to those of the Salem girls.

The devil was responsible both for rendering men sinful and the resultant curse of the springing up of thorns and thistles in the Garden of Eden. Sin entered the world and men and women had to till the ground and eat of the herb of the field instead of the fruits of Eden. Cultivating and eating of the herbs of the field was associated with the fall, and weeds represented a further division from edible fruit. Since Christ associated weeds with sinners and with the devil, weeds of the field were paired in Parris's mind with human weeds, the damned, especially the witches who willingly and knowingly associated with Satan. Following the example of Jesus, who at the last supper referred to Judas as a "devil," Parris, as evident in his sermon of March 27, had ceased to make a distinction between devils as evil supernatural beings, witches, and ordinary sinful people who routinely did evil (Hill 102). Since both types of weeds belonged together, Parris might have reasoned, at least subconsciously, that the use of such weeds would be "good enough" for exposing and purging Satan's "weeds" from his church. Just as terrorist leaders use suicide bombers to launch their explosives (purportedly for a divine purpose), and just as cigarette companies use cigarettes as delivery systems for nicotine, for Parris, Putnam, and Griggs, the girls in their charge could also be used as delivery systems to root out the tares from their midst. They would harvest the tares using a blunt instrument—a witch hunt—fighting fire with fire. Naturally, a few grains of wheat might fall in with the tares. To use a noxious weed for such a purpose would only fit the use that God had ordained by sprouting them from the ground Adam and Eve had to till. Sarah

Good, Sarah Osborne, and Tituba and been the “weeds” in a sense, the targets of the conspirators’ delivery system. To purge the weeds from their midst might be necessary to feed the weeds of the field to the weeds of the community, the devils who opposed him. That would only be giving them a taste of their own medicine, using traditional methods of witches as “Poysoners” against the devils in his church. Parris and his co-conspirators would cast out the devil with Beelzebub. The weeds of the field (the nightshade that grew in the corn fields) would be harvested for use against the weeds of the community who opposed Parris and his church. Both would eventually be burned together in the fire. Like a fanatical terrorist, Parris might have thought it was just to expose the human weeds to the noxious weeds working through the bodies and minds of their human though relatively innocent delivery systems to oppose and destroy the evil working against him.

Parris, Putnam, and Griggs could have begun accusing others themselves, but that would have seemed too obvious and proved too unwieldy. It was safer and more efficient to have servants help harvest the tares for them. It was far preferable to use the servants who had lost their parents in the Indian wars, daughters, nieces, and even wives. People would sympathize with their afflictions. There would be a natural inclination among influential males to pity and not question too harshly the young female accusers. How could these men get the women in their households to go along with their scheme? By leaving them in blissful ignorance. But if the women were not told of this scheme, how would they be expected to make accusations? They would make accusations if they thought they were bewitched. But how could a daughter, a niece, a female servant or slave be made to believe she is bewitched?

They could be subjected to the type of torments people have had in the past who have been known to have been possessed. The fits could then be blamed on witchcraft. What would bring on such fits? Was there a drug of some kind that would mimic the symptoms of bewitchment, some herbal preparation that would cause fits and delusions, make people passive instruments, and cause hallucinations of sights and sounds of ghosts and demons that could then be blamed on witchcraft?

On May 8, Parris records the text from which he took his sermon. Parris's text, taken from 1 Corinthians 10.21 reads, "Ye Cannot drink the Cup of the Lord, & the Cup of Devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, & of the Table of Devils" (Sermon Notebook 199). It was as if to say that if you don't partake of the Lord's table (read, if you don't support me), then you must be partakers of the devil's table (you risk receiving the contents of the chalice and bread of the devil in the form of accusations of the afflicted brought about by the devil's potions. Those who supported Parris had nothing to worry about. Those who didn't, however, could fear the devil's wrath in the form of witchcraft accusations fomented by a true witches' brew.

The ingredients for such a concoction were known to exist. There was a plant that Indians used to bewitch their young boys, one that made them see and talk with the devil. But could anyone be made to take the drug without their knowledge? Easily: a powder could be ground from the seeds, dried leaves, or roots of this plant and hidden in bread, drinks, sauce, gravy, and other foods. A tincture, infusion, or decoction could be made and added, undetected, to a drink like cider. Not only could it be done, it had been done

countless times. Poisons were easily hidden in the days before modern forensics. People had done such things for centuries (See Muller).

But where would Parris find such a plant? The answer is startling: perhaps in his back yard. Such a plant grows in all 48 of the contiguous United States. Before leaving the subject of Parris's plant imagery and its relevance to the situation in Salem Village we should note that the prevalence of infestation of a plant known as jimson weed in corn fields in the United States. Jimson weed (short for Jamestown weed) is found to be as prevalent in corn fields as crabgrass. On average in the United States, .5% of every acre of sweet corn grown is lost to jimson weed infestation. In one acre of corn, that would be 217.8 square feet of loss to jimson weed alone. Typically, just one acre of corn might yield enough jimson weed to afflict an entire community with delirium, hallucinations, and convulsions. The species *datura stramonium* or jimson weed grows in every county in Massachusetts ("County Distribution of DAST in Massachusetts").

It is self-evident why Parris would be thinking and commenting about weeds in his sermons: Jamestown weed was being used to bring on the fits of afflicted victims. The effects of jimson weed poisoning were just the type of fire that could be used by Christ's servants to purge the human weeds out of His garden so the anointed could thrive. The afflicted bodies and minds of Parris's and Putnam's first victims (the servant-girls and daughters) would supply the oil for the holy fire that God would use to purge the unrighteous from their midst. The reason Parris would be using so much plant imagery in his March 27 sermon, "Occasioned by dreadfull Witchcraft broke out here a few weeks

past,” on the parable of the tares in John 6.70, was that the “weeds” were about to be gathered and burned—or in the case of Salem—hanged.

Once the fits had started and the victim was sure she was bewitched, how could the “bewitched” then be made to accuse certain others? A specific person could be singled out and described while the afflicted were in their fits. They could then be asked if that was the person they saw bewitching them. Since such plants of the nightshade family were known to affect the memory adversely, both during and after their fits, the afflicted would be reminded of who they had cried out upon, the specter of the person who had caused the fits, the shape that had tormented them, the same person who had at first been suggested to them. When the fits were over, the bewitched could be reminded of it again and again. It was brainwashing, pure and simple. The result was that the afflicted believed those they accused had tormented them.

People who made easy targets could be accused at first: perhaps those with whom the accusers already had altercations. The afflicted would be made certain that those identified were the people who had bewitched them. The first to be named were those already suspected of witchcraft, or who fit the stereotype of a witch, like Sarah Good and Tituba, or who, like Sarah Osborne, had property disputes with the Putnams (Robinson, 261-63; 267-68). These were powerless individuals nobody important would really miss, the unregenerate—perhaps many folks would even be glad they were gone because they were a nuisance to the community. Then eventually the real targets could be named.

Someone had to be held responsible for allowing Satan a foothold: By dabbling in magic, trying to foretell the future, those now “afflicted” had ultimately succeeded in

raising the devil. The bewitched girls had brought the affliction on themselves and on the community by toying with the unwarrantable. No wonder Satan had attacked them; he had been invited. Cotton Mather, too, suggests that it was these little sorceries that later brought on the more serious visitations of the devil. Although these “*Diabolical Divinations*” had been more prevalent all over the “*Rest of the World*” than they had been in the Country of New-England, God “signalized his Vengeance against these wickednesses, with such extraordinary Dispensations, as have not been often in others places,” writes Cotton Mather in Pietas in Patriam: The Life of Sir William Phips. He continues,

It is to be confessed and and Bewailed, That many Inhabitants of *New-England*, and Young people especially, had been Led away with Little *Sorceries*, wherein they *did Secretly those Things that were not Right against the Lord their God*; They would often cure Hurts with *Spells*, and practice detestable Conjurations with *Sieves*, and *Keys*, and *Pease*, and *Nails* and *Horseshoes*, and other Implements, to Learn the Things for which they had a forbidden and impious Curiosity. Wretched Books had stoln into the Land, wherein Fools were instructed, how to become able Fortune-Tellers: Among which, I wonder that a blacker Brand is not set upon that Fortune-telling Wheel, which that Sham-Scribler, that goes under the Letters of *R. B.* has proposed in his *Delights for the Ingenious*, as an *honest and pleasant Recreation*.<sup>54</sup> And by these Books, the minds of many had been so poisoned, that they studied this *Finer Witchcraft*; unitl,

‘tis well, if some of them were not betray’d, into what is grosser and more sensible and Capital. (68)

The “R.B.” Mather names was the pseudonym of Nathaniel Crouch,<sup>55</sup> and the book to which Mather refers was Delights For The Ingenious, In Above Fifty Select and Choice Emblems, Divine and Moral, Ancient and Modern (London, 1684). The book contained emblems, numbered 1-56 with a lottery wheel at the end of the book with instructions to turn the index

without casting your eyes thereupon to observe where it stayeth, till your hand ceaseth to give it motion; and then look, upon what number it resteth; Then look for the same number among the Lots, which having read it directs you to the Emblem of the same number likewise. (205)

With such a book, children, or anyone, could use the emblems and the lottery wheel to predict fortunes. Someone like Samuel Parris could have used fortune-telling sessions as the book may have inspired an impetus for making the girls participating in such sessions believe they were in danger of bewitchment. Some of the same girls participating in such practices may have been the very ones blamed on opening the door to let in the devil. Samuel Parris may have used such fortune-telling incidents to make the girls believe that they were responsible for their own bewitchment when in reality a drug was responsible.

Nathaniel Crouch had also written the even more sensational and influential Kingdom of Darkness (London, 1688), which was apparently influential in the Salem affair. John Hale tells us that Crouch’s Darkness was among the books most consulted by the Salem Judges (See Burr, Narratives 416 and n.). Darkness, as its full title suggests,



is filled with all sorts of lurid tales of “demons, specters, witches, apparitions, possessions, disturbances, and other wonderful and supernatural delusions, mischevievous feats, and malicious impostures of the Devil” and is adorned with woodcuts illustrating the text, making for great—if provocative—entertainment, appealing to the imaginations of young people especially. In one account from Crouch’s book a girl under the influence of a witch is described as going out in the fields to gather herbs, and taking them back to the witch, who intends on using them to poison the girl’s mother.

The Witch commanded [the five boys she had conjured] to go along with the maid to a meadow at Wilton, which she shewed in a Glas, and there to gather Vervine and Dill; Forthwith the ragged Boys ran before the Maid, and she followed them to the said Meadow, they looked about for the Herbs and removed the Snow in two or three places before they could find it and at last found some, and brought it away, and returning again to the Witch, the Maid said she found her paring her nails in the Circle; She then took the Herbs and dried some to powder, and the leaves of the rest; threw bread to the Boys and they eat and danced as formerly, and then the witch reading in a Book they vanished. The Witch gave the Maid the powder in one paper, and the leaves in another and the paring of her nails in a third, all which she was to give her Mistress; the powder was to be put in the young Gentlewoman’s drink, or broth to rot their guts in their bellies, the leaves to rub about the brims of the pot to make their teeth fall out of their

heads, and the paring off her nails to make them drunk or mad. (Crouch 13)

Plants could be used to cause or cure bewitchment.<sup>56</sup> According to George Lyman Kittredge, vervaine and dill were used to ward off the devil, and in conjunction with St. Johns wort induced spiritual sight (Witchcraft 121). While vervaine, dill, and St. Johns wort are not particularly hallucinogenic, if the Salem girls or anyone else had been reading Crouch's book they would have found in its pages a model for gathering, preparing, and the covert spiking of food and drink with herbs for magical purposes. They may have also been led or tempted to try to mimic what they were reading by gathering whatever herb of the field they had learned was endowed with magical properties. This herbal lore might have been learned from Indians, or from herbals, or from Tituba or her husband John Indian. The idea of drying the herbs and making them into a powder and putting it into a drink would certainly have appealed to some and conveyed the idea of bewitchment through the use of plants.

Besides the girls' attempts at fortune telling opening a door, someone had initially helped raise the devil by baking a witch cake. As we recall, on February 25, 1692, Tituba or John Indian, or both, under the direction of Mary Sibley baked a cake from rye meal and the urine of the bewitched and fed it to a dog to try to "draw" the witch. Someone had let Satan out of the pit. To Samuel Parris, however, the witch cake was a godsend. Man had unleashed the evil one, but God would help fight the battles. After all, God had created Satan for a purpose—to delude others—particularly those who opposed His instruments in setting up His Kingdom. Therefore, it was only fitting for those whose

natural state was delusion and who were opposed to Christ and His ministers to be even further deluded by Satan. Why could delusion not be a major weapon in God's arsenal too? Since Samuel Parris and Thomas Putnam were perhaps desperate and cynical, they might have seen no other way out but to take advantage of such decoys as fortune telling and a witch cake to hide their agenda. Even if they didn't stage the witch cake incident in the first place, they could manipulate the fallout.

Actually, the principle of conducting a witch hunt for personal gain in the name of defeating witchcraft has often been practiced. What Frederich Spee describes of the alliance between confessors, officials, and prince-bishops during the wave of witch hunts in Germany in the 1620s is not all that different in kind from what went on at Salem:

They will simply resist anything that limits their profit, however politely it is done, particularly since in many places not only officials but also confessors receive a per capita commission for every conviction. In a tempting invitation to collusion, these priests feast and drink together with the inquisitors on the blood of paupers, which they suck out to the very last drop. (33)

Clergy, whose impetus was the confiscation of property and who against all reason evilly insisted on prosecuting witches, those who have killed family members for the insurance money, and those who knowingly sacrifice lives for material profit are all guilty of the same crime. The relative completeness of Salem's records compared with many European ones allows us to have a window into what must have been a similar scenario in many witch hunts in the past.

As a clergyman who had studied both Greek and Latin, Parris would probably have been familiar with traditional and linguistic links between witches and poisons. A passage from John Webster's Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft (1677) suggests that the effects of philters, potions, and poisons used by "witches" were often mistaken for witchcraft:

[T]he Devil worketh no more in them but by instigation, to move wicked persons (such as are those that are accounted Witches) to give and administer strange things, Philters, or secret poisons, to such as they would kill, torment, make mad, or draw to unlawful love . . . .

And this kind of witching, or secret poisoning, we grant to be too frequent and common, because those persons commonly accounted Witches are extreemly malicious and envious, and do secretly and by tradition learn strange poisons, philters and receipts whereby they do much hurt and mischief.

[I]t is manifest that these kind of people that are commonly called Witches, are indeed (as both the Greek and Latin names do signifie) Poysoners, and in respect of their Hellish intentions are Diabolical, but the effects they procure flow from natural Causes. (242, 247)

Webster's statement makes explicit the connection between poisons and signs of bewitchment. If the effects of some poisons could be mistaken for witchcraft, the one thing needful would be to find the correct poison. Parris might have wondered if by administering the proper philter he might be able to make people believe they had been

bewitched. Parris could also have known that the Indians had a drink that made boys raving mad and allowed them to see spirits and the devil. That was certainly witchcraft. Such models might have been just what Samuel Parris and Thomas Putnam pondered. But how would one go about identifying, locating, and administering such a substance? First one would need to know which plants to use. Dr. Griggs's medical knowledge, some Indian lore, and some herbals might be able to help.

One plant that caused what the colonists would have interpreted as symptoms of bewitchment was known already to some English colonists. The use of a hallucinogenic substance in the huskanaw or puberty ceremony initiation rites of boys and young men, known as “wisakon” by the Algonquian Indians of Virginia, seems to have been well known to the Virginia colonists and to the London Council, not least because of the sensational and widespread misconception that the practice involved child sacrifice.<sup>57</sup> But would New Englanders have known about it? The earliest mention in English in print of the word “huskinaugh” occurs in John Banister's Natural History of Virginia sometime between 1690 and 1692. Before Banister, the word “huskanaw” had not yet entered the English language, but the ritual itself had long been described by colonists, writers, and explorers.<sup>58</sup>

Early printed descriptions of these initiation ceremonies gave rise to sensational ideas of sacrificing children to demons. Captain John Smith mistakenly assumed that children were sacrificed, though it was only a mock sacrifice signifying a ritual death and rebirth. Children do seem to have died from the rigors of the ordeal, but child sacrifice was not its explicit intention. The point was to make the boys spiritually knowledgeable

and physically, mentally, and emotionally resilient. Those who did not succeed were dishonored. The most famous of these descriptions of the “sacrifice” occurs in Smith’s A Map of Virginia (1612), reprinted in his Generall Historie of Virginia in 1624.

In some part of the Country they have yearely a sacrifice of children. Such a one was a Quiyoughcohanock some 10 miles from James Towne and thus performed. Fifteen of the properest young boyes, betweene 10 and 15 yeares of age they painted white. (Smith, Map 171)

The boys were then made to run the gauntlet. Smith says that subsequently, “what else was done with the children was not seene.” They were then “cast on a heape” as if dead. The Werowance (a Powhatan commander or chief) explained that they were not all dead, but that some were chosen by lot and that the “Oke or Devill did suck the blood from their left breast” until they were dead. The rest later spent nine months in the wilderness separated from the rest of the tribe. From this group, Smith writes, “were made their Priests and Conjurers” (Smith, Map 172).

In A Map of Virginia, Smith writes of another ritual in which “Every spring they make themselves sicke with drinking the juice of a root they call wighsacan, and water, whereof they powre [pour] so great a quantity, and it purgeth them in a very violent maner so that in 3 or 4 daies after they scarce recover their former health” (Map of Virginia 168). Smith himself does not link the annual drinking of the wighsacan with the puberty ritual he also wrote about, but evidence gathered about the practice of other American Indian tribes suggests that what Smith witnessed could have been part of an

annual refresher course in the transforming effects of wighsacan first experienced during the puberty rituals.

This springtime purgative seems to have been a reminder or rededication of their lives to their guiding spirit acquired at a previous puberty rebirth ritual. Comparison with a datura ritual among the foothill Yokuts in central California suggests that Smith could have been witnessing some form of the rebirth ritual repeated to relive what some Powhatan Indians had experienced as young adolescents through the drinking of wighsacan, or simply to learn more from further contact with the spirit world. Among the Chohnimini, “All adults had some experiences (primarily hallucinatory) that paralleled, in a minor way, those leading to shamanism.” After a fast of six days participants drank a preparation of datura. They were then able to discern and heal illnesses in themselves and others (Spier 482). The datura ritual would always be performed in the spring because later in the season the properties of the plant would become too strong (Spier 482; See Wallace, Handbook 456).

In a more complex ceremony, Members of the Wikchammi of the California central foothills fasted for up to two months prior to receiving this drink. The main subjects were adolescents participating for the first and only time, but some adult men also repeated the ritual to “acquire additional supernatural power” (Spier 482). After falling into a coma lasting for 12 to 18 hours, “participants could become active and run away or injure themselves.” Those partaking were watched over by women. During this period, participants would experience “revelations concerning causes of illnesses, sources of individual power, and the evil doings of malevolent shamans” (Spier 482).

Captain John Smith did not make the link between whigsakon and the boyhood initiation ritual, but we find out a little later from Samuel Purchas that some form of “whigsakon” also played an important role in the Virginia Algonquian puberty initiation ritual. It is also probable that “whigsakon” was also used annually as a hallucinogen among the Algonquians of Virginia.<sup>59</sup> The Algonquian tribes were a loose confederation spread over five geographical divisions from the Rocky Mountains to north of the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes, east to the Maritime Provinces and south along the eastern seaboard. The eastern Algonquian, which we are most concerned with here, occupied the area from the Maritimes to North Carolina. All the eastern tribes spoke languages branching off from the Proto-Eastern Algonquian language group. The northeastern Algonkins occupied Quebec, the Maritime Provinces and eastern Maine and included the Micmac, Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, and Abnaki. Algonquian tribes along the Atlantic coast south of the Abnaki included the Pennacook, Massachusetts, Wampanoag, Narraganset, Nipmuc, Montauk, Mohegan, Delaware, and Powhatan tribes.<sup>60</sup>

Samuel Purchas in his Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas His Pilgrimes (1625) copies the story of the Algonquian initiation rite from Smith but supplies additional information from another source, perhaps some of Richard Hakluyt’s papers that afterwards disappeared. Taking up Smith’s narrative, Purchas, who died in 1626, writes,

The Werowance, being demanded the meaning of this sacrifice, answered,  
That the children were not all dead, but the next day they were to drink  
Wighsakon, which would make them mad; and they were to be kept . . . in



the wilderness, where their Oke did sucke the bloud of those which fell to his lot.<sup>61</sup>

Important new details of the initiation ceremony appear in Purchas's account. Purchas reveals that a drink by the name of Wighsakon that made the boys mad was to be a part of the ritual and that the Oke would suck their blood while the boys were kept guarded in the wilderness. From the end of this passage we see parallels with the belief in New England, England, and the rest of Europe that witches often had teats and would allow themselves to be sucked by their familiars, a universal idea probably giving rise in some quarters to the idea of the vampire. Such a detail would not have gone unnoticed by the Puritan colonists in America who would have linked the ritual directly to their own understanding of witchcraft. That link would have drawn interest in the Indian ritual and its component of drinking a concoction of a plant to induce visions. Naturally the detail would have been left out of any discourse from fear of spreading the practice to the colonists. Purchas states that the boys were kept in the wilderness for nine months and adds,

Then are divers platters of broth set, of which some are poisoned; and he whose divination finds out the poisoned, is much esteemed and made a Quiyoughcosuck. These are the degrees to become Priests or Conjurers.

The boys who chose to consume the "poisoned" broth were the ones eligible for highest honor. With Purchas's book there was now in print a widely published and famous work linking of the diabolical initiation ceremony of the Algonquian Indian boys with the poisonous drink "Wighsakon." All five volumes of the 1625 London edition of

Purchas's His Pilgrimes are listed in the Harvard College Library catalog compiled in 1723.<sup>62</sup> Had anyone in Boston or Salem read Purchas's account of Virginia, seen reference to the beverage consumed during a sacrificial ritual that turned the boys raving mad in a ceremony associated in the minds of the Puritans with witchcraft, and wanted to know about the composition of the drink, he or she might have been able to find out by talking to someone who had gone through the ritual himself, perhaps a Christianized or "praying" Indian. The information also could have been acquired by questioning someone who had spent time among the Indians, had been captured by them, or was familiar with their practices. The important thing is that knowledge of such a ceremony existed and was associated with a ritual drink. The Algonquian puberty rite would have conveyed to the minds of Parris, Putnam, Griggs, and others the idea of how children might be used to display the effects of demonic possession.

It is important linguistically and otherwise to note that the ceremony, later identified by the name Huskanawing, a Virginia Algonquian word, or wuskenoo among the northeast Algonquin, meant "he is young." The terms also referred to puberty ceremonies.<sup>63</sup> Such a sensational ritual allegedly involved child sacrifice. Appearing in a famous printed work, the ritual must certainly have attracted attention, its sensational subject matter perhaps even becoming common knowledge in some circles. Because of their religious outlook, however, the New England Puritans to a much greater degree than the Virginia colonists were sensitive to religious issues and wanted to avoid informing their readers too much about such diabolical Indian practices, fearing, as Cotton Mather did, to publish the details of such "*Sorceries . . . which I will not Name*, lest I should by

Naming, *Teach* them” (WIW [xviii]). Disseminating the details about such rituals might have risked spreading the heathen practice to the English and help bring down all the churches in the country, as Cotton Mather feared. The dread of assisting Satan may explain why so few details about the puberty ceremonies and other religious practices of the New England Algonquian tribes exist even though Puritans did a lot of thinking and writing about Indians.

Despite scanty records, we do know that the Virginia Powhatans were not the only Algonquians tribes along the eastern woodlands of North America to participate in such a ritual. Francis Parkman, taking as his major source the relations of the Jesuit fathers among the Algonquian and Huron around the Great Lakes and Canada in the seventeenth century, synthesizes some of the accounts he collected into a composite description of the ritual, but without mentioning the use of any drug to assist in the solicitation of visions. He attributes their visionary experiences to a fast—which is certainly in keeping with the Algonquian practice as far as it goes, for the huskanaw certainly involved fasting—but Parkman relates succinct but revealing details about the ritual’s meaning:

Each primitive Indian has his guardian Manitou, to whom he looks for counsel, guidance, and protection. These spiritual allies are gained by the following process. At the age of fourteen or fifteen, the Indian boy blackens his face, retires to some solitary place, and remains for days without food. Superstitious expectance and the exhaustion of abstinence rarely fail of their results. His sleep is haunted by visions, and the form

which first or most often appears is that of his guardian manitou,--a beast, a bird, a fish, a serpent, or some other object, animate or inanimate. An eagle or a bear is the vision of a destined warrior; a wolf, of a successful hunter; while a serpent foreshadows the future medicine man . . . (65)<sup>64</sup>

It is understandable why neither the writers on Virginia, nor the Puritans, nor the Jesuit fathers would want to reveal in much detail what they may have known about the various substances used in these rituals for fear of encouraging their use among their own flock. Neither did the Catholics nor the Puritans want competition with their own religious systems, which revealing details of shamanistic practices among the heathen might have generated.

The earliest known account of what may have been the deliberate experimental use of jimson weed by English colonists involves a group of Jamestown, Virginia soldiers in 1675, who ingested what was thereafter known as Jamestown weed. Rev. Mr. John Clayton, minister at Jamestown from 1684-1686 and afterwards Dean of Kildare in Ireland, described the incident in a letter (1687) to Dr. Nehemiah Grew, member of the Royal Society and author of Cosmologica Sacra (1701). This letter was later published in volume 41 of the Royal Society's Philosophical Transactions.<sup>65</sup> Clayton's letter indicates that the story of the Jamestown incident was circulating even before Robert Beverly published a famous account of it in The History and Present State of Virginia (1705). Clayton says that he had heard the story "asserted by many" that the soldiers "were rendered apish and foolish, as if they had been drunk, or were become Idiots" (19). The Reverend Clayton implicitly identifies the weed the soldiers consumed as the plant datura

stramonium, or Jamestown Weed. Commenting that the Indians have no opium, Clayton remarks, “I have been told that in fevers and when their sick cannot sleep the[y] apply the flowers of “Strammonium to the Temples, which has an effect like Laudanum,” (“Medicinal Practices” 19). In the next sentence of the same paragraph Clayton relates the story of the intoxication of the soldiers at Jamestown with a particular weed.<sup>66</sup> Clayton adds that one of his sources for the story, a Dr. Lee, “assured me, that the same accident happned once in his own familly, but that after a night or two’s sleep, they recovered” (19). Clayton’s story confirms, at the very least, that the Jamestown Indians did use datura stramonium in a gentler, topical form—for at least one mind-altering practice.

In The History and Present State of Virginia (1705), in the chapter “Of the Wild Fruits of the Country,” Robert Beverley, using Clayton as one of his sources, gives further details about the same incident, identifying the plant as that of the thornapple, the name by which it was then known in England:

The Jamestown weed (which resembles the thorny apple of Peru, and I take to be the plant so called) is supposed to be one of the greatest coolers in the world.<sup>67</sup> This being an early plant, was gathered very young for a boiled salad, by some of the soldiers sent thither to quell the rebellion of Bacon; and some of them eat plentifully of it, the effect of which was a very pleasant comedy; for they turned natural fools upon it for several days: one would blow up a feather in the air; another would dart straws at with much fury; and another stark naked was sitting up in a corner, like a

monkey, grinning and making mows at them; a fourth would fondly kiss and paw his companions, and sneer in their faces, with a countenance more antic than any in a Dutch droll. In this frantic condition they were confined, lest they should in their folly destroy themselves; though it was observed that all their actions were full of innocence and good nature. Indeed, they were not very cleanly, for they would have wallowed in their own excrements if they had not been prevented. A thousand such simple tricks they played, and after eleven days returned to themselves again, not remembering anything that had passed. (139-40)

Key elements of Beverly's account involve his mention that the men grew mad for several days after ingesting this substance, acted foolishly and indiscriminately, had to be confined to avoid hurting or killing themselves, and did not remember anything. Later, in Book 3, entitled Of the Indians, their Religion Laws, and Customs in War and Peace, chapter 8, "Concerning the Religion, and Worship of the Indians," Beverly writes about some others who had ingested an herb, had gone mad for days, behaved erratically, had to be confined to keep from hurting themselves or others, and had forgotten everything. These were boys who had been chosen to undergo the Algonquian initiation rite called the Huskanawing. Beverly describes the Native American practice:

The choicest and briskest young men of the town, and such only as have acquired some treasure by their travels and hunting, are chosen out by the rulers to be huskanawed; and whoever refuses to undergo this process dares not remain among them. . . . [B]ut the principal part of the business

is, to carry them into the woods, and there keep them under confinement, and destitute of all society for several months, giving them no other sustenance but the infusion, or decoction, of some poisonous, intoxicating roots; by virtue of which physic, and by the severity of the discipline which they undergo, they became stark, staring mad; in which raving condition, they are kept eighteen or twenty days. During these extremities, they are shut up, night and day, in a strong inclosure, made on purpose; one of which I saw belonging to the Pamunky Indians, in the year 1694. It was in shape like a sugar loaf, and every way open like a lattice for the air to pass through, as in tab. 4, fig. 3. In this cage, thirteen young men had been huskanawed, and had not been a month set at liberty when I saw it. Upon this occasion, it is pretended that these poor creatures drink so much of that water of Lethe, that they perfectly lose the remembrance of all former things, even of their parents, their treasure, and their language. When the doctors find that they have drank sufficiently of the wysoccan, (so they call this mad potion,) they gradually restore them to their senses again, by lessening the intoxication of their diet; but before they are perfectly well, they bring them back into their towns, while they are still wild and crazy, through the violence of the medicine. (Bk. 3, ch. 8, 207-08)

Beverly includes with his text an illustration of a “huskanaw” pen resembling a cone or a sugar loaf<sup>68</sup> (see illustration 1). Beverly actually had the image of the pen added onto to an already existing engraving.

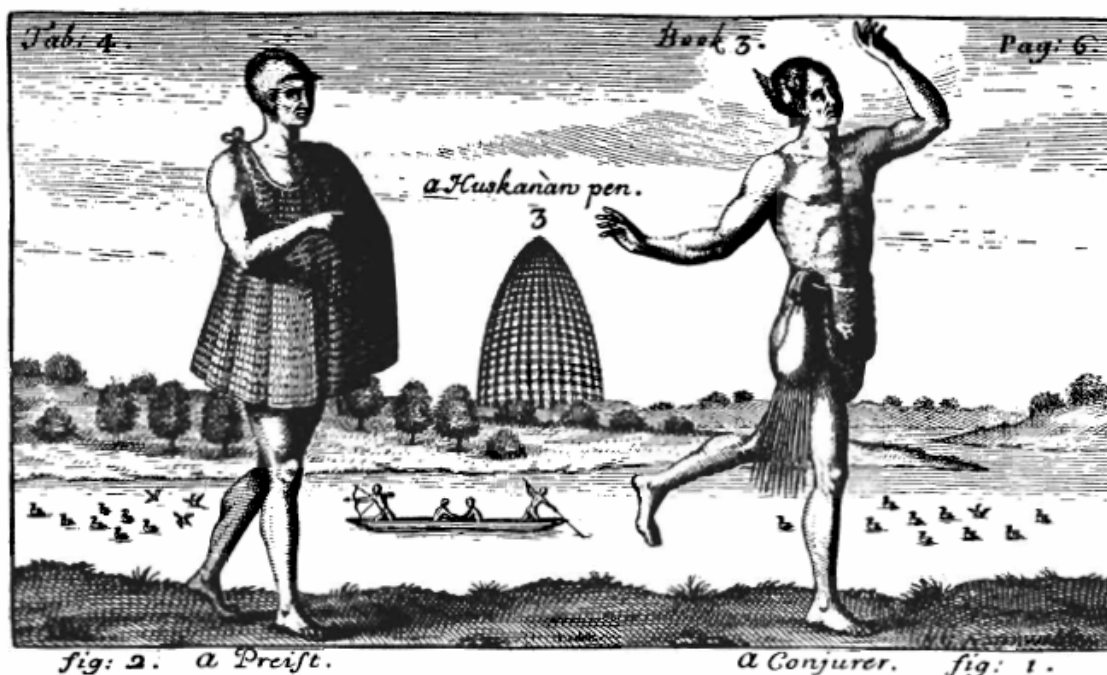


Figure 1. A Huskanaw Pen. woodcut from Robert Beverly’s The History and Present State of Virginia (London, 1705) in Louis B. Wright, ed. (Chapel Hill, U of NC P, 1947) 165.

We are left with, of course, Beverly’s view of the ritual, not any contemporary Native American account of what actually took place or why. It seems likely that the Jamestown soldiers had learned of the effects of jimson weed from the Powhatan Indians who used it in their huskanaw ceremony and decided to experience it for themselves, just as American soldiers during the Vietnam War would use marijuana and opium as recreation,



escape, and a means of coping. Frederick W. Gleach examines the ritual and meaning of the huskanaw in a variety of seventeenth-century sources. From his own research in the rituals of Algonquian Indians, he concludes that huskanaw is “probably a vision-quest rite, by means of which a young man acquired . . . a tutelary spirit, establishing a personal connection with the supernatural world which would help him to employ the powers available in the world in the right ways” (38). This spirit guide was to remain with him the rest of his life. Often this guardian spirit appeared in animal form. Indians would often tattoo images of the object or animal on their bodies using a crude method of tattooing: piercing the skin and then applying charcoal to the wound.

Although we can as yet draw no conclusions as to relationships in the meaning of the puberty initiation ritual between the various tribes, we can gather from another example that the use of the datura plant in Native American initiation ceremonies was widespread. Writing for the Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution in 1920, ethnobotanist William E. Safford includes in his article a detailed description of an initiation ritual among the Luiseño Indians of Southern California, resembling in many ways the huskanaw among the Virginia Powhatans. In their puberty initiation rite, the Luiseno administer datura meteloides, a species of datura similar to stramonium. In the evening, just after dark, the shaman takes the boys before the chief who crushes the root of the plant with a pestle. The root is then put in a sieve, and water is poured over it. The boys then drink the infusion. When the effects begin the boys start falling to the ground and are taken elsewhere until they regain normal consciousness. Following this ritual the boys are instructed in occult knowledge.<sup>69</sup>

A key characteristic of the huskanaw ritual was the loss of memory of all previous existence, the purging of ideas formed in childhood that were considered no longer valid and viewed as an impediment to manhood. Did the Indians of New England use the same plant for a similar purpose as the Virginia Algonquians did in their huskanaw ritual? The Jamestown weed certainly grew around Boston as well. The main ingredient of the drink used in Virginia, which Beverley calls wysoccan, William E. Safford concludes, was “undoubtedly Datura stramonium” or Jamestown weed (558). It is significant that delirium, outrageous behavior, and amnesia were three of the symptoms said to be experienced by young men in the huskanaw rite, the soldiers in Jamestown, and the bewitched at Salem.

Noticeably, the descriptions of the symptoms of the afflicted at Salem quoted at the beginning of this chapter are consistent with the bizarre behavior of the soldiers Beverley described who had ingested jimson weed or datura stramonium. Without a modicum of doubt, the symptoms described by Lawson, Mather, Calef, Hale, and others of the afflicted girls at Salem could all be attributable to datura stramonium ingestion. Contemporary descriptions of the girls’ behavior and of their visions seem consistent with what is now known about datura stramonium intoxication. Beverley’s description of the behavior of the soldiers in Jamestown after eating jimson weed is remarkably consistent with the forms of derangement described of those initially afflicted at Salem. The substance, if ingested by Abigail Williams, could have caused her assertiveness and insolence in telling the Reverend Deodat Lawson, “I know no Doctrine you had, If you did name one, I have forgot it” (Burr Narratives 154). Regardless of the reason, she

exhibits extreme brazenness, forgetfulness, and distraction. Hallucinations, delirium, forgetfulness, distraction, and dangerous and uncontrollable behavior are listed in every medical handbook describing the symptoms of jimson weed ingestion. The substance was already linked to the devilish practices of the Indians.

Would the girls have experimented with jimson weed themselves? Their close proximity to the ever-present threat of the Indians who were at that moment attacking the frontier in Wells, Maine, only forty miles from Salem, would have made Indian practices a matter of interest, discussion, speculation, and perhaps of general knowledge.<sup>70</sup> Since Puritan settlers believed in the close affinity between Indians and the devil, they would have been fascinated by religious rituals of Indians and their powwows, their priests, sorcerers, and medicine men. That the girls would experiment knowingly and repeatedly with the plant themselves is not likely. It is clear from many modern cases of adolescent experimentation with datura stramonium that once individuals did experience the physical effects, delirium, and hallucinations from a strong dose of jimson weed, most are unwilling to repeat this profoundly disturbing, terrifying, and unpleasant experiment any time soon. If seventeenth-century believers in witchcraft had been given jimson weed without their knowledge, it would not have taken much convincing to believe that witches were in active pursuit once the effects and the hallucinations started.

A caveat needs to be added: even though the girls would not have willingly repeated their experiment with jimson weed the Salemites might well have had an imperative for its ingestion. For those at Salem, living in freezing, dark winter days long before modern media entertainment, the Salem witch episode was a fascinating source of

reality entertainment. A case in point is the event of March 1, 1692. So many people flocked to witness the examination of the first accused witches, Tituba, Sarah Good, and Sarah Osborn that the venue had to be moved from Nathaniel Ingersoll's tavern to the Village meeting house down the street (Roach 25). On March 21, several hundred people crowded into the meeting house to witness the afflicted girls during the examination of Martha Corey. If word had gotten out somehow that jimson weed could make people see devils and ghosts, which most believed in anyway,<sup>71</sup> seventeenth-century New Englanders would likely have felt compelled to experiment with the drug to see with their own eyes the manifestations of the invisible world. The ability to see demons and spirits would have resonated with those in Salem in 1692. What then would have been a religious impetus, today would center mostly on recreational use for a unique experience. Today jimson-weed use would not have the same appeal that it had in 1692.

At the same time, we should not entirely discount the possibility that some of the girls were complicit in their use of the plant—and therefore co-conspirators: we hear from contemporary sources that some of the girls had been experimenting with the occult. Experiments with the effects of the plant among the accusers (or even the accused) cannot be ruled out completely, especially among some of the older petitioners since Elizabeth Hubbard, Mercy Lewis, Mary Walcott, and Mary Warren were older than 12. Could some of these “little sorceries” to which Cotton Mather referred and preferred not to name have involved ingesting the active ingredient in wysocan in some kind of rebellious coming-of-age vision quest? That is certainly possible. We need to remember that plants were long considered to have had supernatural properties associated with

witchcraft. The plant had been used by Native Americans as a hallucinogen to instruct participants in diagnosing and healing sickness and to perceive clairvoyantly the deeds of enemy shamans (see Spier). To be sure, the young men in the huskanawag ceremony did not oversee their own ingestion of the dangerous intoxicant, but older members of the tribe, minders, monitored the administration of the drug and its effects. Undergoing the huskanawag ordeal among Native Americans does not seem to have been so much a matter of choice among recipients as a sacred duty and honor with results considered vital to the community. It may have been entirely involuntary among the girls at Salem.

Michael Dalton's The Country Justice, a law book used as a guide by the Salem judges, condemns witches for "Ceremonial Forms of words (called Charms) by them pronounced; or by Medicines, Herbs, or other things applied, above the course of Nature, and by the Devils help, and Covenants made with him" (386).<sup>72</sup> From the Indian's viewpoint, however, users of jimson weed would become visionaries, and there is evidence that some of the girls, notably Ann Putnam and Mary Walcott, were treated as visionaries, those able to detect and identify witches at a time when accusations in Salem Village were winding down. They were called away to Andover to do just that, thus spreading the epidemic further outside Salem Village. That some of the girls might have used the weed themselves, however, does not negate the strong possibility that they were being manipulated by vengeful adults motivated by greed, thirst for power and dominance, and dread of penury in a harsh environment.

A fascinating incident involving Mary Warren, who played the roles of both accuser and accused, appears in the Salem court records describing what some of the girls

might have experienced had they ingested the weed either knowingly or unknowingly and what their reaction might have been. Mary Warren's involvement in the Salem trials started as an accuser. After she had spent the night in the village on March 24, she stood with the accusers at Rebecca Nurse's examination on March 25. The timing of events along with other circumstances indicates that Mary Warren was in the village for the express purpose of giving testimony on the 24-25 of March. While there, she could have been initiated into the group of accusers. Where in the Village she stayed, we can only guess, but it is probable it was at the home of some of the accusers. Her Master, the sixty-year-old John Proctor, went to fetch her home because he violently disapproved of the girls' accusations.

On the morning of March 24, John Proctor started out from the Town to the Village to bring Mary back. Meeting Samuel Sibley on the road, Proctor asked him how the "folks," meaning the afflicted, were doing at the village, and Sibley answered that they "were very bad last night." Sibley's wife, Mary, had been the instigator of the witch cake incident. Proctor told Sibley he would "fetch his jade Home & thresh the Devil out of her & more to the like purpose[,] crying [out against the accusers] hang them hang them" (SWP 2: 683). Proctor told Sibley that he had rather give 40 pence than Mary go to the village among the accusers. When Sibley asked why, Proctor replied that "if they were let alone so we should all be Devils & witches quickly . . ." (SWP 2: 683). The accusers, rather, should "be had to the Whipping post." Mary Warren later testified, apparently in revenge for her whipping by Proctor, that on March 26 as well as "Divers other Dayes and times as well before as after," John Proctor had been afflicting her with

witchcraft (SWP 2: 680). Proctor was indicted for afflicting Mary Warren on March 26. Interestingly, that was not the date of Proctor's examination, but the date Mary Warren gave in her indictment as the date Proctor afflicted her. According to Bernard Rosenthal, in the Salem court records the dating of Warren's indictment was "an exception to the standard practice of having the affliction occur on the day of the examination" (Salem Story 230 n. 42). The date suggests Mary's immediate revenge for a possible beating.

On April 11 Mary Warren's status shifted from accuser to accused. At the April 11 examination of John Proctor's wife, Elizabeth, who was indicted for witchcraft, Ann Putnam declared that Proctor's specter told her that she "hath made her maid [Mary Warren] set her hand to" the Devil's book. Mary was then arrested and examined, probably because, as Elizabeth Hubbard put it at Warren's subsequent examination on April 19, Mary had at some point said that "the afflicted persons did but dissemble" (SWP 3: 793). As a result of Warren's apparent change of heart against the accusers, the accusers or their controllers decided to go after Mary Warren and began making accusations that she was afflicting them. Elizabeth Hubbard's accusation of Mary Warren for dissembling marks the first open indication of outright fraud in the Salem trials.

While Mary Warren was in prison, sometime around the first week of May, 1692, she gave what could have been a candid appraisal of her own and the accusers' states of mind in the context of making accusations. Four people accused as witches, Edward Bishop, Sarah Bishop, Mary Easty, and Mary English testified that while they were in jail with Warren they had

Heard Mary Warrin Severall times Say that the Majestrates Might as well  
 Examine Keysars Daughter that has Bin Distracted Many Yeares And  
 Take Noatice of what Shee Said<sup>73</sup>: as well as any of the Afflicted pe'sons  
 for Said Mary warrin when I was Afflicted I thought I saw the Apparission  
 of A hundred persons: for Shee said hir Head was Distempered that Shee  
 Could not tell what Shee Said, And the Said Mary tould us that when Shee  
 was well Againe Shee Could not Say that Shee saw any of Apparissons at  
 the time Aforesaid[.] (SWP 3: 803)

What did Warren mean by “well Againe”? What did she mean by saying she saw the apparitions of a hundred people and after recovering could not say whether she had actually seen them or not? Warren’s words suggest some kind of temporary delusional state or insanity. Her allusion to Keysar’s daughter is an allusion to another instance of insanity.<sup>74</sup> Bernard Rosenthal points out that Warren’s statement to four others in prison argues for a “mentally unstable person,” adding “this picture suggests hallucination and tenuous recovery, a recognition of one’s own unreliability” (46). Though both accusers and accused had a “vested interest” in making Warren seem to be an unreliable witness, and though Warren could have “feigned uncertainty,” she really might have been uncertain about what she had seen and heard. Warren’s statement about her distemper and that of the other afflicted girls describes precisely some of the effects of jimson weed intoxication. Had she been affected by both memory loss and hallucinations associated with datura stramonium, she might very well have seen the apparitions of many people either together, singly, or in groups, only to recant later. The absolute conviction of



seeing people and things whom the subject later realizes could not have actually been present is a major symptom among those who take datura stramonium deliberately to get high. The appearance of people is one of the most common effects of datura ingestion—although to the subject the people seem real. Had the Salem girls also ingested jimson weed, that might account for their spectral sightings and elucidate why Mary Warren described them (and herself) as mad as Keysar’s daughter. This type of delirium is clearly evident in the modern case of a 17-year old who grew his own plant and then made a tea from one flower, one leaf, and one seed pod leaves the following account.

I remember having very long conversations with friends that weren’t there[.] It wasn’t anything important just general chat . . . the hallucinations were as real as reality . . . the most interesting part were the UFO’s in the sky I think I counted 13 of them, 1 was hovering over the next door house, they would just fly everywhere, at first I thought they were satilites but then I decided they HAD to be ufo’s. (“Datura Tea”)

If datura enables users to have conversations with long-gone friends, see UFOs, experience the sensation of floating as the subject above describes, then certainly datura could be responsible for interactions with hovering specters in the case of Salem.

Negative effects of datura such as another modern user describes—if experienced in the seventeenth century—could easily have been taken for preternatural torments. After drinking a decoction of datura tea, the subject began experiencing dry mouth. Soon a feeling of drunkenness came on and his legs gave way. He got into bed and experienced the subsequent hallucination:

I had an extremely vivid and realistic dream of an invisible being grabbing me and throwing me head first into a wall. Try as I did, I was unable to see it at all. Again he picked me up and slammed [me] head first into the wall again. Then it began to beat me. It grabbed my fore arm and snapped it in two. My bones were protruding from my flesh and my blood was squirting high in the air. I pleaded with the being to leave me alone but it showed me no mercy. It picked me up again and slammed me head first into the wall once more. At that point I woke up and realized I was dreaming, but I was none the less quite shaken by the ordeal. I had the strangest feeling that the being was punishing me for entering the spirit world and wanted to teach me a lesson. (“Agent 11421”)

Most, if not all of the symptoms of the afflicted in Salem, which they attributed to the vexations of the devil, are clear markers of datura stramonium poisoning. In account after account, modern users of datura undergo a variety of experiences that could easily have been taken as symptoms of bewitchment or possession.<sup>75</sup> That Native Americans used datura for the express purpose of contacting the spirit world speaks for the nature of its effects.

In Salem, the bewitched often spoke of seeing spectral birds. Tituba saw the devil as a dog, a hog, and a man that offered her a yellow bird to serve him. In one version of her examination, she accused Sarah Good of having a little yellow bird that sucked between her fingers (SWP 3: 748). In another version, she said the children had seen this yellow bird several times (3: 752). The Friday night before “Abigail was Ill” the devil

had showed Tituba “Some thing like Creatures, a little bird something like green & white” (3: 753). According to Samuel Parris, Thomas Putnam, and his brother-in-law Nathaniel Ingersoll, Ann Putnam Sr., Ann, Jr., Mary Walcott, and Abigail Williams saw birds fluttering about Rebecca Nurse at her examination (SWP 2: 598). One modern user of datura received spectral visitations from both people and birds:

It always seemed like there was a bunch of people in my room, but when I'd talk to them, I'd realize they weren't there. Then it looked like some demonic midget was in the corner. Amazingly, this didn't scare me at all. I laughed at him and he felt insulted and disappeared . . . .

Then something else cool happened, it looked like there were birds perched on my window, but on the inside of the room. This particular window usually has bats that hang around it at night, so it seemed real enough that there could be birds there, but at the time I didn't care how the hell they got in my room. It was nice to have some company. Sometimes they'd fly around my room, and do little tricks around my bed, and play-fight with each other. One got real close to me, and I tried to grab it, but then it dissappeared. I thought to myself that he must be hiding in my hand, and tried clapping to get him out. (“Birds in My Room”)

Symptoms of *datura stramonium* ingestion could include the girls' refusal to eat. Cotton Mather wrote, “For if it were *Præternatural*, to keep a rigid *Fast*, for Nine, yea, for Fifteen Days together . . . Such *Præternatural* Things were endured by them” ( Pietas in Patriam 69). An extended fast was also part of the Algonquian huskanaw ceremony as

mentioned before. One of the effects of Jamestown weed intake is dry mouth. Modern accounts are filled with thirsty users with dry mouth attempting to gulp water. Another effect of jimson weed ingestion is a radical deceleration of the digestive system. The effects of a single incident of ingesting datura stramonium might last for 1-3 days because the alkaloids contained in the plant cannot be eliminated quickly from the body. Mather's suggestion of using a fast to cure witchcraft might have been very helpful in this case because it could have eliminated a source of the poison afflicting the girls. If the girls had been affected by jimson weed, a true water-only fast would have soon eliminated their symptoms. But even people who fast must drink some liquid, which also could be tainted. Cider and even water could contain a tincture, infusion, or decoction of the plant, enough to keep the subject intoxicated. In Pietas in Patriam (1697), Mather gives a lengthy description of the afflictions suffered by the bewitched that sound like stramonium poisoning. One of the terrors that afflicted the bewitched was that of specters attempting to administer poisons.

*Poisons* to the standers-by, wholly *Invisible*, were sometimes forced upon the Afflicted; which when they have with much Reluctancy swallowed, they have *swoln* presently, so that the common Medicines for *Poisons* have been found necessary to relieve them: Yea, some-times the *Specters* in the *struggles*, have so dropt the *Poisons*, that the standers by have smelt them, and view'd them, and beheld the *Pillows* of the miserable stained with them. (Pietas in Patriam 70)

Mather repeats this story in Book 2 of the Magnalia (61). The “specters” trying to make the afflicted take poisons might have been Parris and Putnam. To have raised the specter of deliberate poisoning in 1692 would have been a slanderous accusation and would have been too rational an explanation to fit Mather’s purpose of attributing the cause of the afflictions to witchcraft. Just what these alleged poisons might have been can only be speculated about. The visions of the afflicted could actually have been “memories” of a real person trying to poison them, which they confused with one of the “apparitions of 100 persons,” as Mary Warren described them. Mather’s writing about the Salem episode introduces the idea of poison linked with the fits of the afflicted, an idea he didn’t just invent.

In 1697, and again in 1702, Mather explicitly relates the symptoms of the afflicted to poisoning, a point that he alludes to briefly in Wonders of the Invisible World concerning Phoebe Chandler’s claim that the specter of Martha Carrier was poisoning her. Mather sometimes associates the devil’s actions on the mind as poison.<sup>76</sup> Even though he claims the afflicted were poisoned by specters, the stains on the pillows and the smells seem real enough. Could these stains on the pillow have resulted from the afflicted vomiting in their delirium or sleep? The “swelling” Mather refers to could have been due to a combination of drinking excessive amounts of water due to extreme thirst and dry mouth, and bladder and bowel retention, because toxins are not eliminated from the body by the usual means for some time. Datura does cause high fever. It is quite probable that the afflicted would have vomited upon their pillows, as the drug frequently causes nausea. On the following page in the Magnalia, just after tacitly admitting that common

antidotes for poisons would relieve the symptoms the afflicted, Mather again writes about magical poisons in relation to spectral attacks in Salem.

Now many good Men took up an Opinion, That the *Providence* of God would not permit an *Innocent Person* to come under such a *Spectral Representation*; and that a concurrence of so many Circumstances would prove an *accused Person* to be in a *Confederacy* with the *Dæmons* thus afflicting of the Neighbours; they judged, that except these things might amount unto a *Conviction*, it would scarce be possible ever to *Convict* a *Witch*; and they had some *Philosophical Schemes* of *Witchcraft*, and of the Method and Manner wherein *Magical Poisons* operate, which further supported them in their Opinion. (62)

If we look carefully at what Mather is saying (68-70) in Pietas in Patriam, we see that he links the young people, their dabbling in occult practices, and their experience of being poisoned. We can follow these links if we read Mather's descriptions quoted above alongside that of John Hale of how the events in Salem got started:

I fear some young persons, through a vain curiosity to know their future condition, have tampered with the Devil's tools, so far that hereby one door was opened to Satan to play those pranks; *Anno* 1692: I knew one of the Afflicted persons, who (as I was credibly informed) did try with an egg and a glass to find her future Husband's Calling; till there came up a coffin, that is, a Specter in likeness of a Coffin. And she was afterward followed with diabolical molestation to her death; and so dyed a single

person. A just warning to others, to take heed of handling the Devils weapons, lest they get a wound thereby. (Modest Enquiry 132-33)

Certainly gazing at the white of an egg in a glass all by itself did not cause the girl's perpetual diabolical molestations. If one of the girls had ingested datura stramonium in conjunction with gazing into this makeshift crystal ball, however, she might have been disturbed by the vision of a spectral coffin. If the girls had ingested large doses of datura stramonium regularly until going into seizures and convulsions, they might have become physically as well as psychologically impaired. Samuel Parris's niece, Abigail Williams, one of the first and most frequent accusers, probably died at or before 1697 "haunted to the end" (Roach 518). What follows is a description of one datura poisoning as experienced by someone who drank tea made from the leaves of the plant:

If you want hallucinations this is your drug. However "you" are not there to experience them. This stuff takes over completely and irreversibly for at least 24 hours. Stupidly, I went out while the effects had not yet fully started. After having been thrown out of a bar, where I was desperately searching for my briefcase that was supposed to be there someplace (but which i hadn't even with me ) I found myself in a city that i did not recognize. I did not remember where I came from, where to go, what [to] do, who I was, let alone what I was doing there at this time of night, nor did I have any clue how to get "home" as far as there was still a conception of what home might be. There was complete retrograde amnesia: no access to any knowledge at all. In the mean time I had

encounters with people I knew, that were able to do a disappearing act. Just by standing behind a light pole they could make themselves invisible.

(This must be the “witches sabbath” hallucination , which seems recurrent in this type of delirium: the very very real hallucination of speaking with people) [parenthetical statements and spelling in source]. (“Chris”)

Another user named “Jaymz” writes that “The hallucinations from datura stramonium are very strong. They are very bizzare, but seem natural. . . . [E]verything is very, very odd, but seems real.....more real than reality if that makes any sense to you[.]” In his account of an experience with datura, Jaymz, a young man who had been partying with some friends in Savannah, Georgia, relates the following experience that occurred after ingesting about 70 datura stramonium seeds.

I heard a knock at the front door as soon as I got back to my room. I went to see who it was and when I opened the door, I was in for a surprise. I think that everyone I had ever known was there, even people I had forgotten all about. (This makes me think that Datura has the power to unlock forgotten memories.) I let the hundreds of people in and we all went to my room....which is strange, because I had a very small room, but everyone was there. I was talking to and catching up with everyone. People kept on disappearing and reappearing in random places in my room. People also kept dying, decaying, and eventually disappearing. I was worried, but soon forgot all about it. [parenthetical statements in source] (Jaymz)



The seeds of datura stramonium are tiny, dark, flat, and kidney-shaped, about 3 mm in diameter. Ground up, they can easily be hidden in whole wheat flour, rye flour, or corn meal. What would be the difference between preternatural vexations and the symptoms of nightshade poisoning when people are not aware they've been poisoned? People in the seventeenth century would indeed think they had been hexed by witchcraft because they would begin to have conversations with beings that disappeared or turned into monsters; they might see the specters of people whom someone suggested they would see, or whatever image was placed in their mind's eye. Their imaginations could be prodded with questions like, "Do you see Goody Nurse's specter with her familiar, that cat by the fire?" Being outside with a delusional person and seeing a dog run by, the minder might say, "Look, there goes Goody Proctor's specter in the shape of a dog!" In a delirious state caused by datura, people might indeed feel as if they had been scalded because their skin would flush and fever would cause their temperature to rise dramatically. They would hallucinate about the shape of anyone they knew or about of the devil as a "Black man with a lounge Crouned hat" (SWP 3: 838). They could hallucinate the devil in the shape of tawny Indians because they had been taught to associate them with witchcraft and the supernatural.

They would receive an "alteration of the eyes," in three ways: they could see things that weren't there; their pupils would be dilated so their eyes would be more sensitive to light, and they might also have blurred vision that could last for days, a week, or longer. They might indeed feel pricked and tormented as the result of convulsions and tactile hallucinations. If they knew they had been given a drug they might at times

remember why they were experiencing these sensations because they might remember something about eating the seeds or drinking a decoction of the flowers or leaves. But if they didn't know why these strange things were happening to them, they would likely become so frightened that they would hallucinate even more vividly whatever was imagined to be responsible for their malady. Many in the seventeenth century would certainly attribute such unexplained sensations besetting one unexpectedly to witchcraft. Had they been victims of dosing (administered by others), they might have believed in any cause that explained their malady. "Dosing" was quite common even among friends in America in the 1960s and 1970s. Today, females especially are sometimes dosed with date-rape drugs. There is every reason to believe that dosing existed in 1692 Salem.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, from his reading of witchcraft manuals, Cotton Mather was well informed about the link between witches and plants of the nightshade family like mandrake, belladonna, henbane, and datura stramonium. At the time of the Salem trials, Robert Beverley's History of Virginia (1705) had not yet been published, but other accounts like Purchas's had, yet Mather may or may not have realized how much the behavior of the bewitched resembled the effects of Jamestown weed intoxication. The incident at Jamestown certainly did get Mather's attention, finally. By 1720, at least, Mather had written about some of the remarkable effects of datura stramonium. In The Christian Philosopher (1720) Mather paraphrases Robert Beverly concerning the effects the Jamestown weed had on the soldiers who had consumed it. Perhaps aware of where such information might lead, Mather is also quick to give the incident an innocuous spin. He says that although they had to be confined

“lest they should kill themselves . . . there appear’d nothing but Innocence in all their Actions,” suggesting, of course, that he conceived nothing devilish in them (1994 ed. 147). Elsewhere Mather notes that the seeds of “Strammonium, carelessly kept, have grown after seven Years” (Christian Philosopher 1994 ed: 138).

The Jamestown or jimson weed is one of eleven species of the genus datura from the solanaceae or nightshade family, all characterized by white or purplish star-shaped flowers. Because of the traditional associations of the nightshade family with drugs and poisons, European and American colonists were at first reluctant to use some of the species of the solanaceae family that were imported from the New World, including the tomato (Lycopersicon esculentum), white potato (Solanum tuberosum), and eggplant (Solanum melongena var. esculenta).

The following illustration of a near relative of jimson or Jamestown weed appears in John Gerard’s Herball Or Generall Historie of Plantes of 1630, owned by the Harvard College Library—and by the Mathers. Gerard, writing years before Linneaus tandardized the names of plants, tells us that one of its names is “stramonia.”

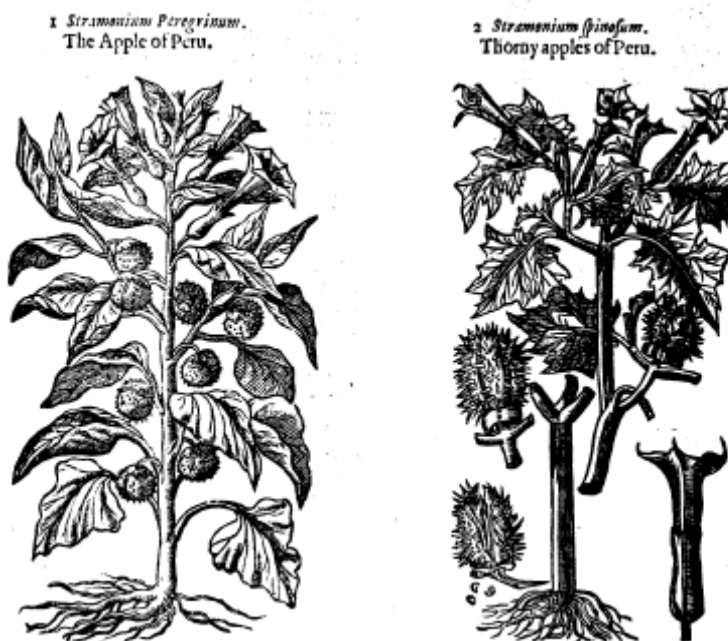


Figure 1.2. The Thorn apple. Gerard's Herball (London 1630) 348.

Anyone looking at the plant in Gerard's illustration would have easily identified the familiar plant commonly called "thorn apple," and discovered it in every cornfield of New England. Gerard's herbal tells us that the Greeks attributed to it the quality of instilling "drowsiness and disquiet sleep" (348). According to Gerard, Pierandrea Andrea Matthiolus thought it to be the "Nux methel."<sup>77</sup> Gerard informs us that in English it may be called the Thorn apple or Apple of Peru. The plant is "cold" in the "fourth degree" and of a "drowsie and numbing quality not inferior to mandrake." It was thought by the Greeks to drive horses mad. It may have been the plant "Hippomanes" that Theocritus alluded to in his Idylls (2). Gerard gives the original Greek and then an English translation: "Hippomanes 'mongst th' Arcadians springs, by which ev'n all / The Colts and agile Mares in mountains mad do fall." (349)<sup>78</sup>

Datura stramonium gets its name from Hindu datra, named for the thieves who used it to drug their victims, as Christobal Acosta reports in his treatise Tractato des Las Drogas y Medicinas de Las Indias Orientales (1582). Mather must also have been familiar with John Parkinson's Paradisi in Sole Paradisus Terrestris or Garden of All Sorts of Pleasant Flowers (London 1629). Mather owned a copy of this handbook; another was also accessible at Harvard College Library (Catalogus 27). Parkinson describes some of the "virtues" of stramonium, or thorn apple, as follows:

The East Indian lascivious women performe strange acts with the seed . . . giving it their husbands to drinke. The whole plant, but especially the seed, is of a very cold and soporiferous quality, procuring sleep and distraction of the senses. A few of the seeds steeped and given in drinke, will cause them that take it to seem starke drunke or dead drunke, which fit will within a few houres weare away . . . It may therefore (in my opinion) be of safe and good use to one, that is to have a legge or an arme cut off, or to be cut for the stone, or some other such like cure to be performed, to take away the sense of paine for the time of doing it; otherwise I hold it not fit to be used without great caution. (362)

Datura stramonium has also been identified by Andreas Palatkis and Roger C. Duvoisin as the substance used by the witch Circe to create a delusional state with subsequent amnesia when she turned Odysseus' men into swine (Odyssey 10: 248-259). In Homer's tale Odysseus's crew were turned into "pigs." On his way through the forest to rescue his men, Odysseus met Hermes, who warned him against meeting Circe and

provided him with an antidote or “moly” for Circe’s baleful drug. Plaitkis and Duvoisin conclude that this “moly” was the snowdrop or Galanthus nivalis, containing galanthamine, a centrally acting anticholinesterase, used successfully as an antidote to the effects of anticholinergic alkaloids, which are contained in all species of datura. Since datura stramonium contains an abundance of hallucinatory and amnesia-producing anticholinergic alkaloids, R.E. Jennings also identified it as the likely culprit in Circe’s pharmacopeia.<sup>79</sup> The genus datura, or sacred thorn apple, has been identified as the “[m]ost universally used hallucinogenic and medicinal plant known to humans.” Shamans have used datura to transcend physical reality, take “magical” flights into other worlds, contact guardian sprits, and shape-shift into “other life forms such as the mountain lion or eagle” (Moerman, Native American Ethnobotany 194).

Properties of soporific plants such as nightshades have been long recognized for their ability to create delusional states such as the sensations of flying over vast distances and of turning into animals. Johann Weyer defines a Lamia as

a woman who, by virtue of a deceptive or imaginary pact that she has entered into with the demon, supposedly perpetrates all kinds of evil-doing, whether by thought or by curse or by glance or by use of some ludicrous object . . . She can “ravage fertile crops . . . travel great distances abroad in a few hours . . . dance with demons . . . hold banquets . . . play the succubus . . . have intercourse with demons . . . [and] change herself or others into beasts. (Bk 3: 166)

A Lamia, whom Weyer associates with witches, is deluded into thinking she can perform such activities under inducement of the “arch-contriver” “by means of dreams, when they have unwittingly fallen into profound lethargic sleep as a result of this anointing with a highly soporific ointment” (3: 225). In Europe such plants, including the nightshade datura stramonium linked to witches’ flying ointment, have also been indicated in cases of shape-shifting and lycanthropy (Sidky 249). A detailed recipe for werewolf salve provided by Jean de Nynauld in De La Lycanthropie, Transformation, et Extase des Sorciers (Paris, 1615), and quoted at length by Weyer, included belladonna root, henbane, and aconite, also known as wolfsbane or monkshood.<sup>80</sup> Belladonna and henbane are nightshades. and Nathaniel Crouch wrote in The Kingdom of Darkness that

a certain Woman being in Prison on suspicion of Witchcraft, pretending to be able to turn her self into a Wolf, the Magistrate before whom she was brought promised her that she should not be put to death in case she would then in his presence thus transform her self, which she readily consented to, accordingly she anointed her Head, Neck and Arm-pits, immediately upon which she fell a most profound sleep for three hours, after she suddenly rose up, declaring that she had been turned into a Wolf, and had been at a place some miles distant, and there killed first a Sheep and then a Cow, The Magistrates presently sent to the place and found that first a Sheep and then a Cow had there been killed. (69-70)

Clear evidence, then, indicates that soporific substances in salves, identified with the witch’s ability to travel vast distances quickly, were also associated with the witch’s

ability to shape-shift into animal form, including that of a wolf. German toxicologist Erich Hesse wrote that

A characteristic feature of the solanaceae psychosis is . . . that the intoxicated person imagines himself to have been changed into some animal, and the hallucinosis is completed by a sensation of the growing of feathers and of hair, due probably to the main paraesthesia. In all these states the intoxicated person is loud, loquacious, restive; he laughs, and carries on animated discussions with people who are not there. (qtd. in Sidky 249)

Such symptoms as burning, prickling, itching, or tingling of the skin (paresthesia)<sup>81</sup> common among the afflicted at Salem, are clearly associated with symptoms of nightshade psychosis.<sup>82</sup> Thus, nightshades and other soporific plants are responsible for a variety of affects associated with witchcraft. Physical and mental torments, strange actions and excessive speech (such as the Reverend John Hale described of the girls’ “getting into Holes, and creeping under Chairs and Stools [using] sundry odd Postures and Antick Gestures, uttering foolish, ridiculous Speeches, which neither they themselves nor any others could make sense of . . .”), along with the belief that witches are able to shape-shift and fly, can all be attributed to plants of the nightshade family (qtd. in Burr Narratives 341-342).

Ethnobotanist Louis Lewin states that the effects of *datura stramonium* such as delirium and loss of memory have been “known for centuries and . . . [have] given rise to many crimes.” Lewin claims that “towards the end of the seventeenth century, extensive



poisoning by use of the plant took place” (110). He quotes one seventeenth-century source outlining its use and effects: “If only a small quantity of the plant is given to a person his mind is depraved and deluded to such a degree that anything can be done in his presence without fear of his remembering it on the following day” (110). The effect of datura stramonium allows people to be robbed without their realizing it and conveys the ability to “do anything one pleases with women and obtain anything from them” (110). According to Lewin’s source, datura stramonium caused delusions and hallucinations. One chambermaid after eating lentil soup spiked with the seeds cried, ““Look! All the devils in hell are coming!”” (qtd. in Lewin 111).

Writing 125 years after the Salem witch trials, Thomas Jefferson seems to have been well advised about one tradition of its use—and ‘about the dangers of datura stramonium ingestion. In an 1813 letter to Dr. Samuel Brown, Jefferson thanks the doctor for sending him certain seeds but expresses his reluctance to grow some of them because of their potential harm to his “grandchildren and others” who might possibly be attracted by its flowers and want to experiment with their ingestion. Jefferson writes, “The most elegant thing of that kind known is a preparation of the Jamestown weed, Datura stramonium.” He relates to Brown that “Every man of firmness carried it constantly in his pocket to anticipate the guillotine.” Perhaps Jefferson was even thinking of Thomas Paine who narrowly escaped execution by the guillotine during the French Reign of Terror. Jefferson informs Dr. Brown that the plant “brings on the sleep of death,” then gives the example of Jean Caritat Marquis de Condorcet, whom Jefferson may have known had committed suicide to avoid being executed. Jefferson writes, “I have never been able to

learn what the preparation is, other than a strong concentration of its lethiferous principle.” Finally, Jefferson advocates its use in euthanasia, as it would be a “rational relief” in diseases like the “inveterate cancer” (184).<sup>83</sup> Jefferson was also aware of the Indian ritual, the Huskanaw, because he referred to the word in his writings. (Writings 2: 444).

As stated before, the Powhatan Indians of Virginia were not the exclusive Algonquian tribe in the lands inhabited by the English colonists to practice such a ritual as the Huskenaw initiation ceremony. In Good News from New England included in Samuel Purchas’s Pilgrimage, Edward Winslow relates a ritual similar to the Huskanawing among the Indians of Massachusetts.<sup>84</sup> Writing of the religious practices among the Wompanoags about the year 1623, Winslow describes the practice that readied certain boys to take positions as Panieses, “men of great courage and wisdom” to whom “the devil appeareth more familiarly then to others.” As Winslow describes the ritual:

They traine up the most forward and likeliest boyes from their child-hood in great hardnesse, and they make them abstaine from dainte meat, observing divers orders prescribed to the end that when they are of age the Devill may appeare to them, causing to drink the juyce of Sentry and other bitter Hearbs till they cast, which they must disgorge into the platter, and drinke againe, and againe, till at length, throught extraordinary pressing of nature it will seem to bee all bloud . . . . (386)

The repeated drinking and disgorging of the juice of bitter herbs would allow the initiate to feel the full effects of the drink on an empty stomach. The purgative effects of the beverage provide one explanation of why stains of poisons were said to have been found on the pillows among the afflicted at Salem.<sup>85</sup>

Because of their covenant with the “devil” Paniseses were able to fend off death from arrows, knives, and hatchets. They became advisors to the sachem’s, or chief’s, council and were always consulted before going to war. Acting in the role of knights, they frequently escorted the sachem to protect him from danger. Considered lesser gods, the Panisees were said to be capable of chasing down and warring against a hundred men at once, all of whom they were able to slaughter single-handedly. So that the tribe might continually replenish their supply of Panisees, the Wompanoag Indians would choose certain boys already recognized for their special abilities and train them in a puberty ritual that involved the drinking of bitter herbs, repeated vomiting, and running the gauntlet so that in time “they may appear more hardy and acceptable to the Devill, that in time he may appear to them” (qtd. in Purchas XIX 386-387). This apparition came in the form of Hobbamock, who appears not to everyone but only the “chiefest and most judicious” among them, by whom Winslow probably means the elite Paniseses, “though all of them strive to attaine to that hellish height of Honour” (384). Hobbamock would appear in many guises such as that of a man, a deer, a fawn, an eagle, “but most ordinarily a Snake” (384). Hobbamok is the manifestation to an individual of the Algonquian Manitu or Great Spirit. These animal forms appear to the initiate as a vision of an animal or an object that becomes the acolyte’s guiding spirit for life.

Assembling these facts, comparing them with other sources like Smith and Purchas, we can assume that Winslow refers to the acquisition by certain adept individuals of a tutelary spirit, Hobbamock, who in Winslow's eyes "as farre as wee can conceive is the devil" (383). Contact with this spirit was acquired by means of the puberty ritual. Among many Algonquian tribes the acquisition of a tutelary spirit was the primary goal of the initiation, which involved the drinking of bitter herbs, such as wysoccan. The term "wysoccan" in the Algonquin language did not actually signify the name of a specific plant species but referred to a general category of plants that included ritual hallucinogens such as datura stramonium. The term wysoccan in the Algonquin language literally means "bitter" (Trumbull, "Wesogkon").

Similarities in initiation ceremonies are one indication of parallels in the religious worldview among the Virginia and New England tribes. Other connections were conceptual and linguistic. In Powhatan's World and Colonial Virginia : A Conflict of Cultures, Frederick W. Gleach asserts that the name Powhatan was probably related to the term powwáw, the word for a priest among the Narragansetts of Rhode Island and southern Connecticut. Both Powhatan and powwáw derive from the Proto-Algonquian root pa:w-, "dream," pa:wa:qe:wa, "he, she dreams of him, her." According to George F. Aubun, the Micmacs of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island used the term "pewat," meaning "he dreams." John M. Cooper relates that to the Cree of north-central Canada, the word powa'gan meant "guardian spirit" (qtd. in Gleach 33). A. Irving Hallowell finds that in Michigan and Canada, the Ojibwa term pawáganak signified "dream visitors or 'other-than-human persons.'" Ojibway historian William W. Warren

noted that Powhatan meant “a dream,” and C. F. Voegelin translated Powatanep in the Walum Olum as “shaman” (qtd. in Gleach 33).<sup>86</sup> Such entities are often referred to in anthropological literature as guardian spirits, asserts Hallowell (qtd. in Gleach 33). Philip L. Barbour states that the place name Powhatan also meant “Medicine-man’s (shaman’s) village or hill,” and Gleach asserts that for a man named Powhatan to have become chief suggests he embodied both political and religious power and was probably also himself a shaman (33, 42). Among seventeenth-century New England writers, powwow referred to both the Indian “sorcerers” and to their ceremonies (OED).

Gleach also relates that “Like many Algonquian groups, the Powhatans recognized the concept of manit” (40). These groups included the North Carolina coastal Algonquians, who “believed that there are many gods, which they call Mantdac, but of different sorts and degrees” (40). Manit the singular noun, refers to “spiritual power that could be manifested in any form” (Gleach 40), and Barbour also notes that manito is “the widespread Algonquian term for a spirit being” (Gleach 40). Gleach also relates that dreaming was the source of shamanic power. Frank Speck, speaking of the Rappahannock Indians in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, notes that “Dreams are held in high esteem” and that headbands were used to “induce dreaming” (qtd. in Gleach 33). It is merely speculative, but one wonders if at times the headband might have contained woven flowers of the thorn apple.

Gleach also points out that Manitu was a frequently used expression recorded by Roger Williams from seventeenth-century Massachusetts Algonquians (40). Williams defines the term:

there is a general custom amongst them: at the apprehension of any excellency in men, women, birds, beasts, fish, etc. they cry out Manittdo, that is, it is a God, as thus if they see one man excel others in wisdom, valor, strength, activity etc. they cry out Manitto a God, and therefore when they talk amongst themselves of the English ships, and great buildings, of the plowing of their fields, and especially of books and letters they will end thus: Manittôwock: they are Gods; Cummanittôo, you are a God, etc. A strong conviction natural in the soul of man, that God is, filling all things, and places, and all excellencies dwell in Gode, and proceed from him. (qtd. in Gleach 40)

Gleach further relates that “These manitoac were most likely the tutelary spirits with whom connections were made through the huskanaw ceremony. Hallowell (1976a:384-85) discussed the “so-called ‘puberty fast’ or ‘dreaming’ experience” of Ojibwa boys as “the means by which it was possible to enter into direct ‘social interaction’ with ‘persons’ of the other-than-human class for the first time. Walter Miller notes “an internalized manitu guardian” among the Fox that is obtained through a vision quest that is quite similar to the huskanaw, although of shorter duration. Robert Brightman describes the vision quest as it survives today among the Crees, and the Rev. John Heckewelder described the process of initiation for the Delawares in the late eighteenth century. All of these rituals put young men in contact with the tutelary spirits that would guide them throughout their lives. (qtd. in Gleach 41)

Thus anything significant that appeared to the initiate in spiritual form could be interpreted as Manitu. William S. Simmons in his chapter “Worldview” in Spirit of the New England Tribes quotes part of a letter from a Dutchman, Isaack de Rasieres, dated around 1628, printed in Sydney V. James’s Three Visitors to Early Plymouth describing an initiation ritual among Algonquians living near New Plymouth:

When there is a youth who begins to approach manhood, he is taken by his father, uncle, or nearest friend, and is conducted blindfolded into a wilderness, in order that he may not know the way, and is left there by night or otherwise, with a bow and arrows, and a hatchet and a knife. He must support himself there a whole winter with what the scanty earth furnishes at this season, and by hunting. Towards the spring they come again, and fetch him out of it . . . until May. He must then go out again every morning with the person who is ordered to take him . . . to seek wild herbs and roots, which they know to be the most poisonous and bitter . . . which he must drink . . . And if he cannot retain it, he must repeat the dose until he can support it. (Sydney, ed., Three Visitors, qtd. in Simmons 47).

Thus the puberty initiation rite among the Wampanoag and other Indian tribes of New England appears to be much like that described by Robert Beverly and others of the Algonquian Indians in Virginia, including the use of bitter herbs in puberty rituals. The goal, which we find by comparing the ritual among various sources, was the acquisition of a tutelary spirit. To the Puritans of New England, this spirit of Hobbamok or, as the Virginia Indians called it, “Oke,” would have been identified among the New England

Puritans as none other than a witch's familiar. The Oke, as mentioned earlier, was thought by John Smith to have sucked the left breast of some of the boys undergoing initiation, though Smith mistook the rite for child sacrifice (A Map 172). It is very likely that jimson weed or datura stramonium played a central role in Powhatan, Penobscot, and Massachusetts Indian tribal rituals as the primary hallucinogen. The colonists in Boston and Salem would not have had to look far to discover evidence of such rites, including information about the preparation of the plants used. The information, because of its nature, however, may not have made it into print. The ritual hallucinogen, datura stramonium, could well have been employed by individuals like a Samuel Parris or a Thomas Putnam to cause their targets in Salem to experience the devil.

When doing cross-cultural analysis of these Algonquian ceremonies, we get the picture of a similar puberty ceremony among Algonquian tribes in both Virginia and Massachusetts. In The General Historie of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles Captain John Smith, writing of the gods of the Virginia Algonquians, relates that the "Chiefe God they worship is the Devil" (122). This god they called Okee. Smith continues to relate that they "say they have conference with him, and fashion themselves as neare to his shape as they can imagine" (122). (This tutelary and shape-shifting quality of the Okee corresponds with that of Hobbomock of the Massachusetts tribes.) Smith relates that this "Okee or Devill," chooses by lot some of the boys undergoing the puberty ordeal and "sucke[s] the bloud from their left breast" (Generall Historie 125). In comparing gods of the Powhatan with the Penobscots and Massachusetts Indian tribes, Smith relates that the chief God of the "Southerne Virginians" is called Kewassa,



equivalent to Kiehtan of the Massachusetts Algonquians. The “devil” is, of course, their Okee. The boys who pass the ordeal become a Quiyoughcosuck.<sup>87</sup> Quiyoughcosukes are equivalent to the Panieses of the Wampanoags of Massachusetts and become demigods. Smith informs us that when they die Quiyoughcosukes “doe go beyond the mountains towards the setting of the sunne, and ever remaine there in forme of their Okee,” suggesting that they take the form of their tutelary spirit (usually an animal) acquired during the initiation ritual, the huskanaw (Generall Historie 125).

Likewise, the Penobscots of New England consider Kiehtan to be the creator of all other gods. According to Smith, the Penobscots also have another “Power” they call Hobbamock, which wee conceive the Devill”(Generall History 461). Smith thus refers to both Hobbamock and the Okee as “Devill” (Generall History 461; 125). Hobbamock appears to the Penobscot powwows sometimes like “a Man, a Deere, or an Eagle, but most commonly like a Snake” (461). It appears, based on what the English colonists, John Smith and Edward Winslow tell us, that at least in their eyes, as a manifestation of the devil the “Oke” of the Virginia Algonquians and Hobbamock of the Penobscot Indians played similar roles. Oke and Habamock also seem to be their respective terms for tutelary spirits acquired during initiation. The similarity of the vowel and consonant sounds between Habamock and Okee suggests some kind of linguistic connection as well. That would not be unusual since both tribes spoke different dialects of the same proto-Algonquian language.

In Decennium Luctuosum (Boston, 1699), Cotton Mather blames the Indians and their heathen ceremonies in part for the outbreak of witchcraft at Salem. Mather

deliberately avoids getting into details, but we can guess he refers to such ceremonies as the puberty initiation rituals, and perhaps the ritual drink that went with them.

The Story of the Prodigious War, made by the Spirits of the Invisible  
World upon the People of New-England, in the year, 1692, hath  
Entertain'd a great part of the English World, with a just Astonishment:  
and I have met with some Strange Things, not here to be mentioned,  
which have made me often think, that this inexplicable War might have  
some of its Original among the Indians, whose chief Sagamores are well  
known unto some of our Captives, to have been horrid Sorcerers, and  
hellish Conjurers and such as Conversed with Dæmons. (242)

What was this strange “Original” of the Salem trials among the Indians to which Mather refers? Mather seems to be suggesting that some of the cause of witchcraft at Salem could have something to do with these ceremonies. Could Mather be suggesting more than just a demonic connection between the Indians and Salem, perhaps an herbal connection as well, which fear of experimentation with the ritual made him forego describing? We can see how and why these practices and their effects would have been understood by New England Puritans in the seventeenth century as witchcraft. The means for achieving such effects as conversing with demons would have been readily available to anyone with the knowledge and the motivation to use such a plant for the purpose of creating the effects of bewitchment.

The similarity to the symptoms of the soldiers in Jamestown who had ingested jimson weed, the delirium, hallucinations, and amnesia experienced by the Algonquian

young men and boys during initiation ceremonies, and the fits, hallucinations, convulsions, and actions of the possessed girls in Salem strongly suggests that some of the “bewitched” may have been put under the influence of jimson weed or datura stramonium. To run about madly, behave wildly, to forget what has just occurred, to hallucinate about neighbors and converse with individuals not present is common with those who have ingested the infamous Jamestown weed. Such behavior is often described of the original Salem accusers. The girls could have ingested the substance themselves, or could have received the weed unknowingly, given to them surreptitiously by someone interested in their mimicking the symptoms of possession. It is altogether plausible that Samuel Parris, Thomas Putnam, Jr., Dr. William Griggs, and others would have given their charges datura stramonium or jimson weed covertly to bring about visions and symptoms of bewitchment.

As we have suggested, there is documented evidence among American Indian tribes that suggests the use of datura stramonium in vision quest rituals. Ethnobotanist William Safford identifies datura stramonium as the main ingredient of wysoccan used in the puberty initiation rituals of the Virginia Algonquians. There is extensive documented use of datura among American Indians in North, Central, and South America where the use in vision-quest rituals seems to have been widespread. Species of the datura family, of which datura stramonium is but one, all contain varying amounts of the same alkaloids, mostly hyoscyamine, scopolamine, and atropine, and are found all over the world. In the Middle East a species known as datura metel is used in various hallucinogenic religious rituals, especially among the Islamic whirling dervishes. In

Haiti, the spiny seed pod of the datura species brugamasia, known as the “devil’s cucumber,” is used to turn people into zombies.<sup>88</sup> On the East Coast of North America from Nova Scotia to Florida, datura stramonium, the Jamestown weed or one of the related species is commonly found growing along roadsides and waste places. Rock art at Pecos River sites along the Texas-Mexico border depicts the use of jimson weed by shamans as many as 500 years ago.

Pecos River rock art shows many shaman figures holding staffs attached to oval, spine-covered shapes that correspond to the prickly seed pods of a regional plant known as Datura, the scientists contend. In low doses, powders prepared from Datura, also called jimson weed, cause restlessness, disorientation, hallucinations, and high fever. Historical records cite widespread use of Datura by shamans in the southwestern United States and northern Mexico . . . . (“Mind-altering Rock Art” 41)

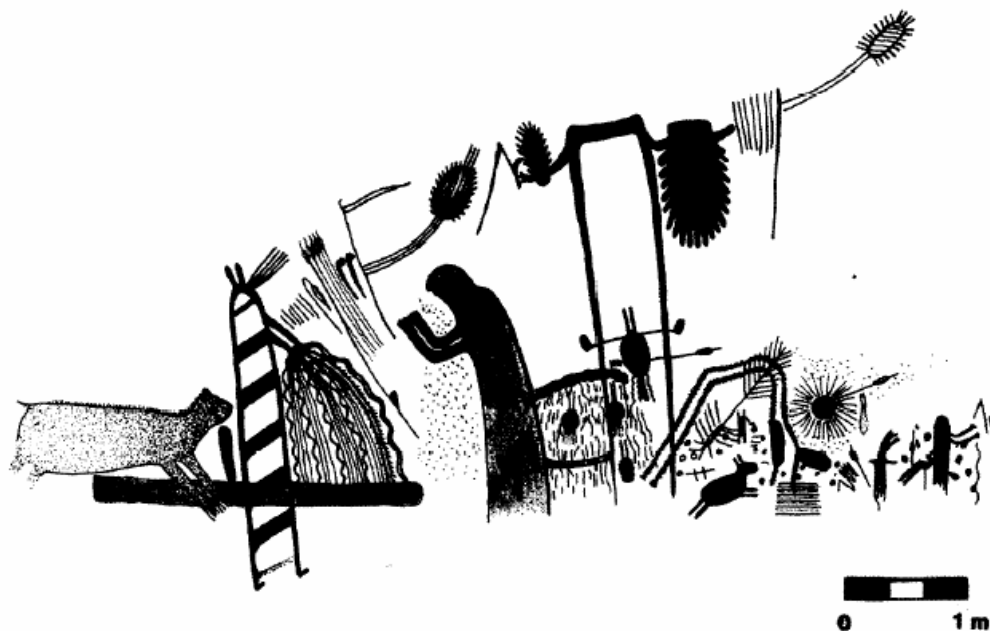


Fig. 1.3 Pecos River Cave Painting of Anthropomorphic Figure in Veneration of the Animal-Plant-Spirit. Carolyn Boyd and J. Philip Dering. “Medicinal and Hallucinogenic Plants” 260.

The priest-like figure in the illustration above of perhaps 500 years ago seems to be worshipping a plant-like object resembling a *datura stramonium* seed pod. But what else is known about the actual effects of *datura stramonium* today? A modern description of *datura stramonium* poisoning includes distressing auditory and visual hallucinations, disorientation, and psychomotor excitation that can become extreme. These symptoms may be accompanied by what one might term “atropine madness”: disorderliness, confusion, vertigo, troubles with language, convulsions, and sometimes coma. Intoxicated subjects are frequently described as “red as a beet, dry as a bone, blind as a bat, mad as a hatter, and hot as a hare.”<sup>89</sup>



### III. The Seeds of Opportunity and the Harvest

I have shown the motives and the means by which a core group of accusers in Salem may have carried out a witchcraft outbreak. What remains to be discussed is their opportunity to do so. Obviously, living in the same household with people one intends to poison provides the occasion to do so. Men like Samuel Parris, Thomas Putnam, Jr., his brother-in-law, Jonathan Walcott, who lived next door to Parris on one side, Walcott's uncle, Nathaniel Ingersoll, who ran a tavern next to Parris on the other side, and Dr. William Griggs—each had ample opportunity to administer such a delirium-producing agent to one or more of their charges and guide their experiences. Did they take advantage of their opportunity? Defining “opportunity” in a narrower sense, what opportunities do suspects appear to have seized in their quest to instigate and manipulate the outcome of something as volatile as a witchcraft outbreak and make it go their way? What is the evidence that a plant like datura stramonium was involved in their manipulation? Conversely, what opportunities for stopping the outbreak did they ignore or refuse to take? First, we need to look at the court cases to see who was really making the accusations.

A quick glance at Marilynne K. Roach's “Appendix E” or “Persons Known to Have Entered Complaints Against Witch Suspects,” in The Salem Witchcraft Trials (619-621) shows that the person who entered the most complaints by far was Thomas Putnam. Of the 158 people complained against, Thomas Putnam was responsible for 36 or 23% of them. If we add all of the Putnams' complaints together, we find they add up to 50 complaints or 32 % of the total number. Since Thomas Putnam, Jr. was the oldest of the

male heirs of Thomas Putnam, Sr., he stood to receive the lion's share of the inheritance from his father—had it not been for Thomas, Sr., choosing to leave the inheritance to Thomas, Jr.'s half brother, Joseph, that is. Thomas, Jr., therefore, had the greatest reason to feel cheated and the most motivation to instigate a witchcraft outbreak to try to recover what he felt he should have inherited. Thomas Putnam, Jr., was followed in number of complaints by Jonathan Walcott (17), John Putnam, Sr., (15), and Nathaniel Ingersoll (13). Of these, Walcott's daughter Mary lived with Thomas Putnam, Jr. Nathaniel Ingersoll and Jonathan Walcott, Mary Walcott's father, lived next door to Samuel Parris. Among the males who made the most legal complaints, we find they were either Putnams or lived next to Samuel Parris.

Turning to "Appendix III" in Mary Beth Norton's In the Devil's Snare, we find a chart with the number of "Afflicted Accusers of Salem Village and Andover." Of 434 total legal complaints, we see that the number of complaints of the women and girls living at the house of Thomas Putnam, Jr., including Ann Putnam, Sr. (5), Ann Putnam, Jr. ( 53), Mercy Lewis (54), and Mary Walcott (69), together numbered 181 or 42% of the total complaints in the Salem records. Added to these the complaints of Betty Parris (3), and Abigail Williams (41), (both living with Rev. Parris), and Elizabeth Hubbard (40), living with Dr. William Griggs, we find that these core accusers together were responsible for 61% of the total legal complaints at the Salem trials. Clearly, Thomas Putnam, Jr. was the greatest accuser, who, including his wife and female charges were responsible for 181 or 42% of the total complaints. The household of Samuel Parris generated, understandably, fewer complaints (44), so as to give the entire operation its



religious legitimacy. The name of Parris himself did not appear on any of the complaints, since he was the minister. Formal legal complaints by Parris would have exposed him to hard feelings of the accused's relatives in his church; after all, Parris's goal was to preserve his standing. The female accusers who made the most complaints were the very first accusers: Betty Parris, mid-January 1691/2; Abigail Williams, mid-January 1691/2; Ann Putnam, Jr., Feb. 25, 1691/2; Elizabeth Hubbard, Feb. 27, 1691/2; Mercy Lewis, March 14, 1692; Ann Putnam, Sr., March 18, 1692; and Mary Walcott, March 19, 1692. All of these had lived in the homes of Thomas Putnam, Jr., Rev. Samuel Parris, Dr. William Griggs, or Jonathan Walcott. These facts together suggest both an initiatory element and virulence. What was motivating these individuals? The answer to this question very much depends on the gender of the accused and accusers.

Another issue is one of character. Is there anything in Samuel Parris's past that might indicate he was capable of using violent means to achieve his ends? What else besides possibly making veiled threats in his sermons did the Reverend Parris do that would indicate he was capable of performing so horrific an act as deliberately to initiate a witchcraft outbreak? Parris's violence inflicted on Tituba to extort a confession (perhaps to cover up his own involvement in the girls' afflictions) would be one such indication. If Parris needed a scapegoat, he found the perfect candidate in Tituba. As an Indian (possibly an Arawak)<sup>90</sup> married to another Indian, called John Indian, she would have been suspected of practicing witchcraft, both due to the associations of Indians with the devil and because of her marital connection with her husband. For decades, writers—beginning with Charles W. Upham—have blamed Tituba for teaching the girls

witchcraft, but there is no real evidence that she had anything to do with witchcraft other than (perhaps) bake a witch cake to try to expose a witch. Tituba was suspected primarily because of her ethnicity and social position. But why would Parris want or need to beat Tituba into confessing? We have already seen that she was probably not responsible for the girls' symptoms. Since a free and voluntary confession exceeded in validity all other forms of evidence for witchcraft,<sup>91</sup> a confession from Tituba would have created a shield for Parris or for any of his cohorts. No one would thus be able to charge Parris with anything amounting to responsibility for the outbreak. Since the Puritan troops were fighting the Indians less than fifty miles from Salem at the time of the outbreak, and since both Indians and women were traditionally associated with witchcraft, Tituba initially made the ideal scapegoat. Parris needed a target he could manipulate. He carefully saw to it that Abigail and Betty named Tituba as the first "witch" (see Hale Modest Inquiry in Burr Narratives 413). He apparently also forced her to name two more women, Sarah Good and Sarah Osborne, both likely candidates because they were women of low social position whose reputations were already tainted. Tituba was the person most under Parris's control, for as a slave she was by definition forced to take orders. The evidence that Parris beat Tituba into confessing comes from one source only, but a credible one: Robert Calef informs us in More Wonders of the Invisible World (1700) that after Tituba confessed,

She was . . . Committed to Prison, and lay there till Sold for her Fees. The account she since gives of it is, that her Master did beat her and otherwise abuse her, to make her confess and accuse (such as he call'd) her Sister-

Witches, and that whatsoever she said by way of confessing or accusing others, was the effect of such usage; her Master refused to pay her fees, unless she would stand to what she had said. (qtd. In Burr, Narratives 343)

Parris eventually sold Tituba for her jail and court costs. It was Tituba, along with Betty Parris and Abigail Williams, who accused the next two women of witchcraft, Sarah Good and Sarah Osborn. Could Parris also have duped Tituba by drugging her to manipulate events and to give her “spectral sight”? Most of Tituba’s confession shows that she was familiar with the common folklore of witchcraft: riding on poles to witch meetings, seeing the devil in some strange shape demanding that she serve him, pinching, tormenting, and the like. If Tituba really thought she experienced even a little of what she describes, then she must have been hallucinating. Judge John Hathorne conducts the examination. Notice the leading questions:

Q. att first begining w’th them, w’t then appeared to you w’t was itt like that Got you to doe itt A. one like a man Just as I was goeing to sleep Came to me this was when the Children was first hurt he sayd he would kill the Children & she would never be well, and he Sayd if I would nott Serve him he would do soe to mee Q. is that the Same man that appeared before to you that appeared the last night & tould you this? A. yes. Q. w’t Other likenesses besides a man hath appeared to you? A. Sometimes like a hogge Sometimes like a great black dogge, foure tymes. (SWP III: 750)

Since Tituba, like most in New England, would have known that witches or their familiars could assume the form of animals, it is uncertain whether her description

involved actual hallucinations or was based on other incidents she imagined, heard about, or was coached into repeating. Since her encounter began as she was going to sleep, something of what she describes could have been based upon hypnagogic hallucinations occurring in the period of drowsiness preceding sleep, with the experience influenced by the effects of certain alkaloids. These hallucinations could have been brought on either by an incubus nightmare or by drugs.<sup>92</sup> Since datura stramonium is known to induce vivid dreams, Tituba's description could have been based on a dream intensified by Jamestown weed. In a modern case study from 2001, a "Mr. Underhill" describes his experience with datura stramonium.

Eventually the time came to go to sleep, and I decided then to eat 5 seeds before I fell asleep to experience the dream alterations of the plant. That night was amazing. When I was fall[i]ng asleep, I experienced vivid, abstract mental imagery with my eyes closed, (although it was nothing like a hallucination). When asleep, I had unbelievable long and vivid dreams. The dream also was one continuing story, even though I frequently wove in and out of REM sleep and non REM sleep. ("Dream Plant Spirit")

In the testimony of the two first male accusers at Salem, William Allen and John Hughes, hallucinogenic imagery, attributable either to drugs or an incubus nightmare, is also evident. Both Allen and Hughes relate that while in bed (on the evening of March 2), they saw apparitions accompanied by strange lights (see SWP II: 372). William Allen lived about a mile to the south from Thomas Putnam and a mile to the west from the Rev. Parris. The location of John Hughes's homestead of is not known. Both Allen's and

Hughes's account sound like nightmares (see Chapter 2) and both (since they occurred on the same date, though in separate places) could have been at least partially drug-induced:

William Allen . . . saith that on the 2'd day of march the s'd Sarah Good vissabley appeared to him in his chamber s'd allen beeing in bed and brought an unuseuall light in w'th her the s'd Sarah came and sate upon his foot the s'd allen went to kick att her upon which shee vanished and the light with her.

Hughe's account is very similar:

John Hughes beeing in Bed in a closd Roome and the dore being fast so that no catt nor dogg could come in the said John saw a Great light appeare in the s'd Chamber and Risseing up in his bed he saw a large Grey Catt att his beds foot[.] (SWP 2: 372)

That Elizabeth Parris's condition improved quickly and dramatically after she was sent to live with Stephen Sewall in Salem Town seems rather revealing. We might therefore wonder why some of the other afflicted women were not isolated and placed in other residences. Cotton Mather had made a model of such a practice in 1688 by taking thirteen-year-old Margaret Goodwin into his home, eventually curing her of the effects of bewitchment. He had written about it in Memorable Providences (1689), which Samuel Parris must have read as it was famous all over New England. Why was Abigail Williams not also sent away, perhaps to the home of a minister like Cotton Mather, to see if her condition would improve as her cousin's had after leaving the Parris household? Significantly, Cotton Mather records in his Diary that he offered to take "a half a dozen

or so” of the afflicted into his home temporarily to try to cure them with fasting and prayer. The offer was rejected (Mather Diary I: 151-152). Had Mather’s offer been honored, the entire outbreak could have been prevented. The instigators did not seem to be interested in pouring water on the smouldering embers. Mather’s opportunity to intervene occurred in the case of Mercy Short, a girl of Boston, who came down with seizures while attending his church service. He took her into his home near the end of the Salem episode, in November, 1692, and eventually cured her of her bewitchment. By attending to Mercy Short, Mather intentionally protected not only her but the people whom she falsely or mistakenly might have named as responsible for her afflictions. Cotton Mather also says (Diary 1) that he kept the names of the accused to himself. He wrote about this episode in a journal he kept of the episode entitled A Brand Pluck’d Out of the Burning.<sup>93</sup> He noted later in an unpublished account of another energumen,<sup>94</sup> Margaret Rule, that he kept the names of the accused to himself (Another Brand Pluck’d Out of the Burning in Burr Narratives 321).

Why didn’t anyone in Salem take advantage of Mather’s offer? Boston was only a fifty mile journey. If the people in charge of these girls had really wanted their symptoms and accusations to end, why would they not have taken advantage of the opportunity to separate the afflicted girls and have at least one or two more live elsewhere to see if their conditions would change? Why would Parris or Putnam not have allowed Mather to assist? All knew that Mather had successfully cured others. Removing Betty Parris from the Parris home initially had worked. Sending the girls away would have thwarted the witchcraft accusations and endangered the reputation and perhaps the lives of the men

who hosted the accusers (especially if they had something to hide). It would have separated the girls from those who used them as instruments for their own agenda.

As we recall, the parsonage of Reverend Parris was not the only home to be invaded by specters on the day the witch cake was baked. Ann Putnam, living with her father, Thomas Putnam and her mother, Ann Putnam, Sr., was also afflicted by Tituba, Sarah Good, and Sarah Osborne, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February. Ann testifies that on the 25<sup>th</sup> Sarah Good “tortured” her most “grievously,” but she didn’t learn the identity of Good’s specter until 27 of February when Good “told” Ann her name. Why does Ann even mention that she didn’t know the identity of the specter, and why did she not discover her identity until two days later though Sarah Good must have been previously known to Ann as she was to her friend Abigail Williams? It sounds as if someone identified Good’s specter for Ann (see SWP 2: 373).

Sarah Good’s shape was not the only apparition Ann Putnam could not identify until sometime later. The identity of Rebecca Nurse’s specter also appears to have eluded Ann for a couple of days after it began troubling her. A deposition by John Tarbell, Rebecca Nurse’s son-in-law, reveals not only that the girls were being told whom to “cry out of” but also exposes a possible method used by the Putnams and perhaps others to convince the girls about whose specter had been attacking them.

John Tarbell, being at the house of Thomas Putnam’s upon the 28 day of this instant March, being the year 1692, upon discourse of many things, I asked them some questions, and among other[s] I asked this question: whether the girl that was afflicted did first speak of Goody Nurs before

others mentioned her to her. They said she told them she saw the apparition of a pale-faced woman that sat in her grandmother's seat, but did not know her name. Then I replied and said: but who was it that told her that it was Goody Nurs. Mercy Lewes said it was Goody Putnam that said it was Goody Nurs. Goody Putnam said it was Mercy Lewes that told her. Thus they turned it upon one another, saying it was you and it was you that told her. This was before any was afflicted at Thomas Putnam's beside his daughter, that they told his daughter it was Goody Nurs. (SVW 33)

Ann Putnam, Sr. and Mercy Lewis stood in front of Rebecca Nurse's relative, each accusing the other of putting into Ann Putnam, Jr.'s head the idea that Rebecca Nurse had afflicted her. Why had Ann been unable to identify the specter of Rebecca Nurse herself? Why did it take her two days to identify her? Was she unable to identify Rebecca Nurse for two days because she had to get over the effects of a drug-induced "fit" before she was in her right mind enough to "identify" anyone? Rebecca Nurse, though a member of the Salem Town church, almost always attended services at the Village where Ann's father was a deacon, and Ann should have known her. If Ann had seen a specter, how could anybody have possibly identified whose specter it was for certain unless Ann did it herself? Ann's description of a "pale-faced" woman's specter is not much of an identifying feature. If it had been decided beforehand that Ann was to cry out upon Goody Nurse, why would Ann have needed to see an unidentified specter in her grandmother's seat? If Ann's visions were a hoax, and she understood that they were,



why not just name the specter of Rebecca Nurse, and have done with it, unless she did not know Rebecca Nurse and others knew she did not know her?

Such a circumstance would not have been unlikely had Ann been seeing specters generated randomly in her mind under the influence of datura stramonium. Were Mercy Lewis and Ann Putnam, Sr. lying when they said that Ann was unable to identify the specter in an attempt to explain why they, and not Ann, had identified Rebecca Nurse? Why were they not able to say that Ann had identified Rebecca Nurse's specter? Perhaps they were afraid Tarbell would ask Ann. Perhaps it was because it was true that Ann had seen a specter but false that she had been able to identify it. Obviously, Tarbell thought their answers bizarre because he used the incident as testimony in favor of Rebecca Nurse. This incident suggests that the specters of Sarah Good, Rebecca Nurse, and others had not always been identified by the afflicted themselves, but by older men or women around them. If we combine the method of naming the specters after the fact, revealed in John Tarbell's testimony, with the theory that the girls were also fed a psychoactive substance like datura stramonium to make them hallucinate and then forget, we see a workable hypothesis not only of how the witchcraft accusations were brought about but also how the "afflicted" could be convinced about who it was afflicting them.

It is one thing for individuals to know they are taking a substance known to make them see visions. It is another altogether to be given a drug without this knowledge and to have no idea why they are hallucinating. The first case might be frightening and seem supernatural, but their experience would ultimately be attributed, at least partially, to the effects of a plant. The second scenario would involve frightening symptoms, the source

of which was unknown. The effect would have been especially profound when belief in witchcraft was rampant. It is precisely the inexplicable nature of the malicious symptoms brought on by surreptitious dosing with the thorn apple that would have caused the girls themselves to believe they were bewitched. They would have entered a world for which there was no explanation but witchcraft and from which there was no escape. Acceptance of the demonic as the only explanation would have greatly compounded the victims' fears, vivified their imaginations, intensified their delirium and panic, and hence, generated more terrifying hallucinations in a vicious circle, perhaps until the victim lost consciousness. Both the victims and those who observed them would have thought they were bewitched.

The possibility of the influence of the thorn apple on the Salem witch panic provides a unified theory of how the witch crisis was started and sustained. A probable scenario plays out like this: someone was fed datura stramonium in some form and became delirious. During the subsequent delirious state of high suggestibility lasting several hours to two days or more, of which the victim might remember little or nothing except the information the victim was also fed that so-and-so had bewitched her, the victim was told the identity of the specter afflicting them and given the details, perhaps in the form of a question. For example, "Is Bridget Bishop afflicting you?" Thomas Putnam or Samuel Parris could thus manipulate the suggestible girls in such a way that they would accuse anyone they were told to. The technique was similar to hypnosis and was enhanced by the use of datura stramonium. When the fit ended, which the victim probably remembered vaguely and naturally thought was due to bewitchment, the victim

was reminded repeatedly and in no uncertain terms whom she had “cried out of” during her delirium. The victim would have been in no frame of mind to disagree about it. Upon coming down from the effects of the drug the victim would believe whatever had been drummed into her. The role delirium played in the naming of the victims resulted in a different kind of “delirium” played out in the courtroom, which always seems so obviously contrived, in which the afflicted mimicked the actions of their tormentors on the witness stand. It was natural for the girls to identify the person they believed or half-believed had caused their afflictions by falling into a fit. Once someone had been “cried out of” it was necessary to stick with the story. Such a scenario explains why accusers often seemed to believe their own testimony—and believe it so strongly.

Puritan ministers like Cotton Mather considered the heathenish acts and customs of the Indians to be a part of a general thrust by the devil to tear down all the churches in the country and set up his own kingdom. Samuel Parris may have viewed many of his opposing parishioners in a similar way that Cotton Mather viewed the Indians. The faction opposing Parris and Putnam appear to be among the main ones targeted during the initial outbreak. Others the Parris and Putnam group targeted as witches were ones like John Proctor and Mary Warren who at some point stood in their way.<sup>95</sup> While their victims were in their delirious states, Parris and Putnam might easily have influenced the girls by telling them who was bewitching them. That way they could maintain control over the accusations. For instance, if Parris knew that several ministers would be observing the actions of his daughter and his niece, he could have administered the plant in some form in an effort to create the symptoms of bewitchment for the occasion.

Evidence in the form of testimony by John Tarbell suggests how they could have done it. Parris in essence suggested to those around him that certain people might be witches. Unfortunately, the outbreak soon took on a life of its own.

In Salem Story, Bernard Rosenthal points out that certain testimony found in the court transcripts almost certainly indicates deliberate dissimulation or contrivance (37-39). For instance, Rosenthal mentions the case in which Ann Putnam and Abigail Williams appear at the examination of George Jacobs. The transcript reads, “Ann Putman and Abigail Williams had each of them a pin stuck in their hands, and they said it was this old Jacobs” (SWP 2: 477). From the wording of the transcript it is impossible to tell if Ann and Abigail walked into the courtroom with pins sticking into their hands, inserted them when they got there, or were merely relating something that had happened in the recent past. It appears as if at some point both Ann Putnam and Abigail Williams each may have had at least one pin stuck in a hand or said they did. Whatever the truth about how the pins were presented as evidence, the testimony was fraud. Bolstering a witchcraft case with pins does not prove witchcraft but something else. Under the anesthetic and amnesiac effects of datura stramonium, pins could have been inserted into the flesh of the girls without their knowing about it. The same people who would use pins as evidence or insert them into a stupefied victim’s skin would be the same ones capable of covertly administering a poisonous hallucinogen. It is possible that the girls woke up, “had each of them a pin stuck in their hands” (SWP 2: 477), and believed a witch was responsible because they couldn’t remember how the pins had gotten there. Then they testified.

The phenomenon of spitting up pins and other objects is a common motif in witchcraft accounts, known as allotriophagy. The way we look at fraudulent pins today holds true for most other evidence of the “impossible” type. Eyewitness accounts of people flying over the tops of trees in broad daylight—barring their source as hallucination—indicates something other than empirical evidence. The story of the Bury St. Edmunds witches Mather includes in Wonders of the Invisible World involves the vomiting up of pins, nails, stones or other strange objects. Since the Salem judges used the Bury St. Edmunds trial as a model, pins at Salem were possibly used to match the evidence presented at that famous trial. Why else would Abigail Williams and Betsy Parris have produced pins in court other than to bolster their case with palpable evidence? If the girls had received these pins mysteriously while delirious, or unconscious, and believed a witch had put them there, they might have believed anything.

The girls making the accusations would have been much more inclined to deception and giving incriminating testimony, however, if they themselves felt that on the whole what they were saying was true. Conversely, if the accusers are examined as a group rather than each separately, examiners will decrease their ability to uncover conflicting and contradictory testimonies. The following excerpt from the examination of Rebecca Nurse indicates that adults might have played a role in the pin incident, since the accusers are Thomas and Edward Putnam:

The Deposition of Tho: Putman aged about 40. years & Edward Putman aged about. 38. years. witnesseth & saith that having been several times present with Ann Putman jun’r in & after her fits & saw her much

afflicted, being bitten, pinched, her limbs distorted, & pins thrust into her flesh, which she charged on Rebekah Nurse that she was the Acter thereof & that she saw her do it [.] (SWP 2: 602).

As interested parties in the suit, Thomas and Edward Putnam might well have thrust pins into Ann's flesh themselves. They probably did witness Ann charge Rebecca Nurse, but only after they had coached her to blame Nurse. It is likely, though, that the girls themselves or someone else inserted the pins, if they were inserted, to offer proof of bewitchment. Because of the soporific, anesthetic, and amnesiac effects of datura stramonium, pins could have been inserted in the girls' flesh while they were under the drug's influence. Certainly, if one could have an arm or a leg cut off while under the influence of this drug, as John Parkinson stated (Garden 362), one could have a pin stuck in one's hand while in a stupor as well. It is worth noting that Parkinson's definition of a "fit" caused by datura stramonium includes both adjectives "starke" drunk (i.e., exceedingly drunk) and "dead" drunk (i.e., in a comatose state). In the absence of seemingly natural causes, physical symptoms and palpable evidence mimicking supernatural afflictions probably suggested to the girls actual bewitchment. It would have been much easier for adults to manipulate the girls into lying about details if the girls themselves were convinced of their own bewitchment. If the girls themselves were convinced, they could easily be persuaded to accuse a purported witch.

Another incident that points to a case of possible poisoning and contrivance involves the mysterious death of Daniel Wilkins, 17, said to be the boyfriend of Mercy Lewis, and the arrest of John Willard for bewitching him. John Willard had just been

named as a witch by four of the girls but had not yet been indicted. Willard was probably accused of witchcraft because he refused Constable John Putnam's request that he arrest some of the accused whom Willard didn't believe were guilty. The Putnams then went after Willard.

On Thursday, May 4, after he had been named by the girls as an afflicter, John Willard asked Henry Wilkins to accompany him to Boston for Election Week. Wilkins's son, Daniel, much troubled by Willard's request, advised his father not to go with Willard, who had just been named as a witch, saying "it were wel If . . . Willard were hanged" (SWP III: 846). His son's statement made Henry Wilkins "admire" Daniel because he had never heard such an expression from his son's mouth "since he came to yeares of discretion." Henry Wilkins went with Willard anyway, and during Henry's few days' absence in Boston, the Putnams probably took advantage of his father's absence to poison Daniel Wilkins, for he soon became gravely ill. A physician, termed "the french doctor," was consulted, who "affirmed his sickness was by some preter natural cause & would make no application of any phisicke" (SWP 3: 846).<sup>96</sup> Apparently, the doctor never examined Wilkins in person, but adjudged his condition from the description of those who consulted the doctor. The "french" doctor's refusal to treat the victim does not seem to have deterred the Putnams from trying to get something into Daniel's stomach, however. A document signed by Thomas Putnam, Constable John Putnam, three other Putnams, and several of their allies describes Daniel's condition and their efforts:

[The] 14'th day of Instant may Daniell Willkins about tenn of the clock in the morning was taken speechless and never spoak untell the 16'th day in

the intervale of time wee often Endeavoured to make him take something  
 in A spoon but what hee took in which was but little hee spitt it out in our  
 faces w'th that wee sent to the french Doctor but hee sent word againe that  
 it was not a naturall Cause but absolutly witchcraft . . . [.] (SWP 3: 821)

The refusal of the doctor to treat the patient, which might have been a refusal to have his name associated with the incident, gave the Putnams a convenient excuse for treating Wilkins themselves. One would like to know, however, what it was that Daniel Wilkins spat back in their faces. Apparently, the Putnams had already consulted the “french doctor” once and were told it was witchcraft and then tried to consult him again after Daniel spat something back in their faces. Wilkins’ physical reaction indicates dislike, anger, delirium, or all three. Read closely, the testimony suggests that they had, at the time, been trying to administer their own “physicke.” Their behavior, and the presence of the girls at Daniel Wilkins’ bedside to identify the tormenting specters, if asked, appears more than suspicious, especially if the girls were to make accusations. Perhaps it wasn’t “physicke” at all they were trying to administer, however, but another dose of the potent poison causing Daniel’s delirium.

According to the later testimony of Henry Wilkins, Sr., during his son’s illness, some neighbors, including Mercy Lewis, came to visit his son. Mercy Lewis had then seen “the apperition of John Willard aflecting” him. At the same time, Henry Wilkins’ eldest daughter was also taken “in a sad manner.” Ann Putnam came “quickly after” and identified the same apparition to be John Willard. Later, just before Daniel’s death on the 16 of May, Mercy Lewis returned to Daniel’s bedside with Mary Walcott and both saw



the apparition of Willard afflicting him (SWP 3: 846). Willard's specter presumably then finished him off.

The repeated assurance of the "french doctor" that Daniel Wilkins' distemper resulted from a preternatural determinant and his refusal to administer medicinal treatment raises some thorny questions. The "french doctor" apparently never actually saw Daniel Wilkins, so how could he make the diagnosis of witchcraft twice? Was the "french doctor" even asked to visit Daniel Wilkins, or was he merely asked for his opinion based on a description of symptoms the Putnams supplied so they could say a doctor had been consulted and agreed with their own diagnosis of witchcraft? Why wasn't Dr. William Griggs summoned as well? Dr. Griggs had made the pronouncement of witchcraft concerning Rev. Samuel's Parris's charges, Elizabeth Parris and Abigail Williams, which had been heeded. Perhaps something less salubrious than "physicke" had already been administered to Daniel Wilkins while his father was away in Boston. The Wilkins family lived near Will's Hill in northwest Salem Village, about a mile from Thomas Putnam, Jr. In his father's absence Daniel Wilkins could have been "afflicted" to provide further evidence against John Willard. Daniel Wilkins was known to dislike Willard. In his father's absence perhaps he learned too much and needed to be silenced by methods seeming to resemble witchcraft.

After Daniel Wilkins died speechless and gasping for breath, a jury of inquest was held on the 17 of May to try to determine the cause. The 12 men examining the body included many Parris allies: Nathaniel Putnam, Jonathan Walcott, Edward Putnam, John Putnam, Jr., and Nathaniel Ingersoll. Upon examining the body, they concluded that

Daniel Wilkins had “dyed an unnatural death by sume cruell hands of witchcraft or diabolicall act as is evident to us both by what we have seen and heard consarning his death” (SWP III: 822). Samuel Paris wrote in the church record, “Dan: Wilkins Bewitched to death 17.” Wilkins’s body was bruised in several places on his back, and his skin had been broken in many places. One side of his neck and ear seemed to be “much bruised to his Throat.” When they turned the body over, blood ran out of either Wilkins’s mouth or nose or both. The “gratest part of his back” seems to have been “prickt with an instrument about the bigness of a small awl” (SWP 3: 822). The jury of inquest made the point of asserting that Daniel Wilkins had not been poisoned: “his body not swel’d neither did he purge elce where.” The men who sat on the jury of inquest, however, were many of the same men there that day trying to administer “physicke.” They could have poisoned him, either deliberately or involuntarily depending on the specific potions they forced Wilkins to swallow. Why would anyone have suspected poison? That no signs of purging existed contradicts earlier testimony given by some of the same men into whose faces Wilkins had spat what they had tried to feed him; the same men were now sitting on the jury of the inquest. Were they lying about the lack of swelling as well? Daniel’s affliction and perhaps unexpected death could have been a warning to his father Henry Wilkins not to side with the constable John Putnam’s former deputy John Willard after Henry had accompanied him to Boston. Could Daniel Wilkins have been poisoned and then beaten and then pricked with an awl to make it look like witchcraft? The idea of witchcraft was certainly the one the Putnams wanted to convey. Nothing is explained. Not many questions seem to have been asked either.

An arrest warrant was issued for John Willard on May 10 and a search was made for him at his house, but the constable, John Putnam, was unable to find him by the 12<sup>th</sup> of May. Another arrest warrant was issued on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Constable Putnam finally seized Willard at “Nashaway,” on May 17, while he was hoeing.<sup>97</sup> That Daniel Wilkins would have become deathly ill during his father’s absence, but in the presence of Mercy Lewis, Abigail Williams, and Ann Putnam seems hardly coincidental. Daniel was possibly poisoned by the Putnams. The Putnams might have used Mercy Lewis as an unwitting relay to administer something poisoned to him just as they had poisoned their own daughter, Ann, her friend, Mary Walcott, and their servant, Mercy Lewis. They probably didn’t mean for Daniel Wilkins to die, but merely to afflict him in the way the others had been afflicted (unknowingly) so they could send the girls to come and identify John Willard as the specter troubling him. Since most of the afflicted up to that time had been girls and women, the conspirators may have needed an afflicted male to lend credibility through gender variety. Daniel may have died because whoever administered the poison was not there to control the dosage. Perhaps in his father’s absence Daniel had unwittingly partaken of some spiked cider. If the cider had been laced with the thorn apple, intense thirst would have ensued, which may have caused Daniel to drink even more. John Willard was hanged on August 19. Daniel Wilkins had died on May 16. The manner in which Daniel Wilkins died was also suspicious: He died gasping for breath. Early clinical signs of datura stramonium poisoning include rapid breathing. A severe case of poisoning could have rendered Daniel Wilkins unable to remember what had happened to him. It could also have made him unable to speak. Fatal cases of datura

stramonium poisoning include irregular breathing, convulsions, and coma. Could Wilkins's death have resulted from an overdose?

Another strange incident involving Mercy Lewis that happened just after the death of Daniel Wilkins seems to have its own internal logic and centers on the accusation and imprisonment of Mary Easty. The sister of two other condemned witches who were already in jail, Rebecca Nurse and Sarah Cloyce, Mary Easty was officially examined on April 22 after being accused the previous day of afflicting the bodies of Ann Putnam, Mercy Lewis, Mary Walcott, Abigail Williams, and Elizabeth Hubbard. Easty was imprisoned after the examination, but for some reason the authorities seem to have had a change of heart. She was released from prison on May 18. Perhaps Judge Hathorne's own sister, Elizabeth Porter, who had vigorously defended Easty's sister, Rebecca Nurse, may have influenced Hathorne. Perhaps it was her minister, Joseph Capen of Topsfield (Rosenthal 176, 177). Perhaps the Putnams and Parris wanted to create the semblance of fairness—let off some of the steam from all the accusations occurring right then. The reason is unknown, but some of the girls seemed to waver at Easty's examination on April 22. Mary Easty's release set the Putnams on another strategy. According to Mary Easty's petition, she was "cleared by the afflicted persons," only to wind up back in jail three days later (SWP 1: 301). The occasion for Easty's re-imprisonment on May 20th was Mercy Lewis's coming down with horrible fits that seemed to land her near death. Judging from descriptions of her symptoms, we can determine that drugs may have been involved in her behavior. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of May, Samuel Abby had gone to John Putnam's residence where Mercy Lewis was now living

and found Lewis lying on the bed “in a sad condition and continewing speachless for about an hour.” Since John Putnam was not home, “the woman” asked Abby to go to Thomas Putnam’s to fetch Ann Putnam to see if she could tell who it was that hurt Mercy Lewis (SWP I: 300). As luck would have it, Abigail Williams was also at Thomas Putnam’s house, so both girls were able to come immediately and find Mercy Lewis lying “speachless and in a sad condition,” with the apparitions of Mary Easty, John Willard, and Mary Witheridge afflicting and choking Mercy Lewis in “a most dreadfull maner. which did most greivously affright us,” testified John Putnam, Jr. (SWP 2: 601).

In the September 9th deposition describing the events of May 20, Samuel Abby relates how Mercy Lewis “continewed in a sad condition the greatest part of the day being in such tortors as no tounge can express.” Like Daniel Wilkins, she was “not able to spake” (300). Finally, Mercy Lewis recovered sufficiently to say, “Deare lord Receive my soule” and “Lord let them not kill me quitt” and then, coming to her senses, announced that Goody Easty would kill her before midnight because “she did not cleare hir so as the Rest did” (300). Soon Mercy Lewis “fell very bad and cried out, ‘Pray for the salvation of my soule for they will kil me’” (300). Imagine the degree of cynicism required of Mercy Lewis to ask others to pray for her soul’s salvation from witchcraft if she were at the same time knowingly condemning innocent people to their deaths. Such behavior bespeaks either heartless depravity, extreme coercion, or actual affliction. Since Mercy Lewis’s friend Daniel Wilkins had just died with similar symptoms, we might want to look at poisoning. What may have happened was that as soon as Mary Easty was released from jail, Mercy Lewis was given a strong dose of datura stramonium, whose

effects are known to last about two days—long enough to afflict Mercy Lewis severely and return Mary Easty to prison. The other girls may well have believed they had the ability to see and identify specters, as they were required to do about two months later in Andover.

Both Mary Walcott and Elizabeth Hubbard were then summoned to Mercy's bedside. Mary Walcott spotted "the apparition of Goody Easty choking Mercy Lewis, pressing upon her breasts with both her hands, and putting a chain about her neck." Elizabeth Hubbard reported seeing the specter of Mary Easty "torturing Mercy in a most dreadful manner." Other people heard about Mercy's severe afflictions and came "from all directions" to observe her (Upham Salem Witchcraft 450). Jonathan Putnam, James Darling, Benjamin Hutchinson, Samuel Braybrook and "divers others" came that evening and found Mercy "in a dase [daze] as if death would have quickly followed" (295).

George Herrick describes the condition of Mercy Lewis and the occasion of Mary Easty's resultant re-jailing that night in some detail. According to Herrick, he and John Putnam saw Mercy Lewis "in a very Dreadfull and Solemn Condition: So that to our apprehension shee could not continue long in this world without A mittigation of thoes Torments wee saw her [in]." They, therefore, expedited a hasty dispatch to apprehend Mary Easty in the hope that it might save Mercy Lewis's life. They returned to John Putnam's house about midnight to find Mercy Lewis in a dreadful fit. Her reason, however, had returned, and she said, "What! have you brought me the winding Sheet, Goodwife Estice? Well, I had rather goe into the winding Sheet then Sett my hand to the Book" (295). Her fits became weaker and weaker, but she still complained that she

was “very sick of her stomach.” About daybreak “She fell a sleep but still Continues Extreame sick and was taken with A Dread fitt Just as wee left her so that wee perceaved life in her and that was all” (295).

Edward Putnam confirms the findings of the other men who attested to Lewis’s grave condition.

I myself, being there present with several others with Mercy Lewis, looked for nothing else but present death . . . for all most the space of two days and a night. She was choked almost to death, insomuch we thought sometimes she had been dead; her mouth and teeth shut; and all this very often until such time as we under stood Mary Easty was laid in irons . . .

[.] (transcribed from SWP I: 301).

In “reading” this episode from the Salem depositions, we might want to keep in mind that the effects of datura stramonium ingestion are known to last for about one to three days. It is possible that drugs were used to fool not only the “afflicted” girls but others who observed them.

One of the most damning pieces of evidence against Samuel Parris in the annals of Salem witchcraft is a record, taken down by Parris himself, of what members of Parris’s own church thought about his involvement in instigating the witchcraft outbreak. This Salem Village church account goes about as far one can go toward accusing the Rev. Parris of deliberately instigating the Salem witchcraft crisis without actually being an indictment. That Parris’s congregation sensed that he had an unnecessarily powerful involvement in initiating and driving the witchcraft trials can be seen in a document in

the Salem Village Church records, in which three members of his congregation, John Tarbell, Thomas Wilkins, and Samuel Nurse, petition to stop attending service or taking communion under Parris. The reasons given for their refusal as listed in their petition dated Sunday, February 5, 1692/3 show that the signers of the petition are deeply suspicious of Parris's motives. They are "greviously offended" by the "unwarrantable actings of their Pastor, Mr. Parris, in the matter of Witchcraft" (NEHGR 11.1: 316). The term "unwarrantable" had been used only once before in the Salem Village Church record and that was in reference to Mary Sibley's "unwarrantable" way to "find out Witches" by instructing Parris's "man" John Indian on how to bake the witch cake (NEHGR 11.4 133).

They list five reasons for their dissatisfaction with Parris. First, they refer sardonically to the fact that they cannot worship in peace from the din of so many fits and disruptions of the afflicted which they imply Parris had control over. Had the people thought the afflicted were really possessed, would they not have blamed the devil instead of their minister, Samuel Parris? Second, they themselves feared being indicted for witchcraft, indicating their suspicion that the innocent had been charged and convicted, "they seeing those whom they had reason to esteem better than themselves thus accused" (NEHGR 11. 4: 316). The third reason for their dissatisfaction was their pastor's repeated preaching about "the dark and dismal mysteries of iniquity working amongst them," along with his "easy and strong faith and belief of the affirmations and accusations made by those they call the afflicted" (316). The dissenting bretheren also accused Parris of



practicing unwarrantable methods for discovering what he was desirous to know referring to the bewitched or possessed persons, as in bringing some to others and by and from them pretending to inform himself and others who were the Devil's instruments to afflict the sick and pained[.]

(NEHGR 11.4: 316)

Here Wilkins, Nurse, and Tarbell are accusing Parris of using “unwarrantable methods” to spread the witchcraft incident. They could be referring to some type of countermagic, possibly an alleged involvement with Mary Sibley in the witch cake incident. They could also be suggesting something more sinister, such as the perception that he had manipulated the “bewitched or possessed” for his own ends. They could even be accusing Parris of causing the girls’ afflictions, which brings up the possibility that, in a veiled way, some of the church members might have been accusing Parris of deliberately bewitching them with poisons. The allegations seem deliberately vague. Even here, Parris was doing the recording, for it was he who kept the church record.

The fourth reason they gave for not wanting to worship with Parris was his “unsafe and unaccountable oath” making accusations against the accused and his zeal in seeking them out. John Tarbell even calls him “the great persecutor.” The fifth reason they listed to stop coming to church and taking communion from Parris was his “persisting in these principles and justifying his practices” in spite of the fact that others as wise and learned who had been “as forward as himself” in believing in the outbreak were sorry for what they had done and had admitted their error (NEHGR 11.4: 316).<sup>98</sup>

The three men claim to be speaking “in the name of all the Plantation,” or a great many of them at least (317).

The church members also accuse Parris of misrepresenting transcribed testimony when acting as court recorder. The petition started in February 1693 continued to be acted upon for the next two-three years, up until the time Parris resigned. On November 26, 1694, John Tarbell, Thomas Wilkins, and Samuel Nurse again summarized the reasons that they would not attend either service or communion, all of which centered around Parris’s nefarious actions during the witchcraft episode. It was his role in the witchcraft affair that was the rallying point in the substantial opposition to Parris that led to his ouster in 1697. Particularly, it was their perception about Parris’s inordinate zeal to prosecute by using the afflicted as witch finders.

If we look at what took place and we factor in the deliberate dosing of the accusers with datura stramonium, pieces of the puzzle begin to fit together. This theory has internal logic that matches all the externalities. The clandestine nature of poisoning explains why it is so hard to prove. There would intentionally be no smoking gun. Any unused datura seeds would have been scattered or cast into the fire. We have the reaction of Tituba and the reaction of Parris’s congregation as indications that they knew he was driving the trials. Furthermore, they knew him well enough to guess why. If we look at some of the symptoms of the girls at the beginning of the trials and compare that with the testimony of witnesses at a later phase of the accusations outside Salem Village in Andover, Lynn, and elsewhere, driven by the lurid confessions of the accused trying to save their lives, then we can see a genuine impetus for the trials at the beginning of the

first phase and an effective driving force through to the end of the trials. The need for confessions was what took the trials in a different direction, one that Thomas Putnam and the Reverend Samuel Parris could no longer control.

It would have been harder for Parris or Putnam to have controlled the symptoms of bewitchment with the poison they administered from a distance when they no longer had complete control of when, where, and how the poison was administered and who was getting accused and when. At best, they or their surrogates could have slipped the concoction into grain or cider or some other drinkable or edible item that was sold or given to certain individuals outside their households. Cotton Mather may have been blissfully ignorant of such matters, but the rumors and accusations might have existed nevertheless that Parris and Putnam had somehow started it. Some might even have guessed how and why. That is the reason Parris eventually lost his job. It seems that after the calamity was over—Governor Phips having put a stop to further accusations, depositions, and trials—parishioners resenting Parris's actions no longer had to fear his power.

Writers of later generations who have lived in the area may have guessed what was responsible for the symptoms of witchcraft and the accusations. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, a linguist as well as a poet, who applied Finnish folk meter to Indian legends in *Hiawatha*,<sup>99</sup> suspected that witchcraft at Salem might have been due to the effects of certain plants. In his play "Giles Corey of Salem Farms," Longfellow apparently took up Charles W. Upham's assertion that Tituba had taught the afflicted girls witchcraft and turned it on its head, portraying Tituba as bewitching the girls with monkshood, henbane,

and deadly nightshade (belladonna) to attain a sense of power that she lacked as a slave. It is not unlikely that in a culture in which people depended on plants growing in the area for their food and medicines, someone might have guessed that poisonous plants were somehow involved. Rumors—and there must have been rumors—that no longer survive may have circulated in the area in the 1830s, perhaps even among the Hawthorne clan. It is not unlikely that some of these rumors might have attributed the use of poisonous plants to the Salem ordeal. People might have been afraid to voice these rumors openly from fear of being named as a witch, out of concern that they were debunking the very idea of witchcraft, or out of respect for a minister of God.

The confluence of Nathaniel Hawthorne's repeated allusions to poisonous or choking plants, sin, and guilt—in stories like "Young Goodman Brown," "Alice Doan's Appeal," and "The Minister's Black Veil"; Longfellow's realistic portrayal of Mary Walcott's mysterious illness from nightshade poisoning by Tituba in Giles Corey of Salem Farms, along with Hawthorne's erstwhile friend, Charles W. Upham's idea of Tituba having taught the girls magic, may have been simply a reflection of the persistent hearsay. Both Nathaniel Hawthorne and his friend Longfellow, with nineteenth-century hindsight, may have guessed at, or spotted the crux of the issues, too. Cotton Mather's allusions to poisoning in writing about the trials might have been an attempt to give a supernatural explanation for what in fact had been rumored—that some of the symptoms of the afflicted resulted from deliberate poisoning with the thorn apple.

If the hypothesis is correct that most of the key accusers were victims of datura stramonium poisoning and that those they named as witches as a result of their very real

fits and hallucinations were the indirect victims, then the true nature of the Salem witch persecutions comes to light. If we take the primary definition of witch in Cassell's Latin Dictionary, veneficia, the Greek word φαρμακευς, the Hebrew Mecassephah, a poisoner, often translated as witch in the Bible as our definition, then there were true witches at Salem.<sup>100</sup> Their ranks included Samuel Parris, Thomas Putnam, Dr. William Griggs, Jonathan Walcott, and others.

What the Salem witchcraft episode teaches poignantly is that willful ignorance, deliberate deception, covert maliciousness, persecution, religious and governmental sanction of and participation in atrocities based on official lies, coupled with preferential treatment and protection for the rich and powerful, are not anomalous to—or a product of—an unenlightened age but a constant tailored to fit each society. Conversely, in every age there is a struggle to discover the truth in opposition to the promulgators of deception. Our challenge is—like Thomas Brattle's—to side with those who oppose the false. It was against this backdrop of delusion and deception that Cotton Mather wrote his apologia for the Salem trials, Wonders of the Invisible World.

## Notes to Chapter 1

<sup>23</sup> The sermon was published soon after Mather delivered it as A Midnight Cry (Boston, 1692).

<sup>24</sup> Datura is a modern Latin adaptation of the Hindi dhatūra (OED). The American Heritage Dictionary traces the etymology of dhatūrā to the Sanskrit dhattūrā, thorn apple. Linnaeus first used the generic name datura, which he Latinized from the East Indian word Dhatura or Dutra. The word first appeared in his Hortus Cliffortianus (1737). Datura may also come from the Arabic name Tatorah (see Avery 17). For Johann Weyer's connection of plants with witchcraft, see pages 166, 225-227; 228-230; 430, 560 and 619 of Witches, Devils and Doctors in the Renaissance: Johann Weyer, De Prestaegeous Demonium. Medieval and Renaissance Text Studies Vol. 73. George Mora, M.D. and Benjamin Kohl, eds. Trans. John Shea. Foreward by John Weber, M.D. New York: Binghampton, 1991.

<sup>25</sup> A Midnight Cry was published at the end of April, 1692. See Cotton Mather, Diary I: 147.

<sup>26</sup> William Griggs (d. 1693-1697) was a 78-year-old, probably self-taught physician. Sidney Perley says he owned nine books on "physic" (History of Salem 3: 127; see also 256, 257, and 266). William Griggs was from Rumney Marsh and lived there from 1640-1662. In 1671 he was in Gloucester, MA, where he was still living in 1682. By 1692 he had moved to Beverly, MA near Salem. See H. Minot Pitman, "Early

Griggs Families of Massachusetts,” NEGHR 123 (1969): 172. For other sources on William Griggs, see Mary Beth Norton, In the Devil’s Snare, 333 n. 15.

<sup>27</sup> Lieutenant Governor and chief justice William Stoughton, chief magistrate John Hathorne and many others believed the devil could not assume the shape of an innocent person. Their rationalization sprang from the idea that the devil could not act without God’s permission. God would have to give Satan permission to inflict people with punishment as he allowed Satan to do to Job (see Job 1.12 and 2.6). It was believed by Stoughton, Hathorne, and others that a just God would not give the devil permission to impersonate the appearance of a believer. Increase Mather and to some extent Cotton Mather held a different view that in some cases it might be possible for God to give his permission.

<sup>28</sup> Not much about Tituba is known for certain except that she was probably a Native American, a servant in Rev. Parris’s household, and probably his slave. She may have been married to Parris’s other slave, John Indian. Based on the name “Tattuba” appearing in a 1676 inventory of slaves of a Barbados plantation owner, Samuel Thompson, Elaine Breslaw places Samuel Parris and “Tattuba” on Barbados at the same time for a period of years between 1676 and 1680. Breslaw makes a determination about Tituba’s age from the placement of her name on Thompson’s 1676 deed among “working boys and girls, a category that usually included children between nine and fourteen years of age” (Tituba 29). If “Tattuba” was the slave that Parris brought with him to Salem, then she probably would have been 25-30 years old at the time of the Salem crisis. Elaine

Breslaw has determined that Tituba was probably an Arawak Indian from Guiana in Northeast South America. Breslaw suggests that she was in all likelihood “sold in Barbados as a slave” and purchased and brought to Massachusetts by the Rev. Samuel Parris.

<sup>29</sup> Carol F. Karlsen places Sarah Good’s age at 38 (The Devil in the Shape of a Woman 65); Mary Beth Norton places Osborne’s at 49 (In The Devil’s Snare 22).

<sup>30</sup> Hale is using the old-style calendar. He refers to the end of January through February and March of the year 1692.

<sup>31</sup> Abigail Williams’s exact kinship to Samuel Parris or his wife Elizabeth is uncertain.

<sup>32</sup> “Triparadisus” was finished between 1720-24—thirty years after the Salem debacle. In his “Third Paradise” Mather laments that European speculations about the Second Coming in the 1690s, which came to nothing, have resulted in disbelief in the apocalyptic scenario. Mather warns that “*The Extraordinary Descents from the Invisible World*” that seemed to herald Christ’s return and Satan’s impending thousand-year imprisonment may have been just a decoy to “lull” people to sleep (341-342). Unfulfilled expectations of the apocalypse have spread complacency and doubt, which is all part of the devil’s scheme. Mather implies that the Salem debacle was one of Satan’s devices to make people dismiss belief in witchcraft and in the imminence of the Second Coming.

<sup>33</sup> See, for instance, the famous account of Agnes Symson and the North Berwick Witches in which the devil, appearing as a tall black man, mounted the pulpit amidst



burning black candles in North Berwick Church to perform a roll call and ceremony involving corpses from grave dug up inside the church. The account appears on page 129 of Nathaniel Crouch's Kingdom of Darkness (1688) used by the Salem judges. The "black man" also appears in Joseph Glanvill's Sadducismus Triumphatus (1688) pages 289, 390, 394, 463- 467, 469, and 473. The devil is described as a "black man" in Cotton Mather's Magnalia Christi Americana, VI. 81; Edmund Bower's Doctor Lamb Revived or Witchcraft Condemned in Anne Bodehnam (1635), page 28, and many other Early English Books.

<sup>34</sup> The OED defines tawny as the "Name of a composite colour, consisting of brown with a preponderance of yellow or orange; but formerly applied also to other shades of brown." The OED also defines the adjective black (definition 1.c.) as "Having an extremely dark skin; strictly applied to negroes and negritos, and other dark-skinned races; often, loosely, to non-European races, little darker than many Europeans." The OED provides several pre-seventeenth-century examples of this usage. The OED defines the term "black man," (definition 2) as "An evil spirit; also, the evil one, the devil; also, a spirit or bogey invoked in order to terrify children," providing one sixteenth and one seventeenth-century example. Clearly, in the seventeenth century there was a lot of overlap between black and tawny. Mary Beth Norton also points out some of these examples (and others) in her book In The Devil's Snare on pages 58-59, 180, and 344 n. 34.

<sup>35</sup> For an introduction to the controversy, which involved accusations of heresy on both sides, see Rossell Hope Robbins, The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology, pages 74-77 and 263-266.

<sup>36</sup> Joseph Glanvill was born in Plymouth, England, the son of a Puritan merchant. He received a BA at Exeter College, Oxford in 1656 and an MA from Lincoln College, Oxford in 1658. He was ordained in the Church of England in 1660 and became rector at Wimbish, Essex. He was elected into the Royal Scientific Society of London in December, 1664 following the publication of his book *Scepsis scientifica* (1664), attacking scientific dogmatism over the relationship of cause and effect (Burns, “Joseph Glanvill”). Glanvill’s most famous book Saducismus Triumphatus a collection of witchcraft and apparition narratives was the most influential book of its kind in the seventeenth century. It, along with other books like it, influenced the later development of fiction (Parsons vii-xii). Glanvill was concerned with documenting the empirical verifiability of the activities of spirits, demons, and witches to provide scientific proof of their existence. Saducismus Triumphatus was reprinted numerous times and went through four editions. Cotton Mather quoted from it in Wonders of the Invisible World and abstracted Anthony Horneck’s An Account of What Happen’d in the Kingdom of Sweden in the Years 1669, and 1670 reprinted in the second and third editions of Saducismus Triumphatus. For a fuller discussion of Glanvill’s witch book, its history and impact, see Coleman O. Parsons introduction to the 1669 reprint of the 1689 edition of Saducismus Triumphatus.

<sup>37</sup> Michael Dalton (1564-1644) English barrister and legal writer born at Linton, Cambridgeshire. He matriculated from Trinity College, Cambridge in 1580 and was called to the bar in 1581. He served as Justice of the Peace in the county of Essex. In 1618 Dalton published The Country Justice, a popular legal treatise for local magistrates. The treatise went through four editions and was reprinted until 1742 (Orr “Michael Dalton”). Dalton’s book became a guide at the Salem trials. (See Burr Narratives 163 n. 2 and 304 n. 5).

<sup>38</sup> Laws and Liberties of the Massachusetts Colony: Revised and Reprinted. Boston, 1672. 15.

<sup>39</sup> Most modern scholars allow for the involvement, at least, of true psychopathology in symptoms and accusations at Salem. Pediatrician Ernest Caulfield strongly negates the idea that the children were “deceitful, wicked, malicious and dishonest.” Instead, he asserts that they were “sick children in the worst sort of mental distress” (63) Chadwick Hansen blames the girls’ symptoms on hysteria brought about by true belief in and fear of witchcraft. Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum in *Salem Possessed* that the girls’ symptoms sound like the often pathological nature of the Puritan conversion experience. Mary Beth Norton agrees that

The first afflictions of the little children . . . were genuine (that is, not deliberately faked) . . . Many subsequent afflictions also—especially those experienced by frontier refugees—were at least arguably genuine . . . the phenomenon known today as post-traumatic stress disorder comes to mind. (In the Devil’s Snare 307).

<sup>40</sup> Charles W. Upham, Salem Witchcraft, 1867. Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia Library, Sept. 15, 2005.

<<http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/Uph1Wit.html>>.

<sup>41</sup> Belief in ghosts, witchcraft, demons, and magic both predated and existed independently of the Bible, of course. Keith Thomas shows that in England belief in witchcraft was composed of two main ideas concerning witchcraft, the popular and the learned concepts:

On top of the popular belief in the power of maleficent magic was imposed the theological notion that the essence of witchcraft was adherence to the Devil. These two ideas were to be found side by side, sometimes apart, sometimes intermingled. But it was the fear of maleficium which underlay most of the accusations and trials (Religion and the Decline of Magic 449).

The clergy and the Bible at times actually played a role in curtailing the impulse of the folk in blaming disasters upon the work of witches.

<sup>42</sup> Samuel Parris wrote in the church book of record that Mary Sibley had instructed his slave John Indian, Tituba's husband, on baking the witch cake, for which Parris publicly reprimanded her in a public statement read to her before the congregation. However, Tituba also confessed to Reverend John Hale that she had baked the cake. For an analysis of this event, see Bernard Rosenthal Salem Story, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992. 25-27.

Samuel Parris wrote in the Salem Village Church Record, “It is also well known that when these calamities, first began, which was in my own family, the affliction was several weeks before such Hellish operations, as Witchcraft was suspected. Nay it never broke forth to any considerable light, untill Diabolical means was used by the making of a Cake by my Indian man, who had his direction from this our sister Mary Sibly : Since wch Apparitions have been plenty, & exceeding much mischief hath followed. But by this means (it seems) the Devil hath been raised amongst us, & his Rage is vehement & terrible, & when he shall be silenc’d the Lord only knows.” February 11, 2005. Salem Village Church Record Book. Salem Witch Trials Documentary Archive and Transcription Project. Transcribed by Thaddeus Harris, esq. Taken from The New England Historical and Genealogical Register, Vol. 11, 1857 (April) pp. 31-135; (October) pp. 316-321; Vol. 12, (July) 1858; pp. 127-128; (January) 245-248. <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/salem/witchcraft/villgchurchrcrd.html>.

<sup>43</sup> See Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*. 543-544.

<sup>44</sup> SWP 3: 756; Boyer and Nissenbaum, Salem Village Witchcraft 6.

<sup>45</sup> The specific plant was named datura stramonium by Carl Linnaeus and published in Species Plantarum (1753). The genus datura is the modern Latin adaptation of an ancient Hindi word dhatura, a common “Indian species of the plant used by criminals to stupefy and poison” (OED). The species name stramonium, is originally from Greek, “strychnos (nightshade) and manikos (mad)” (Jonker).

Datura stramonium is an ideal candidate for mimicking the symptoms of bewitchment or possession, rather than some other substances it might be compared with like LSD, for instance, which is derived from the ergot fungus. Datura stramonium is a different class of hallucinogen altogether; its effects depend upon different chemicals known as the tropane alkaloids, which are known to take complete control over the subject's experience and sense of identity. The Solanaceae, or nightshade family, includes over 3,000 species world-wide. Species include common plants such as the potato, tomato, eggplant, green pepper, and tobacco. The Solanaceae also include medicinal and psychogenic species of plants long associated with witchcraft and witches' flying ointment. These include Belladonna (atropa belladonna), henbane (hyoscyamus niger), datura (datura stramonium), and mandrake (mandragora officinarum). All these plants contain the psychoactive alkaloids atropine, hyoscyamine, and scopolamine—known as the anticholinergic alkaloids because they block the action of acetylcholine in the brain, producing intense visual, gustatory, and olfactory hallucinations. These plants also differ from other natural hallucinogens because of their extreme toxicity (Sidky 196). Sidkey explains,

In large doses anticholinergic drugs are in some respects similar to LSD, and experienced users, as well as clinical diagnosticians, can sometimes confuse anticholinergic intoxication for LSD psychosis. What distinguishes the two drugs, however, is that anticholinergic substances tend to induce hallucinations which appear to exist externally, with the

subject losing all sense of reality. LSD psychosis, on the other hand, is more ideational in nature, with the subject often able to distinguish the drug-induced state from his objective surroundings. (196)

Datura stramonium often produces hallucinations so intense as to be indistinguishable from objective reality. A common experience of users of jimson weed (or any of the datura species) is seeing, communicating, and interacting with someone who really is not there. Its ability to produce a separate reality makes datura ideal for producing spectral evidence and the effects of bewitchment. Modern subjects frequently describe having a certain experience only to find evidence later in the form of physical injuries and damage to property that their actual experience must have been quite different from the experience hallucinated.

<sup>46</sup> See Frances Hill, A Delusion of Satan. New York, DeCapo Press, 1995. 2002. 194.

<sup>47</sup> For the publications dates of the first Boston edition see Thomas James Holmes, Cotton Mather: A Bibliography of His Works 3: 1257-58 and 1266 n. 34 and 35. For the first London editions of Mather's Wonders, see Holmes Bibliography 3: 1258 and 1266 n. 35. For all seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth-century editions of Wonders of the Invisible World through the year 1914, see Holmes Bibliography 3: 1234-66. Lawson's Narrative was published in London in 1693 by Cotton Mather's publisher John Dunton, bound with Increase Mather's Cases of Conscience under the title

A Further Account of the Trials of the New-England Witches. The elder Mather's name gave the work much greater recognition.

<sup>48</sup> For example, Thomas Potts's famous story of the 1612 Lancashire witches in A Wonderfull Discoverie of Witches in the Countie of Lancaster (1613) offered a detailed account by the court clerk (Potts) of the circumstances surrounding each of the accusations, along with the confessions of the accused. Joseph Glanvill's famous story of the demon of Tedworth began with the account of Mr. Mompesson tuning the vagrant drummer with illegitimate papers over to the authorities and of the subsequent haunting of Mr. Mompesson's house, which included spectral drummings, strange lights, flying objects, and afflictions borne by Mr. Mompesson's children at the hands of the drummer.

<sup>49</sup> Larry Gragg refutes Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum's assertion that Parris's inheritance was meager. See A Quest for Security 13 and 20 n. 64.

<sup>50</sup> See "27. March. Sab. 1692. Sacrament day." Salem Village Church Record Book. Transcribed by Thaddeus Harris, esq. Taken from The New England Historical and Genealogical Register, Vol. 11, 1857 (April) pp. 131-135; (October) pp. 316-321; Vol. 12, (July) 1858; pp. 127-128; (January) 245-248.

<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/salem/witchcraft/villgchurchrcrd.html>.

<sup>51</sup> Richard Baxter, The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits. London, 1691. 164.

<sup>52</sup> According to Robin Briggs, across most of Europe, "the property of a convicted witch was confiscated by the authorities, leaving the survivors impoverished (Witches and Neighbors 238). Briggs says that "Overall there is no reason to suppose that legal



profiteering was the explanation for persecution. On the other hand, it must take its place among those factors which could facilitate trials . . . “ (342).

<sup>53</sup> For an excellent day-by-day account of events at Salem before, during, and after the trials, see Marilynne K. Roach, The Salem Witch Trials. NY: Cooper Square Press, 2002.

<sup>54</sup> Mather refers to a work by Nathaniel Crouch, Pseudonym R.B.: *Delights For The Ingenious In Above Fifty Select And Choice Emblems Divine And Moral Ancient And Modern Curiously Ingraven Upon Copper Plates With Fifty Delightful Poems And Lots For The More Lively Illustration Of Each Emblem*. London, 1684.

<sup>55</sup> Nathaniel Crouch (c. 1640-1725) was a London bookseller and writer. He was born in Lewes, Sussex, the son of a tailor, Thomas Crouch, and became apprenticed to a bookseller, Livewell Chapman, in London in 1656. In 1666 he had his own bookshop. His name appears as either the author or publisher of at least seventy-eight books between 1666 and 1725. Most of Crouch's books sold for just one shilling.

<sup>56</sup> Richard Baxter discusses herbal preparations for expelling bewitchment, the fuga Dæmonium, in The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits (London, 1691) 116-117.

<sup>57</sup> See Philip L. Barbour. “The Riddle of the Powhatan ‘Black Boyes.’” The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography. 88.2 (1980): 148-154, esp. 148.

<sup>58</sup> See OED “Huskanaw.” For references to the ritual, see John Bannister, Natural History of Virginia, 380-81; Robert Beverley, The History and Present State of Virginia, 207–210; John Smith, A Map of Virginia, 171-72 and Generall Historie of Virginia, 124-

125; Henry Spelman, "A Relation of Virginea," cv–cvi; William Strachey, The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania 89, 96, 98–99; William White, "Fragments Published Before 1614," 147–149.

<sup>59</sup> Samuel Purchas (bap. 1577 d. 1626), was an English clergyman, editor, compiler, and writer. He was baptized in Thaxted, Essex. He graduated from St. Johns College, Cambridge with a BA in 1597 and MA in 1600, receiving a BD in 1615. He was ordained priest in 1601 in Witham Church, Essex and held several subsequent positions as vicar, curate, and rector, including rector of St. Martin's, Ludgate and ending his life and career as rector of All Hallows, Bread Street. Though having never traveled more than 200 miles from his birthplace, Purchas was a great editor and compiler of travel literature. The first edition of Purchas His Pilgrimage was published in 1613, entitled Purchas His Pilgrimage, Or Relations of the World and the Religions Observed In All Ages, followed by three subsequent editions in 1614, 1617, and 1626 in which he continued revising and expanding his work. The four-volume folio Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas his Pilgrimes, Containing a History of the World in Sea Voyages and Land Travell by Englishmen and Others, the full title of the last edition, was the largest book ever published in England and spent three years in the press. Purchas's Pilgrimage was widely disseminated and had enormous influence. One of Purchas's major sources was Richard Hakluyt (1552?-1616).

<sup>60</sup> "Algonkin Stock," Encyclopedia Americana (Grolier Online, 2003), <<http://go.grolier.com.dax.lib.unf.edu>> (Sept 1, 2005).

<sup>61</sup> An oke is a personal supernatural spirit belonging to that individual.

<sup>62</sup> *Catalogus librorum collegij Harvardini in quod est Cantabrigiae in Nova Anglia*, (Boston, 1723). 26-27.

<sup>63</sup> See Frederick Webb Hodge, editor, Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology. Bulletin no. 30. Washington: 1907, 1910.

<sup>64</sup> For this and other accounts of Indian religious practices among the Hurons, see Francis Parkman. The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century. 1867. Into. Carl E. Heidenreich and Jose Brandão. Lincoln NB: U of Nebraska P, 1997. The entire collection of Jesuit Relations edited by Reuben Gold Thwaites in the latter part of the nineteenth century is now available online in searchable format at <http://puffin.creighton.edu/jesuit/relations/>

<sup>65</sup> See The Royal Society of London. Philosophical Transactions. Vol LXI. For the Years 1739-1740. Rpt. New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation; Klaus Reprint Corporation, 1963. 160.

<sup>66</sup> I include Clayton's entire paragraph here:

They have no Opium though in some old fields upon York River I found Poppys perhaps of no despicable virtue. I have been told that in feavers and when their sick cannot sleep the[y] apply the flowers of Strammonium to the Temples, which has an effect like Laudanum. I have had asserted by many that when the Soldiers were first over to quell the Insurrection of

Bacon etc. They being at James-town several of them went to gather a sallet in the fields and lighting in great quantitys on an herb called Jamestown weed, they gathered it, and by eating thereof in plenty were rendered Apish and foolish as if they had been drunk or were become Idiot. Dr. Lee likewise assured me that the same accident hapned once in his own family, but that after a night or two's sleep they recovered. (Clayton's entire letter is in Bernard G. Hoffman; John Clayton, Ethnohistory 11.1 (Winter, 1964) 1-40. 19.

<sup>67</sup> The OED defines "cooler" as "3. A cooling medicine or agent; a refrigerant." and "4. fig. Anything that cools emotion, excitement, or ardour, or damps the spirits."

<sup>68</sup> The illustration is also reproduced in Helen C. Rountree, The Powhatan Indians of Virginia: Their Traditional Culture, 83.

<sup>69</sup> The complete account in Safford's article appears as follows. I include it because of its vivid description, its application to the Virginia and the New England initiation ceremonies, and it describes the ritual use of a single plant of the datura family, datura meteloides, and not the use of a combination of the extracts of several different plants. The account suggests that jimson weed could have been used effectively by itself in such ceremonies and also in initiating the witchcraft outbreak at Salem:

When it grows dark the masters of the ceremony, called paha, go from house to house to collect the candidates for initiation, sometimes carrying in their arms little boys who have already fallen to sleep to the place of assembly. The strictest

silence is observed, and it is necessary that the paha be a shaman, or wizard skilled in magic. A large tamyush, or stone bowl, is placed before the chief, who, sitting in the darkness, pounds with a stone mano, or pestle, the dry scraped root of the plant, to the accompaniment of a weird chant, while the boys stand waiting. The powdered root is then passed through a basket-sieve back into the stone bowl and water is poured upon it. The boys are enjoined to keep silence. As each boy kneels in turn before the big bowl to drink the infusion, his head is supported by the hand of the master of ceremonies, who raises it when enough has been taken. It is a solemn occasion, a spiritual rebirth, suggesting the rites of baptism or confirmation. During the entire ceremony both the men and the boys are quite nude. When the drink has been administered to all the candidates, dances are performed in the darkness, accompanied by cries in imitation of birds and beasts; and when these are finished the candidates are marched round a fire, chanting a ceremonial song. As the effects of the narcotic plant overcome them, one by one they fall to the ground and are carried to another place and left until they regain consciousness. After this the dancing is resumed and kept up through the entire night. At daylight they return to the place where the drink was administered, and after a day of fasting they witness feats of magic performed by the shamans, from whom, after having been dressed in feathers and painted, they receive wonder-working sticks. The boys are also instructed by their elders in certain mysteries and rules of conduct, somewhat corresponding to one's duties toward God and to

one's neighbor, as taught in the catechism. The initiatory ceremony is followed by two or three weeks of abstinence from salt and meat, after which a ceremony is followed by two or three weeks of abstinence from salt and meat, after which a ceremony with a rope, called wanawut, is performed. When this is finished the candidates are free. (555). "Lucario Cuevish to Miss Constance Godard Duibois" qtd. in William E. Safford, "Daturas of the Old World and New: An Account of their Narcotic Properties and Their Use in Oracular and Initiatory Ceremonies." Annual Report of the Board of Regents of The Smithsonian Institution. 1920.

Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922. 537-8

<sup>70</sup> See John McWilliams, "Indian John and the Northern Tawnies." The New England Quarterly. 69.4 (Dec. 1996), 580-604, especially 584-585. See also James E. Kences, "Some Unexplored Relationships of Essex County Witchcraft to the Indian Wars of 1675 and 1687." Essex Institute Historical Collections, 120 (1984): 179-212.

<sup>71</sup> See David D. Hall, World of Wonders, 71-80; Jon Butler, "Magic, Astrology, and the Early American Religious Heritage," 317-346.

<sup>72</sup> Chapter 160, section 5. I refer to the 1690 edition of Michael Dalton's The Country Justice.

<sup>73</sup> Elizar Keysar of Salem was a tanner and a cousin of Thomas Putnam.

<sup>74</sup> Keysar's daughter truly was insane. Warren's testimony shows the distinction made between bewitchment and mental illness.

<sup>75</sup> See the virtual anthology of datura experiences under Datura in The Vaults of Erowid Sept 9, 2005. <[http://www.erowid.org/experiences/subs/exp\\_Datura.shtml](http://www.erowid.org/experiences/subs/exp_Datura.shtml)> and “Trip Reports” in The Lycaeum. Sept 9, 2005. <<http://leda.lycaeum.org/index.pl?ID=283>>

<sup>76</sup> For Mather’s account of Phoebe Chandler’s claim, see WIW 136-137. For more of Mather’s associations of the activities of the devil with poison in WIW, see pages [xiv], [xv], [xx], and 141.

<sup>77</sup> Peir Andrea Matthiolus or Mattioli (1501-1577) born in Sienna, was an Italian physician and botanist. His commentary on the work of the great Greek physician and botanist Pedacious Dioscorides (40-90 A.D.), Commentarii in Sex Libros Pedacii Dioscorides (1544) was famous among European botanists. He died of the plague.

<sup>78</sup> The blind Dutch botanist Georg Everhard Rumphius (1637-1706) stated that the Italian botanist Luigi Anguillara (d. 1570) identified the hippomanes of Theocritus as the species of datura, nux-methel (See Safford, “Daturas” 548).

<sup>79</sup> See Andreas Plaitakis and Roger C. Duvoisin, “Homer’s Moly Identified as Galanthus nivalis L.: Physiologic Antidote to Stramonium Poisoning,” Clinical Neuropharmacology 6.1, 1-5. Palatkis and Duvoisin refer to R.E. Jennings, “Stramonium Poisoning: A Review of the Literature and Report of Two Cases.” Journal of Pediatrics. 1934: 6: 657-64.

<sup>80</sup> William Coles (1626-1662) in The Art of Simpling (1656) wrote that The Oyntment that Witches use is reported to be made . . . of the Juices of Smallage,

Woolfsbaine and Cinquefoyle” (66). Goody Close in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s “Young Goodman Brown” uses ““smallage, and cinquefoil, and wolf’s bane”” in her flying ointment (153).

<sup>81</sup> “Paresthesia.” American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language. Fourth Edition.

<sup>82</sup> The symptoms of pricking of the afflicted by specters become evidence in the Salem court cases, including Elizabeth Hubbard vs. Sarah Good (SWP 2: 372-373); Ann Putnam, Jr. vs. Sarah Good (SWP 2: 373); Susannah Sheldon vs. Sarah Good (SWP 2: 374); Sarah Bibber vs. Sarah Good (SWP 2: 376); Mary Warren vs. Martha Carrier SWP 1: 185); Elizabeth Hubbard vs. Martha Carrier (SWP 1: 194); Mary Walcott vs. Martha Carrier (SWP 1: 195); Elizabeth Hubbard vs. Sarah Osborne (SWP 2: 611-12); Ann Putnam vs. Sarah Osborne (SWP 2: 612); Ann Putnam, Jr. vs. Rebecca Nurse (SWP 2: 595); Elizabeth Hubbard vs. Rebecca Nurse (SWP 2: 596); Sarah Bibber vs. John Proctor (SWP 3: 684); Elizabeth Hubbard vs. John Proctor (SWP 2: 685); Elizabeth Hubbard vs. Tituba (SWP 3: 756); Ann Putnam, Jr. vs. Tituba (SWP 3: 756); Ann Putnam, Jr. vs. Sarah Wildes (SWP 3: 811); Mary Walcott vs. Sarah Wildes (SWP 3: 811); Elizabeth Booth vs. John Willard (SWP 3: 842); Thomas and Edward Putnam vs. John Willard (on behalf of Mary Walcott, Elizabeth Hubbard, Abigail Williams, and Ann Putnam, Jr.) (SWP 3: 845); Elizabeth Booth vs. Elizabeth Proctor (SWP 2: 672); and Mary Warren vs. Abigail Somes (SWP 3: 736). Other sensations include pinching and biting, many instances of which are not included in this list.



<sup>83</sup> Thomas Jefferson, The Political Writings of Thomas Jefferson. Joyce Oldham Appleby and Terrence Ball, eds. New York: Cambridge UP, 1999.

<sup>84</sup> Edward Winslow (1595-1655), was born at Droitwich, Worcestershire. Son of a prosperous yeoman farmer, Winslow learned Latin and Greek at King's School in Worcester under the renowned headmaster Henry Bright. Winslow sailed aboard Maylower to Cape Cod, landing with the colonists on November 11, 1620. In 1621 he helped carry on important negotiations for Plymouth with the Wampanoag Indian chief Massasoit, even offering himself as a hostage while a treaty was being forged. His book Good Newes from New England was published in 1624, containing important information about the religious practices of the New England Indians. He was elected Governor of Plymouth Colony in 1633 and again in 1636 and 1644. His book, The Glorious Progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians of New England (1649) aided the cause of missionary work.

<sup>85</sup> See Cotton Mather, Pietas in Patriam (Boston, 1697) 70.

<sup>86</sup> The Walum Olum is thought to be the tribal chronicle of the Delaware, or Leni-Lenape.

<sup>87</sup> It is Samuel Purchas who informs us that they become Quiyoughcosuckles in Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas His Pilgrimes (1625), bk. 4. See Philip L. Barbour, "The Riddle of the Powhatan 'Black Boyes.'" The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography 88.2 (1980) 148-154, esp. 153-154.

<sup>88</sup> See Wade Davis's The Serpent and the Rainbow.

<sup>89</sup> “Datura stramonium.” Book Review. Review Francaise Laboratoires. Vol. 2002. Issue 340. February 2002. Page 23. My translation is from the French.

<sup>90</sup> See Breslaw, Tituba 3-12.

<sup>91</sup> See Michael Dalton, A Country Justice. 385.

<sup>92</sup> See the next chapter on the effects accompanying nightmares.

<sup>93</sup> The journal, which remained in manuscript until the mid-nineteenth century, is printed in George Lincoln Burr, Narratives of the New England Witchcraft Cases. 255-287. (See bibliography.)

<sup>94</sup> An energumen is one who is possessed by the devil, a demoniac. An energumen can also mean a “possessed” person, such as a religious enthusiast or a fanatical devotee (*OED*).

<sup>95</sup> Charles W. Upham was the first to write extensively about the economic and social forces that drove the accusations. He relates of the accused that “They were ‘Topsfield Men,’ or the opponents and Baley [the first minister at Salem Village Church] or of Parris, or more or less connected with some other feuds” (Salem Witchcraft 2: 390). Many writers on Salem have pointed out significant social reasons (usually having to do with money, initially) that certain individuals were named. On the naming of Rebecca (Towne) Nurse, Sarah (Towne) Cloyce, and Mary (Towne) Easty, see See, for example, Enders A. Robinson, The Devil Discovered 273-279; On the naming of Rebecca Nurse see Mary Beth Norton, In the Devil’s Snare, 47, 51-2, and 61-2. On the naming of John and Elizabeth Proctor, see Enders A. Robinson, Devil Discovered, 281-

288; on the naming of Mary Warren, see Robinson, Devil, 24-125, and the section on the Proctor, above.

<sup>96</sup> Norman Gevitz identifies this “french doctor” as Dr. Anthony Randall fl. 1692. See Norman Gevitz, “The Devil Hath Laughed at the Physicians,” Journal of the History of Medicine 55 (January 2000) 29.

<sup>97</sup> “Nashaway” or Nashua was an Indian town later named Lancaster, Massachusetts.

<sup>98</sup> The entire entry appears in the records of the Salem Village Church and is quoted below:

Divers of the Brethren of the Church at Salem Village, being grievously offended by reason of the (in their estimation) “unwarrantable actings “ of their Pastor, Mr. Parris, in the matter of Witchcraft, do therefore habitually absent themselves from Public Worship, and from “Communion at the Lord’s Table,” notwithstanding the endeavors of the Pastor and Church to enforce their attendance thereupon. The grounds of their dissatisfaction are these: 1. “The distracting and disturbing tumults and noises made by the persons under Diabolical power and delusions, preventing, sometimes, their hearing and understanding and profiting by the word preached.” 2. “Their apprehensions of danger of themselves being accused as the Devil’s instruments to molest and afflict the persons complaining; they

seeing those whom they had reason to esteem better than themselves thus accused, blemished, and of their lives bereaved.”

3. “The declared and published principles of their Pastor, and his frequent and positive preaching of the same, with respect to the dark and dismal mysteries of iniquity working amongst them, and their molestation from the invisible world; his easy and strong faith and belief of the affirmations and accusations made by those they call the afflicted; his approving and practising unwarrantable methods for discovering what he was desirous to know referring to the bewitched or possessed persons, as in bringing some to others, and by and from them pretending to inform himself and others who were the Devil’s instruments to afflict the sick and pained ; and his not rendering to the world a fair if true account of what he wrote on examination of the afflicted.” 4. “His unsafe and unaccountable oath given by him against sundry of the accused; and his zeal in seeking out the suspected, insomuch that one of the disaffected brethren (John Tarbell by name) tells him to his face that he has been “the great persecutor, and that had it not been for him his; mother Nurse might have been still living, and so freed from execution.” 5. “His persisting in these principles and justifying his practices, though others, wise and learned, who were as forward as himself, are sorry for what they have done, and see their error” therein.

The disaffected brethren, having first taken “the advice of some neighboring Elders,” two of them repair to the house of their Pastor on the 27th of March, 1693, accompanied by one “William Osburne, of Salem,” and two others, as “witnesses,” and give him a paper, wherein is expressed their desire for “a Council of Elders, mutually chosen, to hear ill grievances between their Pastor and selves, and to determine where the blameable cause is,” purporting to be in the name of “all the Plantation, or a great many of them at least,” but without either signature or date. The which paper, when Mr. Parris had read, he puts into his pocket, and replies that he will “consider of it.”

But sundry conferences being had, and still no signs of reconciliation, the breach rather growing wider, the brethren refusing to be dealt withal in a Church way, but preferring a petition to his excellency, the Governor and the General Court, and sending letters to divers remote Churches, complaining of their “Church and minister as unpeaceable with their neighbors;” at the last, “Mr. Willard, in the name of the Elders at Boston:” writes to the Rev. Messrs. Higginson, Noyes, and Hale, desiring to persuade the Church at Salem Village to join with the complainants in calling a Council of neighboring Churches, not excepting against any on either side; -- whereupon these Rev. Gentlemen addressed letters to Rev. Mr. Parris and his Church, in the month of October, (?) 1693, signifying to

them the advice of the Elders ; the which not being followed, by reason of the non-agreement of the contending parties, and the unhappy differences being protracted through the winter and spring, the disaffected brethren and neighbors again apply to the neighboring ministers, desiring them to meet together, and try if they can give any, direction for the healing of the sad dissensions in their midst. (Salem Village Church Records Sabbath 5<sup>th</sup> Februrary 1692/3 at the Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia web site: September 15, 2005.

<<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/salem/witchcraft/villgchurchrcrd.html>>

<sup>99</sup> “Henry Wadsworth Longfellow,” *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, Nina Baym et al, eds. New York: Norton, 1998, 1450.

<sup>100</sup> See William Perkins, *A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* (1608) 178.

## Chapter 2

### “Between sleepeing & wakeing”: Writing the Night-mare into the Invisible World

“Beautiful, unusual sight: Heliopolis by night.”

Aberfeldy, Young Forever

In the years between the witchcraft outbreak of 1692 and the completion of his medical treatise “The Angel of Bethesda” (1724), Cotton Mather had evidently learned to tell the difference between an incubus nightmare and a witch’s specter. It remains a mystery why it may have taken him so long to discover that, because both Mather and his father Increase had been plagued by recurrent Ephialtes or incubus nightmares.<sup>1</sup> In his treatise, Mather reveals quite a bit about the phenomenon of the nightmare and also about the folly of people in the past who mistook nightmares for the bedroom visitations of a witch. Mather writes,

The Nations of the North, had a Whimsy of One, *Mara* a famous and a mighty *Dæmon*, who is the Death of all them who dy by *Suffocation*. Our *Night-Mare* has its Name from this Northern *Dæmon*. And it has been a common Thing for People under the Invasion of this Malady, to imagine a *Witchcraft* in the Case; And anon perhaps the Folly proceeds unto the Accusation of a poor, mean, ill-beloved old Woman in the

Neighbourhood, *Away, Away*, with such Idle Fancies. Tis one who has another Name than that of , who inspires 'em! (153)

When Mather writes of the accusation of a “poor, mean, ill-beloved old Woman in the Neighborhood,” would he have not thought about Sarah Good, Sarah Osborne, Rebecca Nurse, and other women accused in the witchcraft outbreak at Salem in 1692? One of the most remarkable aspects of Mather’s commentary is that he now attributes to the Devil the idea that nightmares are witches’ specters. If only he could have said that in 1692! Now giving a natural explanation for the nightmare, Mather points out that one of the most bothersome afflictions a nightmare performs is to pin the victim down, pressing like a great weight upon the chest. Mather attributes this “Pressure on the Diaphragm” to “a Vapour, which is the Effect of Some Ill Digestion in the Stomach.” This pressing sensation causes the feeling of suffocation, reminding one of death, perhaps even causing it. Mather refers to the sensation that one is dying, common to the incubus nightmare. He adds,

A Fitt of the *Night-mare* is often introduced, with a Dream that we are Conversing with the *Dead*. The Malady comes to call us away unto the *Dead*. Yea, some have *Died* of the Malady. A *Sudden* and an *Easy* Death! How Desireable for a *Man in CHRIST!*—One can scarce forbear saying, *Sic mihi contingat!*—

In a marvelous clarification or about-face from 1692 Salem, Mather now tells his audience that a desirable way for a Christian to die is to be carried away in a “Night-mare” that he had just said had been mistaken often for witchcraft. Why would Mather



want to have anything to do with even the appearance of witchcraft? Ironically, the nightmare has evolved from a sign of witchcraft into a heavenly portal. Mather seems to be driving home a point. What he recognized was that despite the nightmare's natural origins, it functioned as a doorway into the invisible world, and to die in close proximity to that world made for an easier transition. Paradoxically, the nightmare becomes an event that removes the sting from the King of Terrors and makes dying akin to riding on Elijah's chariot. Continuing his amazingly accurate taxonomy of the nightmare, Mather explains that the victim assaulted with this Incubus "has the Exercise of his Reason awakened at the First Assault; He knows where he is, and who is near him; he Groans, he Strives, he Cries for Help; a Jog of a Neighbour delivers him" (153). Mather writes correctly not only in his description of the nightmare but also in his portrayal of how nightmares often end: another person hears the victim cry out and awakens him or her. Modern research tells us that often just being able to move one finger ends the paralysis state and its accompanying hallucinations.

Folklorist David Hufford has done extensive analyses of the Night-mare from case studies in Newfoundland, Kentucky, and elsewhere, and in his book The Terror that Comes in the Night he defines it as having four primary characteristics or features, all of which agree with Mather's depiction (25):

1. a subjective impression of wakefulness
2. immobility variously perceived (paralysis, restraint, fear of moving)
3. realistic perception of actual environment
4. fear

With these characteristics in mind, consider a 1692 account by a Salem woman, Elizabeth Symonds, who testified against Sarah Wilds:

After I was abed, I did see something stand between the Wall and I, I did see something stand there and I did Look upon it a considerable time, so Long that I was afraid to Ly on that side of the bed and asked my husband to Let mee Ly on the other side of the bed, and he did. And then I did feel it come upon my feete as if it had been a cat and Creep up to my breast and Lay upon me, and then I could not move neither hand nor foot; neither could I speak a word. I did strive to call my husband, but I could not speak, and so I lay all night. And in the morning I could speake and then I told my husband they talk of the old w[torn] but I think she has ridden me all this night. (SWP 3: 813)

Apparently, Symonds had an initial encounter with a strange entity that caused her to exchange sides of the bed with her husband. Perhaps she imagined changing sides as well. She then went back to sleep, but her encounter with the specter continued. Elizabeth Symonds's memorate shows the classic features that both Mather and Hufford describe of the nightmare: a feeling of wakefulness; the appearance of objective reality; a pressure on the chest; and inability to move or speak despite striving to do so. We can infer Symonds's sense of fear from the context of her description and the fact that she changed sides or thought she changed places with her husband to put him between herself and the entity. Symonds interprets her experience as being ridden by a witch, whom she identifies as Sarah Wildes, who was executed at Salem for witchcraft on July 19, 1692.

Unfortunately, in 1692 Cotton Mather apparently had not learned to spot the features of the Night-mare showing up as spectral testimony in Salem in time to try to save the life of Wildes, hanged on July 19. If he had, he might actually have warned the judges that some of the testimony given sounded like the incubus or ephialtes, which many writers, including King James I in his book Demonologie (1597), had pronounced as an illusion brought on by shifting humors in the body. Increase Mather, too, did eventually reject spectral evidence as proof, perhaps because he recognized it sometimes had natural origins. Mather's promotion of an early form of smallpox vaccination in Boston almost thirty years later shows he was willing to take considerable personal risks to save people's lives. Even if Mather suspected some of the spectral evidence used against the accused had a natural and not a supernatural origin, and was willing to risk his reputation to make the case, he might not have been able to convince the judges. The judges, not knowing how to act, would have turned—as all English and American legal proceedings do—to case studies of previous occurrences.

Mather may or may not have known before he wrote “The Angel of Bethesda,” that the true Mara, or nightmare with its accompanying hallucinations, was responsible for generating a plethora of spectral evidence, testimony based on the apparitions of witches appearing to torment their victims. Such evidence became the central feature in the Salem trials. From the trial records it is clear that without spectral evidence and confessions, the judges at Salem would have had insufficient evidence to convict. It is impossible to find a single case of a convicted witch at Salem in which either spectral evidence or confessions did not play a key role. The appearance of tormenting spirits

both sparked and fueled the inquiry into witchcraft. In January, 1692, Tituba, the West Indian slave in charge of the Reverend Samuel Parris's children, began seeing specters. Then in late February her charges, Elizabeth Parris and her cousin Abigail Williams, accused the spectral shapes of Tituba, Sara Osborne, and Sara Good of bewitching them. Further accusations led to the first execution, that of Bridget Bishop, on June 10, 1692. After Bishop was sentenced on June 2, judge John Saltonstall resigned in protest and proceedings were set aside temporarily while Governor Phips and the magistrates debated the use of spectral evidence, seeking advice from area ministers.<sup>2</sup> In the respite the controversy created, Cotton Mather answered the judges' request anonymously in an ambiguous document published June 15 entitled "The Return of Several Ministers," signed by twelve ministers from the area. In the tract Mather warned against the exclusive or injudicious use of spectral evidence, but then, in the final paragraph added,

*Nevertheless, We cannot but humbly recommend unto the Government, the speedy and vigorous Prosecution of such as have rendered themselves obnoxious, according to the Direction given in the Laws of God, and the wholesome Statutes of the English Nation, for the Detection of Witchcrafts.* (qtd. in Mather, I. "Postscript" Cases of Conscience)

Mather's statement had the unfortunate effect of sanctioning the previous judgments and letting the accusations, trials, convictions, and executions proceed unimpeded.

Specters were evident everywhere during the trials, even in the midst of court examinations. In fact, the typical indictment for witchcraft used at Salem seems to be

patterned after the incubus nightmare. One example is from an indictment against George Burroughs: “Ann Putman the Ninth Day of May in the fourth year abovesaid and Divers other Dayes and times as well before as after was and is Tortured Afflicted Pined Consumed Wasted and Tormented” (SWP 1: 157).

Regardless of its cause, evidence used against Rebecca Nurse resulting in her execution seems to have been almost entirely spectral.<sup>3</sup> In each of Cotton Mather’s accounts in Wonders of the witches tried and executed at Salem, spectral evidence and its interpretation was central. Much of the rest of the evidence remained circumstantial. For instance, a suspected witch uttered something perceived as a curse, and when some negative event followed, the suspect got the blame. Combined with circumstantial evidence, however, spectral evidence had a sensational effect. It connected other types of evidence—mischief, death or illness of humans or animals following a perceived threat, a strange mark or teat, a negative reputation, a poppet (doll) suspected in the use of sympathetic magic, or an animal taken for a familiar—with the specter of the accused. Spectral evidence lent credence and spiritual context to circumstantial evidence, which in turn supported more spectral evidence. Circular logic made each type of evidence bolster the other, causing the accumulated evidence to seem more than the sum of its parts, effecting what neither type of evidence could accomplish alone. It was, paradoxically, spectral evidence that seemed the most empirical, providing eye, ear, and even tactile witness of spiritual assault. Robert Calef, one of Mather’s and the judges’ detractors, revealed his perception of the important role spectral evidence played in convicting Sara

Dustin. He wrote, “The Spectre-Evidence was not made use of in these Tryals, so that the Jewry soon brought her in not Guilty . . .” (Burr, Narratives 383).

That spectral evidence figured so prominently in the outcome of the Salem trials may seem odd to readers of Wonders of the Invisible World, because two of the major authorities on witchcraft consulted by the judges at Salem and summarized by Mather in Wonders, William Perkins and John Gaule, never explicitly mention spectral evidence in their specific guidelines for either suspicion or conviction of witchcraft (see Perkins Damned Art 199-219 and Gaule Select Cases (74-87). Perkins thought that, for conviction, only a voluntary confession or, lacking that, the testimony to two witnesses “of honest and good report auouching before the Magistrate vpon their owne knowledge, these two things: Either that one partie accused, hath made a league with the deuill; or hath done some known practices of Witchcraft” (211-213). Gaule accepts only moral and physical evidence. As in the Salem trials, Matthew Hale’s trial of the Bury St. Edmunds witches in 1662, which Mather abstracts in Wonders, accepted a great deal of spectral evidence. Mather used Hale’s trial to show to English readers in London that New England followed the same procedure as did the English trials of the 1660s. The difference between judicial theory and practice over the weight of spectral evidence raises the question: why the rift? The answer might lie with public opinion concerning witchcraft. Speaking of the sources of witchcraft cases in general in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, G. L. Kittredge notes that it is “not only the dogmas of the theologians, the tenets of the physicians, and the rules of law that we need to know, but, above everything else, the beliefs and feelings of the populace—of the folk itself”

(Witchcraft in Old and New England 3). The folk—who by and large made the accusations—had their own ideas of magic and sorcery. These ideas were buttressed by actual experience with the invisible world, such as the Mara or incubus nightmare, which was interpreted as the spectral attacks of witches. Accounts of spectral visitations—and their interpretation—would then be passed around from person to person. When someone was accused of witchcraft, individuals would reference a store of tales or experiences. The point of reference was not books of law or theological abstractions but their experience. Either individuals had encountered spectral assault themselves or knew and trusted someone who had. It was—as Hufford stresses throughout his book—often experience that was responsible for the belief—not the other way around.<sup>4</sup> Learned culture helped shape or interpret these encounters but was not responsible for them. The folk would then seek out any legal loophole they could find to obtain redress from what they believed was assault from demonic forces. As Kittredge explains, it is to the populace

that the officers of the law must look for testimony, and it is the jury of the vicinage that renders the verdict. Experience has taught, over and over again, how hard it is for the most skeptical judge to bring about an acquittal in a particular case when the neighborhood from which the jury comes in convinced of the reality of the crime in general (3).

Only one of the major authorities upon whom the judges and Mather relied, Richard Bernard of Batcombe, mentions spectral evidence in his guidelines. Bernard clarifies, however, that an “apparition of the party suspected, whom the afflicted in their

fits seeme to see” is useful only for a “great suspicion,” not for conviction of witchcraft (A Guide to Grand Jury-Men 209). Bernard’s statement appears in chapter 12 of his Guide under the rubric “[G]reat presumptions of a Witch, for which he or shee may be brought before authoritie to be examined” (204). Mather, however, does not include that statement about apparitions in his summary of Bernard’s guidelines in Wonders of the Invisible World.

Michael Dalton’s The Countrey Justice (1690), which seems to have been used by the Salem judges more than any other guide<sup>5</sup> (but, again, not mentioned by Mather in Wonders), refers briefly to spectral evidence by way of quoting Bernard. Dalton lists one way to discover witches as “Their Apparition to the sick Party in his Fits” (384), lifted from page 209 of Bernard’s Guide. On the next page, Dalton reiterates the statement on apparitions by quoting another passage from Bernard’s guide concerning ways to determine “whether one bee bewitched”: “When the party shall see visibly some Apparition, and shortly after some mischief shall befall him [. . .]” (Bernard 167, 173; Dalton 385). Dalton’s two main articles of evidence for convicting a witch were “a Familiar or Spirit, which appeareth to them sometimes in one shape, sometimes in another; as in the shape of a Man, Woman, Boy, Dog, Cat, Foal, Rate [rat], Toad, &c.,” and the witch’s mark or teat (383-84). Dalton’s statement helps define a “familiar spirit.” According to the Massachusetts Bay Colony statute of 1641, consulting with a familiar spirit is defining evidence of a witch.<sup>6</sup> Even seeing one of these familiar spirits was risky at Salem, for it was known that the assaulting spirits often encouraged the victim to “sign the book” or make a covenant with Satan. Both the witch’s mark and consultation with a



familiar spirit constituted evidence of the core criterion for conviction: a compact with Satan. All additional evidence served to substantiate the compact. Dalton, however, makes no distinction in his list between evidence used to “discover and [to] convict these Witches” (384). He does not partition evidence into separate categories for suspicion and conviction of witchcraft as do Perkins, Gaule, and Bernard, but simply provides a list that combines all types of evidence to form proof of a compact between Satan and the witch, making all evidence cumulative and potentially weighty. Dalton adds—and it is particularly damning when applied to the evidence gathered at Salem—“Now against these Witches . . . the Justices of Peace may not always expect direct Evidence, seeing all their works are the works of darkness, and no witnesses present with them to accuse them . . .” (383). Guided by Dalton’s work, judges could convict on the mere preponderance—not just the type—of evidence. Cotton Mather warned against such indiscriminateness in his “Return of Several Ministers,” writing, “As in Complaints upon Witchcrafts, there may be Matters of Enquiry, which do not amount unto Matters of Presumption, and there may be Matters of Presumption which yet may not be reckoned Matters of Conviction” (qtd. in Mather, I. “Postscript” Cases of Conscience).

Although neither the New England nor the English statutes for witchcraft referred to spectral evidence per se, abundant legal precedent existed for its inclusion in witchcraft trials throughout both England and New England. Kittredge lists at least 22 English witchcraft trials before 1692 in which spectral evidence played a role (Witchcraft in Old and New England 363-64 and notes). Why—when it barely warranted mention by any of the major guides to witchcraft prosecution—was spectral evidence allowed so much

credence both before 1692 and in Salem? It was because the people wanted it and the magistrates driven by their theological predilections and public opinion allowed it. Put another way, however, why did Perkins and Gaule never, and Richard Bernard of Batcombe only once explicitly refer to spectral evidence in their guidelines for admissible evidence? It was probably because magistrates needed a conviction. Intensely scrutinizing spectral evidence, or determining whether or not a specter can represent the innocent would have made the entire witchcraft paradigm come crashing down. If, on one hand, after acknowledging the validity of spectral evidence, these guides had asserted that the devil could appear in anyone's shape, including that of a righteous person (as Satan had arguably done with the prophet Samuel in the story of Saul and the witch of Endor), then all spectral evidence would be suspect. This is why the twelve ministers ultimately signed the petition disallowing spectral evidence, which was published at the end of the preface to Increase Mather's Cases of Conscience (1692). If, on the other hand, specters could represent only the guilty, then any person said to be seen spectrally could be assumed guilty of witchcraft and the ensuing plethora of accusations, recriminations, and executions would seem implausible. More important, blame could have landed on anyone more easily, even ministers and judges. Not able to decide the controversy, Perkins, Gaule, and Bernard overlooked the issue. None of Mather's paraphrases of the guidelines of Perkins, Gaule, or Bernard in Wonders even mentions spectral evidence, which is not unusual considering his models. The guidelines were written not only to keep from convicting the innocent but also to make sure the guilty could be condemned, though specific guidelines for the use of spectral evidence were lacking in either case.

Given the absence of clear guidelines—or any guidelines—for spectral evidence, and the lack of information about such evidence in the Bible, how did the idea of spectral evidence come to play so important a role? Why did it figure so prominently at Salem? As Thomas Ady asked, “Where is it written in all the old and new Testament, that a Witch is a murtherer, or hath power to kill by Witchcraft, or to afflict with any disease or infirmity?” (A Candle in the Dark 6). Likewise, where in the Bible did it say that the specters of near or distant neighbors would come and pinch, choke, pine, waste, torment, and grievously oppress those who knew them, as was often reported at Salem? Frankly, it didn’t. Demons, however, were permitted to do those things. Christ and the apostles cast out demons, which were “allowed” to enter a herd of swine, but blaming demons was not the same as attributing possession to a witch. Even the typical legal indictment of bewitchment repeated time and again at Salem encouraged spectral testimony in which the possessed person “was, and is, tortured, afflicted, tormented, consumed, Pined and wasted, against the Peace of Our Sovereigne Lord and Lady, the King and Queen, their Crowne, and Dignity, and against the Lawes, in that case made and Provided—”(SWP 3: 926).

According to the Salem Witchcraft Papers Web site at the Electronic Text Center at the University of Virginia, choke or choak accompanied testimony against every convicted witch at Salem except Mary Parker and Samuel Wardwell. Pinch appeared in evidence against every executed witch except Sarah Good, Alice Parker, Mary Parker and Margaret Scott. Pinch could mean anything from a tweak between the finger and thumb or the opposing surfaces of any instrument, a squeeze or a seizure with the teeth,<sup>7</sup> to its

obsolete definition “Said of actions causing a painful bodily sensation: To hurt, pain, torture, torment [also] applied to the torture of the rack”<sup>8</sup> and “mental affliction.”<sup>9</sup>

What was meant by spectral evidence may also have been hard to define because of the lack of distinction possible between apparitions and familiar spirits, which could appear in any shape. All familiar spirits could be apparitions and were sent by the devil, but not all apparitions were necessarily familiar spirits, as Cotton Mather tried to show in Wonders with his relation of the appearance of an apparition to Joseph Beacon in Boston of his brother murdered in London. The apparition of Beacon’s brother at his bedside gave what was later to be found accurate information as to the manner of his murder and his murderer’s identity. Such accounts suggested that not all apparitions were evil. Mather was writing after the fact, however, because by the time Wonders was published, all the executions in Salem had essentially ended, the last occurring on September 22, 1692. A “joint letter of endorsement” by Chief Justice William Stoughton and Justice Samuel Sewall dated “Boston Octob. 11. 1692” appeared at the end of Wonders. In a letter dated October 12, 1692, Governor William Phips wrote to the home government in England declaring that he had had “found that the Devill had taken upon him the name and shape of severall persons who were doubtless innocent.” In the same letter Phips informed the King and Queen that he had “put a stop to the printing of any discourses one way or other” about the Salem trials (Burr, Narratives 197). According to Mather’s bibliographer Thomas J. Holmes, Wonders of the Invisible World probably appeared in print in the middle of October 1692 (1:1257-58).

The main sticking point in the debate over spectral evidence was whether or not the devil could represent the shape of an innocent person. Chief Justice William Stoughton and the other magistrates thought not. Cotton Mather, on the other hand, tried to cater to both sides without coming down definitively on either. Religious pomposity was on trial here, as well as those accused of witchcraft.

In Wonders Mather also summarized the famous witch trial that the judges depended on most for guidance, A Trial of Witches as the Assizes at Bury St Edmunds, the 1682 summary of a trial that took place in 1662 before the famed jurist and then baron of exchequer and Chief Justice of England Sir Matthew Hale. As in Salem thirty years later, the witch accusations at Bury St. Edmunds, England, in 1662, started with the fits and accusations of two girls of the ages of nine and eleven. Like the Salem trials, the Bury St. Edmunds trials depended heavily on spectral evidence. The primary instigators and accusers in the Salem trials were the niece and daughter of the Reverend Samuel Parris of Salem Village, Abigail Williams and Elizabeth Parris. Through the Reverend Parris, both girls could have been exposed to many accounts of witches and apparitions. Cotton Mather's Memorable Providences (1689), published in both Boston and London, described in great detail the possession of John Goodwin's children in Boston, whose afflictions closely resembled those of the girls in the Parris household.

The rift between theories of spectral evidence and the practice of applying them raises the issue of how spectral evidence could be virtually absent from the important guides to witchcraft but appear so prevalently in written records of witchcraft and in trial transcripts. Of course the Bible said there were familiar spirits and witches, which was

the central reason to believe in them and put people on trial. When witchcraft seemed manifest, magistrates consulted the Bible in diagnosing and treating witchcraft, but the Bible did not clearly define what it meant by a witch (Starkey 52; Normand and Roberts 334-37). Much argument had ensued over the definitions of certain words pertaining to witchcraft. Reginald Scot highlights the dispute over language in The Discoverie of Witchcraft, questioning the meaning of certain Hebrew words in the English Bible, which were translated as witch and familiar spirit (See my discussion of these words in the preface). Such biblical indeterminacy about what constituted a witch, or witchcraft, or a familiar spirit left the door open to a wide range of interpretation, and the clergy appropriated whatever evidence it could find that seemed to fit their theological framework for the purpose at hand. Why, then, did the judges not err on the side of caution?

For identifying factors that contributed to witch beliefs, and a hint at why spectral evidence, though controversial, figured so prominently in people's actual experience and in witch trials, British essayist Charles Lamb (1775-1834) provides a clue in his essay, "Witches, and Other Night Fears," published in London Magazine in October, 1821.<sup>10</sup> Like us, Lamb looks back to the time of universal belief in witches, and in analyzing the origin of his own childhood fears, locates sources of belief:

We are too hasty when we set down our ancestors in the gross for fools, for the monstrous inconsistencies (as they seem to us) involved in their creed of witchcraft. In the relations of this visible world we find them to have been as rational, and shrewd to detect an historic anomaly, as

ourselves. But when once the invisible world was supposed to be opened, and the lawless agency of bad spirits assumed, what measures of probability, of decency, of fitness, or proportion—of that which distinguishes the likely from the palpable absurd—could they have to guide them in the rejection or admission of any particular testimony? (65)

Lamb judges the way we have traditionally looked at ancestral belief in witchcraft—that they lacked rationality—as far too simplistic. Although Lamb does not single out any specific cases for criticism, the rush to judgment to which Lamb refers applies to all witchcraft cases in which previous generations participated, and particularly those of Salem in 1692. More importantly, Lamb's essay attempts to answer the question of how and why such practical, rational people in their daily lives could have been so credulous about the invisible world. The answer to the question of why, he suggests, depends upon more than just culture—it also depends upon an open door into the invisible world. What opened the door for previous generations? One factor would be an imperative to adhere to religious dogma, of course, but Lamb suggests another cause. Lamb suggests that we try to look through the eyes of those who believed in and thought they had experienced witchcraft. Perhaps we will see more clearly to gain a better understanding of how, why, and what they experienced that will explain something about their beliefs. Once we start to view the invisible world through the eyes of individuals who lived in Salem in 1692, we begin to rethink what happened at the witchcraft trials. Consequently, we can achieve a better understanding of the reasons for Cotton Mather's apologia for the trials, Wonders of the Invisible World.

Before examining Lamb's critique of witch beliefs and their application to 1692 New England, we might consider to what extent belief in witches, devils, and spirits from the invisible world didn't end with the Enlightenment. Well into the eighteenth century, people in both England and New England still were very much believers in spirits. The last witch executed in Britain was in Dornoch, Scotland in 1727 (Ankarloo and Clark 60). Daniel Defoe's account, "The Apparition of Mrs. Veal" (1706) argued the case for the actual appearance of ghosts of the deceased, and Samuel Johnson's eighteenth-century fascination with the case of the Cock-Lane Ghost shows that he and many others regarded ghosts as a possibility and were quite eager to investigate and to believe.<sup>11</sup> One legal case between a landlord and tenants involving the alleged haunting of the mansion of Josiah Cotton, in Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1733, indicates that the possibility of ghosts was still taken quite seriously there.<sup>12</sup>

If we doubt the extent to which people in Salem believed in witchcraft and the invisible world, or tend to ridicule those who in the eighteenth century were still "deluded," we should remind ourselves that in the twenty-first century, many groups continue to condemn and try to ban books on the subject of ghosts and witches through fear of encouraging meddling with the forces of Satan. The American Library Association reports that the most frequently challenged books of 2002 were the Harry Potter series for its focus on wizardry and magic.<sup>13</sup> Alvin Schwartz's Scary Stories series for ages 9-12 beginning with Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark: Collected from American Folklore, with stories about witches and ghosts, is listed as number one on the list of "most challenged" books by the American Library Association for the years 1990-



1999.<sup>14</sup> A Christian group in Cromwell, Connecticut, recently tried to ban both the Harry Potter series and Elizabeth George Speare's The Witch at Blackbird Pond from a middle school, claiming they were anti-Christian and promoted and glorified witchcraft. In June, 2003 The Hartford Courant reported that the latest in the Harry Potter series, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, is now the mail-order Web site Amazon.com's largest new product release ever, with more than 500,000 copies ordered to date on Amazon.com and 875,000 copies worldwide, suggesting the subject of witchcraft is still amazingly popular.<sup>15</sup>

Such lingering effects of belief in witches and demons are not limited to the attempted banning of books only, but also apply to other aspects of our lives. Carolyn Risher, Mayor of Inglis, Florida, a town of 1,400 residents, recently banned Satan from the town, putting the following message on the official town letterhead with official gold seals and attaching them to fence posts at the four entrances to the town:

Be it known from this day forward that Satan, ruler of darkness, giver of evil, destroyer of what is good and just, is not now, nor ever again will be, a part of this town of Inglis. Satan is hereby declared powerless, no longer ruling over, nor influencing, our citizens.”<sup>16</sup>

Carolyn Risher's signs represent a deeply conservative element, an insistence on a traditional faith-based worldview. Now, as then, people seem to believe readily in the supernatural and are still intent on banishing the devil. Of course, there is a political, not just a superstitious element to all of this continued witch mongering, but there was certainly a political element to it in Mather's day as well.

At the time of the Salem trials, little suppression and much encouragement of belief in ghosts and witches existed. Folk tradition and biblical teachings from the pulpit were the major cultural sources of knowledge about witchcraft. One tended to reinforce the other. Many could read, but they read the Bible, almanacs, and other material sanctioned by New England's governmental theocracy (little more than an extension of the religious institution in Salem in 1692). While ministers discouraged the practice of magic, they may have overlooked it at times because belief in magic encouraged belief in the supernatural. Consequently, individuals relied on little but the supernatural to explain extraordinary occurrences. Science in its infancy could now explain some previously unexplained phenomena, but many occurrences defied explanation. Ministers like Boston's Increase and Cotton Mather, Salem's Nicholas Noyes, and Salem Village ministers Deodat Lawson and Samuel Parris, had a vested interest in preaching about the reality of the invisible world and of Satan's part in it, which included apparitions, demons, and witches, all within the context of a time line for the advent of Satan's final wrath and Christ's millennial kingdom. With William Stoughton, trained for the ministry and a true believer not only in witchcraft—but in the impossibility of an innocent specter—presiding over the trials, and Cotton Mather, New England's most illustrious minister writing the official version, we can see reasons for the stance that, at least at first, the ministers and the government took and why it proved so fatal.<sup>17</sup>

From reading the Salem court records we discover the assumption that spectral evidence constituted real proof. While the government and clergy actively discouraged folk practice of countermagic to harm or expose witches, government and the clergy

encouraged belief in devils, apparitions, and witches themselves. When folk beliefs concurred with religious orthodoxy, as they sometimes did, the clergy sanctioned them. What is now termed folklore was then often a form of religious oppression formed in part from Scripture, part from oral tradition. With the Enlightenment just getting underway in America, scientific explanations for witchcraft or apparitions gained little acceptance among the common people and the devoutly religious. With no one actively discouraging belief (the existence of specters and witches were official theology) people believed both God's providential intervention and in the supernatural manifestations of Satan's invisible kingdom. Lamb's essay catalogs some of the popular beliefs and magical practices of a previous age, which we now identify as common folk motifs in accounts of witchcraft:

That maidens pined away, wasting inwardly as their waxen images consumed before a fire—that corn was lodged,<sup>18</sup> and cattle lamed—that whirlwinds uptore in diabolic revelry the oaks of the forest—or that spits and kettles only danced a fearful-innocent vagary about some rustic's kitchen when no wind was stirring—were all equally probable where no law of agency was understood. That the prince of the powers of darkness, passing by the flower and pomp of the earth, should lay preposterous siege to the weak fantasy of indigent eld—has neither likelihood nor unlikelihood *à priori* to us, who have no measure to guess at his policy, or standard to estimate what rate those anile souls may fetch in the devil's market. Nor, when the wicked are expressly symbolized by a goat, was it

to be wondered at so much, that *he* should come sometimes in that body, and assert his metaphor.—That intercourse was opened at all between both worlds was perhaps the mistake—but that once assumed, I see no reason for disbelieving one attested story of this nature more than another on the score of absurdity. There is no law to judge of the lawless, or canon by which a dream may be criticised. (65) <sup>19</sup>

As Lamb indicates, once the door to the invisible world is ajar, as with a nightmare, for example, the characters of folklore and the Bible may spring to life.

Looking in the Scriptures at the lives of the biblical saints, we can see what opened the door to the invisible world for them and confirmed the faith of the believer. Time after time what conveyed belief was experience. Moses's experience with the burning bush confirmed the great I AM. Paul's experience of a light and voice on the road to Damascus confirmed the existence of the risen Christ. John on the isle of Patmos was carried away in spirit and received a vision of the future state. Experience also proved the devil who, in turn, proved God. Was the specter of Samuel appearing to Saul before the witch of Endor really the ghost of Samuel or the devil masquerading in his shape? If one could not experience God, perhaps one might experience the devil. Experiencing the devil was like experiencing the invisible existence of a divine reality because the devil proved God. Witches and apparitions also proved God's existence. Joseph Glanvil put it succinctly: "No spirits, no God." What common experience seemed to provide proof of the existence of spirits, demons, witches and their specters? What common occurrence—that didn't require the meditation, fasting, or lengthy prayer

known and practiced by ministers—unlocked the door to communion with spiritual existence? Glancing back at previous witch beliefs, Lamb outlines a way in which a biblical metaphor becomes a reality: the metaphorical goat asserts its metaphor and becomes literal. Christ's statement that the sheep would be separated from the goats at the last judgment might become the devil in the form of an actual goat, whose buttocks witches were frequently forced to kiss.<sup>20</sup> Where might this demonic goat at last become more than just a four-letter word on a page? Lamb repeats the same logic he made earlier that once one believes that intercourse between the visible and invisible world is possible, even if that intercourse is deemed satanic, then any belief that followed from that conclusion was as good as another for proving the invisible world, limited only by the content and nature of the conception of that realm. Once one accepted that there was an invisible world, then, any act or being described by the Bible or that one could imagine became possible. Demons, spirits, and angels surrounded us. In 1689 Cotton Mather reminded his audience that "There are *Devils*: and so many of them too, that sometimes a *Legion* of them are spar'd for the vexation of *one Man*. The *Air* in which we breathe is full of them" ("A Discourse on Witchcraft" 106).

But what caused the door to the invisible world to remain ajar for common people, who made most of the witchcraft accusations and received the brunt of them? What common experience confirmed the existence of the invisible world for them? What experience could confirm the existence of the invisible world, even to the point of providing a recognizable pattern of extra-biblical experience closely tied to biblical teachings as proof of the invisible world? The answer was, again, experience. Some of

the accounts recorded in the witch trials and apparition narratives involve occurrences extremely real to the subject. Once the known limitations of the material world gave way to the limitlessness of the invisible world in a subject's mind, then the properties of that world were confined only by the imagination. But what experiences confirmed the biblical link between heaven, earth, and hell? What turned metaphorical goats into spiritual realities? An account from New York in the early nineteenth century illustrates what type of experience might have done that in the seventeenth century.

It is by no means an uncommon thing for the person laboring under Night-Mare to see, or at least imagine that he sees, some figure, either human or otherwise, standing by him, threatening him, or deriding or oppressing him. This circumstance has been productive of considerable misapprehension and mistakes; not only of persons with weak minds but likewise with those whose intellectual faculties have been greatly improved. These visions are various, as are likewise the senses which become thus hallucinated; not only the sight, but the hearing, and the touch, are frequently imposed on. These hallucinations have so often occurred to myself, that they have long been rendered quite familiar, although they are still sometimes productive of very laughable mistakes. As they are more frequently, however, of the terrific cast, they act very powerfully on the minds of those who are not acquainted with them, and produce terrors which I verily believe sometimes prove fatal. ("The Night-Mare")

The writer of this article relates several accounts of the nightmare, one of which is the following story by a medical student of an experience that had happened to him when he was fifteen or sixteen years old:

[H]e described himself as laying awake in the night, when he heard distinctly some one coming down the stairs, and immediately afterwards saw a female figure enter his bed-room, which he supposed to be his mother, who had died while he was in his infancy, but whose person had been frequently described to him. The figure before him answered precisely to the idea he had formed of her person, and excited in him considerable alarm. She beckoned him to get up and follow her, which, after many ineffectual attempts, he at length accomplished, and followed her to the bottom of the stairs, where he lost sight of her, and returned to bed. This vision was repeated, either the next night, or shortly after, but with this difference, that he found himself unable to get out of bed, and the spectre quitted the room with threatening gestures, and an indignant aspect. This vision made a deep impression on the mind of the young gentleman, and no reasoning upon the subject could convince him of the hallucination of the vision. ("The Night Mare")

The power, vividness, and intensity of the nightmare as the one recalled above, leaves a strong impression on the memory. The author also explains that

the transactions which [occur] during the paroxysm of Night-Mare, and those of . . . dreams which [take] place during profound sleep, are so very

different as to the impression they have left on the sensorium, that there is no possibility of confounding them with one another. ("The Night Mare")

Such accounts as the one above have profound implications for the study of witchcraft, especially witchcraft in Salem in which spectral evidence played so decisive a role. One of the most revealing details relating to the study of witchcraft is the nightmare's ability to paint a vivid and life-like portrait of figures in one's own imagination or conception. The young student saw his preconceived idea of what his mother looked like come to life in a way that he was convinced his experience had been real. We might consider such an experience as an anomaly, but David Hufford's The Terror that Comes in the Night is filled with such true-life accounts, many from his students, that began with a questionnaire Hufford would pass out on the first day of class. Such accounts interested those in the nineteenth century in a way they probably do not interest most of us today. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century we can pass such things off as a hallucination or a nightmare. Such an experience might not ruin our day. But in the seventeenth century when there was no possibility of not believing in spirits, such an experience would have been a vivid reminder of the invisible world's reality.

Charles Lamb relates similar experiences of his own. After outlining some common motifs, beliefs, and practices associated with witchcraft, Lamb identifies some of his subjective experiences, his night terrors, as largely responsible for fomenting his own fears of witches as a child, implying that the spectral visitors, which seemed so real to him, would have been as real to those of previous generations, creating, reinforcing, and sustaining the larger metaphors of their belief. Could a terrifying and palpably vivid



experience of such spectral visitations contribute to the certainty that intercourse between the visible and invisible worlds was possible? Lamb seems to think so:

I was dreadfully alive to nervous terrors. The night-time solitude, and the dark, were my hell. The sufferings I endured in this nature would justify the expression. I never laid my head on my pillow, I suppose, from the fourth to the seventh or eighth year of my life—so far as memory serves in things so long ago—without an assurance, which realized its own prophecy, of seeing some frightful spectre. Be old Stackhouse<sup>21</sup> then acquitted in part, if I say, that to his picture of the Witch raising up Samuel—(O that old man covered with a mantle!) I owe—not my midnight terrors, the hell of my infancy—but the shape and manner of their visitation. It was he who dressed up for me a hag that nightly sate upon my pillow—a sure bed-fellow, when my aunt or my maid was far from me. All day long, while the book was permitted me, I dreamed waking over his delineation, and at night (if I may use so bold an expression) awoke into sleep, and found the vision true. I durst not, even in the day-light, once enter the chamber where I slept, without my face turned to the window, aversely from the bed where my witch-ridden pillow was. (67)

Lamb refers to the engraving of the Witch of Endor conjuring up the ghost of Samuel before Saul in Thomas S. Stackhouse's A New History of the Bible. This episode in the book of Samuel had been used time and again for centuries as an argument for the

validity of witchcraft and, of course, came up again in the Salem trials. Stackhouse's huge two-volume folio consists of Old Testament stories, along with a skeptical objection to the theological implications of the story appended to each, followed by a theological solution to that objection, serving the purpose of theological instruction. Lamb looks at the withering effects that these mocked-up objections of the faithless and of the orthodox theological defenses to counter them had on his childhood belief in the truth of the Scriptures:

The pretty Bible stories which I had read, or heard read in church, lost their purity and sincerity of impression, and were turned into so many historic or chronological theses to be defended against whatever impungers. I was not to disbelieve them, but—the next thing to that—I was to be quite sure that some one or other would or had disbelieved them. Next to making a child an infidel, is the letting him know that there are infidels at all . . . (66)

When too frequent a perusal of that tome eventually caused Lamb's fingers to puncture some pages, the book was taken from him and locked away. Instead of strengthening his faith, Stackhouse only raised questions and doubts in Lamb's young mind about the validity of Christian beliefs. Reading this mighty volume did nothing to allay Lamb's night terrors. In other words, conscious faith had really nothing to do with it. Lamb's position in childhood was like that of many who find themselves encountering skepticism against religious teachings in the post-Enlightenment age. The doubts unintentionally raised by Stackhouse do not seem to have quelled Lamb's childhood dread of witches,

though, suggesting that it was not theological arguments or reasoned beliefs that validated the existence of witches and stoked his nighttime terrors, but something else. In the seventeenth century and even during the eighteenth century before Lamb, many who had far less reason to doubt than he had as a boy questioned the reality of witchcraft yet still believed in spirits. It was difficult to argue with his nightmares, however, and for those in the seventeenth century, there would have been little reason to. Lamb quickly forgot about both the theological objections and solutions on biblical points given in Stackhouse, but one text stuck in his imagination, fueled by Lamb's susceptibility to nightmares, and it was not words but an image that most frightened him.

Lamb's analysis of his reaction to the engraving of the witch of Endor suggests something important about the cultural shaping of subjective experience. Lamb acknowledges the superstitious beliefs and practices of our ancestors, but then suggests that they, as reasonable as we, derived some of their superstitions from actual subjective experience. A close reading of Lamb suggests that the impetus for his belief in witches and specters sprang from the guided imagery of his "night fears":

I have sometimes thought that I could not have existed in the days of received witchcraft; that I would not have slept in a village where one of those reputed hags dwelt . . . .

From my childhood I was extremely inquisitive about witches and witch-stories. My maid, and more legendary aunt, supplied me with good store . . . . There was that picture, too, of the Witch raising up Samuel, which I wish that I had never seen. (66)

The stories and pictures in Stackhouse merely gave direction to an imagination already out of control as the result of night terrors. Lamb concludes that had he lived in the time of rampant superstition, he could not have dared live near a reputed witch for fear of an actual visitation. He realizes—thanks to his nightmares and what they represented for him—that had he lived in a previous age, he, too, would have believed in witches. Lamb defines his receptivity to night terrors, not printed texts, as the determining factor in the formation of belief. Lamb's uses the term, "witch-riden pillow" as a metonym for the whole phenomena known as hag or witch "riding," which Lamb and many others through the centuries have associated with the phenomenon the Anglo-Saxons called that since at least the year 1440 meant a specter or hag, the root of the word "nightmare."<sup>22</sup> The Indo-European root of Mara is mer-, meaning "to rub away, harm."<sup>23</sup>

Lamb's use of the term "witch-riden pillow" alludes to the riding of the nightmare, either riding with or being ridden, and in this context suggests something crucial about the role of the nightmare in forming belief. Lamb insists it was not Stackhouse's book causing his night terrors. The picture in the book merely formed the "shape and manner of their visitation," indicating that such images derived from the night fears were not created by religious culture but shaped by it, through constant perusal of his father's tome. Nothing could dispel Lamb's childhood fears of witches, not even rational disbelief inadvertently raised by the "objections" and "solutions" in Stackhouse. The specters Lamb saw that caused him to believe in witches did not depend entirely on the ones he

had been culturally shaped to see. Lamb summarized his argument in a way that applies directly to the beginning of the Salem witchcraft episode:

It is not a book, or picture, or the stories of foolish servants, which create these terrors in children. They can at most but give them a direction. [The child] who was never allowed to hear of a goblin or an apparition, or scarcely to be told of bad men, or to read or hear any distressing story—finds all this world of fear . . . in his own “thick-coming fancies;” and from his little midnight pillow, this nurse child of optimism will start at shapes, unborrowed of tradition, in sweats to which the reveries of the cell-damned murderer are tranquility. (68)

What the pictures from Stackhouse did for Lamb was to create a strategy that could accommodate Lamb’s experience of nightmares. They became a concrete symbol or counterpart to Lamb’s nightmare experiences that helped define—not create—them. In a similar way, sermons, the Bible, and accounts of witchcraft, ghosts, and possessions provided a cultural blueprint for the interpretation of similar experiences in Salem and elsewhere. Whatever cultural factors contributed to the witchcraft delusion, belief in witches made it possible, and that belief may have been enabled and encouraged by experiences similar to Lamb’s, through what folklorist David Hufford terms “core supernatural experiences.” Witchcraft was in English law tied not to heresy but to the witch’s power to harm, and the main way the witch was thought to harm was by spectral attack. What Lamb say about cultural shaping has profound implications for what those

in Salem might have experienced in nightmares and other hallucinogenic episodes and for how they interpreted events.

Lamb's "waking into sleep" describes what many have experienced, a phenomenon common to all cultures that Germans and Scandinavians called mara, a Germanic base which is cognate with Old Irish morrigan, queen of the elves.<sup>24</sup> Lamb's night fears provided the raw material for the experience that the picture of the witch of Endor with the specter of Samuel in Stackhouse's book validated and interpreted. When we study the causes and effects of Salem witchcraft and of Cotton Mather's role in documenting it, we have to consider many components in the formation of belief, including subjective experiences. Understanding both the biblical context and the subjective experience of witchcraft are essential to an understanding of Wonders of the Invisible World and preceding events in Salem.

While belief in the Bible laid the groundwork for belief in the invisible world, belief itself did not spring only from being told of an invisible world by reading the Bible and hearing the word of its ministers. True belief also derived from personal experience like that of Job's encounter with God in the whirlwind, prompting him to exclaim, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee" (Job 42:5). Much of what people encountered in the way of religious teachings and folk beliefs merely shaped their worldview, giving form and rationale to the sense of an invisible world encountered in experience. Belief itself did not spring simply from the Bible and the minister any more than Lamb's nightmares sprang from looking at the picture of the witch of Endor in Stackhouse. They merely told him what to experience. Scripture was

the standard of sanity, and “logical” arguments based on the premise of the infallibility of Scripture were very influential. In this way the Bible was the primary shaper which could accommodate, explain, and mould supernatural experience. Belief or faith itself, however, sprang also from personal encounters with the invisible world forming “evidence of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1), experience of an invisible world that was modeled on the framework of the Bible. However, when subjective experience reinforced biblical teachings about witchcraft the real case for witchcraft was made.

Comparing one’s personal experience or the experiences of others with official religious and folk teachings about the supernatural gives direction to the interpretation of any actual experience. This shaping of belief came through both the official religious channels and in a traditional or folk way, through the sharing of providence tales and ghost stories with friends and relatives gathered on cold, howling nights around the fire, sharing relations of strange “wonders” or weird personal experiences or encounters with unexplained phenomena. Experiencing the invisible world oneself, or at least vicariously through others who claimed to have had actual encounters, opened the door to belief and faith. Experience provided faith, “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1). Sharing personal experiences caused cultural shaping of subjective experience. What occurred *a priori* to a preternatural experience was cultural shaping. What occurred *a posteriori* to such experience was in part the result of the shaping or interpretation of evidence, and in part the nature of the experience itself.

In The Terror that Comes in the Night, Hufford writes extensively about the phenomena known as night terrors, such as those that seem to have bothered Lamb. The

most common medical term for what Hufford describes is “sleep paralysis,” though Hufford deliberately avoids that appellation, since the Old Hag experience seems to be comprised of at least four types of psychological experience, what we normally classify by the terms “bad dreams, night terrors, sleep paralysis, and hypnagogic hallucinations” (121). Hufford also defines the Mara experience succinctly as “the experience of finding oneself awake and paralyzed in the presence of a frightening being” (“An Experience-Centered Approach to Hauntings” 31).<sup>25</sup>

In addition to the four primary features of the nightmare listed near the beginning of his essay, Hufford includes a long list of secondary features in his book as well, outlined in detail in his “Index of Features” at the end of Terror. These features include brief descriptions of various types of phenomena experienced, including subjective impressions often perceived by victims, actions performed by victims, the position of the victims during the attack, and the various phenomena accompanying the attack’s termination (Terror 267-70). Later research reveals that the experience of the nightmare or Old Hag may be the product of either hypnagogic or hypnopompic hallucinations. Both types occur in the state between sleeping and waking, the hypnagogic type taking place in the initial part of the sleep phase, that of falling asleep, and the hypnopompic hallucinations occurring in the process between sleeping and waking.<sup>26</sup>

Hufford claims that “in a variety of cultural and social situations Old Hag attacks are readily assimilated to witchcraft beliefs” (Terror 220). For this reason, Hufford argues, “[t]he information developed so far on the Old Hag [Mara] attack should be sufficient to allow reconsideration of certain aspects of the older witchcraft records”



(222). Utilizing the information presented by Hufford, applying elements of these primary and secondary features of the Old Hag or Mara experience to accounts of Salem witchcraft, especially to the cases Cotton Mather treats in Wonders of the Invisible World, we can gain insight into reasons for the Salem debacle. The Mara experience cannot account for all the spectral evidence presented in the Salem witchcraft trials, but it does account for opening doors to belief in the invisible world by generating some of the most sensational and key testimony, evidence of the type likely to influence credulous judges. Individuals found proof that witches existed in subjective experience. Virtually all knew someone who had been ridden by a witch, even if they did not have the experience themselves. The experience itself is timeless. Hufford gives many examples of modern Mara experiences. I use the following case from the year 1915 documented in Hufford's Terror. It echoes an experience recorded in the Salem Witchcraft Papers and by Cotton Mather in Wonders of the Invisible World:<sup>27</sup>

Robert was trying to date Jean, who was John's steady girlfriend. About a month after this had been going on Robert began to be hagged. Every night when he went to bed, it was as if someone was pressing across his chest—it was as if he was being strangled. Robert became so sick that the people he boarded with thought he was going to die. But one night an old man suggested that Robert place a piece of board directly across his chest with an opened up pocket knife held between his hands. It was hoped that when the hag came to lie across his chest, the hag would be killed. (3)

The “hagging” of Robert, which he tried to thwart with a counter-spell, turned out to be attributed to one “John,” whose girlfriend Jean had started to date Robert. This account is interesting for two reasons: first, because it parallels Richard Coman’s 1692 attempt to protect himself by the use of the physical and magical properties of a hand-held sword (the hilt of which formed a cross) to ward off what he believed was a witch attack (recorded in both the Salem court records and in Mather’s Wonders), and second, the hag attack signaled to Robert in the twentieth century an attack by the specter or hag of a specific person he knew might want to do him harm, a feature common in the Salem witchcraft cases. It indicates the continued belief into the twentieth century that a witch’s specter could enter a victim’s room and mount an attack.

In a way, the mischief Cotton Mather performs in Wonders of the Invisible World is like the Old Hag, a term used to describe forms of witchcraft in Cotton Mather’s time. The both raises the frightening specter of witches and then furnishes the evidence. The manifestation seems real, but when closely examined under the proper lens, can be—for the most part—explained. To reiterate: close examination of Salem witchcraft records, the Old Hag or Mara attacks seem to have generated at least some of the spectral evidence cited in key cases in the court records and in Mather’s abstracts of them in Wonders. At the very least, the Mara experience seems to have provided a pattern by which evidence against witches was constructed, not only at Salem, but in many other witchcraft cases. It helped generate a general atmosphere of belief and a provided a touchstone for gauging witchcraft experience. The lent credibility to any ordinary dream about witches.

It is likely that evidence presented in the Salem witchcraft records and in Wonders of the Invisible World are tapping into a tradition of being “hagged” that existed in both Old and New England at the time.<sup>28</sup> The incubus nightmare apparently was often interpreted as a visitation by a witch or hag. David Hufford discovered evidence of the tradition in isolated Newfoundland. During the Salem witchcraft episode Newfoundland was a fishing center and often traded with New England. The experience of the incubus nightmare is ubiquitous and contains at least four elements that make it an ideal generator of evidence of spectral attack: the subjective experience of wakefulness, the evil presence associated with the experience, generating fear, paralysis or inability to move (that which victims of witchcraft in Salem often described as “pinching,” or “oppressing”), and carried the vraisemblance of reality to the victim, which was an important element in eyewitness accounts. Central to spectral evidence is the visionary nature of the experience. Features of the Mara experience provide all these criteria, which could easily satisfy the Newtonian and Cartesian demands for empirical proof sought in the late seventeenth century for evidence of the supernatural and conviction of witchcraft. It is the sense of absolute reality and overwhelming terror inherent in the Mara that makes it so convincing as evidence, both to the subjects who experienced it and to the others to whom they related their nightmare. It made superstitious claimants and others believe what they claimed, giving it validity and making it ideal for use in court.

The standard indictment for witchcraft in English law used extensively at Salem asserted that the victim had been “Tortured, Afflicted, Consumed, Pined, Wasted, and Tormented.” “Pined” meant “[e]xhausted or wasted by suffering or hunger.”<sup>29</sup> All these

verbs apply to symptoms of the Old Hag experience. Waking up in a fit of paralysis, choking, oppression, or “pinching”—especially in the obsolete seventeenth-century senses of the word (“to hurt, pain, torture, and torment”) sounded like torture on the rack and was attributed to witchcraft. Fearfully sensing an evil presence in the room, seeing a horrid creature or something attempting to choke or smother him, and then attributing it to a near neighbor whom he or she had already suspected of being a witch, would be entirely in keeping with English and early American folk belief and practice; the afflicted would automatically attribute the causes to witchcraft. If David Hufford’s estimation about the Mara experience occurring in 18-23 % of the population is accurate, we can assume that such experiences occurred frequently in Salem and in the surrounding area of Essex County. In this way any experience of seeing someone in a nightmare, no matter when it had happened, became useful as evidence in court.

Hufford researched the Mara extensively in Newfoundland and classified its pattern. The primary features are listed above. Hufford’s outline of secondary characteristics is almost three pages long and includes odors, sounds heard, doors opening, appearance of an attacker as a person, shape-shifting, and non-human figures. Sometimes the victim experiences strangling or choking and breathing problems. Moreover, the sensation of “motion” and “pressure” can occur as well. Sometimes the attacker “leaves bruises.” Sometimes the “victim feels lifted,” as in an out-of-body experience (Hufford, Terror 267-70). Frequently, such nightmares usher in out-of-body experiences or “comprise a state that is immediately antecedent to them” (Terror 238).

In the Salem court records, we see experiences going back ten or more years offered as evidence; Salem represented a kind of watershed. A lot of evidence for witchcraft had been dammed up because, as Richard Goodbeer puts it,

[t]he number of witch prosecutions in New England had fallen dramatically during the two decades prior to 1692, as townsfolk realized the difficulty of securing a legal conviction for witchcraft. The magistrates now had to deal with a backlog of witchcraft incidents. (Devil's Dominion 181)

The idea that people could have personal supernatural experience seems to challenge Thomas Hobbes's imperative in Leviathan (ch. 32):

When God speaketh to man, it must be either immediately; or by mediation of another man, to whom he had formerly spoken by himself immediately. How God speaketh to a man immediately, may be understood by those well enough, to whom he hath so spoken; but how the same should be understood by another, is hard, if not impossible to know. For if a man pretend to me, that God hath spoken to him supernaturally, and immediately, and I make doubt of it, I cannot easily perceive what argument he can produce, to oblige me to believe it. (Leviathan 256)<sup>30</sup>

If verifiable evidence could be gathered that spirits and disembodied souls could communicate from the invisible world, Hobbes' materialism and mortalism could be invalidated once and for all. Hobbes had discounted all "Dreams, Visions, Voice[s], and Inspiration," except those that occurred to a true prophet, and the only two signs of a true

prophet were performing real miracles and not “teaching any other Religion than that which is already established” (Leviathan 257). Since, according to Hobbes, miracles had ceased (259), the only way for God to speak to anyone now was by “meditation of the Prophets, or of the Apostles, or of the Church, in such manner as he speaks to all other Christian men” (257). In light of the New England experience, however, who could truthfully say that God did not continue to perform miracles through his saints as earthly ministers? The miraculous deliverance of New England from Indians and the French, during King William’s War (1689-1697), and other wonders of God performed on behalf of his chosen continued to be recorded. Increase Mather’s Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences (1684) contained accounts of remarkable sea deliverances; accounts of the extraordinary effects of thunder and lightning, sometimes caused by Satan and sometimes by good angels, but always representing the voice of God; tales of witchcraft, apparitions and the preternatural in England and New England; demon possession and cacodæmons masquerading as angels; and condemnation of countermagic, including the unwarrantable use of plants and herbs to drive away witches and evil spirits. Books six and seven in Cotton Mather’s Magnailia Christi Americana (1702) contained remarkable tales of divine providence in New England, including deliverance from Indian captivity, “wonderful Sea Deliverances,” “Remarkable answers to prayer,” “Remarkable Conversions,” and “Thaumato-graphia Pneumatica” relating “the Wonders of the invisible World in Preternatural Occurrences”—all representing ways God communicated with His people.

What if God still did speak to some people immediately, as, for instance, Cotton Mather, who believed that God through an angel had spoken to him? Mather writes in a passage inserted into the verso of the cover of his diary for the year 1685,

A strange and memorable thing. After outpourings of prayer, with the utmost fervour and fasting, there appeared an Angel, whose face shone like the Noonday sun. His features were those of a man, and beardless; his head was encircled by a splendid tiara; on his shoulders were wings; his garments were white and shining; his robe reached to his ankles; and about his loins was a belt not unlike the girdles of the peoples of the East. And this Angel said that he was sent by the Lord Jesus to bear a clear answer to the prayers of a certain youth, and to bear back his words in reply. Many things this angel said which it is not fit to set down here. (Diary 1: 87 n. 2)

Among other things, the angel then told Mather about the books he would write and publish in America and in Europe. Before 1686, Mather had not published anything anywhere other than in New England, where in 1682 he had published a poem. Experiences such as the one Mather had can be convincing beyond doubt of the existence of the invisible world.

Hobbes' argument might seem perfectly reasonable to anyone who never had a supernatural experience. But how would Hobbes hold up with those who truly believed they had experienced the supernatural in a way that was more than imaginary, either through a remarkable encounter revealing the personal guidance of divine Providence, a revelation, or a meeting with an angel, an apparition, a demon, or even an experience

with the devil himself? Hobbes could be refuted through recoverable spiritual experiences or revelations sent by God. Such experiences would have a tremendous influence on friends, loved ones, and neighbors. Truth to tell, recording such tales as deathbed experiences and sightings of specters and apparitions seemed something of a pastime in Puritan society. Even if the supernatural manifestation came from the devil rather than angelic messengers, such a manifestation confirmed the intangible existence of the invisible world. As the book of Job indicates, God sometimes gave the devil permission to afflict humans, so anything that happened to the believer, even seeing the devil, was being allowed by God for the believer's edification. As Mather asserted, "*Not a Devil in the Air, can come down without the leave of God*. Of this we have a famous Instance in that Arabian Prince, of whom the Devil was unable so much as to *Touch* any thing, till the most High God gave him a permission, to *go down*" (WIW 13). Evidence of the devil was also evidence of God. That was the reasoning of Henry More, Joseph Glanvill, and others who sought to document empirically the verity of the invisible world. In his "Letter with the Postscript to Mr. Joseph Glanvil" in Sadducismus Triumphatus (1689), a copy of which Mather owned, Henry More writes that there are "*bad Spirits, which will necessarily open a Door to the belief that there are good ones, and Lastly, that there is a God*" (26). It was, in fact, Glanvill's idea that the devil was responsible for the very idea that "the stories of *Witches, Apparitions*, and indeed every thing that brings tidings of another world are but *melancholick Dreams*, and *pious Romances*" (Philosophical Endeavor 4). In fact, denial of the devil's existence was a form of atheism.



Hobbes may have been stating the obvious rational or materialist position, but why did so many people in Salem think, or pretend to think, that they themselves and others had actually witnessed the supernatural, even to the point of condemning others to death for meddling with it? Of course, theological belief played a major role, but its influence was a constant. Once one truly believes that apparitions and witches exist, it is only a matter of time until one finds instances of their existence. What types of evidence of personal experience of a supernatural kind did anyone potentially possess to spark the accusations and keep them going?

Spectral evidence played such a large role in the trials because it was precisely this type of evidence that seemed, at least to the subject, the most genuine. It was connected to the victim not after the fact but in real time. It was perhaps better proof than mischief following cursing and banning. Encountering a specter constituted evidence not only to the subject, but also to those close to the subject as well. A core supernatural experience did not depend on illness, ergot poisoning, jimson weed ingestion, encephalitis, ill-will, greed, jealousy, and hatred, belief or unbelief in the scriptures, but on an experience that was common, universal, spontaneous, and profoundly empirical in its effects. The essayist Charles Lamb's observation that people had no agency to limit their superstition once the door to the invisible was opened certainly applied to Salem. It was precisely spectral evidence—provided in part by the phenomena we now associate with the Mara experience—that opened the door.

Certainly, the Mara or Old Hag experience could never account for circumstantial evidence like a cow getting sick and dying after contact with a suspected witch, or of a

wheel falling off a cart following a dispute with a suspected witch, but such evidence could easily be attributed to the presence of a diabolical agency whose reality had been recently established by vivid, terrifying experience. It also could not explain spectral sightings when subjects truly were objectively awake, such as the appearance of the specter of Susannah Martin to a group of girls in court who, during Martin's examination, cried out of seeing her "on the beam" (SWP 2: 552). However, what David Hufford says about an episode in Europe involving vampire delusion would be equally true about Salem: "Any Old Hag attacks spontaneously occurring during such a 'disturbance' would be readily assimilated to the traditional view of what was taking place" (Terror 230). The Old Hag or Mara experience involves immanence and real time and carries with it the empirical sense of absolute reality. Having no other way to interpret such an experience other than popular belief joined with the theological, cumulative subjective core experiences shared with others about the appearance of witches or demons created a reasonable paradigm through which to interpret closely allied experience.

Many features of the Old Hag experience enter the testimony of the accusers in the Salem witch trials. Stated simply, features of the nightmare became spectral evidence in the trials. Consequently, several accounts of supernatural assault and spectral evidence included in Wonders of the Invisible World bear the marks or pattern of the Mara as outlined by Hufford—one need only be aware that such a pattern exists. Experiential confirmation of preexisting belief expanded the context in which similar experiences could take place, much as the engraving of the Witch of Endor in Thomas Stackhouse's New History of the Holy Bible reinforced and gave shape to the witches inhabiting

Charles Lamb's night terrors. The importance of the nightmare experience to the study of witchcraft was hinted at by George Lyman Kittredge, who devotes a section to the subject of the nightmare experience in Witchcraft in Old and New England. Kittredge recalls that Ludwig Laistner (1890-1959), professor of ancient history at Cornell, had almost succeeded in using the nightmare as a key to all mythologies.<sup>31</sup> Differing from an ordinary dream, the Old Hag experience conveys the impression of absolute reality in the context of one's actual, immediate physical setting. Put bluntly, in Salem the appearance of a specter as part and parcel of the Mara was taken as a witch visitation. Accounts that are almost certainly experiences of the nightmare were presented in court alongside other types of evidence in the Salem witch records and recorded in Wonders—proof that in 1692 at Salem such evidence was interpreted to be witchcraft. In searching the court records, we find no mention of nightmares, though the term had been in English use since 1300 (“Nightmare” OED). Nor do we find evidence of any distinction made in Salem between nightmares and spectral visitants. The word “dream” appears only twice in the Salem Witchcraft Papers, both times linked to assault, once when Mary Toothaker said she “dreamed” of fighting with the Indians, who are likened to “devils”; and once when Sarah Osborne claimed “shee was more like to be bewitched than that she was a witch,” explaining to judge Hathorne “that shee was frighted one time in her sleep and either saw or dreamed that shee saw a thing like an indian all black which did pinch her in her neck and pulled her by the back part of her head to the dore of the house” (SWP 2: 611; 3: 767). Sarah Osborne's inability to distinguish between waking and dreaming is quite revealing, not only about the nature of such experiences but also in their interpretation.

The evidence of the first witch to be executed, that of Bridget Bishop, hanged on June 10, 1692, contained much testimony that readily can be construed as of the “Old Hag” type. Most of the really damning evidence against Bishop was spectral—no doubt because some who were relating spectral visitations really believed themselves to have experienced them. Their certainty may have helped to convince others. If the witch trials centered around the debate over whether or not there was an invisible world or over the nature of that world, then Old Hag experiences offered convincing proof of a world rife with spirits to anyone who had experienced it. A true Old Hag experience is an extremely fearsome and memorable event.

The presence of what are recognized as folk motifs in the Salem court records, and Mather’s incorporation of them into Wonders, shows that people in Salem possessed language for describing their experiences in terms different from that officially sanctioned by the clergy. The mention of witches riding both people and animals appearing in the records at Salem never refers to such activities as anything other than spectral occurrences, which, of course, transmit tangible effects upon the human or animal. One deposition involves a mare that Mary Cummings claimed Elizabeth How had ridden through the night with a hot bridle. Mary Warren testified that Martha Emerson “had rid a man with an enchanted bridle” (SWP 2: 447; 1: 308). In Wonders Cotton Mather uses the term “devil ridden” twice, once in reference to the devil stirring up strife, and again in recalling testimony that Bridget Bishop had “*Ridden* a man” ([xxiv]; 105). As early as 1684, the term “hag-ridden” was in popular use.<sup>32</sup> Cotton Mather used the term in book three of the Magnalia (1702) in his biography of the

Reverend Samuel Whiting, whom he compared to the prophet Elijah, explaining that the pious minister would not allow himself to be “hagridden” by his passions (159). The term “witch riding” is also used in the question-and-answer section of The Athenian Oracle appearing in London on October 24, 1691, in which publisher John Dunton or one of his collaborators<sup>33</sup> answers the question raised by an inquisitive reader,

Whether there’s any such thing as a Hag, which the common people fancy to be Witch-riding, when they are in their Beds in the Night-time, and as some say, when they are perfectly awake, and with such a Vehemency that they are not able to stir either Hand or Foot, or move the least Member of their Bodies, nor can utter one word distinctly, but make a kind of grumbling Noise?—If in the affirmative, what Instance meet you with it in History? If in the Negative, what is it that is the Cause of it?

The answer reflects both the medical, natural, or scientific explanation and the supernatural interpretation:

‘Tis effected both ways, by vapours from crude and undigested concoctions, heat of blood, as after hard drinking, and several other natural ways; but sometimes ‘tis really effected by witches, which first gave the name to the common oppression in sleep called the night-mare: History is full of such instances. (Vol. 4 no. 8)<sup>34</sup>

Interestingly, it was Mather’s London publisher, John Dunton, who also printed the three London editions of Wonders shortly after it was first published in Boston.

The division between popular and learned religious tradition accounts for the ways local events were described. People not only used familiar biblical language and typological tropes, but they also used extra-biblical language and concepts to describe, explain, and define what occurred. Religious and folk tradition assimilated each other. Mather could talk about being carried to the witches' Sabbath from a learned perspective while illiterate witnesses would talk about riding on poles to witch meetings and being baptized by George Burroughs or his specter or a "black man." To ignore the role of core experiences like the Old Hag, out-of-body experiences, periods of trance, and deathbed experiences, all having in common a paralysis state and perceived experience in the invisible world is to discount much of the impetus for the witch trials at Salem.

In the Salem court records, elements in the of the Mara experience emerge many times. Mary Lacey, Jr., describes an incident that seems to include important elements in the model of the Old Hag. Lacey seems to have believed that she also afflicted others by squeezing them:

Q. did the divill apeare to you. A: yes:

Q. in what shape. A. in the shape of a horse

Q. where. A. in the House. Q. what did he say to you. A. he bid me to be afraid of nothing. & he would not bring me out. but he has proved a lyer from the begining. Q. what did he order you to doe.

A. he set me to kill a tinker in the Towne. and I would not. then he said he would kill me if I did not. I said I hoped God would help me. Q. what other shape did he apeare in A. in the shape of around Gray thing & bid

me set my hand to his book & I would not, Q. did he bid you worship him

A. yes. and bid me also afflict persons. --

Q. how many times did the divill apeare to you. A -- twice & both times in

the night I was in my bead & he awaked me by making a strange noyse. Q.

what did he say to you. A. he bid me obey him & he would never bring me out

q. did you not worship him. A. yes I doe not question it sometimes

Q. you may yet be deliverd if god give you repentance. A. I hope he will

Q. have you never ben molested. till about a week agoe A. no. but my

mother has wished severall times the divill would [torn] all away.

Q. but how did you afflict the persons. A. I squesed [torn]

Q. was it something in the likeness of them [torn]

that you squesed A. yes [torn][.] (SWP 2: 520-521)

In tandem with common witch motifs such as a pact with the devil, and the witch forced to perform maleficia, Lacy's testimony reveals several aspects of the pattern of the Mara or Old Hag experience. First is the appearance of the devil as a horse. A mare or horse is, of course, the animal that has become most associated with the word nightmare, in part because similarities between the words "mare" or Mara, the demonic spirit, and "mare," a horse, do exist. The coexistence of the feeling of a heavy weight and of seeing an animal form during the Mara experience, along with the sense of transport that often occurs should the experience be allowed to continue, accounts for the association word, nightmare, with a horse, the principal mode of transportation for much of the world at

that time. The word Mara, or nightmare, gained its meaning, too, from the double significance of “riding,” both in the sense of being ridden by something like an incubus demon or heavy animal like a horse, and in the sense of riding, such as the riding of animals like horses, goats, and pigs to the witches’ Sabbath (an occurrence I will argue that frequently springs from conditions inherent in the Mara experience). In a Mara experience, the victim often perceives the attacker in the form of an animal, giving rise in the subject to the idea of the witch’s familiar. The OED defines “mare” as “A spirit believed to produce a feeling of suffocation in a sleeping person or animal; a feeling of suffocation experienced during sleep; an oppressive or terrifying dream.” An obsolete definition for mare is “A spectre, a hag.”<sup>35</sup> But mare also signifies “a female horse.”<sup>36</sup>

Examining the testimony of witnesses in the Salem court records for aspects of the Old Hag or related experiences, we can identify a source of many of the folk motifs that existed and infer the beliefs of some of those who testified by what they say. The Old Hag or Mara may have caused either the experience described or shaped the content of the testimony of many of the witnesses. From the very first, Old Hag-type experiences played a role in the witch accusations at Salem. Unlike ergot or encephalitis, which might explain some accounts of spectral sightings and ensuing symptoms, the occurrence of the Old Hag experience is universal and constant and does not depend on fluctuating weather or crop conditions or on the vicissitudes of physical environment. Even if such spectral testimony were not based directly on the Mara experience per se, the cultural and contextual pattern generated by recounting the Old Hag experience may have shaped both the language and the testimony.



Descriptions recognized as pertaining to the nightmare experience exist from the very beginning of the witchcraft accusations in 1692 Salem. Both Daniel Allen and John Hughes testified to having had incubus nightmares—only that is not what they called them. Allen and Hughes interpreted them as visitations from the witch, Sarah Good. Allen said that on the second day of March, 1692, he was accosted in his chamber by Good, bringing an unusual light in with her. Goody Good then came and sat upon his foot. He managed to “kick at her,” upon which she vanished. Allen discovered the principle Mather alluded to in his medical description, that once the victim is jogged awake or is able to move in some way, even a little, the spell is broken and the witch disappears. The victim is now truly and completely awake. The vision of the witch melts into thin air.

The trial of Bridget Bishop who was executed in 1692 at Salem is a case in point. According to David Hufford’s The Terror That Comes in the Night, the Old Hag experience has been incorporated into beliefs about witchcraft (220-22). The following passage consists of testimony concerning Bishop taken from the Salem trial records that Mather seems to have used in Wonders of the Invisible World for constructing his account. The version in the court papers is more complete in important detail than is Mather’s. There are three possibilities as to why this is. One is that court clerk Stephen Sewall, whom Mather had asked for the records, gave him only abbreviated versions that had already been purged of material that might have raised questions. Another possibility is that Mather was given the court records in a more-or-less complete form and he edited them himself. A third possibility is that the court records were edited by both Sewall and

Mather in a two-step process. Almost all of the information that Mather relates about the trials of each of the condemned witches can be found in the extant records. It is the information left out of Mather's version that is the most disturbing and potentially damaging to the judges' case. The differences between the court records and Mather's version are potentially significant for what they reveal, either about Mather's source for his version, or what he does with it, or both. Mather's treatment of his major sources in Wonders of the Invisible World will be the primary subject of chapter three. The reader may want to compare the following passage from the trial records with Mather's version. (See "The Trial of *Bridget Bishop*: alias, *Oliver*" in WIW 107-108.) For the purpose of analyzing content as an example of the Mara experience, however, the deposition of Samuel Gray in the Salem court papers provides a more detailed record:

Samuell Gray of Salem Aged aboute 42 yeares Testifieth and sayth that about fourteen years agoe he goeing to bed well one Lords Day at night, and after he had beene asleep some time, he awakened & looking up, saw the house light as if a candle or candles were lighted in it and the dore locked & that little fire there, was Raked up he did then see a woman standing between the Cradle in the Roome and the Bed side and seemed to look upon him soe he did Rise up in his bed and it vanished or disappeared then he went to the dore and found it locked.and unlocking and Opening the dore he went to the Entry dore and looked out, and then againe did see the same Woman he had a little before seene in the Rome, and in the same garbe she

was in before, then he said to her in the name of God what doe you  
 come for.<sup>37</sup> then she vanished away soe he Locked the dore againe  
 & went to bed and between sleepeing & wakeing he felt some thing  
 Come to his mouth or lipes cold, & there upon started & looked  
 up & againe did see the same woman with some thing betweene both  
 her hands holding before his mouth upon which she moved [. . .]. (SWP 1:  
 94)

The significant detail we notice besides the deponent's name and age is that the event is fourteen years old—before the first two “victims” of witchcraft at Salem were born—and, therefore, separated chronologically from anything that might have started the witchcraft outbreak. The vividness of the experience in the mind of Samuel Gray speaks for its power over the deponent, for the essential features of the Mara experience exist in Gray's testimony. He remembers that it occurred on a Lord's Day at night, a significant detail to be remembered for 14 years that suggests the memorable paradox of seeing a diabolical specter on a Sunday. First, his description of the specter's visitation shows an accurate perception of a real setting. He awakens in bed to perceive his room strangely filled with light. The spectral woman he sees in the room is accompanied by strange illumination. She stands between the bed and the child's cradle. The entity disappears upon Gray's arising, a secondary feature common to the termination of a Mara experience in which the experience ends upon regaining the ability to move (as if a spell is lifted). Gray gets up and “finds the door locked,” indicating the woman did not come in the usual way by opening the door (and providing a further sign that Gray really thought

he saw her). She appears again going out the front door of the house. Gray then goes back to bed and in a state “between sleepeing & wakeing” sees her again. This time she seems to be pressing a cold object before his mouth, indicating pressure or suffocating, or some type of restraint, either upon movement or breathing. He seems fearful, for he calls upon the name of God in a traditional charm to make the ghost reveal itself or vanish. In Gray’s account we encounter all four of David Hufford’s primary and some of the secondary features of the Mara experience. We find wakefulness, accurate perception of a real environment, indications of fear, and indication of paralysis or restraint. Secondary features include the regaining of movement causing termination of the attack.

The incubus nightmare should actually get partial blame for the execution of the first Salem witch, Bridget Bishop on June 6, 1692, and should be considered as both a direct and an indirect factor in all subsequent executions. Perhaps not the experience itself, but the popular beliefs about what such things signified and what caused them were at fault. Testimony against all those executed depended on spectral evidence, and Bishop’s execution set the precedent for everything that followed. Not agreeing with the judges’ use of spectral evidence, Judge Nathaniel Saltonstall resigned in protest immediately after Bishop’s execution, and the court took a two-week hiatus to sort things out, calling upon the ministers in the area for council. What was some of this testimony upon which Bridget Bishop was convicted? Mather reproduces this piece of evidence from Richard Coman. I relate it using Mather’s version in Wonders. The familiar pattern of the Old Hag experience appears repeatedly in the Salem trial records and also shows up in Mather’s rendering:

*Richard Coman* testify'd, that eight years ago, as he lay Awake in his Bed, with a Light Burning in the Room, he was annoy'd with the Apparition of this *Bishop*, and of two more that were strangers to him; who came and oppressed him so that he could neither stir himself, nor wake any one else: and that he was the night after, molested again in the like manner; the said *Bishop* taking him by the Throat, and pulling him almost out of the Bed. His kinsman offered for this cause to lodge with him; and that Night, as they were Awake Discoursing together: this *Coman* was once more visited, by the Guests which had formerly been so troublesome; his kinsman being at the same time strook speechless and unable to move Hand or Foot. He had laid his sword by him; which these unhappy spectres, did strive much to wrest from him; only he held too fast for them. He then grew able to call the People of his house; but altho' they heard him, yet they had not power to speak or stirr, until at last, one of the people crying out, *what's the matter!* the spectres all vanished.

(WIW 108-9) (See also Hufford, Terror 221.)

Again, in Coman's testimony we see the familiar feature of the Old Hag experience of the inability to speak or move during the encounter. That Coman remembers his experience after eight years indicates either that it still haunted him, or that he had a vendetta against Bishop, or both. Since Bishop was the first witch to be executed at Salem, such spectral testimony undoubtedly set a precedent in determining the outcome of other trials, thus opening the door for subsequent executions. Since

similar testimony—that which resembles the Mara experience—was replicated throughout the trials, it may have been such an experience as night terrors that provided a catalyst for testimony used in subsequent trials and executions. The Old Hag certainly helped establish belief in those who experienced it. What Mather leaves out of his account reveals that Coman was about 24, was in bed with his wife at the time, and that his two other visitors that night besides Bishop were women. Bishop appeared in “her red paragon Bodys” and “lay upon my Brest or body” and oppressed him so that he could “not speake nor stur noe not soe much as to awake his wife although he Endeavored much so to do itt.” The next night “they all appeared againe in like manner” and Bishop “took hold of him by the throate” and hauled him out of bed (SWP 1: 102).

For Coman to mention Bishop’s red bodice and the presence of another female indicates a possible sexual component to the encounter, details of which Coman might well have wanted to leave out in a religious court, especially if he had been aroused by or taken an active part in the encounter. Incubus and succubus devils who lie on their victims and attempt to have sex with them are frequently encountered in witchcraft narratives and have also been found to be a component in some Old Hag experiences.<sup>38</sup> Coman then informed his kinsman about the visitation, who offers to lodge with him the next night, where the scene repeats itself. The next time, Coman takes a sword to bed for dual protection: both the sharp blade and the hilt of his sword, which forms a cross. Though he was “strook speechless & could not move hand or foote” and his spectral visitants tried to wrest his sword from him, he suddenly found he “had then Liberty of speech” and called to William, his kinsman, his wife, and Sarah Phillips, who lay with his

wife. All told Coman afterwards that they had heard him cry out but “had not power to speak [or stur] afterwards” (102). It seems as if Coman had experienced a series of attacks, common in those afflicted with the Old Hag, and attributed them to Bishop and some other spectral visitants. The visitation ends typically when Coman is finally able to move physically by crying out and grabbing his sword.

Coman’s story highlights the mix-up between sleeping and waking states characteristic of the incubus nightmare. Confusion stems from the fact that the nightmare with its accompanying hallucinations occurs during the transition from waking to sleep, the hypnagogic state, or from sleeping to waking, called the hypnopompic state. In these states between sleeping and waking the subject most often experiences the vivid hallucinations mistaken for wakefulness. The feeling of absolute reality associated with this nightmare is responsible for the certainness of many witchcraft accusations. Accusers were convinced that something very out of the ordinary had happened. The only explanation available to most of them was witchcraft. The confusion between waking and sleeping caused witnesses to testify to seemingly impossible feats like being dragged out of bed by the witch.

That Coman would see Bishop and that others in and around Salem would also take for their spectral visitants people commonly encountered in daily life can be explained by the tendency of the central nervous system to

generate coherence and meaning from endogenous and exogenous sensory inputs . . . . [For] Nightmare hallucinations can be seen as interpretative outcomes of that process, and their content will be formed by familiar

associations. (Davies 195)

That Mather appears not to recognize Coman's experience as simply a nightmare but as a valid instance of spectral attack indicates that he was unable or unwilling to ascribe symptoms of the Old Hag experience to anything other than the visitation of a demon, witch, or specter. What Coman describes certainly resembles an Old Hag experience, but Coman does not seem to understand it to be a nightmare in the way we commonly understand the phenomenon.

From reading the Salem court records, it seems no one associated mere dreams with what was happening, though depositions abound with accounts that fit the pattern of the Mara, indicating that such occurrences were commonly understood not as nightmares but as actual spectral visitations. Mather's lack of attention to clues to the even in his rendering of the court records might indicate that he, too, was unable to view the chorus of symptoms common to the nightmare as anything necessarily separate from the visitation from a witch, demon, or goblin. That he did not recognize nightmare elements in Coman's testimony, or else ignored them, does not seem to square with his first-hand knowledge of the subject. Since 1681, Cotton Mather had experienced terrifying bouts with his own ephialtes (Silverman 25). In addition, Mather also knew of the nightmare's effects from his father, Increase, who had been plagued with ephialtes since 1671 and had sought medical remedy in its wake at the mineral springs at Lynn. Increase Mather continued to suffer from recurrent nightmares for the rest of his life (Silverman 12).

In his diary, Cotton Mather described one of his encounters with the nightmare that occurred at the beginning of September, 1686, that started as a dream-visitation from



the deceased Reverend Thomas Shepard (1635-1677) of Charlestown (1: 129). In Chapter 31 of “The Angel of Bethesda,” “Ephialtes. or The Night-Mare Beaten Off,” Mather’s amazingly accurate and detailed description of the facets of the nightmare suggests he was speaking from personal experience as well as voluminous reading on the subject. Here, he suggests the cause to be “a Vapour, which is the Effect of Some Ill Digestion in the Stomach” (153). Considering the circumstances of Cotton Mather’s personal experience with nightmares, that he would not have recognized the series of effects Coman describes as common to the ephialtes is difficult to believe. By the time Mather wrote “The Angel of Bethesda,” he was admitting that the effects of the nightmare had often been mistaken for the visitation of a witch’s specter (“Angel” 153).

Be that as it may, in 1692 it might have been rather because of Mather’s nightmares, and intimate contact with the invisible world gained through them, that he became convinced the specter of Bridget Bishop could appear in malevolent form to afflict and torment Richard Coman. Rather than “explain” what was happening in natural or physical terms, Mather’s ephialtes might have been one of the experiential factors that provided Mather what he thought was a window into the invisible world, as his later comments on the nightmare in “The Angel of Bethesda” suggest. Though by 1723 Mather may have been more inclined to see the nightmare as a purely physical phenomenon, his comments about the blessedness of dying in the midst of the nightmare, in close proximity to the invisible world, indicate that he still viewed it in preternatural terms. That viewpoint would have tended even more toward the direction of the supernatural during the time of the Salem witch crisis. The reason was that Mather, like

most others at the time, never viewed physical phenomena in just physical terms. The ultimate cause of disease was spiritual. The physical and the spiritual bodies met in the medium of the Nishmath-Chajim, a type of astral body, the “Probable Seat of all Diseases, and a General Cure for Them” to which Mather devoted a lengthy chapter in his medical handbook “The Angel of Bethesda” (“Angel” v). Mather’s philosophy of illness and the connection between the physical and the spiritual “paradises” might rather have convinced him of the possibility of the devil in the shape of Bridget Bishop appearing to Coman.

Though writers and physicians as ancient as Galen (129-199?) attributed nightmares to physical causes such as indigestion, there seemed to have been little inclination for such natural interpretations at Salem. Mather certainly was not the only learned seventeenth-century writer and clergyman to view spiritual and physical sources of disease as not mutually exclusive. Two schools of thought existed as to what caused such visitations: natural explanations and supernatural ones. Those favoring a natural explanation attributed nightmares to indigestion. Such attribution has been termed the “‘Heavy Supper Theory’” (qtd. in Oates 217). Among writers who allowed for a natural explanation was Robert Burton (1577-1640) who writes in The Anatomy of Melancholy (1621) that one food, the “Hare, [is] a black meat, melancholy, and hard of digestion; it breeds incubus, often eaten, and causeth fearful dreams” (190). Another natural explanation concerned the sleeping position of the victim. In The Anatomy, Robert Burton also writes that

we see verified in sleepers . . . in such that are troubled with Incubus, or witch-ridden (as we call it); if thy lie on their backs, they suppose an old woman rides, & sits so hard upon them, that they are almost stifled for want of breath, where there is nothing offends but a concourse of bad humors, which trouble the phantasy (220).

We find Burton offering natural explanations for the Mara, but in another chapter he also asserts the validity of demons and witches and their ability to create disease and cause mischief. He treats the possibility of witches and demons doing harm as a serious question. In his chapter “A Digression of the Nature of Spirits, Bad Angels, or Devils, and How They Cause Melancholy,” he asserts that despite the fact that meteorologists generally attribute tempestuous storms to natural causes, “yet I am of Bodine’s mind, they are more often caused by those aerial Devils, in their several quarters” (167 [1.2.1.2]).<sup>39</sup> In his chapter “Of Witches and Magicians, How They Cause Melancholy,” Burton claims of their power, “That which they can do, is as much almost as the Devil himself, who is still ready to satisfy their desires, to oblige them the more unto him” (177 [1.2.1.3]). As Caroline Oates explains, however, Since Galen, such symptoms were thought to have a possible medical cause, but another school of thought attributed some of these types of visitation to witches, ghosts, and spirits. Owen Davies writes that in addition to the interpretation of nightmares as a natural phenomenon “the common theological interpretation of the experience was that it was an assault by diabolic incubi and succubi” (48). Carolyn Oates points out, however, that these conflicting interpretations

do not mark a simple division between learned rationalism and folk superstition . . . . Before the eighteenth century, education was no bar to admitting that spirits caused nightmares: demons easily did this . . . . That indigestion provoked nightmares was a long-standing commonplace, familiar to all, including those who accepted that intrusive spirits could cause the Mare. For those who rejected the spirit assault theory, all nightmares had natural causes; while for those who accepted it, both natural and unnatural interpretations were available, applicable according to the features of the experience. (219)

There is little indication in the Salem records that the presiding judges saw such visitations as having physical or natural origins.

In such an atmosphere as Salem where symptoms of the Mara became official evidence, the publicity generated would have made people more aware of experiences that resembled the pattern now considered to be official evidence of witchcraft. Any Mara experience that did occur at that time and place, or even years before, would likely have been discussed openly and even publicly, and speculated upon, supplying contextual evidence, paving the way for more investigations and more trials. Such publicity would certainly have created a tendency for someone familiar with the then-current witchcraft outbreak to interpret for themselves any similar experiences as spectral assault.

Another victim also claimed that he was attacked by Bridget Bishop in a similar way to Richard Coman. Mather gives us his version, which only briefly highlights features of an Old Hag or Mara experience:

*Johnn Louder* testify'd, that upon some little controversy with *Bishop* about her fowles, going well to Bed, he did awake in the Night by moonlight, and did see clearly the likeness of this woman grievously oppressing him; in which miserable condition she held him unable to help him self, till near Day. (WIW)

We get more of the story, however, from Louder's testimony in the court records. Details omitted by Mather (but almost certainly known to him) identify Louder's experience as that of an Old Hag attack.

I goeing well to bed; aboute the dead of the night felt a great weight upon my Breast and awakening looked and it being bright moon; light did clearely see s'd Bridget Bushop—or her likeness sitting upon my stomake and putting my Armes of of the bed to free myselfe from that great oppression she presently layd hold of my throat and almost Choked mee and I had noe strenth or power in my ha[n]ds to resist or help my selfe; and in thes Condition she held mee to almost day [. . . ]” (SWP 1: 99-100)

Since Louder's experience occurs late in the night well after he has gone to bed, we can guess that he has been asleep, has awakened, and then seen Bishop “greviously oppressing him” to the extent that he cannot extricate himself from the situation or act to counter it, indicative of the state of paralysis accompanying the Mara experience. Louder is apparently unable to move until near daybreak, when he begins to emerge from his paralysis state. Louder describes a realistic setting in his bedroom, for the scene is illuminated by the light from a bright moon and Louder believes himself to be awake. He

sees “clearly” the appearance of Bishop, indicating full awareness. Louder’s experience seems to have been precursor to yet another, similar, experience.

What Louder reveals next, however, shows the extent to which he and others might consider an attack such as this not as a nightmare or a dream, but as an actual event, a serious transgression of boundaries by an evil entity bent on revenge, a grave breach suggesting witchcraft:

[S]ome tyme after this, my Mistress Susannah Gedney was in our orchard and I was then with her. and said Bridget Bushop being then in her Orchard w'ch was next ad-joyneing to ours my Mistress told s'd Bridget that I said or affirmed that she came one night & satt upon my brest as afores'd which she denyed and I affirmed to her face to be true and that I did plainely see her. upon w'ch discourse with her she Threatened mee.

(SWP 1: 100)

Apparently, Bishop felt threatened by what Louder’s mistress, Susannah Gedney, had told her, which explains why she began threatening Louder. Gedney had evidently confronted her with a serious accusation, that of visiting Louder spectrally and tormenting him—a serious charge that warranted an investigation and constituted serious evidence of witchcraft. Louder follows up with yet another account of a spectral visitant, this time from something animal-like. In the next account we do not know whether or not Louder has been asleep, but we do know he has been ill (Mather tells us only that he has stayed home on the Sabbath). If Louder had been too ill to go to church, it would not be unusual if he had fallen asleep. Mather describes Louder’s experience:

[B]eing at home on a Lords Day, with the doors shutt about him, he saw a Black Pig approach him; at which he going to kick, it vanished away. Immediately after, sitting down, he saw a Black thing Jump in at the Window, & come & stand before him. The Body, was like that of a Monkey, the Feet like a Cocks, but the Face much like a mans. He being so extreemly affrighted, that he could not speak; this Monster spoke to him, and said, *I am a Messenger sent unto you, for I understand that you are in some Trouble of Mind, and if you will be ruled by me, you shall want for nothing in this world.*

Whereupon he endeavoured to clap his hands upon it; but he could feel no substance, and it jumped out of the window again; but immediately came in by the Porch, though the Doors were shut, and said, *You had better take my Counsel!* He then struck at it with a stick, but sturck only the Groundsel, and broke the Stick. The Arm with which he struck was presently Disenabled, and it vanished away. He presently went out at the Back-Door, and spyed, this *Bishop*, in her Orchard, going toward her House; but he had not power to set one foot forward unto her. Whereupon returning into the House, he was immediately accosted by the Monster he had seen before; which Goblin was now going to Fly at him: whereat he cry'd out, *The whole Armour of God, be between me and you!* So it sprang back, and flew over the Apple Tree; shaking many Apples off the Tree, in its flying over. At its Leap, it flung Dirt with its Feet, against the Stomach

of the man; whereon he was then struck Dumb, and so continued for three Days together. Upon the producing of this Testimony, *Bishop* deny'd that she knew this *Deponent*: yet their two Orchards joined, and they had often had their Little Quarrels for some years together. ( WIW 111-112)

An interesting facet of Louder's experience is that Mather seems neither to suspect nor to care that Louder could have been asleep when he received his visitation. That Louder could not move to set one foot forward might indicate that the entire sequence of events took place as an incubus nightmare. We might suspect that he is describing an Old Hag experience because we recognize three features of the Old Hag: the perception of a realistic environment, the inability to speak (indicating paralysis), and extreme fear. Louder also believes he is awake during the experience. We must necessarily infer from the other conditions Louder describes that he has been asleep. In the court records, Louder makes no firm distinction between sleeping or waking. It is as if, sleeping or waking, the significance of seeing the creature would have been the same. Bishop's case probably set the precedent for evidence necessary for conviction, for after her execution the judges adjourned the proceedings while they discussed the merits of the evidence used in her case. Apparently, the judges decided that they had gotten it right, setting a precedent and a pattern for other cases to follow. It was this very spectral evidence involving Bridget Bishop that prompted the Salem magistrates to appeal to the Boston clergy for guidance, putting a hiatus on the trials until they received the ambiguous reply, "The Return of Several Ministers," which was presented to Governor Phips and his council around June 15. It was written by Cotton Mather and signed by



twelve ministers from the area, warning the Judges against over-reliance upon spectral evidence, cautioning them of the ability of specters to represent the innocent, but, in the last paragraph, undercutting all that went before by sanctioning the prior proceedings (see SVW 117-18) . Bishop had been found guilty of witchcraft and executed largely on the type of spectral evidence common to the experience.

We see from the previous testimony that much of the surviving evidence used to convict Bridget Bishop—the first witch executed—was of the Old Hag type. We can surmise, then, that the Old Hag experience may have provided precedent for the type of evidence allowed and the punishment that would be dealt out as a result, and furthering the trials.

Mather's account of Susanna Martin, tried on June 29 and hanged on July 19, also contains accounts that seem to fit the Mara pattern:

*Bernard Peache* testify'd, That being in Bed, on a Lords-day'Night, he heard a scrabbling at the Window, whereat he then saw, *Susanna Martin* come in, and jump down upon the Floor. She took hold of this Deponents Feet, and drawing his Body up into an Heap, she lay upon him, near Two Hours; in all which time he could neither speak nor stir. At length, when he could begin to move, he laid hold on her Hand, and pulling it up to his mouth, he bit three of her Fingers, as he judged, unto the Bone.

Whereupon she went from the Chamber, down the Stairs, out at the Door. This Deponent thereupon called unto the people of the House, to advise them, of what passed; and he himself did follow her. The people saw her

not; but there being a Bucket at the Left-hand of the Door, there was a drop of Blood found on it; and several more drops of Blood upon the Snow newly fallen abroad. There was likewise the print of her two Feet just without the Threshold; but no more sign of any Footing further off.

(WIW 118)

While some of the evidence associated with this episode is fantastic and inexplicable, we can see that a Mara experience probably initiated the chain of events that followed, some of which may have been assumed from the other evidence (such as Peache thinking—or dreaming—he had actually bitten her fingers). Here is another by Robert Downer about Martin, which David Hufford also quotes in Terror:

*Robert Downer testified, That this Prisoner being some years ago prosecuted at Court for a Witch, he then said unto her, He believed she was a Witch. Whereat she being Dissatisfied, Said, That some Shee-Devil would Shortly fetch him away! Which words were herd by others, as well as himself. The Night following, as he lay in his Bed, there came in at the Window, the likeness of a Cat, which Flew upon him, took fast hold of his Throat, lay on him a considerable while, and almost killed him. At length he remembred, what Susanna Martin, had threatned the Day before; and with much striving he cryed out, Avoid, thou Shee-Devil! In the Name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, Avoid! Whereupon it left him, leap'd on the Floor, and Flew out at the Window. (WIW 119)*

Significantly, Downer never claims to have seen the shape of Martin herself but identifies the encounter with a spectral cat as the she-devil Martin was referring to, who is taken to be either Martin herself or her familiar. Downer's interpretation of his experience suggests that his cultural environment created the expectations that shaped his perceptions. The experience occurs at night, which suggests the experience described could have been associated with sleep. Martin has predicted to Downer that a "shee-devil" will fetch him away. Since, theoretically, a specter could assume virtually any shape (except that, perhaps, of a redeemed Christian),<sup>40</sup> any specter in any form might be construed to be the witch in question. Downer interprets his experience to have been caused by the "shee-devil," Martin in feline form. It seems to have been Martin's threatening Downer with a "she devil," a female demon or hag, that shaped his subsequent nightmare, which, of course, he interpreted as Martin in the form of a spectral cat. If we turn to Hufford's "Index of Features," listed near the beginning of this chapter, all of the primary characteristics of the Old Hag experience seem to be present. Downer is apparently awake. We can infer paralysis, pressure or restraint because the animal "lay on him a considerable while" (Mather, WIW 119; Hufford, Terror 267). He perceives a real setting, that of being in his room in his bed and seeing his window. Downer was also apparently afraid, for the cat has grabbed his throat, and he fears for his life. As a remedy, he calls upon the Trinity, sending the creature back out the window (an action or speech on the part of the victim which also tends to end the experience). We also find many of Hufford's secondary characteristics of the experience. We see that the attacker is often something non-human, like an ape or another animal. Hufford's index of secondary

features also mentions the experience of a door opening and slamming, reminiscent of Downer's opening window (Terror 267-268). We find that the cat grabs his throat (indicating strangling) and that it nearly kills him, a symptom that corresponds with Hufford's secondary characteristic of the sense of "dying or the threat of death," probably creating intense fear (Terror 269).

Downer interprets the experience to mean that an accused witch, Susannah Martin, has visited him in the form of a cat and has tried to kill him. From his testimony we find that Downer believes in witches and accepts that witches can shape-shift and appear in other forms. Downer's experience seems only to have increased his belief in witchcraft, not cast doubt on it, to the point that he is now willing to testify against Martin, though he has not seen a specter assuming Martin's form. We also see the religious influence with Downer's calling upon the Trinity to save him, a physical act ending the experience. With Downer, as with others, we find that core supernatural experiences enable and entail other forms of belief (Hufford, "Hauntings" 28, 32) such as that evinced by Downer's calling upon the Trinity. To interpret such an experience as visitation by a demonic specter is to live in a world in which many types of supernatural experience are possible. The appearance of a specter would be something we automatically question, but to Downer and his peers, it was more real than our tangible world.

Mather's account of Jarvis Ring's testimony against Martin also reveals aspects of the Old Hag:

*Jarvis Ring*, testified, that about seven years ago, he was oftentimes and grievously Oppressed in the Night; but saw not who Troubled him, until at last he Lying perfectly Awake, plainly saw *Susanna Martin* approach him. She came to him, and forceably Bit him by the Finger; so that the Print of the Bite is now so long after to be seen upon him. (WIW 124).

It is evident from reading the surviving court records, a main source for Mather's Wonders, that Jarvis Ring had had many similar prior experiences. It is only when this Old Hag experience occurs in the context of a trial that Ring attributes his visitation to Susannah Martin. From the court records we learn that seven or eight years before Ring had been afflicted several times in the night by "som body or som thing coming up upon him when he was in bed and did sorely afflict him by Lying upon him and he could neither move nor speake" (SWP 2: 563). We find from the testimony that during this experience, Ring would often make a noise that people would hear and would come, and as soon as they arrived the entity would be gone. From Ring's testimony we find that several times when the entity came he was asleep, but when it bit him on the little finger, he was "[sayerly awa]ke as ever he was: and plainly saw her shape and felt [her teeth a]s aforsayd" (SWP 2: 564). Jarvis Ring seems to have been subjected to repeated episodes of the Old Hag attack, a common feature of the experience, according to David Hufford (Terror 25). It is worth noting that the symptoms described frequently by those who seem to have had an Old Hag experience—appearing, pinching, biting, grievously afflicting, torturing, etc.—used the same words to describe the afflictions accusers frequently

experienced and accused the witch of performing while all were present at the examinations.

Jarvis's brother, Joseph Ring, also testified to something like an Old Hag experience in which he regained his ability to speak: "And that day that his speech came to him againe w'ch was about [the end of] April Last as he was in bed shee did stand by his beds sid [and pincht] him" (SWP 2: 566). According to both Mather and the court records Joseph Ring was also transported to witch meetings where he lost the ability to speak and was oppressed with chains:

This man has been strangely carried about by *Demons*, from one *Witch-Meeting* to another, for near two years together; and for one Quarter of this Time, they have made him, and kept him Dumb, tho' he is now again able to speak. There was one T. H. who having as tis judged, a Design of engaging this *Joseph Ring*, in a Snare of Devillism, contrived a while, to bring this *Ring* two shillings in Debt unto him.

Afterwards, this poor man would be visited with unknown shapes, and this *T. H.* sometimes among them; which would force him away with them, unto unknown Places, where he saw meetings, Feastings, Dancings;; and after his Return, wherein they hurried him a long thro' the Air, he gave Demonstrations to the Neighbours, that he had indeed been so transported. When he was brought unto these Hellish meetings, one of the First things they still did unto him, was to give him a knock on the Back, whereupon he was ever as if Bound with Chains, uncapable of Stirring out

of the place, till they should Release him. He related, that there often came to him a man, who presented him a *Book*, whereto he would have him set his Hand; promising to him, that he should then have even what he would; and presenting him with all the Delectable Things, persons, and places, that he could imagine. But he refusing to subscribe, the business would end with dreadful Shapes, Noises and Screeches, which almost scared him out of his witts. Once with the Book, there was a Pen offered him, and an Inkhorn, with Liquor in it, that seemed like Blood: but he never toucht it. This man did now affirm, that he saw the Prisoner, at several of those Hellish Rendezvouzes. (WIW 125-26)

In Mather's account we see evidence of a spectral abduction in which Joseph Ring is both unable to move, as if bound with chains, and unable to speak. Hufford notes the connection between the experience of UFO abduction and the Old Hag experience, noting the paralysis state that frequently accompanies both (Terror 233). Hufford later explores this connection further in his essay, "Beings Without Bodies," in which he offers evidence from a Roper opinion poll that indicates UFO experiences frequently begin with "waking up paralyzed with a sense of a strange person or presence or something else in the room" (qtd. in Hufford "Beings Witout Bodies" 37). Hufford had noted in The Terror That Comes in the Night that the paralysis state, if continued for more than a few minutes, frequently led to an out-of-body experience (qtd. in Hufford "Beings" 38). If a modern-day Old Hag experience can be a prelude to the experience of a UFO abduction, why could not a seventeenth-century Old Hag experience be a prelude

to being whisked away to a witch meeting?<sup>41</sup> The seventeenth century didn't have manned space travel, but they did have witches riding on animals, pitchforks, and broomsticks.

Mather's account of Elizabeth How, tried on June 30 and executed on July 19, 1692, also contains allusions to witch riding. Mather reports that Isaac Cummings' mare appeared to have been "burnt with a red-hot bridle" (WIW 131). From the account in the witch trials we see even more clearly that the mare had been missing and that presumably someone has ridden Isaac Cummings' mare with a red-hot bridle:

my son Isaac his maer was mising that he could not find her in to or thre days. and in a short time after my son isaacs maer came in sight not fare from the hous and my son isaac praid me to go out and look on his maer when I came to her he asked me what I thought on her and I said if he wold have my thoughts i could not compair it to nothing elec but that she was riden with a hot bridil #[I said also to isaac that I hered that the said] for she hade divirses bruises as if she had bin over rocks an much wronged and where the bridel went was as if it hade bin burnt with a #[rade] hot bridel . . . . (SWP 2: 447)

But accounts of How do not stop with witches riding mares. At least one account indicates that How had also ridden a person. A bedroom visitation by a witch, similar to the others, also seems to have occurred to the wife of Joseph Safford. Mather states that "*Safford* . . . declared herself to be afflicted by the Shape, of *How*; and from that shape



she endured many Miseries” (WIW 129). We get the details of Safford’s wife’s affliction from the court records. Joseph Safford swore before the jury of inquest on June 30th that

goode how . . . apeard to her throug a crevie of the clambouerds which she knew no good person could do and at thre severall tims after was afflicted by the aperishtion of goode how and goode ollever and funder this depoint saith that Rising erlly in the maring and kindling a fir in the other Room mi wife shricked out I presently Ran into the Room wher my wife was and as soon as ever I opened the dore my [wife] said ther be the evill one take tham wherupon I Replyed whar are thay I will take them if I can shee said you will not tek them and then sprang out of the bed herselfe and went to the window and said thar they went out thay wer both bigger than she and thay went out ther but she could not then I Replyed who be thay she said goode how and goode ollever . goode ollever said I you never saw the woman in your Life no said she I never saw her in my Life but so she is Represented to me goode ollever of Sallam that hurt william stace of Sallam the millr[.] (SWP 2: 452)

Joseph Safford’s testimony records something that seems to have many features of a Mara experience. It is early morning, Safford’s wife is abed, presumably sleeping, or perhaps in that transitional state between sleeping and waking in which Mara attacks often occur. We get the impression of fear because we hear Safford’s wife shriek, and when Safford goes to check on his wife, she thinks she has seen the Evil One along with the specters of Goody How and Goody Oliver. The experience dissipates upon Safford’s

wife getting out of bed, and the specters disappear, predictably, out the window. An interesting twist to Mrs. Safford's experience is that she assumed one of the specters was Goody Oliver when she had never seen Goody Oliver before in her life. She just somehow "knew" the specter was Oliver's. Safford's case is an example of victims seeing what they expect to see and attributing the identification to some kind of telepathic or supernatural "knowing."

According to Hufford, when core supernatural experiences occur in the presence of a haunting, people "do not separate the attacks from the other events" (Hufford, "An Experience-Centered Approach to Hauntings" 32). Once people think they really do experience an invisible world, the door opens for other types of spiritual experience, just as Charles Lamb predicted. We see this aspect of the Old Hag experience alluded to in the case of Elizabeth How. Mather begins his account of the trial of How by pointing out that she had been charged in court by "Several Afflicted People, who were grievously Tortured by sensible and evident *Witchcrafts*, and all complained of the Prisoner, as the cause of their Trouble" (WIW 127). According to Mather there was also "Testimony of people to whom the shape of this *How*, gave trouble Nine or Ten years ago" (WIW 127). Mather then points out that "It has been a most usual thing for the Bewitched persons, at the same time that the *Spectres* representing the *Witches* Troubled them, to be visited with Apparitions of *Ghosts*, pretending to have bin Murdered by the *Witches* then represented" (WIW 127).

David Hufford notices a correlation between Old Hag attacks and hauntings. He writes that "[Mara] attacks are commonly found when one interviews people who say

that their house is haunted . . .” (“An Experience-Centered Approach to Hauntings” 34). People who have attacks frequently experience multiple attackers and experience a plethora of psychic phenomena.

Neither Cotton Mather’s account nor the Salem court records of Martha Carrier’s trial contain much direct evidence of Carrier’s specter having been involved in a Mara attack, but there is plenty of spectral evidence involving Carrier, and Carrier seems to have been a ringleader at supposed witch meetings, guilty of making her children witches, earning the title “queen of hel” from Mary Lacey, Sr. Mary Lacey, Jr., informs us about these journeys. She told the court that on Thanksgiving day night occurred a diabolical feast at Joseph Ballard’s house involving Carrier, who “Came to us in her Spirit & to granmoth'r and would not lett her alone till she went w'th her and afflict persons,” where cider was drawn by Martha Carrier’s spirit (SWP 2: 524). We also learn from Mary Lacey, Sr. that Richard Carrier was there at Ballard’s that night when they drew the cider “and afflicted [Goody Ballard] by pinching choaking & Laying his hand on her Stomak” (SWP 2: 527).

Naturally, witch meetings would take place mostly at night when the darkness could shield the witches during their diabolical revelries, but night is also the time when people are lying down or sleeping and susceptible to having a Mara experience, which, we shall see, is often a prelude for other types of experience such as an out-of-body experience. It should be noted that the term “witch riding” involves more than just the entity pressing on the body, creating the paralysis state of a Mara experience. Sometimes such a state leads to a further type of “witch riding,” involving the sensation of moving

out of the body, one in which the witch “rides” the victim out of the body, creating the sensation of spiritual travel or interior excursions.



Fig. 2.1. Olaus Magnus, Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus (Description of the Northern Peoples). Rome, 1555. 180.

Mather’s account of Martha Carrier, tried on August 2-3 and executed on August 19, also contains evidence of the possible aftermath of an Old Hag or Mara visitation in a case of witch riding involving Carrier’s specter. Carrier’s case is interesting because much of the testimony against Carrier came from those who confessed. As writers on witchcraft have shown, confessions often contain colorful and graphic descriptions of abductions and witch rides to the witches’ meetings or Sabbaths.<sup>42</sup> Mather tells us that

One *Foster*, who confessed her own Share in the Witchcraft for which the Prisoner stood indicted, affirm’d, That she had seen the Prisoner at some of their *Witch-Meetings*, and that it was this *Carrier*, who perswaded her

to be a Witch. She confessed, That the Devil carry'd them on a Pole, to a Witch-Meeting; but the Pole broke, and she hanging about *Carriers Neck*, they both fell down, and she then Received an Hurt by the Fall, whereof she was not at this very time Recovered. (WIW 137)

Two other accounts about Carrier that Mather relates also contain aspects of the Mara experience.

One *Lacy*, who likewise confessed her Share in this Witchcraft, now Testify'd, That she and the Prisoner were once Bodily present at a *Witch-meeting in Salem-Village*; and that she knew the Prisoner to be a Witch, and to have been at a Diabolical Sacrament, and that the Prisoner was the undoing of her, and her Children, by Enticing them into the snare of the Devil. (137-138)

Mather's account of testimony against the Reverend George Burroughs, predecessor to the Reverend Samuel Parris, tried on August 5 and executed on August 19, 1692, also reveals aspects of the Mara experience. Mather begins his own accounts with George Burroughs, an obvious rhetorical ploy, since Burroughs was not the first tried or executed but was the most notorious witch figure at Salem, the alleged ringleader of the supposed knot of witches. Burroughs, a graduate of Harvard College in 1670, had been an un-ordained minister with Baptist leanings, pastor of the church at Salem Village from 1680-1683. Mather's formal account of Burroughs's trial mentions various kinds of spectral evidence, though few details are given.

Ann Putnam also testified about seeing specters not only of Burroughs, but also of Burroughs' two supposedly "murdered" wives.

Accordingly several of the Bewitched, had given in their Testimony, that they had been troubled with the *Apparitions* of two women, who said, that they were *G. Bs.* two wives; and that he had been the Death of them; and that the Magistrates must be told of it, before whom if *B.* upon his trial deny'd it, they did not know but that they should appear again in the Court. (WIW 98) <sup>43</sup>

Mather's account reveals few details of a Mara experience, but official testimony in the court transcripts of those witnesses to whom Mather is referring reveals details of such attacks. The Mara experience even seems to have influenced the testimony of Mary Webber, who relates a third-hand account of a couple of experiences of Burroughs' wife (Aug. 2, 1692):

something in the night made anoise in the chamber where she lay as if one Went aboute the Chamber, and she calling up the negro. to come to her the negro not Comeing sayd that she could not Come some thing stopt her, then her husband being called he came up. some thing Jumped down from between the Chimney & the side of the house and Run down the stairs and s'd Burroughs followed it down, and the negro then s'd it was something like a white calfe: another tyme lyeing with her husband some thing came into the house and stood by her bed side and breathed on her, and she being much affrighted at it, would have awakened her husband but could

not for a considerable tyme, but as soone as he did awake it went away.,  
 but this I heard her say. and know nothing of it myselfe otherwise Except  
 by common report of others also concerning such things[.] (1: 162-63)

For Mary Warren to have gathered so much detail from a third-hand account indicates that both she and John Ruck<sup>44</sup> must have been paying attention to what was being related. So Burrough's wife seems also to have had such an experience, which she related to John Ruck, who in turn related it to Mary Webber, who then told the court about it. It had the effect, however, of associating Burroughs with the appearance of a specter.

Ann Putnam, Jr.'s testimony sworn in court on April 20, 1692, against George Burroughs also reveals several aspects of the Mara experience:

at evening she saw the Apperishtion of a Minister at which she was  
 greivously affrighted and cried out oh dreadfull: dreadfull here is a  
 minister com:what are Ministers wicthes to: whence com you and What is  
 your name for I will complaine of:you tho you be A minister: if you be a  
 wizzard; and Immediatly I was tortured by him being Racked and all most  
 choaked by him: and he tempted me to write in his book which I Refused  
 with loud out cries and said I would not writ in his book tho he tore me al  
 to peaces . . . then againe he tortured me & urged me to writ in his book:  
 which I Refused . . . and he has con-tinewed ever sence; by times tempting  
 me to write in his book and greivously tortoring me by beating pinching

and almost choaking me severall times a day and he also tould me that he was above wicth for he was a cunjurer (SWP 1: 164)

Since Ann has to ask the specter his name, it is apparent that she did not recognize the specter of Burroughs on sight. She did, however, seem to ascertain that she had been spectrally assaulted by a minister. Ann was twelve and Burroughs had ended his Ministry in Salem in May, 1683, again taking up that role in Maine. Ann would have been only three years old when he left, probably not old enough still to recognize him, much less know his name, so we may assume that someone identified Burroughs' specter for her. Ann had probably only heard about Burroughs. If someone had identified the specter of Burroughs for Ann, what else might they have done to get her to testify against him? That the specter just happened to be Burroughs, who also happened to be a Putnam enemy, also sounds suspicious.<sup>45</sup> What we see in Ann's testimony is, if not the recall of an actual spectral encounter, the narrative pattern of the Mara and its features, which include hallucinogenic experience. Putnam does not say whether she had been asleep or awake, but since her "visitation" occurred during the evening, she might well have been asleep or in a soporific trance brought about by ingesting thorn apple. The appearance of Burroughs' specter accompanies extreme fear, the sensation of being "racked," and tortured, as if pinned down; she experiences choking: otherwise, she might simply have sought help—unless the entire fabric of reality had disappeared, that is. At one point she entertains the possibility, at least, of being torn to pieces. Her use of the expression, and its possible context would not be unlike the psychopathological experiences of shamans



who report spiritual dismemberment during initiation.<sup>46</sup> From Ann's description it seems she may have had several such episodes concurrently.

What Ann was dealing with can probably be analyzed in this way: Ann was put into some kind of state through use of a drug—probably the thornapple. She then experienced all kinds of disturbances, specters, the tortures of the rack, extreme fear, panic, much of which she probably did not remember afterwards. She then talked about her experiences in the only way that she could—in the familiar pattern of witchcraft accusations, which were also the ones she had been taught, had heard about, and had previously carried out. The sequence of the typical Mara experience formed the pattern for retelling. Because of their relative frequency, their preternatural nature, and the fact that such things were often discussed, everyone believed they knew what an attack by a witch was supposed to look like. Ann probably was truly attacked by something. Hers was a case of true “bewitchment” brought on by doses of the “devil’s weed,” the thornapple, the effects of which share many characteristics with the Mara—one would almost have to use some of the same language to describe their effects after the fact. The Mara pattern of witch riding used to explain Ann’s encounter with Burroughs appeared in other cases involving spectral evidence which had nothing to do with the use of the thornapple.

When people like those in Andover confessed, as they did in profuse numbers because they were named in someone else’s confession and in turn had to confess and name others in order to save their own lives, they used the familiar form which was—again—the Mara experience, which had become the prototype for spectral accusations

and was, as we saw at the beginning of the chapter, actually written into the language of the legal indictment for witchcraft. The pattern was there to follow, whether accusations originated from a genuine physiological or psychological impetus or were constructed out of need for confession to save one's life. Individuals incorporated features of the Mara into their testimony, adapting them to situational demands. Thus, we should look to experiences like the Mara as providing a pattern for talking about such experiences.

The Mara may have provided a prototype not only for symptoms of spectral assault, but also for phenomena associated with night flight to witch meetings and the witches' Sabbath. The Mara and its effects—if allowed to continue into an out-of-body experience—are also present in the witchcraft accounts because that part of the experience is also innate and universal. Whether the night flights were brought about by drugs through the medium of witch ointment or occurred as a continuation of the Mara, the sensations of flight produced were nevertheless real. As early as 906 when Christianity was still being consolidated in Europe, the Church tried actively to suppress the idea that such flights actually took place by declaring belief in actual flight heretical. In a famous document known as the Canon Episcopi or Bishop's Canon, church authorities declare,

It is . . . not to be omitted that some wicked women perverted by the devil, seduced by illusions and phantasms of demons, believe and profess themselves, in the hours of the night, to ride upon certain beasts with Diana, the goddess of the pagans, and an innumerable multitude of women, and in the silence of the dead of night to traverse great spaces of

earth and to obey her commands as of their mistress, and to be summoned to her service on other nights. (qtd. in Lea, History of Witchcraft 1: 178-79.)

The passage above gives much insight into popular superstitions of the time and also into the Church's attitude toward them (Lea History 1: 182). It is quite probable that she was responsible for superstitions involving both spectral assault and spectral flight since the experience is universal and capable of producing both types of effects. We see evidence of both, the witch's assault and the victim's subsequent sensation of travel, in a narrative from a former slave in South Carolina:

The girl testified that one evening she was weary from her task and lay down on the bed. Then the witch, Barbara Powers, dropped in and sat on top of her. The witch pressed her hands on the girl's throat and made her cough and choke. The girl couldn't get no breath and thought she was going to die. Instead of death, the witch turned the girl into a horse. She mounted the "horse" and off they trotted through the woods to the main part of Lancaster. ("The Witch's Trial" Slave Ghost Stories 109)

The idea of spiritual flight itself probably originated with the Mara experience. It is innate and universal, it occurs without the use of any drug, it often involves the feeling of out-of-body travel, and it is hallucinatory.

We get an account of the circumstances surrounding Ann Putnam's vision of the specter of Giles Corey in a letter from her father, Thomas Putnam, to Samuel Sewall, indicating that Ann, too, may have been subject to Mara attacks. Giles Corey pled

innocent to all of his indictments on September 9, 1692, but refused to enter a plea of either guilty or not guilty, standing mute. His trial was postponed. On September 15, Corey again refused to enter a plea, standing mute before the court. Giles Corey was condemned by the court to pien-fort-et-dure for contempt of court and pressed to death, probably on September 19, 1692.

In his “Fourth Curiosity” in Wonders, Mather quotes from a letter from Thomas Putnam to Samuel Sewall, recorded in Sewall’s Diary for September 20, 1692. According to Sewall, Ann Putnam’s vision of Corey’s specter occurred on September 18, the “Sabbath-day night before Execution” of Corey: <sup>47</sup>

The Last Night my Daughter *Ann*, was grievously Tormented by Witches, Threatning that she should be *Preßed* to Death, before *Giles Cory*. But thro’ the Goodness of a Gracious God, she had at last a little Respite. Whereupon there appeared unto her (she said) a man in a Winding Sheet; who told her that *Giles Cory* had Murdered him, by *Pressing* him to Death with his Feet . . . . (146)

The realm of experience helped create a cultural milieu in which belief in the invisible world could take place. Like Job, who said, “I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee,”<sup>48</sup> Cotton Mather actually believed that he saw the invisible world, not just read about it. One could have spiritual visions, and Cotton Mather sought them. But Mather was not the only one to have or seek such spiritual experience. Testimony at the Salem trials indicates that many had experience and knowledge of the typical motifs found in the subject of witchcraft, and it was only natural

that people interpret any unusual experience, especially inner experience, as potentially supernatural.

A whole cluster of “supernatural” experiences relevant to the Salem trials can be related to Mara: visitation by a specter or demon, physical incapacity brought on by the witch, torturing, pinching, biting, and choking of the victim, the witches’ flight, and the witches’ Sabbath—all have origins in Mara. The Old Hag or Mara acted like a visitation by a demon or witch. At the same time it provided the paralysis state as a segue into the out-of-body experience. Culturally, the experience can be interpreted as all sorts of things, including abduction by aliens, flight with aliens on UFOs, and, of course, the witches’ flight and the witches’ Sabbath. Such experiences in a cultural environment such as Salem could easily be taken for an encounter with a witch. It seems that the paralysis state is conducive to an array of visionary phenomena that is often interpreted as supernatural. The Mara experience’s close alliance with the dream state could then be associated with any subsequent dream experience in which the victim saw the witch to be a follow-up visitation. It is not that the Mara experience provided all the spectral evidence in the Salem trials. It does seem to have provided a good deal, however. More importantly, as David Hufford asserted, these experiences enabled and entailed belief in the invisible world, creating a milieu for a general impression that the door to Satan’s realm stood open.

Evidence of how a recurrent nightmare could be interpreted as a supernatural revenant, one who returns from the dead, is found in Henry More’s Antidote Against Atheism (1655). The story is subtitled “A memorable story of a Shoo-maker, Citizen of

Breslaw in Silesia who cut his own throat, Anno 1591.” In the story, the shoemaker became distraught and cut his own throat with his shoemaker’s knife. His family wanted to hide the fact of the dishonor and told the neighbors that the man had died of an “Apoplexie.” Weeks passed and rumors spread, however, that the man had actually killed himself. Magistrates became concerned and met with those who had seen the body and finally pressed the family into telling the truth. The magistrates wanted to dig up and examine the body but the wife raised such protestations, threatening to sue, that the magistrates could not decide what to do. While things were still up in the air, so to speak, the “*Spectrum*” of the man began to appear and lie heavily upon sleeping victims and even those purportedly awake “like an *Ephialtes*.” The Ephialtes is the same “entity” that plagued both Cotton Mather and his father, Increase, and is the phenomenon to which Cotton Mather devoted the chapter “Ephialtes. or, The Night-Mare beaten off” in “The Angel of Bethesda” (153-55). “No sooner did the Sun hide his head,” Moore relates, “but this spectrum would be sure to appear. . . .”

For this terrible *Apparition* would sometimes stand by their bed-sides, sometimes cast it self upon the midst of their beds, would lie close to them, would miserably suffocate them, and would so strike them and pinch them, that not onely blew marks but plain impressions of his fingers would be upon sundry parts of their bodies in the morning. (211-212)

As evinced by this example, belief generated by experience is a powerful catalyst for producing supernatural experiences. If one believes there are ghosts and witches one is more apt to see and find them. “Only believe,” is what Christ told the ruler of the

synagogue before he raised his daughter from the dead, after he had exorcised the legion of demons from the Gadarene energumen and healed the woman with the 12-year issue of blood (see Mark 5.36;). Hebrews 11.1 also stated, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Belief is a factor that makes many so-called impossible things seem possible.

The evidence against witches at Salem was not only a matter of people inventing stories to take revenge against those they hated or needed to settle a score with. Some of the evidence presented at the trials suggests some kind of actual experience. At the core, some of the evidence and the experiences of the accusers may have been based on the kind of empirical evidence seen by writers of witchcraft narratives with an interest in science and in proving through the gathering of empirical evidence that Satan, and therefore God, exists. The testimony at Salem was not simply invented for the occasion. But testimony of the accusers and accused mimics the patterns often seen in witch trials in England and elsewhere. The people of New England learned about what constituted witchcraft, how to identify a witch from ministers, books, and from each other. Perhaps the interpretation of what happened was pure projection but not the experience itself that required interpretation. Cotton Mather’s five accounts of the Salem witches and some of the four “*Curiosities*” immediately following are based on subjective core experiences, not just a coincidence of objective physical events. The Salem witchcraft craze would not have proceeded far had it not been for spectral evidence that actually had a basis in human experience. This experiential basis, as well as the theological framework and interpretation of the experience, accounts for a lot of the evidence presented, fulfilling a

sort of circle of religious teaching, folklore, and ecstatic experience influencing expectations about witchcraft. Since such experiences confirmed what before only existed in the imagination, this most untrustworthy of our faculties could now be validated. It could be, to some extent, empirical.

If a person lying in bed suddenly finds himself awake and transported above the body in a state of anxiety and in the presence of something like a wild animal, we need not be surprised if such a person were to attribute this manifestation to the presence as a demon. Worse yet, if this person imagined herself transported to what seemed to be another physical location, ascribing her seeming levitation to demonic forces would be more than natural—given the theological zeitgeist of the period. David Hufford draws certain parallels between the Old Hag, out-of-body, and near-death experiences. The recording of the near death experience was in fact often done in Mather's time. Cotton Mather's "Triparadisus" contains such accounts.<sup>49</sup> Hufford also implies that the out-of-body experience is really a continuation of the Old Hag experience and that similar physiological symptoms seem to precede and initiate both.

The testimony of Mercy Lewis against George Burroughs seems to reveal that the specter would not only come to oppress and torture but to tempt the victim to sign a book and even to be able to take the victim on a journey through the air:

the deposistion of Mircy Lewes who testifieth and saith that one the 7'th of may 1692 att evening I saw the apperishition of Mr. George Burroughs whom i very well knew which did greivously tortor me and urged me to writ in his Book . . . then he againe tortured me most dreadfully and



threatened to kill me for he said I should not witnes against him . . . then againe he did most dreadfully tortor me as if he would have racked me all to peaces and urged me to writ in his book or elce he would kill me . . . this 9'th may mr Burroughs caried me up to an exceeding high mountain and shewed me all the kingdoms of the earth and tould me that he would give them all to me if I would writ in his book and if I would not he would thro me down and brake my neck: but I tould him they ware non of his to give and I would not writ if he throde me down on 100 pichforks (SWP 1: 168-169)

In Mercy Lewis's testimony about events of May 7-9, we find recounted the dual set of circumstances pertinent to the Mara in which the victim is both "racked" and then taken on an ecstatic journey. And while there seem to be some experiential constants in all these experiences, a person suffering under the Mara would use expressions that are determined to some degree by the cultural framework, the language, and the expectations of the community. Raymond Moody says as much in his book Life After Life; he outlines the common pattern for the near-death experience, which includes an encounter with a being of light:

Interestingly, while the above description of a being of light is utterly invariable, the identification of the being varies from individual to individual and seems to be largely a function of the religious background, training, or beliefs of the person involved. Thus, most of those who are Christians in training or belief identify

the light as Christ and sometimes draw Biblical parallels in support of their interpretation. A Jewish man and woman identified the light as an “angel.” It was clear, though, in both cases, that the subject did not mean to imply that the being had wings, played a harp, or even had a human shape or appearance. There was only the light. (59)<sup>50</sup>

According to Hufford, a similar contextualization of the Mara experience takes place within cultures. Though the symptoms of the experience are universal and have remarkable similarities worldwide, the language and imagery used to describe it may be culturally determined. Cotton Mather himself, when he had his experience of the angel, was unable to determine with absolute certainty that it was not the devil appearing as an angel of light.<sup>51</sup> Increase Mather warned against cacodæmons, evil spirits that could assume the appearance even of radiant angels, holy men and prophets, and the shapes of departed persons (Illustrious Providences 208-11). For Increase, it was not impossible that “Holy angels may appear, and visibly converse with some. Yet for any to desire such a thing is unwarrantable, and exceeding dangerous” (208). Increase Mather believed that such a cacodæmon was responsible for the appearance of Samuel before Saul and the Witch of Endor (211).

That both the Old Hag experience and the out-of-body experience occur while the body is at rest, in trance, or in the liminal area between sleep and waking and is accompanied by paralysis of the subject indicates that physiological conditions are similar as well. It indicates that the waking and projection of the inner vision that then

seems to assert some movement of its own is common to both experiences. Some of the effects of the spirit's interaction with the physical can be measured empirically. Cotton Mather would have defined such interaction between spirit and matter as a function of the intermediary body between the physical and spiritual, the Nishmath Chahim.

In the introduction to his book Soul Traveler, Albert Taylor, an engineer on NASA's space station program, writes about his out-of-body experiences that at first came spontaneously and were initiated by a paralysis state:

I have experienced, since the age of four, a type of "paralysis" during the night and early morning. "The witches are riding you!" is what my grandmother would always say. This state of feeling paralyzed, I have found, was my personal doorway to what may be the "ultimate truth."

. . . All my life, as far back as I can remember, I have had a peculiar sensation that I once dreaded. Often I would wake up fully aware of my surroundings; I could hear and see, but I was incapable of moving. I felt paralyzed! I call this the "paralysis state."

. . . I didn't have a clue as to how close I was to achieving an out-of-body experience.

. . . another peculiar thing that happened during sleep is what I used to call "waking up in my dreams." Although I was sound asleep, I became cognizant that I was dreaming, or at least aware of what I thought was a dream. . . . After waking up in my dream, I had the ability to change the dream! Sometimes I would fly. Other times I explored my surroundings.

. . . these two common occurrences, the paralysis state and waking up in my dreams, remained unconnected for most of my childhood and adult life. (xv-xvii)

Taylor also recognizes close ties between his out-of-body experiences initiated by the paralysis state and near-death-experiences.

Charles Lamb's description of nightmares involves a cluster of beliefs centered around witch riding. This activity has been recognized in folk traditions all over the world. Folklorist Stith Thompson classified such a phenomena in his Motif Index of Folk Literature as F471.1 "*Nightmare (Alp)*. Presses on person in dream." ("Alp" is German for night-mare or demon),<sup>52</sup> and G241.2, "*Witch rides on person*." Several variants of the experience follow in Thompson, including G241.21, "*Witch transforms man to horse and rides him*"; G241.2.11, "*Witch transforms person by means of magic bridle*"; and G241.22, "*Person enchanted by witch's salve so as to be ridden by witch*." These classifications immediately precede Thompson's motifs G242, "*Witch flies through air*," and G242.1, "*Witch flies through air on broomstick*." These motifs in turn lead to motif G243, the "*Witch's sabbath*."

While the core experience became the centerpiece of the witches' flight to the Sabbath, whatever aided the attainment of that core experience was also associated with witchcraft. Meditative techniques, fasting, lengthy prayer, spiritual exercises of all types, and the use of certain chemicals might bring about a visionary state that would lead to belief in the invisible world. The use of datura stramonium and peyote by American

Indians to induce dreams and visions has been well documented. Anything that served to bring about the core experience might be associated with witchcraft.

Belief in witchcraft included two types of pacts with the devil. One was private and happened between the individual and the devil only, the other was the public pact in which witches would meet together and new initiates would swear allegiance to Satan. These types of pact were not mutually exclusive. The Malleus Maleficarum (1486), prototype for all subsequent books on demonology, states, “Now the method of profession is twofold. One is a solemn ceremony, like a solemn vow.” The other type of ceremony “is private and can be made to the devil at any hour alone” (99). In the public ceremony “witches meet together in conclave on a set day, and the devil appears to them in the assumed body of a man” (99). In the Salem trials we see both kinds of pacts in testimony concerning the specters of the accused witches accosting victims and tempting them to sign the devil’s book. Instances of book signings or a parodic Lord’s Supper also occur at witch assemblies in Salem. Folklorist Stith Thompson’s Motif Index of Folk Literature lists motifs following the natural progression of such experiences as they often appear in folklore, beginning with a witch riding a person, continuing with their initial flight, and ending with their arrival at the witch’s Sabbath.<sup>53</sup> We see ample evidence of all these motifs in the Salem Witchcraft Papers and in Wonders of the Invisible World, except that in Salem witches rode to their meetings on poles.<sup>54</sup> Indeed, we see evidence of such a progression also in the Mara or Old Hag experience. In Mather’s case “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb. 11.1) came in a

similar way as it did to many in and around Salem who had had what they believed to be supernatural experiences.

One can argue, then, that the paralysis state associated with the Mara experience, the paralysis state preceding the out-of-body experience, the meditative and fasting states of Cotton Mather, the near-death or death-bed experience, the use of hallucinogenic plants—are all conditions that put one’s mind in a receptive zone where one really thinks one perceives spirits, beings of light, ghosts, and angels. Once one has such an experience, the perception of the invisible world changes from theory to fact.

Such an experience would serve to strengthen and generate belief. One can argue whether or not many spectral-sightings, trips to the witches’ Sabbath, accusations of grievous torture and oppression by specters, etc. were all fabricated lies, but one cannot really argue that the Mara experience creates evidence of the invisible world and that many people in Salem inevitably would have achieved or have been influenced by it. In Robert Burton’s Anatomy of Melancholy, along with medical explanations of nightmare, we are told that they often involve incubus and succubus demons, male and female demons, who had sexual intercourse with people in their sleep (167, 648 [1.2.1.2; 3.2.1.1]). Such interpretations are sounded repeatedly in witchcraft narratives and treatises. We find in Salem no real distinction made between a nightmare and an actual visitation by a spectral witch or devil. We can also assume that once the witch outbreak started, any unusual subjective experience was fair game for an interpretation of witchcraft. After all, even the devil could—and did—appear as an angel of light.

## Notes to Chapter 2

<sup>1</sup> See Kenneth Silverman, The Life and Times of Cotton Mather 12, 25; Cotton Mather Diary I: 129.

<sup>2</sup> The Court of Oyer and Terminer recessed after Bishop's execution on June 6, during which time Judge Nathaniel Saltonstall resigned. Later, Saltonstall was also accused of witchcraft, See Sewall, Diary 1: 305-06).. The court probably did not meet again until the end of June, perhaps June 30. Cotton Mather dates Susanna's Martin's trial as June 29 (WIW 114). See Rosenthal, Salem Story, 69-70.

<sup>3</sup> See Daniel G. Payne, "Defending the Indefensible: Spectral Evidence at the Salem Witchcraft Trials." EIHC 129.1 (Jan. 1993) 74.

<sup>4</sup> See, in particular, Hufford's chapter, "The Old Hag and the Cultural Source Hypothesis," in The Terror That Comes in the Night, 12-46.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, 67.

<sup>6</sup> The Massachusetts Bay Statute of 1641 states, "If any man or woman be a witch (that is hath or consulteth with a familiar spirit), they shall be put to death. Exodus 22:18 Leviticus 20:27 Deuteronomy 18:10."

The 1604 statute of James I condemns anyone who shall

use, practice, or exercise any invocation, or conjuration, of any evil and wicked spirit, or shall consult, covenant with, entertain, employ, feed, or reward any evil and wicked spirit to or for any intent or purpose; or [b] take up any dead man, woman, or child out of his, her, or their grave, or

any other place where the dead body resteth, or the skin, bone, or any other part of any dead person, to be employed or used in any manner of witchcraft, sorcery, charm, or enchantment; or [c] shall use, practice, or exercise any witchcraft, enchantment, charm, or sorcery, whereby any person shall be killed, destroyed, wasted, consumed, pined, or lamed in his or her body, or any part thereof; that then every such offender or offenders, their aiders, abettors, and counselors, being of any the said offenses duly and lawfully convicted and attainted, shall suffer pains of death as a felon or felons, and shall lose the privilege and benefit of clergy and sanctuary.

<sup>7</sup> “pinch, v.<sup>1</sup>” OED.

<sup>8</sup> “pinch, v.<sup>5</sup>” OED.

<sup>9</sup> “pinch, v.<sup>6</sup>” OED.

<sup>10</sup> Lamb’s essay was first published in London Magazine in October, 1821.

<sup>11</sup> See A True Relation of The Apparition of One Mrs. Veal, The Next Day After Her Death: to One Mrs. Bargrave At Canterbury. The 8th Of September, 1705. (London, 1706). See also Samuel Johnson, “An Account of the Detection of the Imposture in Cock-Lane” Gentleman’s Magazine 32 (1762): 81-82.

<sup>12</sup> See Douglas L. Winiarski, “‘Pale Blewish Lights’ and a Dead Man’s Groan: Tales of the Supernatural from Eighteenth-Century Plymouth, Massachusetts.” William and Mary Quarterly 3<sup>rd</sup> ser. 55.4 (1998): 497-530.



<sup>13</sup> “The Most Frequently Challenged Books of 2002”

<sup>14</sup> “The Most Frequently Challenged Books of 1999-2000.” American Library Association. 27 June 2003.

<[http://www.ala.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Our\\_Association/Offices/Intellectual\\_Freedom3/Banned\\_Books\\_Week/Related\\_Links7/100\\_Most\\_Frequently\\_Challenged\\_Books\\_of\\_1990-2000.htm](http://www.ala.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Our_Association/Offices/Intellectual_Freedom3/Banned_Books_Week/Related_Links7/100_Most_Frequently_Challenged_Books_of_1990-2000.htm)>.

<sup>15</sup> See “Cromwell Group Has Beef with Harry Potter, Others.” The Associated Press State and Local Wire. Saturday, July 20, 2002. June 27, 2003. LexisNexis Online; “Book Bans as Teens Discount Their Audience.” USA Today. July 26, 2002; Pat Seremet. “Java.” The Hartford Courant. Thursday May 22, 2003. June 23, 2003. LexisNexis Online. <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/>

<sup>16</sup> Alex Leary, “Mayor Bans Satan from Inglis.” St. Petersburg Times. November 29, 2001. June 27, 2003. LexisNexis Online. <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/>

<sup>17</sup> Payne, 71.

<sup>18</sup> The corn (grain) fell and lay down flat on the ground, sometimes creating crop circles.

<sup>19</sup> Charles Lamb, “Witches, and other Night Fears.” The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb. Ed. E.V. Lucas. 7 Vols. Vol. 2. 1903. New York: AMS Press, 1968. 65-70.

<sup>20</sup> See Francesco Maria Guazzo, Compendium Maleficarum (1608). The Montague Summers Edition. Translated by E.A. Ashwin. New York: Dover, 1988. 35.

<sup>21</sup> Lamb refers to Thomas Stackhouse's (1681/2-1752) A New History of the Holy Bible, from the Beginning of the World to the Establishment of Christianity (London, 1733), containing illustrations by James Mynde (1740-1770).

<sup>22</sup>See "Mare" OED n<sup>2</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Mer-<sup>2</sup> "Indo-European Roots" The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language.

<sup>24</sup> Mare, n.<sup>2</sup> OED Online, June 2003, Oxford University Press. 15 Sept. 2005, <<http://dictionary.oed.com.dax.lib.unf.edu/cgi/entry/00301914>>.

<sup>25</sup> David Hufford, "An Experience-Centered Approach to Hauntings." Hauntings and Poltergeists: Multidisciplinary Perspectives. Ed. James Houran and Rense Lange. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2001. 18-40.

<sup>26</sup> See Allan J. Cheyne, Ian Newby-Clark, and Steve Rueffer, "Relations among Hypnagogic and Hypnopompic Hallucinations during Sleep Paralysis: Neurological and Cultural Construction of the Night-Mare." Consciousness and Cognition 8.3 (1999): 319-37). See also Allan J. Cheyne, Ian Newby-Clark, and Steve Rueffer, "Relations among Hypnagogic and Hypnopompic Experiences Associated with Sleep Paralysis." Journal of Sleep Research 8.4 (1999): 313-17.

<sup>27</sup> See the case of Richard Coman pertaining to the trial of Bridget Bishop below in main text.

<sup>28</sup> See "hag, v.<sup>2</sup>" in the OED for instances of its English use. During the Salem witch trials, James Carr testified to being "behaged" for a good while by the specter of

Mary Bradbury and describes a bedroom visitation of Bradbury in the shape of a cat (SWP 1: 125).

<sup>29</sup> “Pined,” ppl. a. OED.

<sup>30</sup> Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan. 1651. Ed. Richard Tuck. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991. Rpt. 1994.

<sup>31</sup> Laistner wrote the classic Thought and Letters in Western Europe AD 500 to 900, which went through numerous editions. See Kittredge, Witchcraft in Old and New England. 218-225 and accompanying notes.

<sup>32</sup> “Hag-ridden, ppl. a.” (OED). The listing “Hag, n.<sup>1</sup>” in the OED includes a quotation from Richard Huloet’s dictionary Abecedarium Anglo-Latinum of 1552, which uses the term in the sense of “Hegges or nyght furies, or wytches like unto old women . . . which do sucke the bloude of children in the nyght, *striges*.” The OED also quotes from Sir Thomas Elyot’s Dictionary (1553), which defines the term as “a spyrite whiche apperethe in the nyght tyme. Some do call it a hegge, some a goblyn).

<sup>33</sup> Writers for Dunton’s publication included Dunton’s brother-in-law, Church of England clergyman and poet Samuel Wesley (bap. 1662, d. 1735), the father of John and Charles Wesley, founders of Methodism; another brother-in-law, mathematician Richard Sault (d. 1702); and Church of England clergyman and philosopher, Dr. John Norris (1657-1712), who corresponded with Cambridge Platonist, Henry More.

<sup>34</sup> The Athenian Oracle was partly a reprint, partly a continuation of Athenian Gazette; or Casuisticall Mercury, published from March 17, 1691, to June 14, 1697, by John Dunton and his collaborators, calling themselves the Athenian Society.

<sup>35</sup> “Mare, n.<sup>2</sup>” (OED).

<sup>36</sup> “Mare, n.<sup>1</sup>” (OED).

<sup>37</sup> This is the traditional phrase to make a spirit vanish or reveal its mission, indicating that the subject was familiar with the belief system.

<sup>38</sup> See Owen Davies, “The Nightmare Experience, Sleep Paralysis, and Witchcraft Accusations” Folklore 114 (2003): 181-203. 190-93.

<sup>39</sup> Burton refers to French professor of law and demonologist Jean Bodin, (1529-1596) author of De la Démonomanie des Sorciers (Paris, 1580) A fierce opponent of witches, Bodin sometimes acted as judge in witchcraft trials, urging no leniency.

<sup>40</sup> Near the end of the Salem trials, especially after July 19 with the execution of five persons, ministers began to have doubts about the use of spectral evidence (Holmes, Increase Mather 118). They reasoned that if Satan could impersonate a redeemed Christian, then spectral evidence would be worthless, or rather too dangerous to use as grounds of conviction. Such misgivings prompted Increase Mather to write a long treatise Cases of Conscience (1692), questioning the reliability of spectral evidence. It was published in Boston just a few days after Wonders of the Invisible World (Holmes, Increase Mather (123).

<sup>41</sup> Much evidence exists that main aspects of idea of the flight to the witches' Sabbath may have originated with out-of-body experiences. These out-of-body experiences could have been aided through the use of soporific and hallucinogenic drugs. In Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath, historian Carlo Ginzburg in has presented documented evidence from trial records indicating that long before the stereotype of the witches' Sabbath, nocturnal out-of-body travel, not with in the company of devils and witches, but with the benandanti or "good people" may have been widespread among peasants in the Friuli in Italy and possibly elsewhere in Europe. The imagery associated with particular out-of-body experiences seems to be culturally shaped, making it possible that many UFO abductions are actually out-of-body experiences that reflect modern familiarity with and interest in space travel. I discuss Ginzburg's ideas at greater length in chapter three.

<sup>42</sup> For two of virtually countless examples and sources, see Tituba's examinations in The Salem Witchcraft Papers 3: 747-754 and The Malleus Maleficarum, "How They are Transported from Place to Place" (104-109 [2.1.3]).

<sup>43</sup> Mather seems to be summarizing from Ann Putnam's vision of May 5<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> John Ruck was the father of George Burroughs' second wife, Sarah (Ruck) Hathorne Burroughs. She had been a widow before she married Burroughs, her husband William Hathorne, Jr. of Salem having died in 1678. William Hathorne, Jr. was the brother of John Hathorne, the Salem magistrate. John Ruck and Nathaniel Putnam were deputies of the General Court in Salem. Jonathan Corwin, also a magistrate of the Court

of Oyer and Terminer, represented Salem as an assistant to the Governor. The wealthy John Ruck served as foreman of the grand jury for the first session of the Court of Oyer and Terminer in early June and possibly in later sessions as well (Roach Salem Witch Trials 229; Robinson Devil Discovered 71, 323, 325; Norton Devil's Snare 197).

<sup>45</sup> In 1683 the church at Salem Village had stopped paying Burroughs' salary. When Burrough's wife died he had to borrow money from the Putnams to pay for her funeral. When he could not pay back the money, Putnam sued him.

<sup>46</sup> See Mircea Eliade's chapter, "Initiatory Sickness and Dreams" in Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy, 33-66.

<sup>47</sup> Samuel Sewall. Diary 1: 295.

<sup>48</sup> Job 42.5.

<sup>49</sup> See Cotton Mather's "Second Paradise" in The Threefold Paradise of Cotton Mather ed. Reiner Smolinski, 138-47. See also Magnalia Christi Americana 6.7: 78-79.

<sup>50</sup> Raymond A. Moody, Life After Life. 1975. New York: Bantam, 1988.

<sup>51</sup> See David Levin, "When Did Cotton Mather See the Angel?" Early American Literature 15 (1980-81) 271-275. See also Kenneth Silverman, Review of Paterna. Early American Literature 15 (1980): 80-85.

<sup>52</sup> "Alp *n.*," Oxford English Dictionary. Ed. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989. OED Online. Oxford University Press. 7 July 2003. <<http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00006433>>

<sup>53</sup> Charles Lamb's description of nightmares involves a cluster of beliefs centered around witch riding that have actually been identified in folk traditions all over the world. Folklorist Stith Thompson classified these phenomena in his Motif Index to Folk Literature as F471.1 "*Nightmare (Alp)*. Presses on person in dream." ("Alp" is German for night-mare or demon), and motif G.241.2, "*Witch rides on person*." Several variants of the experience follow in Thompson, including G241.21, "*Witch transforms man to horse and rides him*" ; G 241.2.11: "*Witch transforms person by means of magic bridle*"; and G241.22: "*Person enchanted by witch's salve so as to be ridden by witch*." These classifications immediately precede Thompson's motifs G242 "*Witch flies through air*," and G242.1, "*Witch flies through air on broomstick*." These motifs in turn lead to motif G243, the "*Witch's sabbath*."

<sup>54</sup> See, for example, the examination of Mary Lacey, SWP 2: 521-22, 526; the examination of William Barker, SWP 1: 74; and the examination of Mary Bridges, SWP 1: 135.

### Chapter 3

#### Cotton Mather's Manipulation of His Sources in Wonders of the Invisible World

Another important element of Salem witchcraft that made its way into the pages of The Wonders of the Invisible World cannot be explained by fraud, the effects of drugs, or the interpretation of nightmares. The sad truth about 1692 Salem is not that so many people believed in witchcraft but that so many people believed what they were told to believe, or at least pretended to. They preferred to live, as many live today, as indifferent participants in a state of demonstrable illusion and blatant fallacy. We have always been encouraged in the maintenance of our delusions by prominent defenders of the status quo, the paid promulgators of official doctrine whose job it is to twist information to persuade us to believe that a lie is truth and that truth is a lie. It is not so much that we make irrational judgments as that we base these judgments on imperfect knowledge gleaned from official sources.

As in science before the seventeenth century, when the assumption of God's creation being composed of perfect circles distorted the perception of astronomical reality, so in the social context of colonial America, religious preconceptions distorted the perception of truth. As in science, when the astronomers dropped their preconceived notions they discovered astronomical realities of the universe, what may Cotton Mather have written had he not reasoned deductively from a false premise that Satan was on the loose and had established a knot of witches in Salem? What would he have gotten from his sources?



We cannot expect Cotton Mather to have reacted to witchcraft in Salem like a post-enlightenment scholar, but neither should we ignore the fact that there were other viewpoints voiced in Boston at the time, about witchcraft in general and the Salem trials in particular, which turned out to be correct but to which Mather did not subscribe. Witchcraft was a serious topic of debate among members of the Royal Scientific Society of London, that prestigious organization into which Mather was eventually inducted. People concerned with witchcraft included Robert Boyle, Joseph Glanvill, and Isaac Newton, and many of these Royal Society confreres truly believed in witchcraft. In spite of the fact that many in the Royal Society tried to examine witchcraft scientifically, their Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London, published since 1665, ignored the issue of witchcraft completely. The Transactions “carefully excluded the topics of God and the soul from its province” (Prior 183). Instead, they confined themselves to discussion about matters that could be empirically verified. Regardless of what these scientists may have said or written elsewhere about it, real debate over witchcraft was not taking place in the pages of the Transactions of the Royal Society, despite Royal Society fellow Joseph Glanvill’s suggestion in 1668 that the “SOCIETY” take up scientific study of the “the LAND of SPIRITS [as] a kinde of AMERICA” (A Blow 115). We can tell, at least, that there was no debate occurring over witchcraft serious enough to risk arguing it in the pages of the Transactions. Religious and Scientific discourse were largely kept separate. Through his reading Mather was certainly aware of all sides of the witchcraft debate. And he would have been aware of the skeptical writers on witchcraft as well.<sup>1</sup>

At least four impetuses drove Mather to write about the Salem trials the way he did. First was his religious understanding of the Bible that taught him that witchcraft was real. Second, Mather, either through his own efforts or the efforts of others, or both, was put in charge of writing the official account of the witchcraft trials for the citizens of England and New England. His task in writing Wonders of the Invisible World was to protect the judges and the government from reprisal both at home and abroad. Before Wonders was published, he may have known through personal contact with his friend, Governor William Phips, that the trials were to be halted. Third, Mather had his own experiences with the invisible world and was driven by a wish, like those in the Royal Society, to prove witchcraft and the invisible world empirically. Fourth, Mather wished for publication. The subject of witchcraft had great popular appeal, and a treatise on witchcraft was a sure way of at once becoming a well-known writer and promulgating his religious viewpoint and reputation as a divine. Both influences together, his religious and millennial interpretation of events and the need to justify what already had been done, influenced the way Mather saw witchcraft.

Mather's quadruple impetus, however, limited the effectiveness of Wonders of the Invisible World as an accurate history. Had he taken another view of his sources he might have seen what was really going on. Cotton Mather was not backwards-thinking, but he was trapped by the same limitations as astronomers before Johannes Kepler: belief in a concept that—no matter how he tried to construe it—would not square with an empirical model. Cotton Mather's interest in using science to prove God was a direction which he had unfortunately not completed. This rift between conception and empirical truth caused

tension in both writer and reader because at the end of the seventeenth century the gap between empiricism and religious conception could no longer be ignored. Instead of changing his notions to conform to the world as he found it, Mather tried to skew empirical design into alignment with his preconceptions: tried to bend evidence to his will. By Mather's time, if theory did not square with the facts, the written attempts to make them appear as if they did so resulted in recognizable misrepresentation.

Unfortunately, when empirical facts did not square with Mather's theological notions (and his considerable rhetorical skills could not make them seem to fit), he ignored his sources. Mather struggled with the discrepancy between what the Bible taught him and empiricism mandated. This irreconcilable and now recognizable rift between Scripture and science, along with Mather's need to prove witchcraft empirically, was the ultimate source of his need for distortion.

This breach between empirical norms and religious theory was especially visible during the Salem witch trials because at the same time Mather was ignoring tangible evidence of fraud in the Salem case, he was doing his best to marshal empirical (albeit intangible) evidence of demons and witches to convince his readers that his claims were scientific. Mather's deductive model allowed him to ignore significant details in the court records and his other major sources used to support his conception of witchcraft in Wonders. Readily incorporating details he considered useful to his cause, he freely ignored facts and statements that did not support his assumptions. Mather's attempts at explanation resulted in a kind of awkward pseudo-science: reasoning deductively from Scripture, he selected details that seemed to support his preconceptions. He then

presented those isolated or scattered “facts” to his readers as if they built toward an inductive conclusion. Trying to prove that the acts of witchcraft at once transcended and adhered to empirical forces was a major source of Mather’s “grotesque apologetics” in Wonders of the Invisible World.

It was not that another point of view did not exist that Mather could have chosen to consider; Mather’s voice was not the only one in Boston. Scientist, astronomer, and merchant Thomas Brattle (1658-1713) also lived there, and as his unpublished letter circulated in manuscript showed, he saw quite clearly the fraudulent nature of the outbreak and the unfairness of the judges’ methods. Time proved Brattle correct. Had Mather actively denounced the trials instead of defending them he might have become a national hero. The problem was, because of his faith and his own experience with the invisible world, and despite the questionable merits of individual witchcraft cases, Mather truly believed in the invisible world and the power of Satan and his demons. Part of what lies behind Mather’s distortion of witchcraft accounts is an effort to keep convincing himself.

Mather’s reworking of his source texts can often be described both succinctly and accurately as disingenuous and at best dodgy. He evidently suspected (or knew) he was being deceptive, but the overpowering belief in the invisible world and his own ambiguity must have convinced him that even if he misrepresented witchcraft in some ways, on the whole he was being truthful. He did this, however, with pompous self-assurance and an attitude that he was being fair. His idea or misconception that he was not distorting evidence reminds us of Rupert Murdoch’s Fox News slogan, “Fair and

Balanced.” Mather is saying “Fair and Balanced, Fair and Balanced,” but it was anything but that. All the rhetoric in the world could not change the sad fact that nothing supernatural had happened at Salem and that the Enlightenment was well underway. As Michael Winship notes, “It was not until Cotton Mather’s generation that heirs to the Puritans had to face the discrepancy between the world of their inherited faith and the world of the natural philosophers” (97).

Before getting into the details of Mather’s manipulation of his sources, we should take a brief overview of the sections of Wonders of the Invisible World and glance at a few of the minor sources Mather drew from. It is by no means a complete list. In addition to books by Richard Bernard, William Perkins, and John Gaule, which we will cover at length, Mather’s sources for views on witchcraft and his models for recording witchcraft narratives would have been other witchcraft narratives popular at the time. A short list of books Mather was familiar with includes at least the following from which he quotes in Wonders: Johann Weyer’s De Presteageous Demonium (1653), John Foxe’s Actes and Monuments, Henry More’s Antidote Against Atheism (1656), Richard Baxter’s Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits (1691), and the 1682 edition of Joseph Glanvill’s Saducismus Triumphatus, Mather’s signed copy of which is at the University of Virginia. He would of course have been familiar with his father’s An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences (Boston, 1684), and with John Webster’s The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft (London, 1677), both of which were in the Mather Library.<sup>2</sup> In addition to Matthew Hale, the Reverend John Hale mentions that the Salem judges consulted “English Statutes for Witchcraft” in Joseph Keeble’s (1632-1710) chapter “Conjuration”

in “On the Common Law,” in Keeble’s An Assistance to Justices of the Peace (London 1683, 1689 pp. 217-220).<sup>3</sup> Hale also tells us that the Salem Judges Consulted Richard Baxter and Richard Burton. Burton was the pseudonym for writer and publisher Nathaniel Crouch, whose contribution to the subject of witchcraft was The Kingdom of Darkness (London, 1688) from which Cotton Mather sometimes quotes. Any and all of these books contributed to Mather’s knowledge of witchcraft and its lore. Mather’s other major sources included the anonymous writer of A Trial of Witches At the Assizes Held at Bury St. Edmonds (London, 1682), extensive use of excerpts in some form taken from the Salem court records, and Anthony Horneck’s An Account of What Happened in the Kingdom of Sweden in the Years 1669. and 1670 Upwards (London, 1682). The one source that appears everywhere throughout Wonders was the Bible, from which he quotes, paraphrases, and conflates freely with his own writing.

## **Part One: Jurat in Curia:<sup>4</sup> Cotton Mather's Manipulation of the Salem Court**

### **Papers**

In Wonders of the Invisible World Cotton Mather vowed to report “*Matters of fact*” about the Salem trials not “as an *Advocate* but as an *Historian*” (82). What Mather actually best conveyed is how the Salem trials fit into his religious world view, including his eschatological view of history.<sup>5</sup> As his September 2, 1692 letter to William Stoughton, Lieutenant Governor and chief justice of the Court of Oyer and Terminer, reveals, Mather had no intention of simply narrating the facts or giving a true and accurate history of the trials.

What we know about the history of the making of Wonders begins with Mather's letter to Stoughton, indicating his “zeal to assist . . . the weighty and worthy undertakings wherein almighty God has employed Your Honor as His instrument for the extinguishing of as wonderful a piece of devilism as has been seen in the world” (Selected Letters 43). He informs Stoughton that, since no one else has come forward to do so, he has begun writing such a testimony, a standard, formulaic justification: “I have labored to divert the thoughts of my readers, even with something of designed contrivance, unto those points which help very much to flatten that fury which we now so much turn upon one another” (43). Mather asks for “Your Honor's leave” that he might write and publish an account of the trials that will “vindicate the country, as well as the judges and the juries” (43-44). Actually, Mather had simply gone ahead and written part of Wonders, an “address,”<sup>6</sup> which he sent to Stoughton, asking his permission to expand and publish. Mather told Stoughton that he planned to present the “calamity” in as “true a light” as he could, but

where he has “let fall as once or twice the jealousies among us, of innocent people being accused,” he vowed to “humbly submit all those expressions unto Your Honor’s correction” (43). In other words, if his account reveals too much about the controversy, Mather vowed to submit it to censorship. As a contemporary witness of events, Mather saw the opportunity of gaining wide recognition by writing about the trials, but to be allowed to do that he had to agree to defend the government, judges, and some of the ministers from the backlash against them that was occurring. He had to write it their way, not necessarily the way he really saw it. This was not always a pleasant task, but Mather had the advantage of sharing their basic viewpoint of belief in witchcraft. By his own admission he wrote to calm the fury. To be fair to Cotton Mather, he also wanted to make sure the proceedings did not get out of hand through the actions of an inflammatory public. Mather always kept the names of accused people to himself instead of broadcasting them for persecution. Such an offer on Mather’s part to write to calm the situation should have been very welcome to Stoughton, who as chief justice bore the brunt of much of the criticism from more skeptical quarters. The “address” Mather sent had shown Stoughton the drift of what he would say. Mather—like many of his colleagues—had preached several sermons on the subject and needed only to pull them together.

Governor Phips had left with forces at the beginning of August for Pemmaquid on the Maine coast to build Fort William Henry. Phips was, therefore, probably away from the colony at the time Mather wrote the letter to Stoughton, while Stoughton had assumed the reigns of power and was acting as governor in Phips’s absence (Upham “Salem



Witchcraft and Cotton Mather” 45). What probably happened is that Stoughton gave Mather his permission to go ahead with the writing, and after Phips returned from Pemmaquid on September 29, the governor himself assumed responsibility for what Stoughton had done in his absence (see Roach 220, 304; and Rosenthal 194-195). Mather’s “positive command” to write Wonders, therefore, probably resulted from his own initiative.

Two weeks later, on September 15, Mather wrote to Stephen Sewall, requesting “a Narrative of the Evidences given at y<sup>e</sup> Trials,” mentioning that “his Excellency, the Governor, laid his positive commands upon mee to desire this favor of you, and y<sup>e</sup> truth is there are some of his circumstances with reference to this affair, which I need not mention, that call for y<sup>e</sup> Expediting of your kindness” (NEHGR 24: 108). Some of “his circumstances” Mather alludes to may have been that Phips’s wife had just been accused of witchcraft, or could also refer to the idea that Stoughton and the judges needed help in the court of public opinion. After Phips returned, Mather probably approached the governor (as he previously had done with Stoughton), offering to calm things down with his pen. Mather was then allowed to claim Phips’s willingness to go along with what Stoughton had done in his absence as a “positive command” to do so. It seems inconceivable that Mather would have published the claim of a commission from “His Excellency the Governour . . . of the Massachusetts-Bay” without Phips’s approval (WIW [ii]). Mather’s commission to write Wonders was beneficial for both Mather and the magistrates: the former could gain fame and recognition as official chronicler of events and the latter could reap the benefit of Mather’s religious sanction in helping

dispel negative public sentiment over the trials. Whatever Mather's motives may have been, he probably liked the recognition as New England's thaumaturgical spokesman. That role could not have disappointed him, though juggling his words to mollify both sides in the debate over the outcome of the trials distressed him quite a bit, and resulted in lasting infamy.<sup>7</sup> Whether or not Mather succeeded in quelling negative public sentiment toward the trials, he would still have a sensational work published in both Boston and London to follow up on his other first-person account of witchcraft in Boston, Memorable Providences (Boston, 1689; London, 1691). There is no record of Governor Phips having given Mather any kind of written, or even verbal command other than Mather's word for it. But since the text had to be first approved by the governor, Cotton Mather could not have lied about Phip's permission.

The circumstances of Mather's "commission" to write Wonders of the Invisible World are important because they help us to understand the work. We must determine if Mather wrote the book at his own volition, or was "commanded" or "forced" to write it at the "Governour's" request as he was allowed to claim. We have already seen that Mather's public assertion to write as an historian, and not as an advocate, departed radically from his private communication over the matter to Stoughton. As Robert Calef put it in his stinging refutation of Mather's Wonders, "These expressions [e.g., calling Martha Carrier a "Rampant Hag"], as they manifest that he wrote more like an Advocate than an Historian, so also [they show] that those that were his Employers were not mistaken in their choice of him for that work . . . ." (Burr, Narratives 379). Mather's treatment of the trials reveals the combination of a credulous attitude and willingness to

toe the official line in which not only scientific reasoning was absent or ignored, but in which even mother wit, logic, and reasonable questions were abandoned. In modern terms, Mather was writing propaganda. He interprets evidence to prove witchcraft but never to disprove it. Mather's impetus to treat the Salem panic as true witchcraft was several fold: to fight Hobbesian materialism and justify his millennial expectations, to reinforce his own beliefs about the invisible world, to calm the situation, and to avoid King William's ill favor over a possible public revolt that may have resulted in a new governor for the Massachusetts Bay colony who would have been no William Phips. Mather's interpretation of the Salem trials, however, goes beyond that. He seems to have constructed his own reality of what happened and passed that off as fact. A reading of the trial records themselves would have given anyone, including Mather, a different impression than the one he gave to the world. Either Mather chose only certain testimony to comment upon or Stephen Sewall gave him biased records, carefully selected to provide evidence for witchcraft while downplaying or suppressing various types of exculpatory evidence that was probably available. In addition, in the court proceedings the judges routinely asked the defendants leading questions based on the assumption of guilt—perhaps to exact a confession. Samuel Parris and other interested individuals who recorded the depositions and court proceedings were also not interested in disproving witchcraft. Thus, whatever materials (court records) Cotton Mather received were biased from the start.

Regardless, Mather's finished product, for whatever reason, is a carefully honed document recognizable from the court records but differing radically by what it fails to

record. One might make the argument that Mather's resultant marshaling of evidence in favor of witchcraft was just a matter of rhetoric. However, Mather's slanted portrayal of the witchcraft records in Wonders of the Invisible World was a matter of content. We find a highly selective representation of available evidence when we compare his rendition to the extant record. We get a much different impression of the depositions and proceedings from reading Mather's highly selective version than we obtain from the original record.

Mather's account is a blatant departure from the truth, about the Salem witch trials. We can understand many of Mather's attitudes about witchcraft in light of seventeenth-century witchcraft debate and millennial expectations at the time,<sup>8</sup> but Mather's skewed treatment of the trials' chronicles, the Salem court records, is still hard to explain without allowing for deliberate misrepresentation on someone's part. If we want an accurate account of the trials, we must seek elsewhere than in Wonders of the Invisible World, in which we get not so much an historical context and a précis of five of the most notorious trials of the Salem witches, as a record of what Mather thought and wanted his audience to believe about them. Viewed in light of the existing court papers, Mather tells us much more about himself and his religious views than he does about the trials. If we see the court records as already misrepresenting what really happened at Salem, then Mather's summation of the trials is even a greater distortion of the truth. Mather presents his so-called "evidence" by emphasizing testimony supporting his views while remaining silent about evidence that raised thorny questions. Perhaps Mather's subjective version may have satisfied Governor William Phips, Chief Justice William

Stoughton, and the other Salem magistrates. It certainly enticed an American and English audience hungry for sensational news of the supernatural in the New World, but it is doubtful whether even the testimony of court records Mather received from clerk Stephen Sewell would have withstood scrutiny in an English court in 1692. England had not executed anyone for witchcraft for ten years and never would again.<sup>9</sup>

Controversy over the trials centered on the interpretation of spectral evidence, testimony concerning the activities of the ghostly shape or apparition of a person appearing to torment another. The main point of controversy was not whether the devil could appear in someone's spectral form but whether or not the devil could represent an innocent person's image. To discount spectral evidence entirely would be to unseat a pillar of the church's argument over religion and science, and to turn the guns of the Hobbesian materialists (who denied the existence of the invisible world) upon themselves, the invisible world, the devil, and God. Mather and his peers had to come up with empirical evidence to disprove the "modern Sadducees."

Mather was ambiguous over the Salem judges' use of spectral evidence. In several passages in Wonders of the Invisible World—even on the title page—Mather warns of the "*Wrongs* which those *Evil Angels* may intend against all sorts of people among us; especially in Accusations of the Innocent,"<sup>10</sup> yet he includes and defends spectral evidence, refuses to question it, even champions its use. On one hand, Mather links all earthly events to activities originating in the invisible world. On the other hand, he recognizes the possibility of the abuse of spectral evidence that reflected negatively on the judges, the government, and the people of New England. To implicate the judges who

rely heavily on spectral evidence would hurt their case. To leave out of his account spectral testimony presented at the trials would be disingenuous and question the accusers' testimony. Mather's ultimate solution to the problem of editing the court transcripts frequently results in omissions, distortions, lies, suppression of legitimate information, and the ignoring of certain obvious questions.

By the time Wonders was completed and published, Cotton Mather probably knew that the trials were over. By then, 20 people had been executed for witchcraft—more than the total executed in the entire prior history of New England. In fact, more witches were executed in Salem than recorded in any single outbreak anywhere on English soil.<sup>11</sup> The sudden virulence and enormity of the outbreak, in relation to other New England witch trials at least, assisted Mather in Wonders of the Invisible World in establishing Salem as an apocalyptic setting. Mather had to explain Satan's motive for generating the vast eruption. In the first sections of Wonders, Mather's jeremiad uncovers a rationale for New England's fallen condition: the region was once Satan's domain (as Joseph Mede had argued in his Key to the Revelation)<sup>12</sup> and, though fallen, is still more pious and holy than elsewhere—hence Satan's particular vengeance upon it. However, according to Mather's millennial calculations, if New England survives this diabolical outrage, it will “Enjoy *Halcyon Days*” of Christ's millennial reign (WIW xii). The court papers provide no eschatological context for the witch epidemic, but Mather finds spiritual impetus for Salem's trials in Revelation 12.12, “*Wo to the Inhabiters of the Earth, and of the Sea; for the Devil is come down unto you, having great Wrath; because he knoweth, that he hath but a short time*” (WIW 2). Mather explains the Salem outbreak

by its coincidence with God's apocalyptic timing outlined in Thomas Beverley's *A Scripture-Line of Time* (1684). God's unfolding of latter-day history in Salem is, in fact, one of Mather's invisible "Wonders."<sup>13</sup>

With his apocalyptic schema in place, Mather shifts from macrocosmic apocalyptic prophecy to depiction of its microcosmic fulfillment in New England with the story of Joseph Beacon. Mather's seemingly quirky inclusion of Beacon's story just prior to beginning his accounts of witchcraft trials in *Wonders* establishes positively—in a case unconnected with witchcraft—that ghosts visit the living to reveal their murderers. In Mather's account, the ghost of Beacon's brother, murdered in London, appears to Beacon in New England's Boston revealing the time, place, circumstance, and the murderer to Joseph, who later is able to verify the information he received from the ghost. Beacon's story helps establish the validity of spectral evidence, a point to which Mather returns throughout his accounts of the trials. In addition, the apparition of Beacon's brother subtly demonstrates that spirits in the shape of known persons could come with a righteous purpose and convey true information, an indication either that the specter might be genuine or that an evil specter might actually be able to represent the appearance of an innocent person. Such a case of an evil spirit representing the biblical Samuel was believed to have appeared to Saul and the witch of Endor.<sup>14</sup>

After an account of the trial of the Bury St. Edmonds witches presided over by Matthew Hale, Chief Justice of England, Mather finally begins his own account of five of the trials. One of the interesting aspects of Mather's brevities of the trials is that so much of the information in his material can be found in existing court records. Mather's verbal

borrowings and narrative structure that follow existing court records indicate that some of the records we have today were probably some of the same ones Mather used. To interpret how Cotton Mather reported on the trials it helps to ask the question: if Wonders were the only record we had of the Salem trials, how reliably would we be informed about what happened? In other words, to what extent would Wonders of the Invisible World have conveyed to its audience an accurate picture of the circumstances surrounding the trials and to what extent was Mather, by presenting the trials as a necessity, partial to the political interest of those in power? Having presumably already received Stoughton's permission to publish an account of the trials, on September 20, 1692, Mather wrote to court clerk Stephen Sewall, renewing his "most *importunate request*" for

a narrative of the evidences given in at the trials of half a dozen or, if you please, a dozen, of the principal witches that have been condemned . . . . [And] . . . intimate over again, what you have sometimes told me, of the awe which is upon the hearts of your juries, with [respect?] unto the validity of the spectral evidences. Please also [torn] some of your observations about the confessors and [torn] the credibility of what they assert; or about things evidently preternatural in the witchcrafts, and whatever else you may account an entertainment, for an inquisitive person, that entirely loves you and Salem" (Selected Letters 44-45).

In this letter to Sewall, written two days before the last witches were executed, Mather wrote of "my own willingness to expose myself unto the utmost for the defense of my



friends,” and hinted that his purpose was writing on behalf of Governor Phips. Mather asked Sewall to “imagine mee as obstinate a Sadducee, and Witch-advocate as any among us: address me as one that believed Nothing Reasonable . . . .” In other words, Mather wanted hard data from Sewall concerning credible evidence of specters. Why did Mather need these documents from Sewall? To write a solid vindication, of course. Both Mather’s motive and his willingness to carry out Phips’s directive are evident in this letter. The result was Wonders of the Invisible World.

Mather’s version of the trials in Wonders of the Invisible World was the only public record, at the time, of the substance of the trials and how they were conducted until Robert Calef published his equally biased rejoinder More Wonders of the Invisible World (London, 1700). Since the trial records were not published, the general public had little access to them until the Works Progress Administration transcribed them in the 1930s. We can tell by a collation of Mather’s accounts with the court records that he received from Sewall a more or less faithful transcription or excerpt of the court records. What concerns us here is how Mather used the records he included in Wonders.

Mather’s version of the trials deviates significantly from the court records. He chooses his words carefully, excludes important statements and other information on behalf of the accused, emphasizes and validates inflammatory testimony against others, gets some of the facts wrong, and in at least one instance even adds incriminating words to a transcript of the dialogue that do not exist in the extant copies of original documents. His accounts also differ in subtle ways from the court records, but retain recognizable features that link his narrative to the original documents. Mather presents trials of five of

the most notorious witches in Wonders and renders them to appear significantly more literate, logical, reasonable, and credible than they appear in the official records. The harsh, accusative tone and leading questions of the judges do not appear in Mather's version. Mather's editing of the court papers began with his (or someone's) choosing of which trials to present. On September 20, Mather had written the letter to Stephen Sewall, asking him for "a Narrative of y<sup>e</sup> Evidences given in at y<sup>e</sup> Trials of half a dozen, or if you please a dozen, of the principal Witches, that have been condemned" ("Letter to Stephen Sewall" 108). Stephen Sewall probably answered Mather's request at a meeting that took place two days later, recorded by Samuel Sewall in his diary, who wrote that on Thursday, September 22, "William Stoughton, Esqr., John Hawthorne, Esqr., Mr. Cotton Mather, and Capt. John Higginson, with my brother St., were at our house, speaking about publishing some of the Trials of the Witches" (qtd in Burr, Narratives 206). The fact that Chief Justice William Stoughton and John Hathorne, two of the fiercest prosecutors of witches during the trials, were present at that meeting may have decided what records Mather was given and set the tone for the way he was going to present them. The actual court transcripts show that judges in the Salem trials depended much more on spectral evidence than Mather ever suggests in his accounts. Mather actually chose to present the trials that depended least upon spectral evidence and then downplayed some of the spectral evidence that had been presented.

It was not that the trials he chose did not depend upon spectral evidence: they did, but not as much as some others, like that of the pious sisters Rebecca Nurse and Mary Easty, for instance, who were pillars of their church. Mather's inclusion or exclusion of

much controversial spectral evidence in his summaries of the court papers presented a problem. To depict the judges as depending too heavily on spectral evidence might hurt their case. To leave out of his account spectral testimony presented at the trials would be disingenuous and question implicitly the truth of the accusers' testimonies. Mather's solution to the problem of rewriting the court transcripts, however, often seems dishonest and clearly violates his own criteria for admissible evidence for witchcraft taken from English Lord Chief-Justice Matthew Hale, the Reverend William Perkins, and John Gaule,<sup>15</sup> whose publications on the subject Mather summarizes at length in Wonders.

Even though much evidence against the accused was entirely spectral, on the surface at least, it involved an empirical component. The more empirical the evidence seemed, the more validity it seemed to possess. Mather tailors evidence in his manipulation of the court papers to emphasize those instances in which the actions of supernatural agencies might be considered palpable. An examination of Mather's version of the trials of five of the most notorious witches in Salem reveals his bias toward proving witchcraft: Mather himself truly believed it was the devil's work. In Wonders of the Invisible World, Mather sets out, not to examine the pros and cons of whether witchcraft was true or false or whether all the executions at Salem had been justified, but instead to muster proof that true, diabolical witchcraft had been ignited in Salem and that the judges acted appropriately. Mather's choice of the most notorious witchcraft cases of 1692 in Salem as his subject ensured fascination of his audience in both England and America. The relationship between Cotton Mather's version of the Salem witchcraft trials in the first Boston edition of Wonders of the Invisible World and the official court

records is extremely complex, but a close study of both together reveals much about Mather. The Salem Witchcraft Papers: Verbatim Transcripts of the Legal Documents of The Salem Witchcraft Outbreak of 1692, edited by Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum and searchable online from the University of Virginia's Electronic Text Center, is a valuable tool for comparing the court records with the content in Wonders of the Invisible World. Internal evidence shows that in most cases these surviving records were among those that Mather received from court clerk Stephen Sewall. Mather's reliance on both the narrative patterns and vocabulary of the court records indicates that the records he viewed were much the same as those preserved today.

### **Cotton Mather's Account of the Trial of George Burroughs**

Although six women had already been hanged by the time the Rev. George Burroughs was executed on August 19, 1692, including Bridget Bishop on June 10<sup>th</sup>, and Sarah Good, Rebecca Nurse, Susanna Martin, Elizabeth How, and Sarah Wildes on July 19<sup>th</sup>, Mather begins his account with Burroughs, the first man to be executed, their supposed ringleader and "Head Actor" at their "Hellish Rendezvouzes" (WIW 94). The Reverend George Burroughs had been the minister of the church in Salem Village from 1680 to 1683, but in 1692 he was minister at Wells, Maine. On May, 4, 1692, Burroughs was arrested, taken from his home and brought to Salem on charges of witchcraft. Mather's account omits his full name, using only his initials "G.B." Harvard graduate and minister with Baptist leanings, Burroughs had been reluctant to take or even give his

children communion. In his damning critique Mather describes Burroughs as “*King in Satan’s Kingdom*” (95), a phrase Mather probably adapted from the examination and confession of Mary Lacey, Jr., for Lacey’s is the only deposition where Burroughs is explicitly referred to as a “king.” The judge asks Mary Lacey, “Q. how [who] was to be King A[.] the Minist’r Q. w’t kind of Man Is Mr. Burroughs A[.] a pretty little man and he has Come to Us Somtimes In his Spiritt in the Shape of a Catt & I think somtimes In his prop’r Shape” (SWP 2: 523). The accusation of Burroughs as “*King*” comes from the judge, not from the witness, as does the suggestion that “the minister” is Burroughs. Mary Warren also describes Burroughs as ringleader, who summons a general witch meeting (SWP 1: 172-3). To Mather and his audience, this reference would have called to mind an apish parody of the last trumpet before the gathering of Christ’s Church at the Second Coming. In her deposition Mercy Lewis depicts Burroughs as a figure parodying Satan who tempts Christ with vainglory (Matt.4:8):

[T]his 9<sup>th</sup> may mr Burroughs caried me up to an exceeding high mountain and shewed me all the kingdoms of the earth and tould me that he would give them all to me if I would writ in his book and if I would not he would thro me down and brake my neck” (SWP 1: 169)

Mather’s strategy in referring to Burroughs as King in Satan’s Kingdom reveals itself when Mather’s account of the trials of five witches ends with Goody Lacey referring to convicted witch Martha Carrier as the “Queen of hel” (SWP 2: 525). Mather thus sandwiches his remaining three accounts of the trials of Salem witches between those of the King and Queen of the damned. Burroughs and Carrier as King and Queen in Satan’s

Kingdom—with its seat of power in a New-World wilderness village named for Christ's Holy City—provides a typological antithesis to Christ and His Church in Jerusalem. Burroughs, Carrier, and the witches who accompany them to their “Hellish Rendezvous” represent an antithetical satanic hierarchy—an inversion of Christ as bridegroom and His Church as bride at the epicenter of the latest great outbreak of earthly diabolism. Mather deploys his apocalyptic schema with its expectation of Satan's binding and Christ's imminent return in defense of the Salem trials, an interpretive emphasis lacking in the court records.

Mather cleverly highlights eyewitness testimony of examples of Burroughs' preternatural strength and bad character, while downplaying the much more extensive, questionable, and sensational testimony involving spectral encounters with some of the confessing witches and his other accusers. After a short summary of the evidence, Mather begins his chronicle of spectral evidence used against Burroughs, saving circumstantial, character, and physical evidence for last, in an attempt to lay an empirical emphasis upon all that went before. Spectral evidence was meant to support physical evidence; Mather and the judges did it the other way around. Mather divides the more empirical portion of his diatribe against Burroughs into two main parts: eyewitness accounts involving Burroughs' shows of preternatural strength and eyewitnesses accounts of the defrocked clergyman's use of preternatural abilities in the abuse and deaths of his two successive wives. Mather's character assassination of Burroughs as a wife beater is meant to substantiate the appearance to Ann Putnam and others of the specters of Burroughs' supposedly murdered wives.

Mather emphasizes the eyewitness accounts against Burroughs and limits recounting instances of spectral occurrence in his retelling to avoid revealing discrepancies in testimony. By conflating the testimonies of several witnesses, Mather avoids having to explain awkward similarities in their statements. Mather invariably revises the non-standardized spelling of the scribes, which, however, hides the ubiquitous and often earthy use of colloquial English spoken in court preserved in the court records, all having the effect of making the judges seem fair, and the accusers, accused, and witnesses alike seem learned.

In his account of the trial of George Burroughs Mather follows the record more-or-less faithfully for the episodes he relates. However, Mather ignores important details and discrepancies in the testimony that emerges. One instance of discrepancy in the records concerns the deaths of George Burroughs's wives: Ann Putnam's claim in her deposition that Burroughs stabbed his first wife under the arm and that Burroughs and his present wife killed the second one in a boat while she was going to visit friends "because they would have one another" (SWP 1: 166). However, Susannah Sheldon says "the first hee smothered and the second he choaked and killed tow of his own children" (SWP 1: 171). On August 3, Mary Walcott testifies that Burroughs "tould me he would have kiled his first wife and child: when his wife was in travil but he kept hir in the kithin tell he gave hir hir deaths wound" (SWP 1: 174). It is surprising that the judges failed to point out the discrepancies in the three testimonies, because such divergence concerns the very nature of spectral evidence upon which they relied that literally dominates the court records. It is even more significant that Mather, as a careful student of witchcraft

narratives, should ignore such inconsistencies. Modern historian Frances Hill, author of A Delusion of Satan (1995) and its companion piece The Salem Witch Trials Reader (2000), has pointed out that another important question raised by the court testimony and never questioned by the judges is that the spectral Burroughs (who had already admitted to multiple murders to Ann Putnam on April 21<sup>st</sup>) would try to defend himself two weeks later from his dead wives' spectral accusation to Putnam by warning her that they would try to lie (130). Why would Mather, who seems to have received material from both of Putnam's depositions, not have asked and answered this question himself? Many skeptical treatises on witchcraft from even before Mather's time would have pounced on this.

Mather correctly points out that several of the bewitched had provided testimony about Burroughs murdering his two wives, but if the spectral evidence was truthful, why do discrepancies exist in how the two women were killed? Did Mather not notice the discrepancies in their testimonies, and if he did, why did he not point them out? Perhaps because Mather sensed or knew the executions were over by the time he wrote his account, he was less concerned with these questions and much more concerned about the prospects of getting a new governor thrust on them should Phips lose his job because Salem had become an embarrassment to King William III.

If the specters gave different versions of the deaths of George Burroughs' wives and Satan was the instigator of their lies, wouldn't the judges, and especially Cotton Mather, have wanted to know? After giving us a summary of purely spectral evidence used against Burroughs, Mather reminds us that this evidence was enough to convict the



Lancashire witches. It was not, however, enough to convict Burroughs if Mather had properly consulted the sources he prominently inset in his Wonders: William Perkins, Richard Bernard, and John Gaule. Only Bernard allowed another confessing witch to condemn another (WIW [xxx]).

Mather writes that examination of teeth marks on some victims, supposedly caused by the specter of George Burroughs, show that “the print of the Teeth, would be seen on the Flesh of the Complainers; and just such a sett of *Teeth*, as *G. B*’s would then appear upon them, which could be distinguished from those of some other mens” (WIW 96). Mather does not say who made such a complaint. Testimony as to teeth marks on several of the girls, and testimony to Burroughs’s spectral biting of Elizabeth Hubbard and Mary Walcott can be found along with spectral testimony (See SWP 1: 170, 172, and 174). Such evidence plainly indicates fraud. Thomas and Edward Putnam both claim that they had “seen them [Elizabeth and Mary] most dreadfully tormented and we have seen dreadfull marks in their fleesh which they said Mr. Burroughs did make by hurting them” (SWP 1: 175).” However, neither Elizabeth Hubbard nor Mary Walcott mention teeth marks.

At the examination of Mary Soames, on May 13, the court scribe records Mary Warren’s claim that the “apparition of Proctor, Nurse and Burroughs . . . appeared before her, and [that] Burroughs bitt her which bite was seen by many” (SWP: 3: 736). From the court record it is impossible to tell exactly when Burroughs made his appearance to Warren and bit her, but it seems to have been while she was testifying in court, since the transcript says Burroughs appeared “at the same time” to Margaret Jacobs (SWP 2: 736).

No record exists of Burroughs' teeth marks having been measured. That is about the extent of the evidence concerning Burroughs' teeth marks—questionable signs for Mather to have based his assertion upon. About the only evidence Mather could have affirmed with certainty was that the girls had made the claim. Such startling news as physical evidence of Burroughs' teeth matching the marks on victims' bodies should have made it into the court record. If such empirical evidence did exist as to the sizing of Burroughs's teeth against the bite marks, would not the record have been preserved?

Next, Mather switches the subject from Burroughs' teeth marks to accounts of his shows of Burroughs' preternatural strength. Mather claims, "Yea, there were Two Testimonies, that G. B. with only putting the Fore-Finger of his Right hand, into the Muzzel of an heavy Gun, a Fowling-piece, of about six or seven foot Barrel, did Lift up the Gun, and hold it out at Arms end." Mather is probably referring to two depositions in the edition of the court records by Boyer and Nissenbaum, one by Thomas Greenslit and another by Simon Willard (SWP 1: 160-61).

On September 15, Greenslit testified in Salem about Burroughs' strength in handling the gun. Since Burroughs had been executed on August 19, we wonder why Greenslit would be making the claim then. Bernard Rosenthal points out that all of the other witnesses Greenslit named who were supposedly there at the time were dead and that his mother, Ann Pudeator, was condemned to be executed a week later. Rosenthal suggests that by testifying against Burroughs, Greenslit may have hoped to save his mother, a ploy that did not work. Greenslit made the following statement:

That about the breaking Out of this last Indian Warr being at  
 the house of Capt Scottow's at black point he Saw Mr George Bur-  
 roughs lift and hold Out a gunn of Six foot barrell or thereabouts  
 putting the forefinger of his right hand into the Muzle of s'd gunn  
 and So held it Out at Armes End Only with that finger. (SWP 1: 160)

According to the OED, the obsolete expression, “arms-end” signifies “*at arm's length*: as far out or away from one as one can reach with the arm.” It does not mean “straight out” or parallel to the ground. Mather wants his audience to envision Burroughs holding the length of the gun level to the ground with his forefinger stuck in the barrel, but the expression could easily apply simply to balancing the gun perpendicular to the ground with the end of the forefinger stuck into the end of the barrel with the arm fully extended. That explanation is far more plausible.

The other deposition from which Mather could have drawn was that of Simon Willard, age 42. Willard says only that in September 1689 at Falmouth in Casco Bay he was visiting a Mr. Robert Lawrence who was complimenting George Burroughs, who was also there, for his strength. Willard relates that Lawrence stated at the time that no one there could do what Mr. Burroughs could accomplish. According to Willard, “s'd he Mr Borroughs can hold out this gun with one hand. Mr. Borroughs being there: sayd I held my hand here behind the lock: and took it up: and held it out” (SWP 1: 161). The extent of Willard’s evidence is this: in 1689 Burroughs had apparently confirmed Lawrence’s claim about Burroughs’ strength. Willard specifically says that he did not see Burroughs hold the gun up. Willard goes on to relate that “s'd gun was about or near

seven foot barrill:and very hevie: I then tryed to hold out s'd gun with both hands: but could not do it long enough to take sight” (SWP 1: 161). Those two depositions are probably the source of the tall tale that Mather relates above. Bernard Rosenthal points out that the issue of whether or not Mather was privy to other documents in the Burroughs case “remains unknown,” but cautions that no other trial records of credible witnesses survive (Salem Story 140). The language, however, suggests that Mather referred to Greenslit’s testimony.

Mather next takes up testimony combining empirical evidence of preternatural ability with character assassination. He recounts John Ruck’s story of Burroughs’ disappearance into the bushes while picking strawberries with his wife and her brother. Later, Burroughs reappears carrying a bucket of strawberries and begins chiding his wife about what she had said about him in his absence. The details of this event are found only in Mather’s text, not the court record. Could Mather have guessed that Burroughs, an Indian-fighting minister, had probably just disappeared into the bushes and stalked stealthily behind, listening to everything he could hear and inferring what he couldn’t? It is remarkable that Mather would interpret as witchcraft an event with such an obvious natural explanation. The records Mather used to write his account of Burroughs and the strawberries cannot be found in any of the Salem Witchcraft Papers except, perhaps, for a brief statement in the memorandum of the case of George Burroughs about “Thomas Ruck of his sudden coming in after them & that he could tell his thoughts,” which suggests such testimony did exist (SWP 1: 178).

As if to prepare the reader for Burroughs' execution, Mather then attacks Burroughs's religious beliefs, writing, "Now . . . there might have been Testimonies Enough of G. B's. Antipathy to *Prayer* and the other Ordinances of God" (99). Significantly, Mather fails to mention that Burroughs recited the Lord's Prayer perfectly while on the scaffold, an act of faith that his contemporaries took as proof positive that Burroughs was not a witch, since witches were not believed to be able to recite this prayer without stumbling over it. According to both Robert Calef and Samuel Sewall, Mather was present at Burroughs's execution and helped sway a wavering crowd in favor of executing Burroughs and the other witches that day (Calef in Burr Narratives 360-361; Sewall Letters 294).

We now see the value of Mather's story of Joseph Beacon just before his accounts of witchcraft trials. Spectral testimony against Burroughs centered on ghosts coming back from the grave to implicate their murderers. Mather repeats practically the same statement about spectral testimony in his accounts of Burroughs and How. Here's Mather's statement about ghosts in his account of Burroughs:

It has been a frequent thing for the Bewitched people, to be entertained with Apparitions of *Ghosts* of murdered people, at the same time, that the *Spectres* of the witches trouble them. These Ghosts do always afright the Beholders, more than all the other spectral Representations; and when they exhibit themselves, they cry out, of being Murdered by the witchcrafts or other violences of the persons who are then in spectre present. (WIW 97)

Mather defended the injudicious use of spectral evidence in the trials just as he elsewhere cautions against its use.

### **Cotton Mather's Account of the Trial of Bridget Bishop**

In his account of Bridgett Bishop, alias Oliver,<sup>16</sup> Mather hides the fact that the testimony of witnesses shows some of the deponents testifying against the accused were themselves guilty of using white or countermagic. He also omits other details in deponents' testimonies that would call into question elements of their character or other circumstances behind their testimony. Mather glosses over pertinent details that would have mattered to his audience had it known of them.

In the case of Samuel Shattock vs. Bridget Bishop, Mather disguises two attempts on the part of Shattock to use countermagic. Shattock's child had been bewitched years before, with his mouth and eyes drawn aside if he were upon the point of death. After a visit by Bridget Bishop, the boy started to sicken and on each successive visit by her the boy grew worse. Bishop would come to Shattock's house on frivolous errands. Once, she claimed she wanted to buy something but left without procuring it. The Shattocks' eldest child, a boy, was then taken with a very "drooping condition." The child would afterwards fall and bruise his face upon a "great Step Stone" as if he had been "thrust out bye an invisible hand" (SWP 1: 97). After Shattock had dyed some pieces of cloth for Bishop, the child grew truly sick; the money she gave him for the job mysteriously disappeared. About 17 or 18 months later a stranger came to Shattock's house, who

turned out to be a diviner. Shattock and Mather both say that the stranger appeared 17-18 months later, which would probably be in the year 1681, or at least ten years before the Salem outbreak. Mather actually gets the date wrong, writing years for months, but that we can ascribe to a slip of the pen or a printer's error. But Mather changes the language in his version to hide information that the "stranger" who visits Shattock is actually a diviner or fortuneteller. In the court papers the stranger says to Shattock, "among other words [that] wee are all borne Some to one thing & some to another." Shattock replies, "I asked him & what do you say this child is borne too." He replied, "He is born to be bewitched." Shattock replied, "I told him I did not know he said he did know & Said to me you have a neighbor that lives not far off that is a witch" (SWP 1: 98). Mather, however, glosses over significant details by simplifying the account:

[T]here came a Stranger to *Shattocks* House, who seeing the Child, said, *This poor Child is Bewitched; and you have a Neighbour living not far off, who is a Witch.*" He added, *Your Neighbour has had a falling out with your Wife; and she said in her Heart, your Wife is a proud Woman, and she would bring down her Pride in this Child.* (WIW 110)

The stranger reveals information to Shattock that he could not have known except by talking to Bishop herself, but he has never met Bishop. From reading Mather's version we get the impression that the stranger actually knew Bishop and many of the details of her life. But the stranger's statement that "the child is born to be bewitched and is bewitched," which Mather does not include in his account, tips us off that the person Shattock is entertaining is a fortune teller. Shattock reveals something else when he

recalls, “I told the aforesaid Stranger that there was Such a woman as spoke of; he asked where she lived for he would goe & see the stranger if he knew how” (SWP I: 98). The stranger, in spite of his occult knowledge of the child’s bewitchment and the witch’s words to Shattock’s wife, seems to have had no material knowledge of the suspected witch.

According to the court records, Shattock then pays the stranger to take his bewitched child to see Bridget Bishop. Mather tells us, “The abovesaid stranger would needs carry the Bewitched Boy with him to Bishop’s House on pretense of buying a pot of cyder.” What Mather does not relate is that the stranger wanted some of Bishop’s cider from her orchard, something belonging to the witch to use in a spell of sympathetic countermagic to harm her and break the spell. But Bishop sees through the ruse and the stranger’s plan backfires. The child returns with his face scratched and bleeding from an encounter with Bishop’s fingernails. At the end of his deposition Shattock reveals, “Now this man did say before he went: t’ he would fetch blood of her” (SWP 1: 99). What Shattock had paid the man to do was get the cider and then draw blood from the suspected witch in the folk belief that to draw the witch’s blood would annul her spells (See Kittridge, Witchcraft 47), a practice that Mather’s guides, William Perkins, Richard Bernard, and John Gaule, had all condemned. So Shattock had actually paid a fortuneteller to go to the suspected witch’s house and draw blood by having Shattock’s bewitched son scratch her face. But something that was said tipped Bishop off to their true intention because Shattock’s son received the same punishment that he, Shattock, and the stranger had intended to inflict on Bishop. Mather simply purges these details



from his account of Shattock's deposition. Had Mather's intention been to reveal the widespread practice of magic that accompanied the witch outbreak, he would have found ample evidence in Isaac Cummings' and Thomas Shattock's stories. But Mather's intention was to justify the execution of the condemned witches and draw clear-cut lines between good and evil, not open a debate about the relative degrees of evil of various kinds of witchcraft. And Mather wanted to use Cummings' and Shattock's testimonies to condemn Bishop, not reveal more subtle aspects of the Devil's great wrath. Mather does tell us at the end of his account of the stranger, "Now it does seem the man had said, before he went, that he would fetch blood of *her*" (WIW 110). But by reading only Mather's account, we don't know the stranger is in the business of ferreting out witches through questionable means or that Shattock has paid him for his services. Had Mather wanted to he could have made it clear that Shattock was also practicing magic.

Of course, Mather couldn't make Shattock's methods obvious, for it would have appeared as if he advocated using the devil to cast out Beelzebub. Had Mather revealed all he knew, that key witnesses were practicing magic, he would have compromised his and the judges' position. Revealing that Shattock had used magic to counter the devil would have called into question the entire subject of witchcraft and the role of the accusers' part in it. Shattock's attempt at folk magic might have made Bishop's magic seem less or appear as a form of self-defense against Shattock.

Mather also disguises elements in Richard Coman's testimony against Bishop. Mather downplays the countermagic involved because he needs Coman's sensational spectral testimony to bolster his case. Coman's countermagic makes use of the cross

formed at the hilt of a sword. Apparitions of Bishop and two others had bothered Coman, so he takes a sword to bed with him. Coman's kinsman lodges with him, but upon going to bed Coman's kinsman makes a suggestion. Here's Mather's version: "He had laid his sword by him which these unhappy spectres did strive to wrest from him: only he held too fast for them" (WIW). But the court testimony says that Coman, at the suggestion of his kinsman, deliberately placed his sword "athwrt" his body as if the magic produced by the cross formed by the hilt of the sword might protect him from a spectral enemy. When Coman wrests the sword from the specters' grasp, he is of course grasping the image of the cross. The Puritans rejected the cross as a pagan symbol. The image created by details of such an act would have appeared too much like "Papist superstition" to be useful to Mather as testimony.

Other significant details Mather leaves out of his account involve Coman's description of Bishop and her accompanying specters. Mather fails to mention that all three of young Coman's spectral visitors were women and that he envisioned Bishop in her "red paragon bodice," or that Coman was lying in bed with his wife. Perhaps Coman's spectral testimony would have seemed more like the highly sexualized nightmare it perhaps was instead of a visitation by specters of three witches—if Mather had revealed its true nature, that is.

Mather also alters official testimony to strengthen his case that the judges acted properly at Salem. His version of the dialogue between the judge and Susanna Martin in Wonders does not agree in one important aspect with either of the two records of the dialogue in the court papers, though the court papers agree with each other. While

reproducing virtually verbatim dialogue between the judges and Martin, Mather adds words not included in the official manuscripts to suggest that Martin confesses—through a slip of the tongue—to a relationship with the devil. Here is one of the versions from the court papers:

[Magistrate] Do not you think they are Bewitcht?

[Martin] No. I do not think they are[.]

[Magistrate] Tell me your thoughts about them.

[Martin] Why my thoughts are my own, when they are in, but when they are out they are anothers.

[Magistrate] You said their Master -- who do you think is their Master?

[Martin] If they be dealing in the black art, you may know as well as I.

(SWP 2: 551).

In this account the magistrate seems to put words in Martin's mouth, implying that she said "Their Master." Bishop's utterance of their master, if she ever said these words, does not appear on either of the original court transcripts at the Essex County Court Archives, the digital images of which can be viewed online from the Salem Witchcraft Papers Web site at the University of Virginia.<sup>17</sup> Mather's version leaves no room for doubt, portraying Martin inadvertently blurting out what could be interpreted as a confession:

*Magistrate.* Don't you think they are Bewitch'd?

*Martin.* No, I do not think they are.

*Magistrate.* Tell us your thoughts about them then.

*Martin.* No, my thoughts are my own when they are in, but when they are out, they are anothers. Their Master---

*Magistrate.* Their Master? who do you think, is their Master;

*Martin.* If they be dealing in the Black Art, you may know as well as I.

(WIW 115-116)

Clearly, Mather has inserted the words “Their Master” into Martin’s dialogue to make her appear to admit either that her thoughts have a master (i.e., the devil) or that she knows the master of the bewitched. Whether she said these words or not, they do not appear in either transcript of the court record, and each appears to be in a different hand. Records would often be taken down simultaneously by two or more persons. We can guess, therefore, that either Mather—or someone else—may have falsified the document for the purpose of presenting Wonders of the Invisible World.

Since a witch’s confession was considered the strongest evidence for witchcraft—according to criteria Mather gleaned from William Perkins and John Gaule—Mather’s insertion produces damning support for the judges’ position. Mather also excludes pertinent statements of self-defense by the accused—their spontaneous, intelligent, often pious, and reasonable rebuttals to the charges of witchcraft.

### **Cotton Mather’s Account of the Trial of Elizabeth How**

In the case of Elizabeth How, Mather repeats the ghostly leitmotif concerning the spectral return of murdered victims that he began with Joseph Beacon and took up again with George Burroughs:

It has been a most usual thing for the Bewitched persons, at the same time that the *Spectres* representing the *Witches* Troubled them, to be visited with Apparitions of *Ghosts*, pretending to have bin Murdered by the *Witches* then represented. And sometimes the confessions of the witches afterwards acknowledged those very Murders, which these *Apparitions*, charged upon them; altho' they had never heard what Informations had been given by the Sufferers. (WIW 127)

In a rhetorical tour de force Mather presents specters to his audience as if the specters themselves were in court testifying: “There were such Apparitions of Ghosts testified by some of the present sufferers, & the Ghosts affirmed that this *How* had Murdered them.” By placing the capitalized sentence object, “Apparitions of Ghosts,” in the usual subject position of an English sentence and by using the word “by” ambiguously, Mather creates the illusion of the ghosts appearing in court testifying against the accused. Mather reinforces this ambiguous structure in the next clause, adding “& the Ghosts affirmed that this *How* had Murdered them” (WIW 127). Mather’s sentence demonstrates his eagerness to make spectral evidence seem legitimate.

In How’s case the court records contain several testimonies on behalf of the defendant, none of which Mather includes in his account. Samuel Phillips, a minister of Rowly, whose name is on the first imprint of the first Boston edition of Wonders, testifies

to How's Christian character and attempts to vindicate her. The Rev. Phillips had gone to the house of Samuel Pearley and his wife of Ipswich to examine their daughter who, it was said, during one of her fits had complained of being afflicted by How. Both Sam Phillips and Goodwife How were in the house when the girl had one of her fits, and Phillips testified that How had gone to the girl after her fit and had asked the girl whether she had ever done her any hurt. "No, never," was the reply. The child reportedly said to How, "And if I ever did complain of you in my fits I know not that I did soe" (SWP 2: 442). Phillips also provides some revealing testimony about the brother of the afflicted girl. Phillips recalls, "I can also testify upon oath that young Samuel Pearly, brother to the afflicted girl looked out the chamber window while the girl and Phillips stood outside and said to his sister, 'Say Goodwife How is a witch; say she is a witch,' but the child spake not a word that way" (SWP 2: 442). If the girl thought How was a witch, why would she not have said so?

Neither this account nor any of the other testimony on behalf of Elizabeth How finds its way into Mather's report. He includes only those portions of testimony that would implicate How. Much of the suspicion of How seems to cluster around her presumed affliction of Samuel Pearley's daughter possibly 9 or 10 years before. For this reason, Mather chooses to leave out Rev. Samuel Phillips' testimony. Phillips' testimony questions the validity of the original incident. Besides Samuel Phillips' contradiction of the claim that Elizabeth How had harmed the daughter of Pearley, Mather also omits several other attestations to How's good character. Much of the subsequent testimony is ancillary to the central charge against How of afflicting Pearley's daughter and depends

upon the long-held suspicion that How is a witch. Such evidence was enough for suspicion but not for conviction of witchcraft, according to William Perkins' and John Gaule's guidelines Mather reproduces in Wonders ([xxvii], [xxix]). Several of these incidents involve How's alleged affliction of animals. The tendency of other character witnesses to clear How's reputation upon which so many of the ensuing charges depend is precisely why Mather does not use them: such testimony would tend to negate both the original charge and subsequent ones levied against How.

Some of the ensuing evidence against How involves a mare that gets sick and dies after Isaac Cummings' son refuses the use of the mare to How's husband, James. Also involved in this incident is Cummings' attempted use of countermagic (which Mather tries to disguise) that increases the animal's suffering and probably hastens its death.

In Cummings' testimony, which Mather includes in Wonders and sometimes paraphrases closely or quotes verbatim, we see Mather passing over important testimony referring to the use of healing magic. Mather tells of "one using a pipe of tobacco for the cure of the beast," but omits to tell us that it was the man giving the testimony, Isaac Cummings, and his brother, Thomas, who were in essence themselves practicing witchcraft. Cummings' account reads,

[M]y brother anderos said he wold take a pipe of tobaco and lite it and put itt in to the fundement of the maer I told him that I thought it was not lawfull he said it was lawfull for man or beast then I toke a clen pipe and filled it with tobaco and did lite it and went with the pipe lite to the barn then the said anderos used the pipe as he said before he wold and the pip

of tobacco did blaze and burn blew then I said to my brother andersos you shall try no more it is not lawful he said I will try again once mor which he did and then thar arose a blaze from the pipe of tobacco which seemed to me to cover the buttocks of the said mear the blaz went up ward towards the roof of the barn and in the roof of the barn thar was a grate crackling as if the barn wold have falen or bin burnt which semed so to us which ware with in and some that ware with out and we hade no other fier in the barn [b]ut only a candil and a pipe of tobacco and then I said I thought my barn or my mear most goe the next day being Lords day I spoke to my brother andersos at noone to come to see the said mear and said andersos came and what h[e] did I say not (SWP 2: 445).

Even Isaac and Thomas considered what they were doing suspect because Isaac Cummings tells us he warned his brother Thomas Andros that the practice “is not lawful.” Mather leaves out the hilarious details about their sticking the pipe up next to the animal’s “fundament” where hydrogen and methane gas from the animal’s hind quarters explodes, burns the animal, and almost sets fire to the barn. Robert Calef, Mather’s nemesis, called such a practice “burning the mare’s fart” (Burr, Narratives 380), and George Lyman Kittridge describes the practice of torturing or burning the animal to torture the witch or force her to reveal her or himself (Witchcraft 95ff.). Folk belief also determined that a blue flame indicated the presence of a supernatural agency. That Isaac Cummings planned to take this practice of burning the mare’s fart to the next level, which would be burning a piece of the animal, is revealed in his testimony:



the same Lords day at night my naighbour John hunkins came to my hous  
and he and I went in to my barn to see this mear said hunkins said and if I  
ware as you i wolud cute of a pece of this mear and burn it I said no not to  
day but if she lived til tomorow morning he might cut of a pece off of her  
and burn [it]. (SWP 2: 445)

What stops Isaac from burning a piece of the mare right then and there is the fact that it is the Lord's day. He chooses to wait until the next day when such a practice might be considered less sinful. Tellingly, Mather fails to reveal this widespread but questionable use of folk magic. The actions of the Cummings brothers involved more than just "using a Pipe of Tobacco for the Cure of the Beast," as Mather puts it, as if they had used the tobacco as herbal medicine (WIW 131). Mather would not have wanted to muddy testimony against How by revealing that the complainer himself practiced countermagic, which both Mather's and the judges' guides in the witchcraft affair, Perkins and Gaule, condemned as even more evil than black magic because of its power to seduce the innocent.

What Mather doesn't reveal would have rendered a great deal of the testimony against How ineffective to an educated audience. That Isaac Cummings' practice fails to burn or even force How to reveal herself as the culprit further weakens his testimony. That he had to resort to such a practice indicates he was not sure who bewitched the animal. Mather was undoubtedly reading the same account as we do today because it was Isaac Cummings,' and both accounts share the same diction, syntax, and structure.

Mather chooses to give the depositions of the accusers rather than allow any complete version of the examination of the accused who attempt to come to their own defense with candid and clever rebuttals to the leading questions and accusations of the judges. Far from trying to hide the truth, responses of the accused reveal their true thoughts and feelings. Mather's practice did not allow the fair and balanced account of the proceedings that his learned and reasonable tone suggests. On the other hand, when Mather says he wants to "countermine the whole plot of the Devil," ([v]) he seems to include the possibility that delusion is part of that plot.

### **Cotton Mather's Account of the Trial of Martha Carrier**

The first question raised, perhaps, in reading Mather's account of Martha Carrier along with the court transcripts is why Mather gave no account of the examination of Martha Carrier, which is part of the court record. Though he quotes from the latter end of her examination, he omits the following dialogue between the magistrates, the plaintiffs, and Martha Carrier: "Can you look upon these and not knock them down?" the judge asks. Carrier answers correctly, "They will dissemble if I look at them." Earlier in his account of Burroughs, Mather states, "At the Examination of this *G. B.* the Bewitched People were grievously harassed, with Preternatural Mischiefs, which could not possibly be Dissembled" (WIW 95). But the people who "will dissemble" at Carrier's trial would have been the same ones whose behavior "could not possibly be Dissembled" at Burroughs' trial and at the trial of many others: Ann Putnam, Elizabeth Hubbard,

Susanna Sheldon, Mary Warren, and Mary Walcott. Again, Mather does not print this portion of Carrier's dialogue with the judge in open court because it might cast doubt on the whole question of dissembling.

In the transcripts, there is also evidence of collusion among the bewitched that never appears in Mather's version of the trials. Susanna Sheldon, Ann Putnam, and Mary Warren seem to be following each others' leads. As soon as Sheldon cries, "She looks upon the black man," Ann Putnam "testifies he was there"; Putnam complains of a pin stuck in her, and immediately Mary Warren cries out that *she* was pricked. Then the judge questions Carrier, What black man did you see? Carrier answers, "I saw no black man but your own presence." Carrier later adds, "It is a shameful thing that you should mind these folks that are out of their wits" (SWP 1: 185). Mather quotes none of this pertinent exchange, and thus makes no comment on the fact that Carrier refers to the judge in black robes by the same description people in Salem often used to describe the devil, as a "black man." Mather, however, does take the opportunity to quote verbatim—and misquote—Susanna Martin and paraphrase the scribe's note in the original transcripts that reads, "As soon as she was well bound they all had strange & sodain ease" (SWP 1: 186; see Wonders 133). In the court records of Martha Carrier, Susannah Sheldon cries out, "in a Trance," as both Mather and the transcripts put it, "I wonder that you could murder 13 persons?" Mary Walcott immediately follows up by testifying, "there lay 13. Ghosts" (SWP 1: 185). None of this revealing exchange makes it into Mather's summary, for to a rational, disinterested, literate audience such raw, unedited

exchanges, frequent in the court transcripts, would have suggested collusion and guile among the accusers that would have called into question everything the judges had done.

Mather's wording of Martha Carrier's testimony makes it appear that Carrier is somehow twisting the necks of the deponents during part of the examination before Carrier's binding on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Her statement actually occurs in the transcripts in the undated testimony of Andrew Foster, who said that he "heard" (second hand) of an account of one of the "afflicted maids" who, upon encountering Samuel and Timothy Osgood on the street, claimed she saw three women following them: Goodwife Carrier, Goodwife Toothaker, and her daughter (SWP 1: 196). They then entered "Engerson's" (Lt. Nathaniel Ingersoll's) house, and the men asked where Goodwife Carrier was. The maid declared, "'There she sits by you upon the table,' upon which maid had a fit which almost twisted her neck almost round of." Then Goodwife Carrier supposedly "Answered no it is no matter if her neck had been quite of if shee said I was there" (SWP 1: 196). So Mather quite disingenuously and deliberately misconstrues Carrier's meaning and the context and occasion of her response. Carrier was simply saying the girl should have had her neck twisted off for lying; the statement originated as Carrier's response to false accusations the girl allegedly made against her.

Mather then gives a fairly accurate summary of the testimony of Benjamin Abbott vs. Martha Carrier, quoting Abbot's testimony almost verbatim, including Abbot's hyperbolic complaint about a sore on his side supposedly caused by Carrier, which yielded "severall gallons of corruption" (SWP 1: 189).

However, in the testimony of John Roger about his “cattle [that were] strangely bewitched” Mather fails to tell his audience about Roger’s account immediately preceding that of his “two large lusty sowes,” one of which he found “Nigh the s’d Carriers house w’th both Eares cut of & the other sow I Never heard of to this day” (SWP 1: 190), suggesting not witchcraft, but theft, since notching a sow’s ears was a kind of brand. Cutting of the ears may have been done to disguise a theft. The severed ears could also have represented an attempt by someone (perhaps Roger?) to divine a witch by burning part of the bewitched animal. Rogers’ actual testimony concerns a cow (that Rogers never actually says is bewitched) that for one month has stopped giving milk morning and night and instead gives milk only at night and on “three severall Mornings not successively” (SWP 1: 191). Mather refers to Rogers’ cow as “strangely bewitched,” not bothering with the details.

Mather’s account of Phoebe Chandler hearing the spectral voice of Martha Carrier is a fairly accurate summary of some of her testimony, but he fails to tell us that Chandler is a twelve-year-old girl, a next-door-neighbor of Carrier’s who on the day Carrier was seized by the authorities thought she heard her voice. Two weeks prior to that, on the Sabbath at the meeting house, while “a psalm was singing,” Carrier had apparently taken Phoebe by the shoulder and shaken her, asking her where she lived. This seemingly innocuous act was perhaps the result of Carrier trying to get Phoebe’s attention during the singing when she would not interrupt the entire congregation. Carrier probably shook Phoebe’s shoulder because the girl could not hear her over the singing. On the day of Carrier’s arrest, Phoebe Chandler was on an errand for her mother taking “bear” (bear or

beer?) to field hands working in a lot nearby. Phoebe said that when she went inside the fence “there was a voice in the bushes (which I thought was Martha Carriers voice, which I knowe well) but saw noe body, & the voice asked me, what I did there & whether I was going: which greatly frightened me” (SWP 1: 191). When her mother sent her back out that day by the same spot on another errand, she heard the voice again, this time over her head, “saying [she] should be poisoned in two or three days.” A few days later, when she is visiting her sister nearby, half of her right hand and part of her face swells and becomes painful. She thinks it is Carrier (SWP 1: 190-91).

The explanation is simple: witchcraft in the neighborhood, people being executed for it, and a witch living next door who had just been arrested; someone must have decided to play a trick. When this trickster saw Phoebe coming with the “bear,” she hid where she could not be seen, and when Phoebe got near she imitated Carrier’s voice. The same person perhaps played the same trick again when Phoebe returned on another errand, but this time she was already frightened and thought she heard Carrier’s voice in the air. The line about the poison is interesting, though. Because Mather gives only the most sensational part of the story without its history, there is no rational explanation for what happens. With the context, there is. That is why Mather did not supply the circumstances behind Phoebe Chandler’s spectral encounter with Carrier. Had Mather been looking for a rational explanation he certainly would have found one.

Mather ends his summaries of the testimony against the accused witches and provides closure to his accounts by saying, “This Rampant Hag, Martha Carrier, was the Person, of whom the Confessions of the Witches, and of her own Children among the

rest, agree, That the Devil had promised her, she should be Queen of Hell.” The transcript dated July 21 actually reads, “goody Lacey owned that Carrier told her also that She Shold be Queen of hel” (SWP 2: 525). Mather’s version is deliberately slanted.

Listen carefully to Mather’s account supposedly involving Carrier: “In the Time of this Prisoners Trial, one *Susanna Shelden* in open Court had her Hands Unaccountably Ty’d together with a Wheel-band, so fast that without Cutting, it could not be Loosed: It was done by a *Spectre*; and the Sufferer affirm’d, it was the *Prisoners*.” Whom does Mather mean by “this prisoner’s”? Mather doesn’t say this incident happened at Carrier’s trial but only “in the time” of it, though it appears among his other testimony against How. How this testimony came to be used against Carrier and not Good remains a mystery. According to the court deposition of Shelden, it was Sarah Good, not Martha Carrier, who tied her hands with a wheel band, which is “A band or strap that goes round a wheel, as the driving band of a spinning-wheel” [OED]. Here’s Sheldon’s statement:

The Deposition of Susannah Shelden agged about 18 years who testifieth and saith that sence I have ben afflicted I have very often ben most greviously tortured by Apperishtion of Sarah Good who has most dredfully afflicted me by bitting pricking and pinching me and almost choaking me to death but on the 26. June 1692 Sarah good most violently pulled down my head behind a Cheast and tyed my hands together with a whele band & allmost Choaked me to death and also severall times sence the Apperishtion of Sarah good has most greviously tortured me by biting pinching and almost Choaking me to death: also william Battin and

Thomas Buffington Juner ware forced to cutt the whele band from ofe my hands for they could not unty it. (SWP 2: 374)

Testimony of Susannah Sheldon against Carrier appears only twice in the court papers, which occurred at Carrier's examination, and which Mather does not include. One wonders if Mather did not wish to reserve some of the most sensational, empirical testimony until the end of his accounts of the trials but ran out of empirical evidence against those whom he chose to write about, and so borrowed it from other accounts. What Mather cannot explain, of course, is how in open court this wheel band manifested itself physically and had to be physically removed in front of a meeting house full of people, and yet no other stories of this incident survive. It's obvious from Sheldon's account that Sarah Good putting a wheel band on her wrists happened while Sheldon was at home. It is easy to see that Sheldon could have been spinning yarn, caught her wrists in the wheel band where it broke and wrapped around her wrists, a misfortune she attributed to the malevolence of Sarah Good, and not Martha Carrier. Sheldon said this happened to her on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June. Sheldon's deposition was taken on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June. Martha Carrier's examination was held May 31<sup>st</sup>. A jury of inquest for Carrier was held on July 1<sup>st</sup>, so it's true that court proceedings against Martha Carrier coincided with the time of Sheldon's complaint against Sarah Good. Her Complaints against Carrier are dated the 28<sup>th</sup> of May; Carrier was arrested on May 28<sup>th</sup>. Her examination occurred on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May. More depositions are dated the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of August. Her trial occurred on August 5<sup>th</sup>. Why Mather would have included such an inaccurate account, for which some record survives, then attributed the malefic act to the wrong person sounds either like he was



given wrong information or was simply constructing a sensational story out of existing testimony because he needed one.

Did Mather simply need a sensational piece of empirical evidence with which to end his account of the trials as he had begun them with eyewitness testimony of George Burroughs' feats of strength? Or was Susannah Sheldon at Martha Carrier's trial actually shackled by a wheel band that had to be literally cut off her wrists in front of a court full of witnesses, an event that somehow never made it into the court records? Just as in the case of George Burroughs' teeth marks, which Mather claimed were measured (though the record gives no evidence whatsoever), it seems strange that two such sensational events would escape documentation. Would Mather, the future Royal Society confrere, simply end his accounts with a sensational piece of empirical evidence to try to satisfy scientifically minded critics? Though Susan Sheldon was at Carrier's examination on May 31<sup>st</sup>, she says nothing about a wheel-band:

Susan:Sheldon, who hurts you?

Goody Carrier, she bites me, pinches me, & tells me she would cut my throat, if I did not signe her book

Sus:Sheldon cried she looks upon the black man.

Susan:Sheldon cryed out in a Trance I wonder what could you murder. 13. persons? (SWP 1: 185)

### Cotton Mather's Account of Spectral Evidence against Giles Corey

An examination of the court records of Giles Corey in the transcripts shows that the evidence presented against him was entirely spectral. In the last of his four “Curiosities” at the end of his accounts of the five most notorious witches in Wonders, Mather provides new post mortem “evidence” against a sixth accused witch, Corey. In this account, Mather includes a letter from Thomas Putnam, Ann Putnam’s father, to Samuel Sewall recalling the spectral appearance to Ann of Corey’s murdered victim. Mather reminds his audience that Corey was once tried for murdering a man—“almost a natural fool”—possibly a mentally challenged man who had lived with Corey. Ann Putnam’s vision recalls “a man in a Winding Sheet; who told her that *Giles Cory* had Murdered him, by *Pressing* him to Death with his Feet” (WIW 146). Ann’s vision is significant because Corey had refused to confess, or even enter a plea at his trial at Salem for witchcraft, and, as a result, was not hanged but pressed to death—a much more torturous method. Ann Putnam’s vision evinces great suggestibility on her part because it seems to relive and perhaps relieve guilt over Corey’s execution, but for Mather, Putnam’s letter was a useful rhetorical tool to be used in the judges’ favor because it showed Corey’s receiving at the hand of the court exactly the punishment that he had meted out to another. In light of Ann Putnam’s follow-up vision, Corey’s execution shows the court acting as the hand of Providence. Corey, in fact, had been suspected and tried for the murder years before, but, writes Mather, “The Jury, whereof several are yet alive, brought in the man Murdered; but as if some Enchantment had hindred the

Prosecution of the Matter, the Court Proceeded not against *Giles Cory*, tho' it cost him a great deal of Mony to get off" (WIW 146).

In Mather's view, by allowing Putnam's vision, God had certified Corey's punishment—and the court's use of spectral evidence—as just. In light of Thomas Putnam's letter, Mather's purpose in telling Joseph Beacon's story at the beginning of the accounts for witchcraft has now come full circle at the end. The reason for Mather's seemingly quirky inclusion earlier in Wonders of the appearance of a murdered Londoner to his brother, Joseph Beacon, in Boston was to establish positively that ghosts could visit the living to reveal their murderers. The murder of Beacon's brother occurs in London at the exact time and date of the apparition to Beacon. Mather's accounts of both Beacon's and Putnam's visions are similar because in each a ghost reveals his murderer. In his story of Beacon, Mather shows that specters can and do appear for just reasons to unearth concealed information. Mather's account of Ann Putnam's vision of Giles Corey's victim consequently tips us off as to why Mather includes the seemingly isolated story of Beacon just prior to his accounts of the witch trials. Written in anticipation of the long-awaited court papers from clerk Stephen Sewall, Mather's story of Beacon readies us for what is to come—a lot more spectral evidence. Surely, reasons Mather, apparitional accounts that reveal hitherto unknown but accurate information about a murder could sometimes be used as evidence of witchcraft. Ann Putnam's vision in tandem with Joseph Beacon's account in Wonders convinces because both are cases of spectral evidence that reveal true facts about a murder, evidence that could be verified and connected with both divine justice and local aims. Beacon's and Corey's stories open and close Mather's

accounts of the Salem trials, providing a frame for the centerpiece of Mather's defense of the Salem trials. Interestingly, Ann Putnam's vision of Corey's murder victim occurs after Corey was executed and does not exist in her sworn testimony at Corey's trial for witchcraft at Salem. Mather transforms the exclusively spectral evidence used against Corey found in the transcripts by showing such evidence to be valid and ongoing.

Reading the court records makes it apparent that if Mather had simply chosen to present a representative view of the evidence, the world would have gotten a much altered picture of the trials. Had readers seen the transcripts of the trials instead of Mather's fantasies about what took place and why, they would have formed a much more negative opinion of the outcome. To be fair, many, perhaps most, of the accounts of witchcraft in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries seem to have been written in a similar way—but not everyone wrote with such credulity. Some writers on witchcraft, including Reginald Scot (d. 1599), Thomas Ady (fl. 1650s), John Wagstaffe (1633-1677), John Webster (1611-1682), Johann Weyer (c. 1615-1688), and Balthazar Bekker (1634-98) were skeptical. Had Mather told the whole truth of what was presented to him by word of mouth and in the court records, the people of Salem might have demanded a different justice.

## II. Cotton Mather's Rerrangement of the Witchcraft Guidelines of William Perkins, John Gaule, and Richard Bernard In Wonders of the Invisible World

We can get a better idea of how far Mather may have gone in manipulating the Salem court records if we examine the treatment of sources we know were exactly the same that Mather used. These include William Perkins's The Damned Art of Witchcraft (London 1608), Richard Bernard of Batcomb's Guide to Grand Jury-Men (London 1627), and John Gaule's Select Cases of Conscience (London, 1646). These sources were said to have been used by the judges in forming their guiding principles for carrying out the trials. In The New England Mind, Perry Miller wrote,

The Court of Oyer and Terminer, with Stoughton presiding, and with Sewall, Richards, Gedney, Wait Winthrop, Sargent, Corwin on the bench, was trusting far too much to 'spectral evidence.' It was not insisting upon the solid common-law principle that an act must be seen by two witnesses . . . . The court at Salem—mainly because of Stoughton's conviction—committed itself to the proposition that no innocent person could, under the providence of God, be represented by a specter, and that therefore those who were manifested were guilty ("The Judgment of the Witches" 193-94).

How accurately did Mather actually summarize Perkins's, Gaule's and Bernard's guidelines? How well did Mather, as well as Stoughton and the other Salem judges, honor the guidelines they said they used?

The most obvious fact we notice upon reading Mather's section in Wonders summarizing the guidelines of Perkins, Gaule, and Bernard is that while Mather summarizes both tokens of suspicion and evidence necessary for conviction of witchcraft in Perkins and Gaule, Mather quotes Richard Bernard of Batcomb only regarding evidence required for conviction of witchcraft. Though chronologically, Bernard's guidelines come between Perkins and Gaule, Mather lets Bernard have the final word. Unfortunately, Bernard's criteria for conviction remove most of the safeguards established by the other two authorities. In Mather's summary we find that many of Bernard's guidelines for conviction are merely causes for presumption and examination for witchcraft in both Perkins and Gaule. Mather thereby undoes the cautionary principles he previously set down. He followed a similar strategy of undercutting his more enlightened guidelines three months before in his "Return of Several Ministers," in which he cautioned against the use of spectral evidence in the first part of the document but sanctioned its prior use by the judges in the last paragraph. For example, in Mather's version where Perkins asserts that "some add . . . the Devil's mark" for a presumption ([xxvii]), and Gaule includes the "Supposed, Witches unusual *Bodily Marks*" under "Tokens . . . more probable, and yet not so certain as to afford Conviction" ([xxix]), Mather relates that Bernard, having the final say, includes the presence of the Devil's mark as sufficient evidence for conviction. Bernard also defines the witch's mark more broadly than does either Perkins or Gaule, describing it as sometimes "like a *Teate*; sometimes but a *Blewish Spot*: sometimes a *Red* one; and sometimes the *Flesh Sunk* . . ."—basically anything unusual ( WIW [xxxi]). While Gaule includes the "Witches usual

Cursing and Banning” as cause for only suspicion of witchcraft, Bernard includes under his category of “things that are . . . *Convictions* . . .” the “Witches *Words* . . . when they have been heard *Threatning* of such Hurt” (WIW [xxxix]).

Central to the witchcraft trials and convictions was how Bernard differed from Perkins and Gaule on matters of confessions. Because of the Salem judges’ extremely unusual practice of sparing the lives of all confessors, confession at Salem quickly became incorporated by the accused as a method to spare their lives. The entire second or Andover phase of the Salem trials was built largely on such confessions and their accompanying accusations to provide evidence. Realizing the unreliable nature even of confession, Perkins cautions that

*If the Devil tell the Grand-Jury, that the Person in Question, is a Witch, and offers withal, to confirm the same by Oath, should the Inquest Receive his Oath or Accusation to Condemn the man? Aßuredly No. And yet, that is as much as the Testimony of another Wizzard, who only by the Devils Help, Reveals the Witch.* (WIW [xviii])

Perkins sums up his point: “*If a Fellow Witch, or Magician, give Testimony of any Person to be a Witch; this indeed is not sufficient for Condemnation*” (WIW [xxxix]).

Likewise, John Gaule cautions that “*Confession without Fact, may be a meer Delusion; and Fact without Confession may be a meer Accident*” ([xxx-xxxix]). Richard Bernard, however, treats confession alone, with or without supporting evidence, as sufficient for convicting a witch. Bernard lists under his points sufficient for conviction testimony “By one or more *Fellow-Witches*, Confessing their own Witchcraft, & bearing Witness

against others” ([xxxi]). By ending his summary of the guidelines of Perkins and Gaule with those of Bernard, particularly with the point about confession, Mather undercuts the judicial caution that came before. Bernard even includes such undefinable tokens as the “Witches Extasies” and overheard relations of their “Transportations” to be taken as adequate evidence for conviction. In allowing such testimony to convict, Mather implies that the judges acted properly and according to judicial precedent.

Mather not only arranges the guidelines of Perkins, Gaule, and Bernard to suit his and the judges’ advantage, he also conveniently misrepresents and abridges his sources. Where a caveat contained in his judicial sources might seem to apply disparagingly to some controversial issue or actions taken by the judges at Salem, Mather alters it or leaves it out. For instance, about Perkins’ first point of suspicion and examination for witchcraft, Mather writes, *“If any man or woman, be notoriously defamed for a Witch; this yeelds a strong Suspition. Yet the Judge ought Carefully to Look, that the Report be made by Men of Honesty and Credit.”* What Mather leaves out of his summary of Perkins’ first presumption is, “Yet the Magistrate must be warie in receiving such a report. For it falls out oftentimes, that the innocent may be suspected, and some of the better sort notoriously defamed” (Perkins, Damned Art 201). During the trials, not one person who was indicted for witchcraft at Salem was ever cleared. Mather’s addition of such a caveat into his judicial summary would have no doubt reminded his audience of such upstanding pillars of the community as Rebecca Nurse and her sister Mary Easty, both righteous church members at Salem who had gone to their graves proclaiming their innocence.



Mather, summarizing Perkins, writes, “*if the party examined be unconstant or contrary to himself, in his Deliberate answeres, it argueth for a Guilty conscience, which Stops the Freedom of Utterance. And yet, there are causes of Astonishment which may befall the good as well as the Bad*” (WIW [xxvii]). Perkins’s seventh and last presumption is much more explicit about what he means by astonishment:

I say not if he or she be timourous or fearfull: for a good man be fearefull in a good cause, sometimes by Nature, sometimes in regard of the presence of the Iudge, and the greatness of the audience. Againe, some may be sodenly taken, and others naturally want the libertie of speech, which other men have. (203-4).

Such a caveat, if inserted by Mather, would have reminded his immediate Salem and Boston audience of the judges’ routine intimidation of the accused, especially judge Hathorne’s brutal leading questions and accusatory remarks, probably intended to exact confessions. Mather also leaves out Perkins’s clarification because it might have raised questions about Mather’s subsequent assessments of prevarication in the testimony of George Burroughs, Bridget Bishop, and Susannah Martin (WIW 103, 114, and 126). For example, Mather reproduces from the court records (though not quite correctly) some of the dialogue between Martin and the judge (WIW 115-16), revealing the judge’s leading questions and attempts at intimidation. To his credit, however, Mather omits Perkins’ sanction of torture in some cases (see Perkins, Damned Art 204).

Under Perkins’s “less sufficient” proofs of witchcraft is “Scratching of the suspected partie,” which Mather reproduces, but Perkins also mentions in his text that

“burning of the thing bewitched, if it be not a man, as a hogge, or oxe, or such like creature, is imagined to be a forcible means to cause the Witch to discover her selfe” (Damned Art 206). Mather, following Perkins, says that these types of proof are so insufficient that they themselves constitute a type of witchcraft (WIW [xxviii]; Perkins Damned Art 206-207). It is thus not surprising that Mather excludes mentioning some of Perkins’ less sufficient “proofs,” including burning of part of the bewitched animal since that is exactly what Isaac Cummings had attempted to do with his mare to expose a witch in Mather’s account of the trial of Elizabeth How. Such use of magic is frequent and often obvious in the court records, but Mather tries to disguise these instances by leaving out the details, not wanting to reveal the plaintiff’s own dabbling in magic (WIW 130). As to the scratching by the suspected party, Mather hides the fact that Samuel Shattock’s child had probably gone to scratch Bridget Bishop’s face when the child’s own face ended up getting scratched by her instead (WIW 110). Mather does not inform his audience that in 1608 Perkins had written that scratching and other such proofs “commeth from the deuill” (Damned Art 207), as it would have reflected badly on the judges’ (and his own) admission of such testimony from both Samuel Shattock and Isaac Cummings. Mather also leaves out Perkins’s litany of “proofs” that Perkins relates were used “in former ages,” that is before 1608, including submerging the hand of the accused in boiling water or forcing her to grasp a red-hot iron to see if she would be burned. If the accused escaped burning, he or she was cleared. Mather ignored these proofs not only because Perkins said they had been discredited, but also because bringing up the idea of discredited practices formerly used to identify witches might draw attention to the fact

that another practice used in 1692 was also controversial and fast becoming discredited: the use—sometimes the exclusive use—of spectral evidence. Mather could have used as easily Perkins’s examples of discredited evidence to argue against the use of spectral evidence—but he chose not to do so.

Mather also omits the second of Perkins’s “weak and insufficient proofes,” which have to do with attempts at discovering a witch. These include the “burning of the things bewitched, if it be not a man, as a hogge, or oxe, or such like creature, is imagined to be a forcible means to cause a witch to discover her selfe.” Mather also leaves out the third, “the burning of the thatch of the suspected party’s house, which is thought to be able to cure the partie bewitched and to make the witch betray herselfe” (Damned Art 206). Mather is wise not to include Perkins here because it might reveal too much in Mather’s account of the trial of Elizabeth How: that a farmer, Isaac Cummings, had attempted to identify a witch by burning part of a bewitched animal.<sup>18</sup> As Perkins notes, “All these proofes are so farre from being sufficient, that some of them, if not all are often a sort of practice of witchcraft.” Mather didn’t want to taint Cummings’ testimony by revealing his practice of this kind of witchcraft. Another of Perkins’s weak presumptions that Mather is careful not to reveal is,

If a man in open court should affirme before the Judge, such an one fell out with me, and cursed me, giving me threatening words, that I should smart for it and some mischief should light upon my person or goods, ere it were long. Upon these curses and threats presently such and such evils befell me and I suffered these and these losses. The magistrate thus

informed may surely proceed to inquire into the matter, but he hath not hence any sure ground for conviction. (Damned Art 209-10)

For Mather to reveal such testimony as an example of one of Perkins's "weaker" proofs that was grounds for inquiry only would have been to negate much of the circumstantial evidence of this type included in his own accounts of the trials (not to mention the judges' use). Perkins validates it as evidence simply to bring an examinant to trial, not as evidence for conviction. Mather treated it as it was used in Salem, as evidence for conviction. He called the case of each of the witches he wrote about a "tryal." Perkins even anticipates the misuse of such evidence: "And yet experience shewes, that ignorant people, who cause a rage against them will make strong proofes of such presumptions, whereupon sometimes Iurers do give their Verdict against parties innocent" (210). Mather fails to warn about such "proofes."

In his list of Perkins's proofs for sufficient conviction, Mather includes the "free and voluntarie confession of the crime, made by the party suspected and accused after examination," yet he leaves out Perkins's detailed qualifications concerning the questionable aspects of exacting a confession:

That a man or a woman may confesse against themselves an untruth, being urged thereto either by feare or threatening, or by a desire, upon some grief conceived, to be out of the world; or at least, being in trouble, and perswaded it is the best course to save their lives, and obtaine libertie, they may upon simplicitie be induced to confess that, which they never did, even against themselves. (Damned Art 211-12)

Mather slides over this caveat, but continues with Perkins's next sentence: "I say not that a bare confession is sufficient, but a confession after due examination taken upon pregnant presumptions" (212). For Mather to have included the above statement would have reminded readers that of all those who confessed at Salem, not one was executed, many were still in prison, but that one who had refused to confess or even enter a plea, Giles Corey, had been pressed to death. Such facts speak for themselves to suggest that people suspected or knew that their lives were to be spared through confession, which is exactly what Perkins suggested they might do. Clearly, Mather had opportunity to openly question or embarrass the judges on this point, but chose not to do so. He could have as easily included Perkins's caveat had he wanted to draw attention to questionable practices of the judges instead of defend them. Again, what Mather chooses to omit from a text is often more revealing than what he chooses to include. At the time Cotton Mather wrote Wonders, however, the executions had stopped and the court proceedings had been halted by Governor Phips. Cotton Mather's actions or inaction did not really harm anyone who was still alive, only justice itself. People were, nevertheless, still in jail for witchcraft.

Mather clearly selects his material carefully to exculpate the judges and keep from making their actions look improper, consciously shaping readers' perceptions by what he ignores or includes. The cumulative effect of these little distortions is actually frightening and instructive. Like a propagandist, Mather attempts to put the best face on what he sensed was really a horrible mistake.

Mather's rendering of John Gaule's "altogether Unwarrantable" signs of witchcraft is mostly accurate, but again he leaves out Gaule's condemnation (probably

following Perkins) of the folk magic practice of burning of the thing bewitched and of the “burning of the thatch on the Witches house,” practices Perkins had also suggested as ultimately springing from the devil. In his rendering of John Gaule’s “signs probable” Mather follows him accurately with one exception. Mather omits Gaule’s third sign, “Bare Confession,” because in this case he needed “Confession” retained as a certain sign (Gaule 80).

Mather follows Gaule’s list of “more infallible and certaine signes” more accurately than did his rendering of Perkins’s. Mather excerpts Gaule’s first five points fairly closely. Gaule, however continues with several more, including sixth and seventh signs involving the accused “Haunting the houses or companyes of notorious Witches, and especially frequenting their nightly meetings . . . whom other notorious witches have impeached to be as ill as themselves” (Cases 82). Allowing these as certain signs of witchcraft would have refuted the second of Perkins’s “presumptions” that allowed the testimony of a fellow witch to occasion an examination but not a conviction.

Making Perkins, Gaule, and Bernard agree with each other over the proper use of evidence was a difficult—but not impossible—task. Although Richard Bernard of Batcombe provided guidelines for the presumption of a witch, Mather includes only those guidelines of his by which a witch may be convicted. When we look at some of Bernard’s “great presumptions of a Witch, for which he or shee may be brought to authorities to be examined,” we understand why Mather left them out. The fifth “presumption,” particularly, raised some thorny issues. It reads, “An apparition of the party suspected, whom the afflicted in their fits seeme to see. This is a great suspition: for some bewitched

have cryed out seeing those who were suspected to be Witches, and calle vpon them by name” (Guide 209-210). The problem was that at Salem such spectral evidence often had served not only for suspicion of witchcraft but also as proof positive that the specters who afflicted witnessed were sent by corporeal witches—especially in the cases of church members Mary Easty and her sister Rebecca Nurse. Mather did not want such evidence included as mere suspicion—even strong suspicion—since most of those accused and executed had been held and hanged primarily upon such evidence. He also did not want to call attention to Bernard’s explanation that such evidence should be questioned:

[B]ecause these apparitions are wrought by the Diuel, who can represent vnto the fantasie such as the parties vse to feare, in which his representation, hee may as well lye, as in his other witnesse. For if the diuell can represent the Witch a seeming *Samuel*, saying, *I see gods ascending out of the earth*, to beguile *Saul*; may wee not thinke he can represent a common ordinary person, man or woman vnregenerate (though no Witch) to the fantasie of vaine persons, to deceiue them and others, that will giue credit to the Diuell? (Guide 210)

Such reasoning would have echoed the statement of the executed witch Susanna Martin, whose trial Mather abstracted, and whose response to Judge Hathorne’s badgering questions Mather quotes: “He that appeared in sam[uel]s shape a glorified saint can appear in any ones shape” (SWP 2: 551; WIW 116). Mather would have wanted no part in calling attention to the fact that he had avoided adding to his text such a passage as Richard Bernard’s potent caveat above. The addition even of that much sensible caution

into Wonders of the Invisible World proceeding from such a renowned juror would have directly challenged the actions of the Salem judges. Had Mather not needed to hide the truth to fill the gaps between theological, empirical, political, and textual demands, he would not have needed to undermine his sources.



### III. Cotton Mather's Retelling of Matthew Hales' Trial of Witches at the Assizes at Bury St. Edmunds

When we become onlookers at cultures other than ours, we tend to see them in a different light than do people immersed in them. Charles-Louis Baron de Montesquieu took advantage of this principle in Les Lettres Persanes in which he satirized French civilization by writing about it as if seen through the eyes of two Persian travelers. By observing culture through unfamiliar eyes, the French were better able to recognize their own hypocrisies. The same principle can be applied to Cotton Mather's retelling of both the Bury St. Edmunds trials and the Swedish witchcraft trials in Mora. By depicting other cultures that New Englanders might use as a lens into their own, Mather inadvertently took the risk of allowing New England to recognize mistakes made at Salem. That is why Mather had to be particularly careful how he represented evidence contained in the Mora and Bury St. Edmunds accounts; they revealed much about Salem.

The parallels between the 1662 Bury St. Edmunds witch trials as related in A Trial of Witches at the Assizes at Bury St. Edmunds and that of Salem are profuse. Although the Bury St. Edmunds trials resulted in the conviction and execution of only two witches, Amy Duny (or Denney) and Rose Cullender, both elderly widows, the circumstances of their case and the evidence used in conviction were similar to that in the Salem trials. Similarities included young girls exhibiting fits and blaming them on the specters of the accused, circumstantial evidence of threatening speech followed by death or mischief (maleficia), and finding of the witch's mark or teat on Rose Cullender, along with the

implication of Amy Duny giving suck to a child as she would a familiar. Additionally, as at Salem, evidence of fraud was seen to carry little, if any, weight. Seven people were said to be afflicted. A mother, Ann Durent, her daughter Elizabeth, age 10, and her infant son, William, were afflicted. Elizabeth Durent died from her afflictions. Two other girls, Elizabeth and Deborah, aged 9 and 11, daughters of Samuel Pacy, experienced fits. Two more girls, Susan Chandler, 18, and Jane Bocking were also afflicted by what seems to be nightmares.

The Bury St. Edmunds case, however, bears a great deal of internal evidence that fraud was involved. The most significant feature of fraud in the case, the throwing up of pins by young and adolescent girls, is always a giveaway. Since this case involves so few people, it looks like a fairly manageable case of fraud. A lot of people do get sick, however. An infant, William Durent, becomes sick for several weeks. His sister, 10-year-old Elizabeth Durent, dies not long after during the time of the trials. Their mother, Elizabeth Sr., becomes lame and has to walk on crutches. Additionally, Elizabeth Jr.'s death is strange. Having gone to the apothecary to procure something for her daughter's illness, Elizabeth Jr.'s mother, Elizabeth Sr., returns home to find the long-reputed witch, Amy Duny, in her house, having come to see the sick child and give her some water. Furious, Elizabeth Sr., shoves Amy Duny out of the house. Duny retaliates by screaming threats: "You need not be so angry for your child will not live long" (215). Two days later, Elizabeth Jr. dies.

In the 1662 Bury St. Edmunds case we see much the same kind of "fits," symptoms and behavior that we find at Salem. At one point another afflicted girl, 11-

year-old Elizabeth Pacy, appears to be in a virtually comatose state, lying on a table in the courtroom while the trial is going on, breathing heavily. She is, however, later able to rally from her table and scratch and draw blood from Amy Duny when the accused witch is led to the table to perform the touch test, to see if the witch's touch would alter the girl's behavior.

There are the familiar apparitional sightings of the accused witches Rose Cullender and Amy Duny by the afflicted Elizabeth Durent, Jr., and by Elizabeth and Deborah Pacy, sightings that bring on their fits. All these signs have much in common with those in the Salem cases. We don't know enough about the trial to establish a motive, though the fact that people have been accusing each other of witchcraft for centuries accounts for a lot. Despite abundant evidence of fraud, and the possibility of some kind of veneficia in the case, to hear Mather tell it, all is easily explained by the witchcraft of Rose Cullender and Amy Duny.

To better show analogies between Bury St. Edmunds and Salem, Cotton Mather incorporated his summary of this famous 1662 English trial into Wonders of the Invisible World immediately preceding his accounts of the Salem trials. Additionally, Mather deliberately patterned his retelling of the Salem trials after this document, as is evidenced by their similarities in form and style, especially in ways they present the testimony of various deponents. Similarities between Cotton Mather's text and the Bury St. Edmunds account do not end with matters of style, however. He wanted to compare Salem's case favorably with that of the court of the most eminent jurist in England, Sir Matthew Hale. Mather wanted to show how the Hale trial, dealing with similar types of evidence, came

to similar conclusions as did the magistrates at Salem. Mather showed that even by taking into account the advice of so eminent a physician as Sir Thomas Browne, Matthew Hale's English court had reached the same verdicts as did the Salem court. According to the Reverend John Hale of Beverley, A Trial of Witches was one of the main guides for the Salem judges (Burr Narratives 416). Mather incorporated his summary of the account of "Witches Discovered and Condemned, in a Trial, before that Celebrated Judge, Sir. *Matthew Hale*," into the text of Wonders "because it was a Trial, much considered by the Judges of *New-England*" (WIW 83). It is not what Cotton Mather includes in his Wonders, but who he leaves out that most misrepresents a true picture.

To show stylistic similarities between Mather's relation of the Salem trials and the anonymous writer's account of Bury St. Edmunds, one example of each will do. The first example is from Mather's account of testimony against Bridget Bishop in Wonders of the Invisible World:

*John Bly* and his wife, testify'd that he bought a sow of *Edward Bishop*, the Husband of the prisoner; and was to pay the price agreed, unto another person. This Prisoner being Angry that she was thus hindred from fingring the money, Quarrell'd with *Bly*. Soon after which the Sow, was taken with strange Fits; Jumping, Leaping, and knocking her head against the Fence[.] (WIW 108).

Next is an account taken directly from A Trial of Witches:

Ann Sandeswell Wife unto the above-said *Cornelius*, Deposed, That about Seven or Eight Years since, she having brought a certain number of Geese,

meeting with Amy Duny, she told her, *If she did not fetch her Geese home they would all be Destroyed*: which in a few days after came to pass. (226)

As we can see, both accounts employ similar stylistic form and content. We can find many examples of such similarities in the two texts.

Mather begins his account by pointing out that to gain a better understanding of what was happening in Salem, his audience should compare it to cases in Europe.

IT may cast some *Light* upon the *Dark Things* now in *America*, if we just give a glance upon the *Like Things* lately hapening in *Europe*. We may see the *Witchcrafts* here, most exactly resemble the *Witchcrafts* there; and we may learn what sort of Devils do trouble the World. (WIW 83)

He performs this function twice, once with the English and again with the Swedish trial. Mather's excerpts from these cases emphasize the similarities to those in Salem.

Quoting Richard Baxter's The Certainty of The Worlds of Spirits (80-81), Mather writes, "*Judge Hale was a Person, than whom no Man, was more backward, to Condemn a Witch, without full Evidence*" (WIW 83). On the surface at least, in relating the circumstances of the Hale trial, Mather gives a fairly accurate summary. Mather did not need to depart radically from A Tryal to make his point, as his anonymous source mainly supported Mather's own views of witchcraft. The writer of the account of the 1662 trial at Bury St. Edmunds, however, was not as circumspect in the presentation of evidence as Mather was in *Wonders*, and the source as it stood created some problems for Mather, forcing him to ignore or pass quickly over certain content. Consequently, Mather departs from the Bury St. Edmunds text in subtle but significant ways, downplaying facts as he

adapts his source text to avoid raising questions. The source text itself, however, raises thorny questions. There is much cultural and sociological background missing from the Bury St. Edmunds account that we have for Salem. A good analogy probably exists between both cases. However, one of the major differences between the trials is the number of people involved. The latter was a much more extensive outbreak; the former involved only two witches and seven bewitched “victims.”

One of Mather’s first significant departures from his source involves Ann Durent’s hiring of Amy Duny to baby-sit her infant child, William. Mather is succinct. He informs his audience “That *Amy Duny* looking after her Child one Day in her absence, did at her return confess, that she had *given suck to the Child*: (tho’ she were an Old Woman . . .)” (WIW 83). That is all we hear from Mather on the subject, though his source spends two pages explaining why Duny wanted to allow the child to suck at the breast and why the mother would not allow it. One of the reasons Dorothy Durent gave was that Duny had been suspected for a witch. The other, more practical reason was that the child would suck nothing but air and get the colic. The Bury account says it was “customary with old Women, that if they did look after a sucking Child, and nothing would please it but the Breast, they did use to please the Child, to give it the breast, and it did please the Child, but it sucked nothing but Wind which did the Child hurt” (213). In Mather’s text keeping the child quiet is not a part of Duny’s rationale. Mather is content to let his readers infer that Amy Duny was doing something abominable in allowing the child to suck: she was a witch and had an extra teat from which she sucked her familiars. The implication was that since Duny had no milk to offer, the child would

imbibe something far less wholesome than milk—perhaps the same blood that Duny had used to sign the devil’s book. The child would drink and become bewitched. That explanation would inform Mather’s readers as to why the child got sick. The author of the Bury St. Edmonds account gives a more practical explanation for Duny’s actions: she wanted to keep the child quiet. She was doing what was expedient. Let the child’s mother worry about the consequences of the colic. Mather, on the other hand, wanted his audience to be unambiguous about the idea that Amy Duny was a witch. At any rate, neither Durent nor Duny were happy, and Duny went away “with Discontents and Menaces” (WIW 84).

The next night “the Child fell into strange and sad Fitts, where in it continued for Diverse Weeks” (WIW 84). Mather relates that “One Doctor Jacob advised to hang up the Childs Blanket, in the Chimney Corner all Day and at Night, when she went to put the Child into it, if she found any Thing in it then to throw it without fear into the Fire” (85). What Mather does not say is that Dr. Jacob “had the reputation in the Country, to help children that were Bewitch’d” (214). In fact, the plaintiff, Dorothy Durent, had consulted a specialist in countermagic, a white magician or a witch-doctor, who prescribed a magical technique of hanging a victim’s blanket by the hearth in an attempt to capture the offending spirit—using the same principle as that for a witch bottle containing pins or witch ball with glass strands inside to trap the witch. Dr. Jacob told her if anything appeared in the blanket she should not be afraid but throw it into the fire. When she took down the blanket, out fell a “Great toad,” which Ann Durent took to be Amy Duny. She then had a boy take the toad with some tongs and toss it into the fire, thereby hoping to

torment the witch. There was “a flashing in the Fire like Gunpowder, making the noise like the discharge of a Pistol, and thereupon the Toad was no more seen nor heard” (A Tryal 214). The charm worked, because a kinswoman of Amy Duny reported to Dorothy Durent that the suspected witch “was in a most lamentable condition having her face all scorched with fire, and that she was sitting alone in her House in her smock without any fire” (214). Dorothy Durent later went to Amy’s house and confirmed the sight with her own eyes. As eighteenth-century writer on witchcraft, clergyman Francis Hutchinson (1660-1739), points out, Dorothy Durent was the only person in the original account to actually be seen practicing magic—and that by her own admission (Historical Essay 140-141). Though Cotton Mather well knew that such practices were unwarrantable, a case of going to the devil to fight the devil, he let stand without comment Dorothy Durent’s seemingly successful use of white magic to help make the case that Amy Duny had been a witch. Elsewhere, Mather had condemned such practices, but he downplayed them in the text of Wonders, just as he did in the case of Isaac Cummings (WIW 130-31). By hiding the fact that Dr. Jacob had a reputation for using white magic against witches, Mather camouflages Dorothy Durent’s practice of going to the devil for help against the devil.

Once again, what Mather does not tell us is critical. He also skips over some important details about the affliction of Elizabeth Durent that points to a possible case of poisoning. The author of the Bury St. Edmonds account relates that lying on a table in court Elizabeth Durent



Could not speak one Word all the time and for the most part she remained as one wholly senseless as one in a deep Sleep, and could move no part of her body, and all the Motion of Life that appeared in her was that she lay upon Cushions in the Court upon her back, her stomach and belly by the drawing of her breath, would arise to a great height: and after the said Elizabeth had lain a long time on the Table in the Court, she came a little to her self and sate up, but could neither see nor speak, but was sensible of what was said to her, and after a while she laid her Head on the Bar of the Court with a Cushion under it and her hand upon her Apron . . . . (215-216)

If Elizabeth Durent were really in a stupor, how could she possibly get up as she did and wildly attack Amy Duny, scratching her “till Blood came” (216)? What happened in the description could be the effects of a combination of the alkaloids atropine and scopolamine found in nightshades. Durent’s comatose state and difficulty in breathing appear similar to symptoms experienced by Mercy Lewis, Daniel Wilkins, and others at Salem. To the New England audience the description of the girl might also have appeared much like some of the symptoms of the girls in Salem. Looking at the English trial, people might not fear suggesting poisoning as a cause since it did not implicate anyone in Salem directly. What is described in the Bury St. Edmonds account that Mather skims over could even represent the second or comatose phase that follows the maniacal phase of atropine and scopolamine ingestion found in datura stramonium.

Harvard pediatrician Robert P. Jennings writes that the

maniacal stage [of datura stramonium poisoning] may pass into the comatose form, which is marked by degrees of unconsciousness, varying from mild stupor from which the patient may be easily aroused to profound coma, in which the temperature is subnormal, the pulse feeble, and the respirations slow and stertorous, accompanied by a deep cyanosis. (661)

Evidently, the ability of Elizabeth Durent to be aroused from her stupor, catch hold of Amy Duny, scratch her on the hands and face “till Blood came,” and then continue to attack her would not be precluded by the mildly comatose state brought on by datura stramonium ingestion. It could even facilitate such an act because delirium would also be present. One case Dr. Jennings saw was that of a five-year-old boy who had been admitted to Boston Children’s Hospital after having accidentally ingested datura stramonium while playing in the yard. After a bout of unusual thirst in which he went in and out of the house several times for water, he fell asleep. Three hours later he awakened and began speaking incoherently, “cried out lustily,” became “unsteady on his feet, reached for imaginary objects,” and exhibited “jerking movements.” The symptoms intensified, and he was hospitalized by the family physician (659). This modern case study may account for what happened in the Bury St. Edmonds case. Amy Duny said she had stopped by to give the child, Elizabeth Durent, a glass of water while her mother was at the apothecary.

The possibility of identifying a natural cause, however, would certainly not have arisen from Mather’s brief description of events. Such a description of what had also

been symptoms of the girls at Salem might have gone too much into the realm of natural explanation. The writer of the Bury St. Edmunds accounts twenty years after the fact did not have quite the same exigencies to meet as did Cotton Mather in his writing at the time.

The next of Mather's omissions of significance involves another use of white magic practiced by Elizabeth Pacy against the accused witch, Amy Duny. Mather tells us only that "By the direction of the Judge, *Duny* was privately brought to *Elizabeth Pacy*, and she touched her Hand: whereupon the child, without, so much as seeing her, suddenly leap'd up and flew upon the prisoner" (WIW 85-86). The account in A Tryal reads, "the Child . . . suddenly leaped up, and caught Amy Duny by the hand, and afterwards by the face; and with her nails scratched her till Blood came . . ." (216). What Mather hides is the fact that Elizabeth Pacy tried to scratch the witch to draw blood. English historian Keith Thomas tells us that "such violence was encouraged by the popular belief that the injured party could recover his health by 'scratching' or drawing blood from the person who had bewitched him" (Religion 531). Mather's source, Richard Bernard, had warned, however, that "to goe and scratch the suspected" was among the practices that were "very Witcheries themselues" (132), and William Perkins wrote that "the vsing of these meanes is plaine Witchcraft" (Damned Art 55). Mather leaves out this detail because it would have revealed that the child had been encouraged by adults to use witchcraft herself in finding a remedy by drawing blood.

In his reworking of the deposition of Margaret Arnold, the aunt of Elizabeth and Deborah Pacy, Mather provides evidence that does not appear in the original document. The Bury St. Edmunds account reads,

[T]he Elder child declared unto this Deponent [Margaret Arnold], that during the time of her Fitts, she saw Flies come unto her, and bring with them in their Mouthes crooked Pins; and after the Child had thus declared the same, she fell again into violent Fits, and afterwards raised several Pins. (219)

From the context of the Bury St. Edmunds document the child is relating something that happened to her in the past. Mather, however, makes the connection between the flies conveying pins and the swallowing and vomiting of those pins much more immediate and ongoing than in the original testimony of the girl. Mather writes, “The Child would in like manner be assaulted with Flies, which brought Crooked Pins, unto her, and made her first swallow them, and then Vomit them.” (WIW 88). The original account says nothing about the flies first forcing the girl to swallow and then to vomit the pins. Mather needed to present evidence in a way that showed that the girls had actually swallowed the pins first and then vomited them up, a circumstance which the original text actually casts into doubt. Mather probably improved the evidence in order to hide the fact that the girls’ Aunt had expressed doubt about how the pins got into the girls’ mouths. The Bury St. Edmunds account reads,

This deponent [Margaret Arnold] said, that she gave no credit to that which was related to her, conceiving possible the Children might use some deceit in putting Pins in their mouths themselves. (219)

Tellingly, Mather's account in Wonders of the Invisible World completely omits the section about the Aunt's suspicion that the girls were putting the pins into their own mouths. He also attempts to negate the element of doubt raised in his own mind by the aunt's testimony, filling in the gap in the girl's testimony (which he also excludes) by spelling it out for the reader that the flies forced the girl to swallow the pins. Mather thus attempts to provide empirical evidence where it does not exist; had Mather's purpose been finding out what really happened instead of conveying the point of view that it was witchcraft, he would not have distorted such evidence. He failed to present it as it was because the girls in Salem had been suspected of the same type of fraud concerning pins, and such evidence would have bolstered the case for fraud at Salem. Such a representation had much more to do with substance than with matters of rhetorical style. Mather was creating an illusion.

In another relation concerning eleven-year-old Elizabeth Pacy, Mather writes, "She one *Day* caught, an Invisible *Mouse*, and throwing it into the Fire, it Flash'd like to Gun-Powder. None besides the Child saw the *Mouse*, but every one saw the *Flash*" (WIW 88). Mather omits the detail that the girl had crept under the table looking for the imaginary mouse, "put something in her Apron, saying she had caught it," and then immediately ran to the fire and threw "it" in (A Tryal 219-20). Mather makes it sound as if a room full of people had witnessed the event. Actually, the "every one" he refers to

who saw the flash were only the deponent, Margaret Arnold, and of course Elizabeth Pacy, who perpetrated the hoax of pretending to catch the chimerical mouse in her apron and then threw the gunpowder she had concealed in her apron into the fire, probably in imitation of what Dorothy Durent had done to the toad. No wonder Margaret Arnold had been in doubt about the pins. Mather gives supernatural significance to an event with an obvious natural explanation. He, in fact, is inclined to ignore natural explanations and conjures up supernatural ones when they are expedient for his own purposes.

He fails to mention that Susan Chandler seems to have had a nightmare experience, similar to the one in the Salem cases. When such an experience happened at Salem, witnesses could attribute it to witchcraft. What seemed like an attack of witchcraft in Salem might have seemed just a nightmare, especially when their frequent occurrences are validated by English cases. When it happened thirty years before in England, however, people were able to be less emotional and take a more rational overview and would have perhaps seen it for what it was—a nightmare.

From both A Trial and from Mather's Wonders, we can discern in pretty much the same language that Mr. Serjeant Keeling was unsatisfied with the evidence that had been presented at the trial concerning the bewitchment of the children. Keeling's main objection was that while he believed the children were indeed bewitched, he did not think that their bewitchment could unequivocally be blamed on the prisoners since it was based "upon the Imagination only of the Parties Afflicted; For if that might be allowed, no person whatsoever can be in safety" (223).

To avoid presenting too much skepticism, Mather gives only partial coverage to the medical testimony of a “doctor Brown.” A Tryal goes into detail about the testimony at the trial of the famous physician, Sir Thomas Browne, author of Religio Medici (1642) and Pseudodoxia Epidemica (1646). Mather would not have wanted to draw attention to the opinion of such a learned person whose views on witchcraft differed much from his own and who clearly saw much that had been termed witchcraft as simply the result of natural disorders. In religion as in witchcraft Sir Thomas took a much more skeptical attitude than did Mather, ultimately asserting faith in the invisible world but leaving the door open for questions and doubts about its various manifestations. If Mather had given a true picture of what Browne had to say about witchcraft at the Bury St. Edmonds trial, he would have represented the very view Mather was trying to avoid: belief in witches but skepticism in how witchcraft had been applied. In his testimony, Browne in no way identifies the people accused as those responsible for the girls’ afflictions. Sometime in the 1660s Browne had written his opinion on witches in a commonplace book:

We are no way doubtfull that there are wiches, butt have not been alwayes satisfied in the application of their wichcrafts or whether the parties accused or suffering have been guiltie of that abomination, or persons under such affliction suffered from such hands. (Works 3. 293)

Browne expressed much the same view at the Bury St. Edmonds trial. Mather summarizes Brown’s statements fairly well but omits any reference to Browne’s subsequent statement that he was

Clearly of opinion . . . that these swooning Fits were Natural, and nothing else but that they call the Mother, but only heightned to a great excess by the subtilty of the Devil, co-operating with the Malice of these which we term Witches, at whose Instance he doth these Villanies. (233).

The “Mother,” as Browne terms it, was the seventeenth-century term for what was later termed “hysteria,” which was believed to have been caused by the supposed disturbance of the uterus or womb and its displacement against other organs, causing an imbalance of humors in the body, leading to strange behaviors. Mather was probably uncomfortable with Browne’s attribution of the primary cause of bewitchment to something natural that was merely “heightened” by the devil’s tricks in cooperation with the “Malice of these which we term Witches,” suggesting that even the common term or concept of “witch” might be incorrect to describe what was really happening. Mather found it an especially sensitive subject because most of the afflicted accusers in Salem had been women, and to disseminate the idea of the primary cause of their fits as something natural would have given those who opposed the trials more ammunition by lessening the role that witches had played. It might even have been devils that acted directly and caused the girls’ fits. A year after the Salem trials ended, when the trials were no longer a major issue, and after he had treated yet another possessed young woman, Margaret Rule, Cotton Mather seems to have come around more to Browne’s view:

I do believe that the Evil Angels do often take Advantage from Natural Distemper in the Children of Men to annoy them with such further Mischief as we call preternatural. The Malignant Vapours and Humours of



our Diseased Bodies may be used by Devils . . . as engine of the Execution of their Malice upon those Bodies; and perhaps for this reason one Sex may suffer more Troubles of some kinds from the Invisible World than the other, as well as for that reason for which the Old Serpent made where he did his first Address. (“Another Brand Plukt Out of the Burning” in Burr Narratives 313)

The passage was included in a treatise that was published in 1700 without Mather’s consent by Robert Calef in his More Wonders of the Invisible World. To talk about natural causes would have added another layer of complexity to the issue that had irrevocably been decided as attributable to witchcraft:

I think I may, without vanity, pretend to have read not a few of the best systems of physick that have yet been seen in these American regions, but I must confess that I have never learned the name of the natural distemper, whereto these odd symptoms do belong. (“Another Brand Pluckt Out of the Burning” in Burr Narratives 314)

Yet even in Margaret Rule’s case, there were signs that the girl might have been bringing on her own afflictions. Dismissing imposture in her case, however, Mather even credits demonic possession with causing individuals to dissemble: “I know not how far the Devil may drive the Imagination of poor Creatures when he has possession of them, that at another time when they are themselves would scorn to Dissemble any thing” (312). He relates that by the end of Margaret Rule’s rigid nine-day fast, “she was unto all appearance as Fresh, and Lively, as Hearty, at the Nine Days End . . . once or twice her

Tormentors permitted her to swallow a Mouthful of somewhat that might encrease her Miseries, whereof a Spoonful of Rum was the most considerable” (313). Mather is so convinced of Rule’s possession, he excludes other possibilities. If Margaret Rule were sipping rum behind Mather’s back, then she could have been ingesting other things as well, even substances tinctured in the rum. To Mather’s credit, late in 1693 with Margaret Rule, as he had also done in late 1692 with Mercy Short (when the pods of the thorn apple were distributing seeds upon the ground), Mather was careful to conceal the names of anyone the bewitched might have named as the author of their afflictions. For Mather’s purposes in 1692, however, Sir Thomas Browne’s statement about witchcraft having a natural foundation was not something his audience really needed to hear—or so Mather perhaps thought at the time. Mather wanted to avoid presenting testimony that suggested hysteria might be to blame, for it was a rival explanation given for bewitchment at Salem. By refusing to ascribe the bewitchment of the girls to the actions of the accused women, Sir Thomas Brown implicitly seconded Serjeant Kellings’ concern that the source of bewitchment might lie in natural causation.

The most formidable evidence brought up at the trial, however, was something Mather could simply not ignore, and it was exculpatory. Three jurors—Lord Cornwallis, Sir Edmund Bacon, Serjeant Keeling—and some other gentlemen in the court were dissatisfied with evidence that had been used at the trial: that of the touch test. Upon being touched, the girls’ behavior would change. One girl had even flown into a rage and attacked Amy Duny, scratching her till blood came. She had her eyes closed then but had not been blindfolded. Cornwallis, Bacon, and Keeling asked Judge Hale to allow them to

do an experiment, which was granted. The three gentlemen attended to one of the afflicted daughters of Samuel Pacy at the opposite end of the hall while she was in her fits. Then one of the accused witches, Amy Duny, was led from the bar and brought before the afflicted girl, who was then blindfolded with an apron. At the last minute they substituted the hand of another person for Amy Duny's to touch the bewitched girl to see if it altered her behavior in any way. The hand of the other person (not Duny's) produced the same effects in the afflicted girl as the touch of the accused witch had done previously in court. This act brought the court proceedings to a halt. Even Mather was dissatisfied, explaining that "a small Reason was at length attempted to be given for it" (WIW 91).

The author of A Trial tells us that "at length Mr. Pacy did declare, That possibly the Maid might be deceived by a suspicion that the Witch touched her when she did not" (224). Was that not the whole point of the experiment: to see if the touch of an innocent person or the touch of a witch would make any difference? Here was one case in which the force of set opinions about witchcraft overcame the findings of empirical evidence. For some reason it did not seem to make a difference to the jurors that their method of finding out witchcraft, derived from a belief system, had failed them. Perhaps it did not matter because they doubted their own beliefs in the first place. Perhaps being wrong did not matter. Like Cotton Mather, they simply shut out the evidence that did not square with their preconceived notions. So perverse were their rationalizations that the results of the failed experiment became for some "rather a confirmation that the Parties were really Bewitched" (A Tryal 224). Disappointed and angry that methods based on their beliefs

had been proven invalid, and yet unwilling to admit error, the judges hanged Amy Duny and Rose Cullender anyway.

Apparently, to try to dismiss doubt raised by the three gentlemen's experiment, the author and the court apparently, too, found it necessary to begin listing the reasons that the girls would not have committed fraud. Among the reasons listed in A Tryal were,

no man can suppose that they should all Conspire together, (being out of several families, and, as they Affirm, no way related to the other, and scarce of familiar acquaintance) to do an Act of this nature whereby no benefit or advantage could redound to any of the Parties, but a guilty Conscience for Perjuring themselves in taking the Lives of two poor simple Women away, and there appears no Malice in the Case. (224-25)

We hear nothing of these sort of rationalizations against fraud from Cotton Mather, of course, as the reasons given for lack of fraud in the Bury St. Edmonds case (whether true or not) were manifestly untrue of the parties and the situation in Salem, as both Mather and his New England audience knew. Instead of exonerating the judges at Salem, such a statement would have drawn attention to all the reasons that could be given for why fraud had succeeded at Salem. Mather ends his reworking of the Bury St. Edmonds account by recounting evidence of the type of mischief following curses or threats of the accused—evidence that William Perkins had consigned as reason only for suspicion, not conviction, of witchcraft.

**IV. Mather's Abridgment of Anthony Horneck's Account of What Happened  
in the Kingdom of Sweden in the Years 1669, 1670 and Upwards**

The 1669 witch trials in Mora, Dalarna (Sweden), resulted in several hundred children accusing about 60 people of witchcraft. Twenty-three persons from the area, mostly women, were beheaded, then burned, the standard method of execution in Sweden at the time. In 1670, thousands of children offered testimony that resulted in at least 300 more accused witches coming before the government and the Court of Appeal. Of these, 15 were executed early in 1671 (Ankerloo "Sweden" 295-96). In all, the entire witch panic in Sweden (1668-1676) ended when it reached Stockholm and claimed 200 lives. Following the figures in Anthony Horneck's account translated from German, first appended at the end of the 1683 edition of Joseph Glanvill's Saducismus Triumphatus, Cotton Mather believed the total number executed in 1669 to be around 85, but that figure had been greatly exaggerated (Ankerloo 317 n.).

The title page of Wonders of the Invisible World refers to the inclusion of "A short Narrative of a late Outrage committed by a knot of WITCHES in *Swedeland*, very much Resembling and so far Explaining, *That* under which our parts of *America* have laboured!" Mather wanted to show how much Swedish witchcraft resembled its counterpart in New England, in part to convince his audience that there was true witchcraft in Salem and partly to show that similar circumstances in Sweden 22 years before had led to similar outcomes. Mather wanted to identify a pattern to Satan's wives by letting the Swedish trials echo Salem's. He iterates, "I shall only single out a few of

the more Memorable passages therein Occurring; and where it agrees with what happened among ourselves, my Reader shall understand, by my inserting a Word of every such thing in **Black Letter**" (WIW 147). Actually, some of the more "Memorable" passages from the Swedish account are the ones he ignores. The words Mather picks out for emphasis, Devils, Witches, Tempted, Associate, Judges, Suffering, Children, Prayer, and Confessed, while they do indicate certain superficial similarities between Mora and Salem, turn out to be common witchcraft motifs and conditions routine to any large-scale witch hunt.

The most provocative affinity between the Mora and the Salem trials thirty years later, as Mather shows, is that in both trials most of the accusations were made by children and adolescents. The number of child accusers in the Mora case far exceeded that of Salem, however. Under Swedish law a 5-year-old might account for only 1/10 of a person; a fourteen-year-old more than half. The testimony of ten children could be needed to equal one person; the testimony of as many as 20 children might be required to add up to the two witnesses necessary to convict a witch (Ankarloo "Sweden" 303). Regardless of the similarities, the differences between witchcraft at Salem and Mora are actually more significant, as we find when we read Horneck's version against Mather's retelling of it.

Another story of Mora, and a different way of looking at Salem, emerges from the details that Mather omits from his version of the Swedish narrative. Mather found two primary problems that existed in Horneck's account in its relation to Salem. One enigma involved details surrounding the children's trip to Blåkulla (in Germany the Blocksberg,

believed to be the mountain where the witches had their Sabbath meetings). Horneck's narrative revealed the possibility of a natural explanation for some presumed flights to the witches' Sabbath. These circumstances entailed a horn filled with salve that the children were said to have rubbed on their bodies to enable flight. The second bugbear for Mather concerned the Swedish depiction of a bizarre alternative world that would have appeared questionable in many ways to most of Mather's audience and ludicrous to some.

As George Lyman Kittredge points out, the flight to the witches' Sabbath never had as long or as strong a tradition in English witchcraft as it did in the rest of Europe. William Perkins thought such continental beliefs as actual flights to a witches' Sabbath to be just a part of Satan's delusions (Perkins, Damned Art 194-96). The continental idea of the witches' Sabbath was not even mentioned in any English trial until that of the Lancashire witches in 1612 (Kittredge Witchcraft 250-51). Later, after 1634, the Sabbath became a fixture in "attenuated" form in English trials (Kittredge 271).

However, several people in Salem testified to flying on poles to witch meetings. One of the magistrates asked Mary Lacey, Jr., "doe not ye Anoynt ye selves before ye flye[?]." Lacy Answered, "No but the divell carried us upon hand poles" (SWP 2: 521). Mary Bridges, Jr., said she "rod to Salem village meeting upon a pole & the black man Carried the pole over the tops of the trees: & there they promised on another to afflict persons" (SWP 1: 135). Thomas Carrier, Jr., said there were 10 in a company with him who rode upon two poles (SWP 1: 203). William Barker, who lived in Andover, testified that he was at a meeting of witches at Salem Village and judged "there was about a hundred of them," adding that the meeting was "upon a green peece of ground neare the

ministers house” (SWP 1: 66). Mary Toothaker reported attending a witch meeting in which “they did talk of 305 witches in the country” (SWP 3: 769). Cotton Mather wrote of Salem that the witches “sometimes drag the poor People out of their Chambers, and Carry them over *Trees* and *Hills* for diverse Miles together” (WIW 50). On October 12, 1692, Governor William Phips, probably in conjunction with the publication of Wonders of the Invisible World and under Mather’s influence, wrote back to the home government that Salem had been “represented to mee much like Sweden about thirty years agoe” and echoed Mather’s assessments about people being dragged out of their homes (Burr Narratives 196).

Nowhere in these accounts, however, do we find testimony about witch meetings remotely resembling details we find in Sweden and Blåkulla. Rather than raise perplexing questions or pour oil on the flames by repeating to volatile New England lurid details of the witches’ Sabbath in Sweden, Cotton Mather chose to highlight only those passages that agreed with “what happened among ourselves” (WIW 147). To make Mora’s case fit Salem’s, Mather had to paint a minimalist picture of what occurred at Mora by curtailing or neglecting much provocative evidence he found in Horneck’s account that might have raised more than the eyebrows of his New England audience had such an account originated from his pen. One could also argue that Cotton Mather wanted to avoid inflaming the imagination of the locals—hence a positive reason for omitting Horneck’s details.

Mather’s stated intention was to show that New England and Mora were similar. To do that, however, Mather had to leave out of Wonders much vivid detail that Horneck



provided surrounding the abduction of children by witches, the particulars of their time at Blåkulla, and their meetings with the devil. Such a compact between Satan and his followers was the foundation of all witchcraft, supposedly the central theme of Mather's book. The Mora case was certainly as good an example as any of how strange wonders of the invisible world could get. As Mather had suggested by highlighting only certain words and phrases in gothic letter, however, the Swedish account would be seen to mirror closely events at Salem. Just five pages before beginning his account of the Swedish trials, Mather alluded to aspects of the witches' Sabbath with some rhetorical questions:

What is their Transportation thro' the *Air*? What is their Travelling in *Spirit*, while their Body is cast into a Trance? . . . What is their Entring their Names in a *Book*? What is their coming together from all parts . . . But a Blasphemous Imitation of certain Things recorded about our Saviour, or His Prophets, or the Saints in the Kingdom of God. (WIW 140-141).

Mather's assertive questioning fit neatly the traditional interpretation of witchcraft as an inversion of Christian sacraments. To properly answer such questions, however, Mather needed to show how the appearance of witchcraft in the middle of Lutheran Sweden resembled the devil's mocking of the doings of Christ's Church in New England. Mather needed to provide some evidence of how

The Devil which . . . imitated what was in the Church of the *Old Testament*, now among *Us* could Imitate the Affayrs of the Church in the *New*. [For] [t]he *Witches* do say, that they form themselves much after the

manner of *Congregational Churches*; and that they have a *Baptism* and a *Supper*, and *Officers* among them, abominably Resembling those of our Lord. (WIW 140)

Since most of his immediate audience was already familiar with Salem, all Mather had to do was to show how Sweden was like Salem. The problem was that Mather could not reveal too much, or the two cases might have seemed very different. His solution was clever: by highlighting certain words and phrases common to both trials like Stopt their Mouths, Call upon the Devil, Scourged, come into the Chambers of people, Fine Clothes, Strange Fits, White Angel, Enchanted Tools, and Iron Fork,<sup>19</sup> Mather could make the two cases to appear almost identical without delving into aspects of why they were so different. By using words only in their narrowest sense, Mather could speak in generalities; he could appear to give details while still being vague. By sticking to points where Mora and Salem “agreed,” Mather could limit discussion. Fortunately for Mather, most of his immediate audience referred to Salem, not Sweden when they pictured witchcraft. Analogies between Mora and Salem disappeared in the details, however, and the Swedish account did not quite fit the model of witchcraft Mather wanted to portray.

Actually, by showing parallels between reformed Christianity and the devil’s inversion of it as antichrist, Mather was repeating a ploy that had been used by clergy for more than four centuries: the demonizing of preexisting folk beliefs concerning flights into the afterlife and trips to the world of the dead. This rhetorical stratagem also worked in witchcraft interrogations. Carlo Ginzberg explains that

the image of diabolical witchcraft, with all its appendages—the pact with the devil, the sabbat, the profanation of the sacraments—was developed between the mid-thirteenth and mid-fifteenth centuries largely through the efforts of theologians and inquisitors, and gradually spread by means of treatises, sermons, depictions, throughout Europe and, eventually, even across the Atlantic. (Ginzburg Night Battles xviii)

As English bishop Francis Hutchinson (1660-1739) pointed out in An Historical Essay Concerning Witchcraft (1720), the Mora document bore its own internal evidence that inquisitors were responsible for instigating and inflaming the outbreak. The fact that the devils were not able to carry the children away “but only this Year and the last”

shews, that their imaginary Power began with the Prosecution; for the King's Commissioners sat in *August* I. and the Accusation must have been carrying on that Piece of the Year before it, and some part of the last, before it would come so high as a Royal Visitation; and just so long, they say, they had had their great Power. And it ended also with it, for these Judges did not go on accusing and burning more; I have heard, for the same Reason for which they stopped in *New-England*, because it came to the Wealthy, and because they could see no End of Executions. (124)

Even if theologians and inquisitors were not always disingenuous in their assessments about witchcraft, belief in and familiarity with their own religious traditions influenced their interpretations of whatever was reported about witches. There was often a

discernable rift over how evidence should be deciphered that was evident to judges, the accused, and witnesses alike.

Mather's wish to highlight similarities between the Salem and Mora trials suggests that he thought it would be valuable to show how Satan's methods were alike in different places, because such consistency would create a taxonomy helpful in identifying the devil's works. Similarities in two or more cases possibly reinforce evidence. It follows, then, that Mather would have wanted to include as much pertinent detail as possible about the devil's works in the invisible world, stark proof that Satan's methods were similar everywhere. Since Mather lived close to the Salem outbreak and knew many of the judges personally, he had the opportunity to find out explicit details about Salem. He could use this knowledge to assess similarities between Salem and Mora to add to the store of knowledge available to judges, theologians, and other interested parties in mapping Satan's methods. Such a taxonomy would have been useful against those who thought the effects of witchcraft were just "*Fancies, and Hypochondriack Dreams, and the Effects of distempered Brain*" as the English cleric Anthony Horneck did, who railed against such disbelief in his translator's preface to Mather's source (appended to Joseph Glanvill's Sadducismus Triumphatus). Mather, then, had impetus to record as much detail as possible about Salem and apply it to Horneck's account.

In a way, Mather did provide a taxonomy of witchcraft in Salem and Mora, at least as far as he could. He gave as accurate a picture as possible of witchcraft in Sweden without stretching the limits of credibility. However, instead of pondering the meaning of the differences between the two trials, Mather turned Sweden into Salem. By

manipulating language, he made Horneck's account seem almost identical. But why was it necessary to make Sweden seem exactly like Salem? What Mather deliberately did was to cherry-pick from Horneck's account superficial similarities with Salem that he then used to support a position that had already been irrevocably decided: that true witchcraft had occurred at Salem.

Privately, Mather would have been far more worried about the implications of including certain details from the Swedish record than he was of not including them—even though they made for sensational reading. Instead of exploring discrepancies, he tailored the Swedish account to conform as much as possible to both New England's—and London's—expectations. By refusing to say exactly what was meant by certain words and phrases, letting them stand alone on their plain meaning, Mather was safe from both the credulous and the skeptical. He also bowdlerized much in the Swedish account, which far exceeded in prurience anything recorded at Salem, revealing the heavy hand of the Swedish commissioners when exacting confessions.

Mather might have just been discreet, but including too much detail would have raised thorny questions, especially among scholars and the skeptical, about the nature of spectral evidence. Consequently, he had to resort to dexterous editing because the Swedish account also contained what appeared to be an uncomfortable syncretism between certain pre-Christian and Christian elements.<sup>20</sup> To show the scope and lividness of the Swedish trials occurring twenty-two years earlier also would have undercut Mather's millennial assertions in Wonders about the Devil's great wrath at his short time left to torment the world, foiling Mather's desire to portray things in New England as worse

than ever because the devil had recently been let loose and Christ's return was imminent. In truth, much worse cases of witchcraft than those of Salem had been occurring in Europe since the publication of the Malleus Maleficarum, in 1485, and the outbreak in Sweden, which lasted nine years, was one of them. Picturing Sweden for others' minds to limit the discussion of Salem, Mather stuck to highlighting details he could safely apply. Once again, the devil is in the detail; Mather neglects that which would have been most revealing.

To understand why Mather wanted to limit discussion of Swedish witchcraft, a little background of Scandinavian and Lapland witchcraft and beliefs about witchcraft in general will be necessary. What we do not find anywhere in Wonders of the Invisible World is any real discussion as to the possible contribution of natural causes to bewitchment. Specifically, we do not find any mention in Mather's work of the use of a salve or ointment to aid witches or the bewitched in their phantasmal flights, though such things had often been discussed in witchcraft manuals, especially in one book said to have been used by the Salem judges, Nathaniel Crouch's The Kingdom of Darkness (London, 1688).<sup>21</sup> Mather, like some others, ascribes things such as flights to witch meetings only to the power of the devil. In the Swedish account, however, we find some evidence of the devil's subjects getting help in their transvection through the air by natural means. The abducted children relate that, "[the Devil] gives us a Horn with a Salve in it, wherewith we do anoint ourselves; and a Saddle, with a Hammer and a wooden Nail, thereby to fix the Saddle; whereupon we call upon the Devil and away we

go” (Sadducismus Triumphatus 583). We see a causal connection between the devil’s distributing the horn and salve and the beginning of the transcendent trek to Blåkulla.

In Horneck’s text we read of beasts, men, posts, or other instruments, including a spit stuck into the backside of a goat, upon which the children are said to ride. We are to assume that these are devils, demons, or witches’ familiars who have shape-shifted into human, animal, or some other form for the purposes of transportation. When all arrive in Blåkulla, they leave some of the “Men who they have made use of in their Journey” standing outside the house by the gate “in a slumbering posture, sleeping against the Wall” (586). The reason against Mather depicting the use of witches’ ointment and his explicit limning of familiar spirits giving rides to the witches’ Sabbath in Sweden was that it would have touched off many skeptics, especially in England at the end of the seventeenth century, who dismissed such transvection as pure fancy, arguing such flights attributable to illness, melancholy, or the properties of natural herbs and potions. If skeptics were right and the afflicted only thought they flew with spirits in animal form, and if they could convince others, much of the basis for so-called spectral evidence at Salem would disappear. Such a skeptic was English physician and clergyman John Webster (1611-82), who wrote in his Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft (1677)

that this is one main cause of this delusion, is manifest from all the best Historians, that where the light of the Gospel hath least appeared, and where there is the greatest brutish ignorance and heathenish Barbarism, there the greatest store of these deluded Witches or Melancholists are to be found, as in the North of *Scotland, Norway, Lapland*, and the like, as may

be seen at large in *Saxo Grammaticus*, *Olaus Magnus*, *Hector Boetius*, and the like. (32)

Here is Webster blaming witchcraft not on the devil but on ignorance. Webster refers primarily to the people of Scandinavia and Lapland who pretentiously believe

things that are absolutely impossible, as that they are really changed into Wolves, Hares, Dogs, Cats, Squirrels, and the like; and that they flye in the Air, are present at great Feasts and Meetings, and do strange and incredible things, when all these are but the meer effects of the imaginative function depraved by the fumes of the melancholick humor (33).

Webster seems to be blaming these beliefs rightly not on the power of the devil to assist but on the people's "unenlightened" traditions. Moreover, as both Webster and English clergyman Thomas Ady had pointed out, reference to such spirits does not appear in the Bible: "Where is it written," asks Ady, "that a Witch is such a man or woman that maketh a league with the Devill, written with his or her blood, and by vertue of that covenant to have the Devill at command?" (Ady, *A Candle in the Dark* 7). The belief was that witches could command the devil in the form of their familiar spirits. Since the original word translated in the Bible as familiar spirit actually meant a pythonic spirit or the spirit of divination, the concept of a familiar spirit as an animal the witch rides to the Sabbath and who helps her in performing maleficium was simply wrong.

The devil in the form of an animal doing the witch's bidding in providing transport and performing malevolent acts was not originally a biblical concept, but may



have been derived in part from magical folk beliefs. The people of Lapland, pneumatologists would agree, willed their personal spirits to their children. Finlanders and “Finlappers” of Norway were known to send out spirits called Gans resembling “blewish” flies to harm their enemies. The Laplanders also made balls of the hair of a beast or moss called a tyre, so light it appeared hollow. By use of the tyre, Laplanders believed they could send “either Serpents, Toads, Mice, or what they please into any man” to torment him. It “destroyes the first man, or beast, that it lights on,” writes Scheffer (Lapland 60).

Such objects of maleficia incorporating evil spirits were applied to certain verses in the Bible—those concerning familiar spirits—by clergy who wished to demonize the aboriginal religion of an indigenous people through whose lands Christianity had spread. The concept of the “familiar spirits,” often depicted as animals, were constructed by demonizing the “familiar” animal spirits of the shamans and followers of the old religion. We actually find the personal spirits of the Laplanders termed familiars by John Scheffer in his book on Lapland (60). This concept became applied to home-grown witches.

Not surprisingly, we also find reference to such animal spirit “familiars” in history among shamans of the North American Indians, Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, and Russian Lapland, Siberia, and northeast Asia. The reverence paid to the reindeer by the shamans and the people of Lapland is evidence of strong belief system associated with such animal spirits of conveyance. It is likely that in the pre-Christian era in Sweden, as in North America and elsewhere, shamans possessed and were possessed by guardian animal spirits acquired during initiation, whom they were able to control.



Figure 3.1. Veneration of an Anthropomorphic Reindeer God. John Scheffer, History of Lapland (London, 1674) 41.

The idea of using magic to do harm (maleficia) combined with the worship of animal spirits, like that of the flying reindeer of the Lapps, and the belief of shamans and their adherents of journeying through the invisible world in the company of their guardian spirits, evolved under pressure, especially among the Scottish and English concerning the spreading of maleficia, into the idea of the witch's familiar (see Robbins Encyclopedia 190). All that was needed in the beginning was the application by theologians of such ideas to the verses in the Bible concerning familiar spirits. Christians in Sweden, Norway, and Finland came to view the Lapps and their heathen gods in much the same way that the Puritans in America viewed the Indians and theirs—as demonic. The original folk beliefs of the shamans, which influenced popular beliefs, filtered through the theological transformer of inquisitors and clergy who applied them to popular ideas of witchcraft, creating the popular idea and quasi-theological concept of witches'

familiars and their usefulness in riding to a demonic Sabbath. By the time of the great European witch hunts in the late fifteenth century, lingering belief in and use of animal spirits by the shamans and their followers was being misapplied by the Church. This became especially true after the Malleus Maleficarum and the Bull of Pope Innocent VIII that was published along with it debunked the Canon Episcopi's teaching that all such flights with pagan goddesses and their horde of animals were mere illusion.<sup>22</sup> Carlo Ginzburg summarizes his theory of how the idea of the witches' Sabbath came about:

In the image of the Sabbath we distinguished two cultural currents, of diverse origin: on one hand, as elaborated by inquisitors and lay judges, the theme of a conspiracy plotted by a sect or a hostile social group; on the other, elements of shamanistic origin which were by now rooted in folk culture, such as the magic flight and animal metamorphosis. (Ecstasies 300)

When the worship of animal spirits dating from the Paleolithic and Mesolithic ages came in contact with Christianity they became the familiar spirits of wizards and witches to demonologists, even though the original meaning of familiar spirit in the Bible had been a spirit of divination, not animals that did harm or took people on rides to the witches' Sabbath. Deut. 18.11, Isa. 8.19, 19.3 and 1 Sam. 28.3, Lev. 19.31 and 20.6 and 27; 2 Kings 21.6, 2 Kings 23.24; 2 Chron. 33.6, all make a distinction between wizards and those who possessed familiar spirits. The distinction, however, was written vaguely enough to enable those with a strong interest in doing so to try to conflate wizards and diviners. Even the Malleus Maleficarum recognized the familiar as a spirit of divination,

though it (and not the Bible) explicitly included them under the rubric of witch and recommended putting them to death (II.2.8). The Bible only grouped diviners under one of several supernatural acts that were prohibited (Deut 18.9-11). The Lord was driving them out (Deut 18.12), but Exodus declared only that “thou shalt not suffer a witch to live” (22.18). We find probable cause in the Malleus for equating all of these a few sentences later:

When certain persons for the sake of temporal gain have devoted themselves entirely to the devil, it has often been found that, though they may be freed from the devil's power by true confession, yet they have been long and grievously tormented, especially in the night. And God allows this for their punishment. But a sign that they have been delivered is that, after confession, all the money in their purses or coffers vanishes. Many examples of this could be adduced, but for the sake of brevity they are passed over and omitted. (II.2.8)

The entire concept of the familiar spirit, therefore, stood on extremely shaky ground biblically, especially outside of New England. Mather's explicit portrayal of such a concept as witches and their familiars flying around and doing the devil's work in a sensitive text about Salem would have spawned vicious criticism from some of the same people whom Mather was trying to keep calm. Mather wanted to keep Sweden in some sense under the radar. It was a glimpse of this “other” preexisting mythology, including that which sprang up about witchcraft appearing in Horneck's account, that Mather needed to suppress. The Mathers had a copy of Webster's work and knew his arguments

against pythonic spirits being thought of as witches' familiars (Tuttle 310). They also knew that Thomas Ady had questioned biblical bases for many concepts surrounding witchcraft such as the witches' flight to the Sabbath, or the very concept of a witch itself.

Where is it written in all the old and new Testament, that a Witch is a murtherer, or hath power to kill by Witchcraft, or to afflict with any disease or infirmity? . . . . Where is it written, that Witches can hurt corn or cattell, or transport corn by Witchcraft, or can fly in the aire, and do many such strange wonders? . . . . Where is it written, that a Witch is such a man or woman that maketh a league with the Devill, written with his or her blood, and by vertue of that covenant to have the Devill at command? . . . . Where is it written, that there are any other sorts of Witches than such as are there described? *Deut.* 18.10, 11. . . . . Where do we read of a he devill, or a she devill, called *incubus* or *succubus*, that useth generation or copulation with Witches, or Witches with them? (A Candle 6-7)

This is the kind of response that Mather feared to elicit by inserting an accurate description of Mora and Blåkulla into his account. Carlo Ginsburg, in his seminal work I Benandanti or The Night Battles, which concentrates mainly on cultural aspects of the witches' flight among the benandanti of the Friuli in northwestern Italy, also finds a connection between the use of shamanic techniques, hallucinogenic substances, and the transvection of witches. As Ginzburg points out, such flights, regardless of how they are produced, seem to begin with a form of trance or catalepsy. They are characteristic of that

which Mircea Eliade defined in his classic definition of shamanism as an ecstatic journey in trance state (Shamanism 5). Ginzburg writes,

Either it has been supposed that witches and warlocks were individuals afflicted by epilepsy, hysteria, or other mental diseases not well defined; or else the loss of consciousness accompanied by hallucinations, described by them have been attributed to the effect of ointments containing sleep-inducing narcotic substances. (17)

We do indeed find such instances of catalepsy mentioned in the Salem court records and we also find a description of such a cataleptic state preceding flight to the witches' Sabbath in Mather's source on the Swedish witches. In Horneck's account, when children and witches were asked by the Swedish commissioners whether or not their transportation was real and personal and whether it had actually occurred in the body, they all answered in the Affirmative, and that the Devil sometimes laid something down in the Place that was very like them. But one of them confessed, that he did only take away her Strength, and her Body lay still upon the Ground; yet sometimes he took even her Body with him. (583)

The girl's story, especially, suggests a lapse of consciousness followed by a strong sensation of flight—so real that it seemed to the subject to take place in the body even though she was lying on the ground. What the devil had “laid down” could well have been the sensation of the physical body remaining behind. In fact, her story sounds very much like the boys swooning into unconsciousness on the ground characterizing initiation ceremonies of the Luiseño Indians in southern California and in other American

Indian tribes. Horneck's account echoes what Reginald Scot describes in The Discoverie of Witchcraft (10.9), the effects of which are typical of the use of such unguents. Scot ends chapter eight of book X by referring to Johannes Baptista Neapolitanus's recipes "by hearbes and potions, to procure pleasant or fearefull dreames." In his Discoverie, Scot describes the effects of a recipe used to procure the transportation of witches, which they

rubbe [upon] all parts of their bodies exceedinglie, till they looke red, and be verie hot, so as the pores may be opened . . . . They joine herewithall either fat, or oile [so] that the force of the ointment may the rather pearse inwardly, and so be more effectuell. (10.8.184)

One of the executed witches at Salem, Ann Pudeator, whose trial Mather does not include in Wonders, was accused of using such an ointment for questionable purposes (SWP 3: 703). The redness of the skin and the heating, along with the fantastical transport, appear to be very much like the mnemonic applied by some medical practitioners to abusers of datura and other plants of the nightshade family containing anticholinergic alkaloids, "blind as a bat, dry as a bone, red as a beet, mad as a hatter, and hot as a hare."<sup>23</sup> By means of this ointment, continues Scot,

in a moone light night they seeme to be carried in the aire, to feasting, singing, dansing, kissing, culling, and other acts of venerie, with such youths as they love and desire most. For the force . . . of their imagination is so vehement [that] they are naturally prone to believe any thing . . . (105).

Stated plainly, certain drugs may have helped produce the perceived events of flying, reminiscent of actions applied to the witches' Sabbath. The negative effects of such substances were probably also responsible at times for producing frightening hallucinations in users then, just as they do today. When recounted before demonologists, they were interpreted as either figures or works of the devil. As one surprised modern user of mandrake put it, "I ran around my apartment thinking I was an eagle ready to take off! I was about to jump out the window but luckily came back to my senses" ("Mistaken Package").<sup>24</sup> In reality such flights could only be sensations and could never be experienced by the body, but that fact did not keep such experiences from seeming real to subjects.

Because of what Mather left out of his version of the Swedish account about the horn and salve, those reading Mather alone never got any clue to the possibility of a natural or rational explanation for why Ann Pudeator accused the devil of "Leaving her ~~Body~~ on the Ground," of sapping her strength, and transporting her in spirit instead to do his bidding (WIW 148). Mather should have known better because, as his readings on witchcraft had informed him, the properties of ointments containing various plants that witches used were said to produce their flights to the Sabbath. The witches' flight to the Sabbath centered around the witches' covenant with Satan and was a pillar of European demonology. Mather probably did not want to spread any more information to the people of New England about acts of the devil being attributable to witch ointments, or raise the prospect of natural assistance by the use of plants for such purposes, especially since their use also characterized the devilish Indians and may even have been a suspected factor at



Salem. The witch ointments said to have been used by the Devil in Sweden might have contained any of three common plants of the nightshade family: mandrake, belladonna, or datura. In Chaucer's time, Belladonna was known as dwale, a cognate of the Swedish word dvala, meaning 'trance,' and the Danish dvale, or dead, sleep, trance, torpor; and dvaledrik, a soporiferous draught (OED).<sup>25</sup>

The map below shows the growth patterns of datura stramonium measured on the Nordic peninsula. As we can see, datura stramonium, in Swedish spikklubba, the plant used by the American Indians in their shamanistic rituals and that may have been used to induce the witchcraft outbreak as Salem has been discovered growing in Sweden almost as far north as the 65<sup>th</sup> parallel. I insert it here to demonstrate the near-universal prevalence of datura stramonium, even in cold northern latitudes, and to show that the contents of the salve in the medicine horns said to be used by the children at Mora to fly to the devil could well have contained this plant. Folklorist John Lindow, who in his book Swedish Legends and Folktales, includes several stories about the appearance of a magic salve and medicine horn used in the flight to Blåkulla, relates that "The magic salve, which really was used, plays a major role in the reality of witchcraft, since it seems to have frequently included certain hallucinatory agents among the herbs and plants in the various recipes used for it" (48). Lindow writes that the "transformations" caused by the witches' salve "solve the problem of how witches could be away at Black Mass without being missed" (49).

I also speculate that the people of Eurasia and Asia might have brought this plant with them when they crossed the Bering Strait into North America, and hence to New England, as they appear to have transported their shamanic practices, as I discuss below.

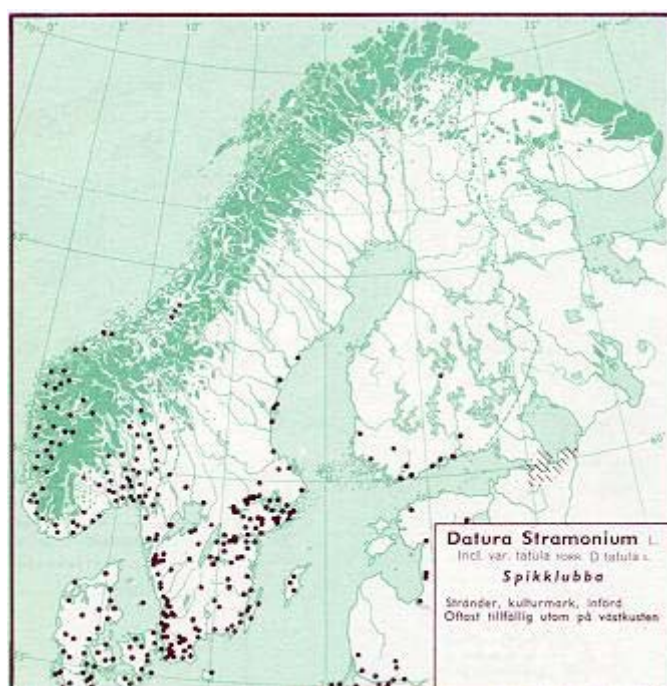


Fig. 3.2. Scandinavian Distribution of Datura Stramonium L. (“Spikklubba”).

Since datura stramonium would have grown in Sweden, it would have grown all over Europe. Such growth patterns do not prove that the plant was used as a witches’ ointment in Mora—only that it could have—but according to Finnish historian Jari Eiola, in the childrens’ testimonies the witches “had only one identifying mark that was repeated from one story to another—a lotion horn reminiscent of a medicine horn. The oldest Swedish accounts concerning a witch’s horn can be found in the medieval county laws” (2). The use of this ointment for flight is mentioned twice in Horneck’s account of the Mora

witches. We know for a fact that the Laplanders who lived above the latitude where datura will commonly grow used the amanita muscaria or fly-agaric mushroom ritually for purposes of transcending the earthly world with their animal familiars. As the map and other evidence indicate, more parallels may have existed between the Mora trials and Salem than even Mather knew for sure. It is a startling statement, but many of our ideas of bewitchment may have originated with the use of such plants. It was precisely these palimpsest layers of narrative and myth involving such use of plants along with other strata of myth informing the Swedish account that Mather had to avoid.

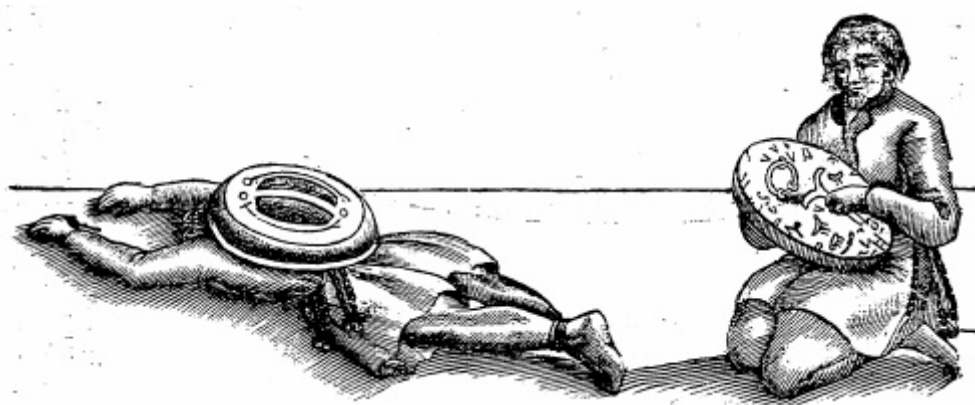


Fig. 3.3 Entering Ecstatic Trance by Way of Drumbeat, J. Scheffer, History of Lapland (1674), 56.

In the illustration above a shaman is playing a drum—a common practice among shamans of Lapland and the American Indians for achieving transcendence. The prostrate man wears another drum skin-down on his back, probably to experience more readily the vibratory sound of the drum being played resonating through his spine. Both the

kneeling drummer and the subject lying prostrate on the floor may well have consumed the fly-agaric mushroom before beginning the ritual.

Besides the use of ritual hallucinogens, similarities between the shamans of Lapland, Siberia, and North American Indians involve the worship of animals as spirits, particularly deer. Anthropologist Peter Furst seems to state the obvious in saying that deer were utilized ubiquitously in the New World as important food animals, but he adds, “almost nowhere were they only that.” Furst continues, “On the contrary, few animals were so universally revered and supernaturally endowed with a special power, and perhaps none was so widely associated with shamans and shamanism” (166). In the final chapter of his book Hallucinogens and Culture, entitled “Hallucinogens and the Sacred Deer,” Furst demonstrates links between the ancient and widespread beliefs concerning the deer and the ritual use of hallucinogenic plants. Examining the affinity between deer and shamanism through many cultures, from Lapland, through Siberia, and throughout North, Central, and South America, Furst poses the pivotal question,

[H]ow far back can we legitimately take this whole pan-American deer-shamanism complex? Can we in fact consider it solely in the context of American prehistory? I don't think so. American Indian deer-shamanism, with its particular emphasis on the deer as divine source of medicine and curing power, is too obviously analogous to the reindeer and deer shamanism of the Paleo-Siberians and their Eurasiatic Paleolithic and Mesolithic antecedents to be anything other than its linear descendant. (167)

The Mesolithic antecedents Furst refers to include what are now the people of Swedish Lapland. Furst also finds that among Native American cultures “[n]orth of Mexico we find the deer widely associated with tobacco, and also with Datura” (168). These connections include the ancient rock art of the Pecos River valley, which incorporates paintings of a shamanic figure with what appears to be several depictions of the seed pods of datruea (“Mind-Altering Rock Art”). As Furst explains, “Of particular pertinence to this problem is the deer’s more or less intensive relationship to several New World hallucinogens, sometimes to the point of total qualitative identification between plant and animal”(168). Such identifications between plant and animal are strong indication of where inquisitors got the idea to transform the veneration people had for the animal-plant spirits who enabled them on their ecstatic journeys into ideas of familiar spirits, the use of witches’ ointment, and the flight to the witches’ Sabbath.

Since datura stramonium, which grows in mid-to-southern Sweden and all over Europe, is thought to be native to the Far East,<sup>26</sup> people who migrated across the Bering Strait thousands of years ago from Siberia and became the Native Americans may have brought the plant with them from Asia, along with their knowledge of the plant’s medicinal and ceremonial uses.

The shamans of Lapland and Siberia closely paralleled the American Indian tribes in Virginia and in New England in their shamanic practices, including the use of the drum and hallucinogenic plants to transcend physical existence and their veneration of animal spirits, including the deer. For example, among the Powhatans the dance began the huskanaw ritual in which the entire population of a chiefdom formed two huge circles

around the “keepers of boys,” male dancers who wore “black hornes,” probably deer horns (Percy 147). John Smith related that Habamock would appear to the Penobscot Powaws sometimes like “a Man, a Deere, or an Eagle, but most commonly like a Snake” (Generall History 461). The deer also played a central role in a Patawomeck creation story, in which the great God who often appeared to humans as a hare created man, woman, water, fish and a great deer. The four winds who were also gods killed the deer out of jealousy. The great Hare then took the hairs of the slain deer and “Spread them upon the earth with many powerful wordes and charmes whereby every haire became a deare” (Strachey 102).

Aboriginal shamanic practices in and around what much later became both Mora and Salem form a specific religious connection between the two places that is thousands of years old. Lapland serves to illustrate the type of practices that may have been occurring simultaneously on their two respective continents between the American Indians and the people of Lapland. It is specifically the shamanic practices among the Indians in New England that Cotton Mather and others knew of first hand, wrote about, and labeled demonic. Even certain knowledge that plants and drums of the Indians enabled the powaw to confer with his spirit-animal familiars would not have deterred Cotton Mather from believing that they were actually consorting with demons.

As Weston La Barre, John Allegro, and Gordon Wasson have all pointed out separately, religion has been, ultimately, the result of ecstatic experience.<sup>27</sup> That statement seems paradoxical because, traditionally, religious institutions have spent so much money, time, and effort attempting to demonize, debunk, or devalue ecstatic

experience. Mather, in Wonders of the Invisible World, was following suit. While religious institutions have tolerated and even venerated some of their own mystics, and Mather himself had had ecstatic experiences, what they really did not like was ecstatic experience not under their own control or those that they could not easily claim or co-opt. As their leaders knew, such experiences often generated hostile sects. We see that principle operating in seventeenth-century New England with Ann Hutchinson and her followers and with the Quakers.

Not only has ecstatic experience often initiated religions and sects, it has also often resulted from the use of hallucinogenic plants. Such plants have enabled many users to make a forced entry into the invisible world, sometimes permanently. Shamans and the people they served believed they experienced the spirit world through their use of a plant, so they considered the plant sacred. Ritual hallucinogens, along with the sacred drum with its depictions of flying reindeer, allowed shamans certain and direct access into the spirit world—they were not rationalizing theological apologetics, or thinking in terms of church meetings, or a change of brain chemistry as we do. The plant was the means that God had provided to experience what was already present but usually unseen. The deer and the plant became the *modus operandi*. The plant-deer upon whom they traveled was to them God. What Cotton Mather confronted in Anthony Horneck's account of the Swedish witches and with witchcraft at Salem was in some ways an encounter in a somewhat purer form than he ever acknowledged, or perhaps realized, with the shamanic origins of his religion. He knew instinctively when he should avoid that issue. His encounter with Blåkulla was akin to what Hugh Trevor-Roper described about the decline

of belief in witchcraft after 1650: “The European belief in witchcraft declined after 1650 because of the adoption of a religious cosmology which changed men’s beliefs about the operations of nature.” Mather was encountering a new religious cosmology that he understood perhaps better than he informed his readers. As George Lyman Kittredge put it,

Now the mere creed—the belief that witches exist and that they can work supernaturally to the injury of and even to the destruction of their enemies—is the heritage of the human race. The Englishman of the sixteenth or seventeenth century did not excogitate or dream it for himself or borrow it from the Continent . . . . He inherited it in an unbroken line from his primeval ancestors. And along with it came another dogma, likewise of abysmal antiquity—the theory that all diseases are of supernatural origin. This dogma had, to be sure, been somewhat limited in scope as the shaman developed into the physician, but it was still extant and still vigorous. (Witchcraft 5)

The shamans of Lapland and Siberia had achieved results similar to the American Indians with datura by use of the fly-agaric mushroom as their ritual hallucinogen. Because the active ingredients of the fly agaric are retained in urine, people would also drink the urine of other humans or deer who had partaken of the sacred mushroom. Reindeer were also strongly attracted to the mushroom and passionately sought it along with the urine of any person who deposited it on the snow (Furst 170-71). Such activity in Lapland, so close to Mora must have influenced the conception of witchcraft in the rest



of Scandinavia, just as Odin, Thor, and the ash tree Yggdrasil of the Scandinavians influenced the religion of Lapland. Even in Mather's time, Lapland had a well deserved reputation for sorcery. This sorcery seems also to have influenced Swedish witches. As Mather aptly puts it in Wonders of the Invisible World,

If a *Lapland* should nourish in it vast numbers, the Successors of the old *Biarmi*, who can with looks or words bewitch other people, or Sell Winds to Marriners, and have their *Familiar Spirits* which they bequeath to their Children when they dy, and by their Enchanted Kettle-Drums can learn things done a Thousand Leagues off; If a *Swedeland* should afford a Village, where some scores of Haggs, may not only have their Meetings with *Familiar Spirits*, but also by their Enchantments drag many scores of poor Children out of their Bed-Chambers, to be spoiled at those meetings; This, were not altogether a matter of so much wonder! (54)

Such statements make one wonder why Mather did not write about the Swedish witches in greater detail.

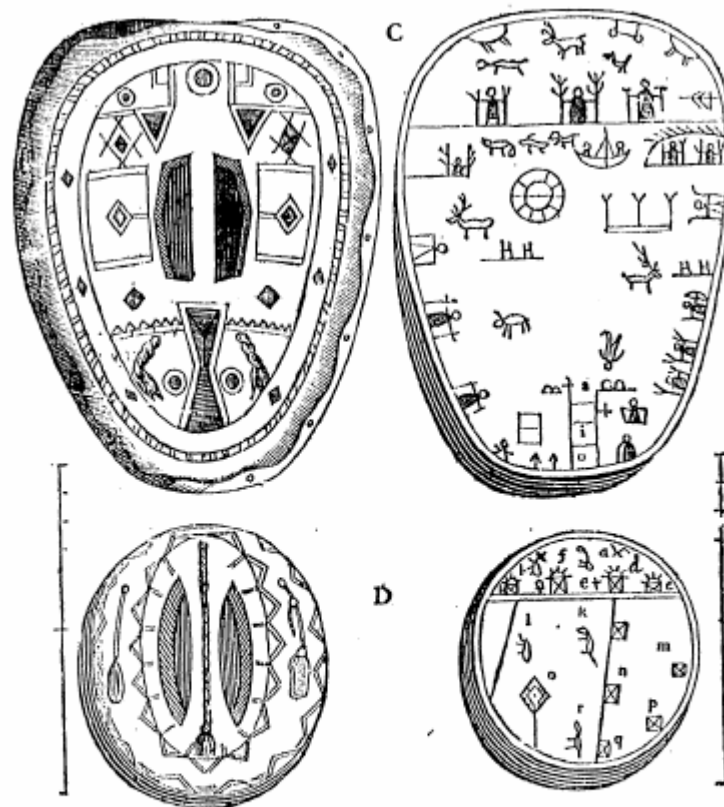
It is telling that despite later documented use of the fly-agaric mushroom in Lapland (see Furst 170-171), the major early sources on Lapland history such as John Sheffer's The History of Lapland (1674) or Olaus Magnus's History of the Goths, Swedes, & Vandals and Other Northern Nations, translated and published in English in 1658, do not mention this little bright red, white-bespeckled mushroom of fairy tale lore, though they elaborate extensively on other aspects of Lapland shamanism. It speaks for deliberate neglect of certain topics by writers for theological or political reasons or out of

fear of spreading potentially harmful information. In his famous book, Soma: Divine Mushroom of Immortality (1972), R. Gordon Wasson quoted Finnish scholar T. I. Itkonen's 1946 book Heathen Religion and Late Superstitions of the Finnish Lapps on fly-agaric use among the Siberians and Lapps:

When speaking of sorcerers, reference must be made to the custom of Siberian shamans of eating fly-agarics to get into an ecstatic stupor; the Ob-Ugrian sorcerers, for instance, consumed each time three or seven mushrooms. It is interesting to note that according to a tradition among the reindeer Lapps of Inari, Lapp sorcerers used to eat fly-agarics with seven dots. (qtd. in Wasson, Soma 279)

And in "The Sacred Mushroom of Scandinavia" Reid W. Kaplan provides Bronze Age evidence in images carved on petroglyphs and several bronze razors depicting what appears to be the fly-agaric mushroom in religious context, sailing upon silhouettes of Viking ships. My point is that in both Mora and Salem, good evidence exists that indigenous populations were ritually contacting the invisible world through the relatively sure-fire medium of hallucinogenic plants. Such practices would have confirmed not only for the indigenous populations but for Swedish Lutherans and English Puritans belief in the existence of the invisible world. The presence of Lapland shamans and New England powwows confirmed for both groups of Christian invaders a conspiracy of the devil. During the Viking era and into the Middle Ages the northern two-thirds of Sweden was inhabited by the people of Lapland, the Sami ("Sami History"). That would have placed Mora, which is a third of the way up the Swedish Peninsula, in or at the border of

Lapland. It was not until 1603 that the first church was built in “Lapland.” Such a location would suggest a strong Sami influence in the area, perhaps especially influencing ideas of witchcraft. It was not until 1673—during the Mora trials—that the official colonization by the Swedes of the Sami lands began (“Sami History”). It was at this point that land grants, water rights, and tax allowances were given to Swedes to encourage the settlement of “unused” portions of lands once inhabited by the Sami. It sounds so familiar. In 1685 the Swedes burned the shamanic drums, destroyed the holy sites, and persecuted worshippers of the old religion of the Sami. The Swedish government, however, could not keep the mushroom from growing, so they had to be content with suppressing knowledge of its use.



The explication of the Figures.

In the Drum C. *a* denotes Birds. *b* black Foxes. *c* Tinnr, a God. *d* Thor, a God.  
*e* Thors hammer. *f* Storjunkare. *g* a wooden Idol. *h* his Servant. *i* a Star. *k* an Ox.  
*l* a Goat. *m* a Star. *n* the Moon. *o* the Sun. *p* a Star. *q* another Star. *r* a Wolf.

Fig. 3.4 Animal, Religious, and Other Figures on Lapland Drums, John Scheffer's *History of Lapland* 1674) 50.

We find that the drums of powaws of the Native American Algonquin tribes had uses similar to those of the shamans of Lapland. As Frank Speck reported, the Penobscot shaman of New England is denoted by the term māde'olinu, the first part of the term meaning “sound of drumming” (240-241). We know that Native Americans frequently

used hallucinogenic plants in their rituals. Another ritual seems similar to that of the people of Lapland in that both groups followed the practice of family shamanism. Though knowledge of this Native American practice is incomplete, different family groups among the Penobscot seem to have possessed their own shamans. A shaman protected certain families' hunting territories and the shaman could "detect when other hunters were intruding upon his family tract" (Speck 244). Shamans sometimes placed "ghosts as guardians at different spots in the districts" (244 n. 1). Frank Speck notes that "It is of no little significance that the same feature has analogues among the Paleoasiatic peoples" (245). These are the same Paleoasiatic people who brought their practices to Lapland. Thus both Salem and Mora had connections to the religious practices of indigenous people of their regions that influenced ideas of witchcraft similarly, each reinforcing the other through knowledge gained through books on both sides of the Atlantic.

Just as today people who use certain plants and substances to "get high" are called "substance abusers," in the past, given the close association of plants with the supernatural, individuals who used plants and their extracts to become intoxicated may have been called "witches" or thought to be associated with witchcraft. Such actual associations between people and plants may be responsible for the pairing in demonological literature of witches with flying ointments. Religious associations with becoming intoxicated may have played a role in labeling as well, due to lingering knowledge of the effects of plants on shamans.

One might ask why the American Indians did not use the fly-agaric mushroom in their religious rituals. There is some evidence of its use among the Ojibway Indians in Michigan for ceremonial purposes, but the chemical properties and morphology of the northern Eurasian fly-agaric mushroom may have been somewhat different from that which grew in the Western Hemisphere and farther south (Benjamin 297; Lewis 706). Just as American Indians in latitudes further south than the Lapps on another continent adopted datura stramonium in their initiation rituals, as I have shown, so might populations further south in Sweden have adopted other plants as they became available or were known about through word of mouth. Interestingly, the “poisoning syndrome due to Amanita muscaria . . . has been called ‘mycoatropinic,’ as the symptoms are similar to those induced by atropinic plants such as Datura stramonium, Atropa belladonna, and Hyosciamus niger, but tropanic alkaloids are not present” (Michelot and Melendez-Howell 132).

The flight to Blåkulla as presented by Horneck, regardless of how it originated, whether induced by the fly-agaric mushroom, plants of the nightshade family, a shaman’s drum, rhetorical demonizing, or a combination of any of these, however, this was not the only aspect of the Swedish account that Mather was happier to omit. Blåkulla itself was suspicious. The very concepts of what went on there were asymmetrical with English ideas of the witches’ Sabbath. As Richard Godbeer points out, accounts of witch gatherings at Salem were quite different from the wild and sexually explicit European

version of the witches' Sabbath. Blåkulla was different from the field beside the minister's house in Salem. Five witnesses placed witch meetings at Salem on the pasture near Reverend Parris's house (Godbeer, "Covenants" 65). They were rather dull affairs resembling Congregational meetings. Godbeer posits that the reason for the difference was that Catholic inquisitors on the continent imposed their prurient version of the witches' Sabbath on the accused to make the rites appear to be inversions of Church rituals. This was done many times, reasons Godbeer, to correct deviant behavior among the population that had become widespread. Confessions in Salem were exacted without nearly as much coercion—by the promise of saving one's life—and allowed the accused more freedom of expression. Instead of making the rituals of witch meetings into inversions of Christian sacraments, they caused them to appear to be exactly like the Congregational minister and his flock at the administering of the Lord's Supper. As a result of the anger of the people against false accusations, New England's version of witch meetings was imitative and therefore highly subversive (67). It was not because the people of Salem were that reticent about expressing sexual content. There was nothing sexual in accounts of these meetings, simply because the presence of wild behavior or orgiastic rituals would have interfered with their paradigm of subversion. In addition to the reasons Godbeer gives, I wish to propose another reason for their subversion: People knew that the minister at Salem Village was behind most of the accusations and despised ministers for it.

Cotton Mather, however, was not interested in practicing subversion against the New England clergy, and he left out a great deal of prurient material in his account of

Blåkulla. He did it for other reasons than did those accused at Salem, however. He believed the devil was imitating New England churches. Mather might have even suspected that the devil had simply taken charge of the church in Salem Village. To have allowed a competing picture of the devil to emerge would have been subversive and self-defeating.

Mythological factors lurking in the Swedish account also prevented Mather from incorporating certain content of Horneck's translation into Wonders of the Invisible World. In Horneck's account we hear that the children "unanimously confessed, that *Blockula* is situated in a delicate large Meadow, whereof you can see no end. The place or House at which they met had before it a Gate painted with divers Colours." In other words, Blockula seemed like an endless world with a beautiful, colorful gate, a little too much like a nice place, even reminiscent of stained-glass windows in a church or the Christian conception of heaven. The house had "a huge large Room [where] there stood a very long Table, at which the Witches did sit down: And that hard by this Room was another Chamber, where there were very lovely and delicate Beds" (586). All this sounds rather like the land of faerie, of which the English were already aware. The trip to Blåkulla was actually a holdover from a much older tradition of taking flights into the spirit world.

The only description we get of the devil up to a certain point in the Swedish narrative makes him appear like someone rather colorful and interesting—like a giant, a fairy, or an elf perhaps—someone mean, no doubt, but not yet diabolical. The children go to a gravel pit—typical of children—near a crossway and dance around. Then they go to



the crossway—an ancient folk motif and location for conjuring, associated with Hecate—and call the devil three times. We hear from the bewitched Swedish children that “he used to appear . . . in different Habits; but for the most part we saw him in a gray Coat, and red and blue Stockings: He had a red Beard, a high-crown'd Hat, with Linnen of divers Colours, wrapt about it, and long Garters upon his Stockings”—not at all like the grim “black man” who resembled a fearful Indian whom those in Salem kept talking about (583). The devil asks if they will serve him “Soul and Body” and they are “content to do so” (583). The description we have heard so far is of a rather congenial place and a not-too-unpleasant devil. Children might actually be curious to go there and meet this fellow.

We begin to hear other details, too, that when combined with the rest are startling. Finnish Historian Jari Eilola explains the cosmology of Blåkulla. In the ancient sagas, the world was divided into two spheres: the midgård or middle yard, the world of humans, animals, and gods, which was surrounded by the utgård, the world of trolls and giants. The midgård represented the ordered world, while the utgård represented the world of chaos and formlessness, the afterlife. The utgård always threatened the order and stability of the midgård, and any transgression of the boundary between the two imperiled life in the midgård. Eilola also shows that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the word for witch was “troll,” so the utgård represented the realm of witches. Eilola states that “the journey to the Blåkulla can be compared to a trip to the ‘utgård,’ i.e. the afterlife” (3).

According to Eilola, in the judgment rolls children frequently testified that they must first pass over a large sea to arrive at Blåkulla. In Horneck's account, children first pass over some churches and high walls where they "must procure some Scrapings of Altars, and Filings of Church-Clocks." This ritual occurs immediately before the devil gives them a horn containing the salve with which they are to anoint themselves (583). They prepare to leave the familiar world of space and time. After they have smeared on the salve, they start arriving in Blåkulla. The first rite exacted from them is to swear an oath to devote themselves, body and soul, to the devil. (Mather says nothing about the oath, or the blasphemy and curses that follow, willful acts that reinforce the idea Horneck reveals that the children have made a pact willingly and are not simply victims.) The children cut their fingers, signing their names in the devil's book with their own blood. Then they are baptized by the devil's priests in Blåkulla. All this sounds so far like standard procedure. The idea of signing the devil's book in blood was very familiar to Mather's audience. References to signing the book appear countless times in the Salem court records, but the Swedish story adds another dimension.

Hereupon the Devil gave them a Purse, wherein there were filings of  
Clocks with a Stone tied to it, which they threw into the Water, and then  
were forced to speak these words; *As these filings of the Clock do never  
return to the Clock from which they are taken, so may my Soul  
never return to Heaven.* (587)

On the way to Blåckula (a pretty green meadow that has no end, that is, beyond space), the children also dropped off clock shavings and scrapings of church altars into

the water (symbolizing the water surrounding the midgård), signifying the rejection of the Church hours, calendar, and their wooden religion—the casting off of time. They have left the realm of linear time characteristic of the Judeo-Christian religion with its definite beginning and final end of all things and have reached a new realm of what John Lindow terms “mythic time,” a world of endless beginnings and endings (Lindow 39). That is the realm not of Jehovah, nor of the devil, but of the ancient Norse-Icelandic sagas. In Horneck’s narrative the children are now portrayed as fully encapsulated within a timeless infinity, a non-material sphere that is neither heaven nor hell but contains the aspects of both—something appearing truly subversive to a world in which one is either saved or damned—something out of kilter with what the Bible could account for if the story were true.

Mythic time accounts for the fact that on a single trip to Blåkulla children could commit carnal acts with the devil, have sons and daughters by him; the devil’s children could in turn couple with each other and then bring forth toads and serpents (Horneck 587). As Francis Hutchinson put it in 1720, “Here are children and their Issue in a night” (125). Mather found it rather difficult to account for this incongruous world without creating more controversy. Events in Blåkulla did not follow the Judeo-Christian concept of time. The narrative itself explained why: the children had gotten rid of the symbol of time: the clock shavings. Even if Mather had published these stories as they appeared in Horneck’s version as fact, they would have appeared suspect to most of his audience. If part were untrue, then why would Mather be retelling it at all? Which parts were true and which were false? The truth is that Mather did not tell most of it, especially not the part

about the devil copulating with the abducted children, their having children, and the children's children copulating with each other. Mather simply could not incorporate ideas into his narrative like the devil becoming a grandfather overnight to amphibians and reptiles—before the earthly parents (who had become great-grandparents in the night) of the original children to become guests in Blåkulla heard their offspring groan and woke them up. No wonder they felt cold! What to make of Horneck's state of mythic time must have bewildered Mather.

The scrapings from the church altars cast into the water and the crossing of the waters surrounding the midgård represented a complete break with the Judeo-Christian concepts and its pillar of support, the Bible and its teachings. Blåkulla represented an escape, a break from the material realm and its religion grounded in the visible rather than the invisible world. A syncretism of both Christian and pagan mythology, Blåkulla formed a rival realm too confusing, too foreign, too outrageous for Mather to portray to his audience—much less try to explain.

After the children drop the purse containing the shavings of church clocks and altars into the water, the witches and children are led into a large room with a table, where the devil “himself gives them meat and drink.” Their diet there included “Broth with Colworts and Bacon in it, Oatmeal, Bread spread with Butter, Milk, and Cheese”—the supposedly hellish banquet at Blåkulla contains a balanced diet (587). The witches apparently sit at table, but the devil makes the children stand at the door and receive “meat and Drink” from him, a parody of a priest and the Lord's Supper. There they partake willingly from this feast that “sometimes . . . tasted very well, and sometimes

very ill,” suggesting the dichotomous nature of the place. With its large room and long table and feast of bacon (like flesh of the boar Sæhrimnir who was eaten and restored nightly), the chamber resembles the one in the Gylfaginning of Snorri Sturlson’s Prose Edda. In Valhöll, after feasting and drinking, the dead heroes ride into a field and fight until they cut each other into pieces. They are then magically healed and return to Valhalla. After meals at Blåkulla the children “went to Dancing, and in the mean while Swore and Cursed most dreadfully, and afterward went to fighting with one another” (587). They then recover and return to Blåkulla. Any keys to understanding this text are hidden by Mather. Meanwhile, we have heard that this devil has beat and cruelly slashed the finger of one who would not stretch it out, but when one girl calls upon the name of Jesus, causing her to fall from her flight upon the ground and hurt herself, this devil heals her up again. Mather omits this part of the account.

Mather explains, however, that hundreds of children were nightly “fetcht from their Lodgings, to a Diabolical Rendezvouz, at a place they called, *Blockula*, where the Monsters that so Spirited them, ~~Tempted~~ them all manner of Ways to ~~Associate~~ with them” (WIW 147-48). Alluding to the devil, Mather relates that when the children arrived in Blåkulla they “gave themselves unto him”(148), and again, “The ~~First Thing~~, they said, they were to do at *Blockula*, was to ~~Give Themselves~~ unto the Devil, and ~~How~~ that they would serve him” (149). Mather also tells his audience of a “~~White Angel~~ [who] would sometimes rescue the Children, from ~~Going in~~, with the Witches” (150).

In each case Mather only hints at something sexual going on. By use of the term “going in”<sup>28</sup> Mather merely insinuates something that Horneck’s account was much more

explicit about, that of the children's sexual liaisons with the Devil. Mather says nothing about the house or its rooms with their foreshadowing of the sexual content ahead.

Horneck, however, relates that after the meal and dancing,

The Devil used to play upon an Harp before them, and afterwards to go with them that he liked best, into a Chamber, where he committed venereous Acts with them; and this indeed all confessed, That he had carnal knowledge of them, and that the Devil had Sons and Daughters by them, which he did Marry together, and they did couple, and brought forth Toads and Serpents. (Horneck 587)

Here we have an account that is more sinister than most European accounts involving the witches' Sabbath, its inverted rituals, and its culmination in copulating with the devil. In 1720 Francis Hutchinson said the "supposed Facts" occurring in Blåkulla make the "coarsest Story that I ever met with" (125). In most European accounts of the Sabbath, participants in the orgiastic ritual are primarily women (along with some men), or a cross-section of the population, which might include some children. In Blåkulla the victims are all children. Mather deftly hints at all this, of course, without confirming any of it with the details. Such content raises the question of whether or not something exceedingly wicked and sexual was behind the witch epidemic in Mora that inquisitors knew about. One thinks about the horn with the salve and the known effects of datura and other plants of the nightshade family making victims soporific, compliant, and forgetful. The medicine horn wielded by the devil represented simultaneously something phallic and potentially narcotic. One imagines the same thing about Salem: the number of

dowry-less female adolescent orphans involved and the male figures they lived with, worked for, and depended upon for support. It is possible some nefarious sexual component existed at Salem as well as at Mora, which Mather suggested but concealed.

There is also something else revealing about Horneck's record that, because Mather does not give us enough prior information, we miss by reading only his account. We find that the children on the morning after their trips to Blåkulla,

After this usage . . . are exceedingly weak; and if any be carried overnight, they cannot recover themselves the next day; and they often fall into Fits, the coming of which they know by an extraordinary Paleness that seizes on the Children; and if a Fit comes upon them, they lean on their Mothers Arms, who sit up with them sometimes all night; and when they observe the Paleness coming, shake the Children, but to no purpose. (585)

We do not know why these children were experiencing such strange and severe symptoms and fits, but we do know that it was not because they had stayed up all night in Blåkulla partying with Satan. If the descriptions are correct, the children show classic signs of having been given something that caused by turns both fits and a lapsing into unconsciousness. We get quite a lot of information about their symptoms from Horneck's translation:

They observe further that their Childrens Breasts grow cold at such times . . . They swoun upon this Paleness, which Swoun lasteth sometimes half an hour, sometimes an hour, sometimes two hours, and when the Children

come to themselves again, they mourn and lament and groan most miserably, and beg exceedingly to be eased. (583)

Finally, one cannot expect that if one is hallucinating on a substance that has been used by shamans the world over to gain transcendence and speak with the gods that the entire experience will always prove unfavorable. If the children were experiencing phantasmagorias it is not likely that upon recall their words could adequately describe them. Many times children, and others too, would have had to fall back upon familiar-sounding motifs of witchcraft and other related accounts of supernatural sightings to find the words to describe such experiences. They might have to resort to standard imagery that sounded like something they had experienced. Both children at Salem and at Mora were said to have witnessed a white angel. A white angel would not be out of keeping with hallucinatory experience. A horrifying experience and the need to be rescued could help conjure such an image to mind. Cotton Mather himself after a period of prayer and fasting recorded seeing such an angel:

A strange and memorable thing. After outpourings of prayer, with the utmost fervour and fasting, there appeared an Angel, whose face shone like the Noonday sun. His features were those of a man, and beardless; his head was encircled by a splendid tiara; on his shoulders were wings; his garments were white and shining; his robe reached to his ankles; and about his loins was a belt not unlike the girdles of the peoples of the East And this Angel said that he was sent by the Lord Jesus to bear a clear answer to



the prayers of a certain youth, and to bear back his words in reply. (Diary 87).

Such experiences above all others probably convinced Cotton Mather of the reality of the invisible world. Prayer and fasting had ushered in the experience for him. Drugs and a drum might have done it for some others.

Mercy Short was one of the girls Cotton Mather treated for bewitchment just after the Salem trials. She was also visited by a “Wonderful Spirit,” who told her ways she must “Answer” the temptations of the “Diabolical Specters” tormenting her. The good spirit also influenced her hand to choose verses “that could bee thought of, and from thence Argue against the Wretches that molested her” (“A Brand” in Burr, Narratives 283-284). The spirit seemed to usher in her recovery. Another girl Cotton Mather treated six months later for witchcraft also saw a White Spirit. Margaret Rule had “frequent view of his bright, Shining and Glorious Garments; he stood by her Bed-side continually heartning the comforting of her and counseling her to maintain her Faith and hope in God” (318).

Cotton Mather himself was afraid to tell others of his experience with the White Angel for fear of others interpreting it as Satan. Mather had actually seen the invisible world. He just did not know exactly what it contained. He was sympathetic with others like Mercy Short and Margaret Rule, who saw into the invisible world also and were sometimes tormented by it. That is why he tried fasting and prayer to try to heal them of bewitchment, refusing to reveal the names of individuals the bewitched had indicated as sponsors of their afflictions. Had Mather actually told others about his experiences with

the Angel, he probably would not have been indicted for witchcraft, but he would have certainly set tongues wagging about his possible involvement with Satan as an angel of light. Cotton Mather believed in witchcraft and wrote Memorable Providences, Wonders of the Invisible World, and other writings to show his readers that witches existed. He tried to stem the witchcraft epidemic at Salem, but he still believed witchcraft was rampant in Salem in 1692. In some ways he may have been indirectly responsible for the deaths and ruined lives because of his interpretation.

Cotton Mather died an honored and respected minister and theologian, truly a seventeenth-century Benjamin Franklin whose championing of smallpox inoculation in Boston saved far more lives than were ever lost in Salem (Silverman Cotton Mather 335-363). In addition, his presence in New England and his enlightened way to treat witchcraft had perhaps saved many more from the same fate of those in Salem. We will never know.

A good way to end this discussion might be by drawing some parallels between two very different men who believed in the Invisible World. In his book The Shaman of Oberstdorf, Wolfgang Behringer tells the story of a man who had glimpses into the invisible world. In the town of Oberstdorf, Bavaria, in the late sixteenth century, a horse wrangler, Chonrad Stoecklin, also saw a white angel. He and his friend, the oxherd, Jacob Walsh, made a pact that whoever died first would return and tell the other about the afterlife.<sup>29</sup> Not long after, Walsh died. According to the record, eight days later Stoecklin's friend returned from the grave as a specter, urging him to repent of his sins and lead a moral life. Walsh appeared to Stoecklin four more times during the next year,

and the last time he saw Walsh, his ghostly friend introduced him to an angel dressed in white with a red cross on his forehead. Before leaving for the last time, Walsh told Stoecklin that the angel was a force of good and not a deception. Stoecklin began to lapse into states of ecstatic trance and unconsciousness, and the angel would take him on soul journeys to visit other worlds that resembled both purgatory and paradise inhabited by strange, though benevolent, beings known as die Nachtschar or the phantoms of the night. Stoecklin became known in the neighborhood for his ability for second sight, and as a healer and witch finder. In 1586, when an unusual set of storms brought plagues and disease to the mountain community in the Allgäu, Stoecklin named a 60-year-old woman in the neighborhood who had been pointed out as a witch to him by the white angel on one of his spirit journeys. That set off a witch epidemic in which Stoecklin himself was named, jailed and tortured, and at 37 years old burned at the stake for witchcraft. Stoecklin's beautiful journeys with die Nachtschar were transformed by Stoecklin's inquisitors into trips to the witches' Sabbat on the back of a goat where he copulated with a sex devil.

Cotton Mather, Chonrad Stoecklin, Mercy Short, and Margaret Rule all perceived a White Angel. All believed that the White Angel they saw was benevolent and would help protect them from witches and demons. The interpretation of such experiences as Mather's and Chonrad Stoecklin becomes all important. What is a bright angel to some is Satan to others. Cotton Mather missed an opportunity with Salem and Wonders that instead of giving him lasting infamy over the witchcraft trials would have earned him eternal praise. Instead of making his editorial decision based on the evidence, Mather

presented evidence based on a decision made previously to defend the judges' actions and to keep intact his theological viewpoint. Since Wonders of the Invisible World was published in mid-October and Governor Phips put a stop to the trials on October 12, Mather could have known ahead of time that Phips was going to stop the trials and, since there would be no further trials, he tailored his book to suit the judges. Mather's reworking of his sources cannot be attributed to chance but must be ascribed to deliberate manipulation.

Despite all the attention the event has received, what caused Salem in 1692 to erupt in a witch hunt remains a mystery. Assessments of what caused the Salem witchcraft outbreak have always seemed inadequate. This very mystery is one of the reasons that have caused Salem to assume mythological significance. In both America and elsewhere in the world, Salem has come, especially in our time, to stand for delusion, hypocrisy, narrow mindedness, willful ignorance, blind adherence to belief, and tragic folly. Salem symbolizes our ready acceptance of the kind of "truth" we are told to believe. It also emblemizes, as it did for Cotton Mather, our attraction to the dark, mysterious, irrational, and unknown. It symbolizes the wish for an invisible world, almost an insistence upon it, and believing what we want to believe without question, regardless. Unfortunately, what we want to believe and are told to believe are often the same. Salem witchcraft and Cotton Mather's response to it are both enigmas, and it is no accident that they are often thought of together. Cotton Mather did not create the witchcraft epidemic at Salem, but in many ways it created him.

Though many scholars have delved into Salem's mysteries to uncover and expose many of its obscure facets, the task is not complete. Our explanations for Salem have not made complete sense any more than "witchcraft" was an adequate explanation in 1692. In the visible world, at least, where there are no effects without causes, something, or rather a combination of things, made events at Salem to occur the way they did. No satisfactory conclusions have ever been reached as to why this hysteria occurred and was allowed to proceed to such a tragic end. This event needs to be studied until this mystery has been solved. We need a new theory of Salem that is holistic and realistic. Hopefully, this discussion represents a step in that direction. Mere fraud and hysteria alone cannot account for the outbreak. Fraud, hysteria, belief in the invisible world, and deliberate manipulation, together, can explain Salem, however, when means are provided to carry out this manipulation.

The first part of this discussion showed the motivation for creating a witch panic, and presented evidence that such deliberate orchestration of a witch hunt took place. It revealed that a plant, the thorn apple, had a long history of use as a poison, as a medicinal plant and as a ritual shamanic hallucinogen. It demonstrated the plant's use among various Native American populations, concentrating on the Algonquin Indians of the Middle Atlantic States and New England, the major area of settlement for the English colonies in America in the seventeenth century. The unfolding of events at Salem and the subsequent outcomes suggest the use of this plant in fomenting the witch epidemic. Experience with what they believed was the invisible world, brought about through the

ingestion of this hallucinogenic plant, brought the afflicted girls at Salem into a state in which they could be manipulated into accusing certain targeted individuals.

The second part of this discussion examined the role that the subjective experience of the nightmare and its interpretation played in creating evidence of witchcraft. This study shows the effects of the nightmare actually being used as spectral evidence against accused individuals at Salem. The incubus nightmare and its related phenomena in seventeenth-century Salem were also responsible for generating belief in the invisible world.

The first two parts of this study examine the formation of belief in the invisible world from the viewpoint of subjective experience, a different perspective than is found in much scholarship concerning witchcraft. There are precedents for this interest in the subjective viewpoint, however. Folklorist David H. Hufford's The Terror That Comes in the Night and other writings and Carlo Ginzburg's Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath are two recent books taking, at least in part, such an approach. In this study, instead of concentrating exclusively on how culture might generate belief in the world of spirits, I attempt to show aspects of how such belief originated in experience and were then shaped but not initiated by culture per se. This study shows how belief in witchcraft could be and often was generated from a perceived experience with the invisible world.

The first two parts of the discussion work together to suggest reasons why Cotton Mather might have been so credulous when it came to witchcraft. At twenty-nine years old, Mather was already enough of a scientist to know that once the validity of the invisible world had been established, the possibilities of that world influencing our own

were endless. His spiritual exercises involving fasting, prayer, and meditation had resulted in transcendent experiences representing (for him) proof positive of the invisible world. Though he tried to keep his heavenly encounters to himself, they nonetheless affected his entire system of belief. Mather's ecstatic confrontations with radiant beings from the invisible world were a basis for his belief. That the invisible world was inhabited by angels, Mather knew from personal experience. That this world was inhabited by devils as well, Mather needed only turn to his Bible for confirmation. The Bible, along with observation and experience, also told him that history was unfolding in New England and elsewhere through the agency of the invisible world. Subjective experience thus became a factor in his forming his millennial expectations.

If we take as genuine Mather's belief in the invisible world, it helps explain at least in part how he could be so insistent in his writings about the existence of the invisible world, its demons, apparitions, and witches, and the coming of Christ's millennial Kingdom. For Mather, faith truly meant "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" as defined in Hebrews 11.1. Mather had, or thought he had, ample evidence of the invisible world from several sources. Once "intercourse was opened at all between both worlds" as Charles Lamb put it, then anything was possible (65).

Mather's belief, gained from subjective encounters, previous experience with witchcraft, and his reading of the Bible and of other accounts of remarkable providences written by contemporaries, therefore, all help explain why he might feel justified in misrepresenting the truth as he did in writing about the Salem witchcraft cases. Belief in

the invisible world was not only a factor in Mather's distortions. It was also, perhaps, a justification. He was also a professional minister, the son of a minister, eighth in a line of ministers, the maternal and paternal grandson of the great John Cotton and Richard Mather. Carrying on the ministerial tradition in such an illustrious family no doubt pressured Mather to obtain equal success and renown of his own. One way to do that was to try to become for New England what Joseph Glanvill and Henry More had been for Old England: clerics, intellectuals, and scientists who used evidence obtained from accounts of spirits, witches, angels, and demons of the invisible world to convince themselves, their flocks, and the doubters of God's existence. One of the best ways of gaining renown was to publish books, and at 29 years old, early in his career, Mather probably saw the opportunity with a book like Wonders of the Invisible World to gain needed recognition.

Wonders was a book based on a sensational topic, and the title page of the first edition, highlighting the words Operations and Devils, suggested in a sensational way that it was going to provide the evidence. The need to live up to the title of his book, and to make his book entertaining and convincing, was probably another reason why Mather agreed to write the book in the first place. He did more than agree to it, apparently. There is evidence he initially sought for the job, and when he got it, had to seek protection of his reputation from those he vindicated by it—those who had been directly responsible for passing sentence on the witches. Even considering these factors, however, it is still hard to explain why Mather would take such liberties with the truth in misrepresenting



his sources. He is not just inadvertently manipulating information but is doing it quite deliberately, in a contrived fashion, with full knowledge of its implications.

That Mather did so, for whatever reason, is instructive to us. Wonders of the Invisible World is an example of a document that long ago was an apologia for an atrocity that Mather and many others probably knew was scandalous. In Wonders, Mather makes no apologies, however, for the deaths of innocent accused citizens; instead, his efforts extend only to approval of the judges' decisions and affirmation of the accusers. He protects the powerful citizens of Salem and Boston. He maintains the status quo to cover up. Mather's book ("that reviled book," as he called it), read in an historical context which I have tried to provide, reveals how individuals, by lying a little, ended up having to lie a lot. Mather actually may have been put into the position of having his genuine belief in the invisible world play handmaiden to something he also believed was wrong. The voice of reason, perhaps by the design of father and son, was Increase Mather. Along with the occasional "witchhunt," such a whitewash is a historical tradition in America. As long as there are religious zealots, politicians, and their allies who want to manipulate the truth for their greedy ends, vigilant citizens need to be ready to reveal the ugly facts. A voice must always speak for the innocent, the wrongly accused, the persecuted, the sick, the powerless, the poor, victims of injustice, ignorance, and deception. The Wonders of the Invisible World is, among many things, an instruction in how and why one man tried to justify a witch hunt.

## Notes to Chapter 3

<sup>1</sup> See pages 375-376 in this text.

<sup>2</sup> See Julius H. Tuttle, The Library of the Mathers. Publications of the American Antiquarian Society 10 (1910): 269-356.

<sup>3</sup> See George Lincoln Burr, Narratives of the New England Witchcraft Cases 416 and 163 n. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Latin: "Sworn in Court."

<sup>5</sup> See Mather's incorporation of Thomas Beverley's eschatological model into his Sermon on Rev. 12.12 in Wonders ([1-47]) and note 254 to Mather's text.

<sup>6</sup> Mather probably refers to "An Hortatory and Necessary Address" beginning on page [48] of Wonders.

<sup>7</sup> Mather refers to the composition of Wonders as a heart-breaking exercise. See *WIW* [iv].

<sup>8</sup> For a thorough treatment of both skeptical and millennialist influences on Mather's thought and writing about the invisible world see Reiner Smolinski, "Salem Witchcraft and the Hermeneutical Crisis of the Seventeenth Century: Cotton Mather's Response to Thomas Hobbes and the Modern Sadducees," in Winifred Herget, ed. The Salem Witchcraft Persecutions Perspectives-Contexts-Representations (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag 1994) 143-183.

<sup>9</sup> According to Keith Thomas, the last person hanged for witchcraft in England was Alice Molland at Exeter in 1685 (Religion 452). The last trial for witchcraft in

England occurred in 1712 involving Jane Wenham (Religion 452). She was found guilty but reprieved. Her case is recorded in an anonymous pamphlet, *An account of the tryal, examination and condemnation of Jane Wenham, on an indictment of witchcraft, for bewitching of Matthew Gilston and Anne Thorn [,] of Walcorne, in the county of Hertford*. (London, [1712]). For a look at the reception of *Wonders of the Invisible World* in London, see Albert B. Cook, “Damaging the Mathers: London Receives the News from Salem,” *NEQ* 65.2, 1992. 302-308.

<sup>10</sup> Other warnings in *Wonders of the Invisible World* about the reliability of spectral evidence can be found on pages [xiii], [xvi], [xxii], 52, 71, 93, and 144.

<sup>11</sup> I glean this information from Rossell Hope Robbins’ entry “Witchcraft in England” in Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology (New York: Crown, 1959) 160-170. See especially the chart of major English witch trials on 168-69 and their corresponding entries in Robbins’s Encyclopedia (pp. 168-69).

<sup>12</sup> See both an excerpt from Mede’s work (pp. 29-37) and Reiner Smolinski’s introduction (pp. x-xlvi) in The Kingdom, The Power, and the Glory.

<sup>13</sup> See Reiner Smolinski’s groundbreaking work on Mather’s millennialism in his “Israel Redivivus,” his Threefold Paradise of Cotton Mather, and The Kingdom, The Power, and the Glory (see bibliography).

<sup>14</sup> See Increase Mather’s discussion of both good and evil Angels in chapter seven of *Esssay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences* (Boston, 1684), pp. 202-247, and especially his discussion of cacodaemons (208-215).

<sup>15</sup> John Gaule (1603/4-1687) was an English clergyman. He graduated from Cambridge with a BA in 1624. His book, *Select Cases of Conscience Touching Witches and Witchcrafts* (1646) was intended as a critical response to invasion of his parish by the witch finders Matthew Hopkins and John Sterne (Clark “Gaule, John”).

<sup>16</sup> A relative of hers later married Cotton Mather’s daughter Jerusha.

<sup>17</sup> There are two versions of the transcripts, both available online. (See Bibliography under “Examination of Susannah Martin.”)

<sup>18</sup> For information on this type of image magic, see Thomas, Keith. Religion and the Decline of Magic. (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1971), 543-544.

<sup>19</sup> See WIW 148-150 and Horneck’s Account 583-593.

<sup>20</sup> Actually, the Swedish account rang uncomfortably of Norse mythology, fairy tales, and the magical flights reported of the Biarmi in Lapland in John Scheffer’s The History of Lapland (1674). The Lapps worshipped variants of the Scandinavian Gods, and Mora was at the time on the border of Lapland. Like the American Indians, they carried on shamanic practices. Mather might actually have feared introducing these “wicked” beliefs and practices by repeating them.

<sup>21</sup> The Rev. John Hale writes about the use of certain books on witchcraft by the Salem judges. See Burr Narratives 416 and n. For allusions to flying ointment in Crouch’s book see pages 74-76.

<sup>22</sup> Before 1486, the Canon Episcopi or Bishop’s Canon had been an article of canon law since before the tenth century. Christian clergy used it to debunk pagan folk

beliefs about the ability to undertake spiritual and bodily flights with pagan goddesses Diana, Herodias, or similar manifestations of pagan goddesses. The Canon contained the following statement: “It is also not to be omitted that some wicked women perverted by the devil, seduced by illusions and phantasms of demons, believe and profess themselves, in the hours of night, to ride upon certain beasts with Diana, the goddess of the pagans, and an innumerable multitude of women, and in the silence of the dead of night to traverse great spaces of earth, and to obey her commands as of their mistress, and to be summoned to her service on certain nights. But I wish it were they alone who perished in their faithlessness and did not draw many with them into the destruction of infidelity. For an innumerable multitude, deceived by this false opinion, believe this to be true and, so believing, wander from the right faith and are involved in the error of the pagans when they think that there is anything of divinity or power except the one God . . . . Who is so stupid and foolish as to think that all these things which are only done in spirit happen in the body . . . . It is therefore to be proclaimed publicly to all that whoever believes such things or similar to these loses the faith, and he who has not the right faith in God in not of God but of him in whom he believes, that is, of the devil.” (Lea History of Witchcraft 179).

The Bull of Pope Innocent VIII overturned that canon by declaring it heresy not to believe such flights by witches with the devil actually took place in the body.

<sup>23</sup> The description has almost become proverbial in medical descriptions of the effects of these plants. “Datura stramonium.” Book Review. Review Francaise

Laboratoires. Vol. 2002. Issue 340. February 2002. Page 23. My translation is from the French.

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, recollections of trips under the headings “Datura,” “Mandrake,” and “Belladonna” in the Erowid Experience Vaults at [http://www.erowid.org/experiences/exp\\_list.shtml](http://www.erowid.org/experiences/exp_list.shtml).

<sup>25</sup> The word is found in Chaucer’s The Canterbury Tales, “The Reeve’s Tale,” line 241.

<sup>26</sup> Bausor, S.C. “Datura.” Encyclopedia Americana Online. July 27, 2005. <http://ea-ada.grolier.com.dax.lib.unf.edu/cgi-bin/article?assetid=0119870-00>

<sup>26</sup> La Barre’s The Ghost Dance uncovers shamanic experience behind all organized religion; In The Sacred Mushroom and the Cross, Allegro eruditely traces the use of the amanita muscaria or fly agaric mushroom to the beginnings of Christianity, and Gordon Wasson, in his indispensable and scholarly work Soma, Divine Mushroom of Immortality, identifies the transcendent drink Soma of the Rig Veda to the fly agaric, the white-bespeckled bright-red mushroom of fairy tale lore.

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<sup>28</sup> Mather is using the language of the King James Version.

<sup>29</sup> Cotton Mather tells a very similar story of Mehetabel Warner in the “Second Paradise” of his “Triparadisus.” See Reiner Smolinski’s The Threefold Paradise of Cotton Mather (116-17).

### Note on the Text

The text of The Wonders of the Invisible World reproduced in this dissertation is that of the first Boston edition, an octavo volume of 208 pages. It is the edition over which Mather would have had the most control. The first Boston edition carried two imprints. Other than minor differences at the bottom of their title pages, these two Boston imprints are identical. Because it afforded the best copy for my transcription, I used the imprint containing the words at the bottom of the title page, “Printed by *Benj. Harris for Sam. Phillips.*” This imprint is listed in Thomas J. Holmes’ bibliography of the works of Cotton Mather as No. 454-A<sup>1</sup>. I worked with a microfilm photocopy of this imprint from University Microfilms International and a digital copy made from the microfilm negative from ProQuest’s Early English Books Online series. For the first and third London editions I used photocopies of microfilm from University Microfilms International, along with digital copies the microfilm negative of the first and third London editions from ProQuest’s Early English Books Online. The second London edition is not available on microfilm, so I collated this text from an original copy of the second edition located at The University of Miami. In my editing of Mather’s text, I use as guides the editorial objectives and procedures outlined by Kenneth B. Murdock in his edition of Books 1 and 2 of Magnalia Christi Americana, Winton U. Solberg’s edition of The Christian Philosopher, and Reiner Smolinski in his edition of Mather’s “Triparaisus” (see bibliography).



In Cotton Mather's lifetime Wonders of the Invisible World was published in one Boston and in three London editions. The second and third London editions were abridgments of the first edition. The title pages of all editions carry the date 1693, though both first editions were published late in 1692. Only the first London edition has the complete text of the first Boston edition, except for the title page, which is altered for the London audience. I have collated all four editions and reproduced their title pages in facsimile so the reader may reconstruct the content of the three London editions to determine what those reading the first, second, and third London editions would have seen.

Cotton Mather used capital letters and italics for emphasis, for quotations, and for foreign words and phrases. He used black letter font for running heads and occasionally to emphasize words within a text. I have reproduced Mather's use of capitalization, italicization, and black letter from the first Boston edition. The size and type of fonts follow the first edition as closely as possible. I have noted the distribution of the running heads in an appendix entitled "Textual Notes." I have replaced the long "s" with a modern "s" throughout. When a hyphenated word in the first Boston Edition occurs at the end of a line, I place the hyphen in square brackets: [-].

I have indicated emendations by page and line number of this edition in an appendix entitled "Emendations." I have followed the original pagination of the Boston edition by inserting it into square brackets. In collating these texts, I have indicated where sections of subsequent editions begin and end in relation to the first Boston edition. I note these places in the text with symbols to the left of the first word that corresponds to

beginning of the text in the London edition, and to right of the last word that corresponds with the end of that section in the London edition. I note these places in the text with the following symbols in parenthetical brackets:

{FLB} = First London edition begins

{FLE} = First London edition ends

{SLB} = Second London Edition Begins

{SLE} = Second London Edition Ends

{TLB} = Third London Edition begins

{TLE} = Third London Edition ends

Where the first, second, or third London editions all begin or end in the same place in the text, I note it by combining abbreviations for the London editions. For example: {FSTLB} = The first, second, and third London editions begin.

{STLE} = The second and third London editions end.

I record the page and line number of these instances in my edition in an appendix entitled "Notes on the London Editions." Since these insertions will be infrequent, my hope is they will be unobtrusive. My procedure in this edition is to collate words only. I do not attempt to collate incidental variations between the editions like capitalization, italicization, punctuation, changes in font, or hyphenation. For these incidentals I follow the Boston edition faithfully.

*The Wonders of the Invisible World.*<sup>1</sup>

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# OBSERVATIONS

As well *Historical* as *Theological*, upon the NATURE, the  
NUMBER, and the OPERATIONS of the

# DEVILS.

Accompany'd with,

I. Some Accounts of the Grievous Molestations, by DÆMONS and WITCHCRAFTS, which have lately Annoy'd the Countrey; and the Trials of some eminent *Malefactors* Executed upon occasion thereof: with several Remarkable *Curiosities* therein occurring.

II. Some Counsils, Directing a due Improvement of the terrible things, lately done, by the Unusual & Amazing Range of EVIL SPIRITS, in Our Neighbourhood: & the methods to prevent the *Wrongs* which those *Evil Angels* may intend against all sorts of people among us; especially in Accusations of the Innocent.

III. Some Conjectures upon the great EVENTS, likely to befall, the WORLD in General, and NEW-ENGLAND in particular; as also upon the Advances of the TIME, when we shall see BETTER DAYES.

IV. A short Narrative of a late Outrage committed by a knot of WITCHES in *Swedeland*, very much Resembling and so far Explaining, *That* under which our parts of *America* have laboured!

V. THE DEVIL DISCOVERED; In a Brief Discourse upon those TEMPTATIONS, which are the more Ordinary *Devices* of the Wicked One.

---

By Cotton Mather.

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*Boston* Printed by *Benj. Harris* for *Sam. Phillips*. 1693.

[ii]

PUBLISHED by the Special  
 Command of His EX-  
 CELLENCY, the Go-  
 vernour<sup>2</sup> of the Province of  
 the Massachusetts-Bay in  
 New-England.

\*\*\*\*\*

[iii] {FSTLB}

#### The Author's Defence

'Tis, as I Remember, the Learned *Scribonius*,<sup>3</sup> who Reports that One of his Acquaintance, devoutly making his Prayers on the behalf of a Person molested by *Evil Spirits*, received from those *Evil Spirits* an horrible Blow over the Face:<sup>4</sup> And I may my self Expect not few or small *Buffetings* from *Evil Spirits*, for the Endeavours wherewith I am now going to Encounter them. I am far from Insensible, that at this Extraordinary Time of the *Devils Coming down in Great Wrath upon us*,<sup>5</sup> there are too many Tongues and Hearts thereby *Set on Fire of Hell*;<sup>6</sup> that the various Opinions about the *Witchcrafts* which of Later Time have Troubled us, are maintained by some with so much Cloudy Fury, as if they could never be sufficiently Stated, unless written in the Liquor wherewith *Witches* use to write their Covenants;<sup>7</sup> and that he who becomes an Author at such a Time, had need be, *Fenced with Iron, and the Staff of a Spear*.<sup>8</sup> The unaccountable Frowardness, Asperity, Untreatableness,<sup>9</sup> and Inconsistency of many persons, every Day

gives a Visible Exposition of that passage, *An Evil Spirit from the Lord came upon Saul*;<sup>10</sup> and Illustration of that Story, *There met him two Possessed with Devils, exceeding Fierce, so that no man might pass by that way*.<sup>11</sup> To send [iv] abroad a Book, among such Readers were a very unadvised Thing if a Man had not such *Reasons* to give as I can bring, for such an Undertaking. Briefly, I hope it cannot be said, *They are all so*: No, I hope the *Body* of this People, are yet in such a Temper, as to be capable of Applying their Thoughts, to make a *Right Use*,<sup>12</sup> of the Stupendious and prodigious Things that are happening among us: And because I was concern'd, when I saw that no Abler Hand Emitted any *Essays* to Engage the Minds of this People in such Holy, Pious, Fruitful Improvements, as God would have to be made of His Amazing Dispensations now upon us, THEREFORE it is that One of the Least among<sup>13</sup> the Children of *New-England*, has here done, what is done. None, but, *the Father who sees in Secret*,<sup>14</sup> knows the Heart-breaking Exercises, wherewith I have Composed what is now going to be Exposed; Lest I should in any *One Thing*,<sup>15</sup> miss of Doing my Designed Service for His Glory, and for His People; but *I* am now somewhat comfortably Assured of *His* favourable Acceptance; and, *I will not Fear; what can a Satan do unto me!*<sup>16</sup>

Having *Performed*, Something of what God *Required*, in labouring to suit His *Words* unto His *Works*,<sup>17</sup> at this Day among us, and therewithal handled a *Theme* that has been sometimes counted not unworthy the Pen, even of a *King*,<sup>18</sup> it will easily be perceived, that some subordinate *Ends* have been considered in these Endeavours.

[v] I have indeed set my self to Countermine the whole PLOT of the Devil, against *New-England*, in every Branch of it, as far as one of my *Darkness*, can

comprehend such a *Work of Darkness*.<sup>19</sup> I may add, that I have herein also aimed at the Information and Satisfaction of Good men in another Countrey, a Thousand Leagues off, where I have, it may be, *More*, or however, more *Considerable*, Friends, than in *My Own*;<sup>20</sup> And I do what I can to have that Countrey, now, as well as alwayes, in the best Terms with *My Own*. But while I am doing these things, I have been driven a little to do something likewise for *My self*; I mean, by taking off the false Reports, and hard Censures about My Opinion in these matters, the *Parter's Portion*,<sup>21</sup> which my *pursuit of Peace*, has procured me among the *Keen*.<sup>22</sup> My hitherto *Unvaried Thoughts* are here Published; and, I believe, they will be owned by most, of the Ministers of God in these Colonies: nor can amends be well made me, for the wrong done me, by other sorts of *Representations*.

In fine, For the *Dogmatical* part of my Discourse, I want no Defence; for the *Historical* part of it, I have a very Great One. The Lieutenant-Governour of *New-England*,<sup>23</sup> having perused it, has done me the Honour of giving me a *Shield*, under the Umbrage whereof I now dare to walk Abroad.

[vi]

“Reverend and Dear Sir,

YOU Very much Gratify'd me, as well as put a kind Respect upon me, when you put into my hands. Your Elaborate and most seasonable Discourse, entituled, *The Wonders of The Invisible World*. And having now Perused so fruitful and happy a Composure, upon such a Subject at this Juncture of Time, and considering the Place that I Hold in the Court of *Oyer and Terminer*,<sup>24</sup> still Labouring and proceeding in the Trial of

the persons Accused and Convicted for *Witchcraft*, I find that I am more nearly and highly concerned than as a meer Ordinary Reader, to Express my Obligation and Thankfulness to you, for so great pains; and cannot but hold my self many ways bound, even to the utmost of what is proper for me, in my present Publick Capacity, to declare my *Singular Approbation* thereof. Such is Your *Design*, most plainly expressed throughout the whole; such Your *Zeal* for God; Your *Enmity* to Satan and his Kingdom; Your *Faithfulness* and *Compassion* to this poor people; Such the *Vigour*, but yet great *Temper* of your Spirit; Such your *Instruction* and Counsel; your CARE OF TRUTH; Your *Wisdom* and Dexterity in allaying and moderating, that among us, which needs it;<sup>25</sup> Such Your clear Discerning of Divine *Providences* and *Periods*, now running on apace towards their Glorious Issues in the World; and finally, Such your Good News of, *The Shortness of the Devils Time*; That all Good Men must needs [vii] Desire the making of this your Discourse, Publick to the World; and will greatly Rejoyce that the *Spirit of the Lord* has thus Enabled you to *Lift up a Standard* against the Infernal Enemy, that hath been *Coming in like a Flood upon us*. I do therefore make it my particular and Earnest Request unto you, that as soon as may be, you will Commit the same unto the PRESS accordingly.

I am,

Your Assured Friend,

*William Stoughton.*”

I Live by *Neighbours*, that force me to produce these Undeserved Lines. But now, as when Mr. *Wilson*,<sup>26</sup> beholding a great Muster of Souldiers, had it by a Gentleman then present, said unto him, *Sir, I'l Tell you a great Thing; here is a mighty Body of People; and there is not SEVEN of them all but what Loves Mr. Wilson*; that Gracious Man presently & pleasantly Reply'd, *Sir, I'll tell you as good a thing as that; here is a mighty Body of People; and there is not so much as ONE among them all, but Mr. Wilson Loves him*. Somewhat so; 'Tis possible that among, this Body of People, there may be few, that Love the Writer of this Book; but, give me leave to boast so far, there is not one among all this Body of People, whom this *Mather* would not Study to *Serve*, as well as to *Love*. With such a *Spirit of Love*, is the Book now before us written; I appeal to all *this World*; and if *this World*, will deny me the Right of acknowledging so much, I Appeal to the *Other*, that it is, *Not written with an Evil Spirit*: for which cause, I shall not wonder if *Evil Spirits*, be Exasperat'd by what is *Written*, as the *Sadducees* doubtless were with what was *Discoursed* in the Days of our Saviour.<sup>27</sup> I only Demand the *Justice*, that others *Read* it, with the same Spirit wherewith I *writ it*.<sup>28</sup>



[viii]

## Enchantments Encountered.

S1. It was as long ago, as the year 1637. that a Faithful Minister of the Church of *England*, whose Name was Mr. *Edward Symons*,<sup>29</sup> did in a Sermon afterwards Printed, thus Express himselfe; “At *New-England* now the Sun of Comfort begins to appear, and the Glorious Day-Star to show it self; --- *Sed Venient Annis Sæcula Seris*,<sup>30</sup> there will come Times, in after-ages when *the Clouds will over-shadow*<sup>31</sup> *and darken the Sky*<sup>32</sup> *there*. Many now promise to themselves nothing but successive Happiness there, which *for a Time* through Gods Mercy they may Enjoy; and I Pray God, they may a *Long Time*; but in this World there is no Happiness perpetual.”<sup>33</sup> An *Observation*, Or, *I* had almost said, an *Inspiration*, very dismally now verify’d upon us! It has been affirm’d by some who best knew *New-England*, That the World will do *New-England* a great piece of Injustice, if it acknowledge not a measure of Religion, Loyalty, Honesty and Industry, in the people there, beyond what is to be found with any other people for the Number of them.<sup>34</sup> When I did a few years ago, publish a Book, which mentioned a few *Memorable Witchcrafts*,<sup>35</sup> committed in this Country; the [ix] Excellent *Baxter*<sup>36</sup> graced the Second Edition of that Book, with a kind Preface, wherein he sees cause to say, *If any are Scandalized, that New-England, a place of as serious Piety, as any I can hear of, under Heaven, should be Troubled so much with Witches, I think, tis no Wonder: Where will the Devil show most Malice, but where he is Hated, and Hateth Most*;<sup>37</sup> And I hope, the

Country will still deserve and answer, the Charity so Expressed by that Reverend man of God! Whosoever travels over this Wilderness, will see it richly bespangled with Evangelical *Churches*, whose Pastors are Holy, Able, & Painful *Overseers* of their Flocks, Lively Preachers, and Vertuous Livers; and such as in their Several Neighbourly *Associations*, have had their Meetings whereat Ecclesiastical matters of common Concernment are Considered: *Churches*, whose Communicants have been seriously Examined about their Experiences of *Regeneration*, as well as about their Knowledge, and Beleef and Blameless Conversation, before their Admission to the Sacred Communion; although others of less but Hopeful Attainments in Christianity are not ordinarily deny'd Baptism for themselves and theirs; *Churches*, which are Shy of using any thing in the Worship of God, for which they cannot see a Warrant of God; but with whom yet the Names of *Congregational*, *Presbyterian*, *Episcopalian*, or, *Antipædobaptist*,<sup>38</sup> are swallowed up in that of, *Christian*; Persons of all those Perswasions being actually taken into our Fellowship, when *Visible Godliness* has Recommended them: *Churches*, which usually do within themselves manage their own Discipline, under the Conduct of their Elders; but yet call in the help of *Synods* upon Emergencies, or Aggrievances: *Churches*, Lastly, wherein Multitudes are growing Ripe for Heaven every Day; and as fast as these are ta- [x] ken off, others are daily Rising up. And by the presence and power of the *Divine Institutions* thus mentained in the Country, we are still so Happy, that, I suppose, there is no Land in the Universe more free from the Debauching, and the Debasing Vices of Ungodliness. The Body of the People are hitherto so disposed, that *Swearing*, *Sabbath-breaking*, *Whoring*, *Drunkennes*, and the like, do not

make a *Gentleman*, but a *Monster*, or a *Goblin*,<sup>39</sup> in the Vulgar Estimation. All this notwithstanding, we must humbly Confess to our *God*, that we are miserably Degenerated from the *First Love*,<sup>40</sup> of our Predecessors; however we *boast our selves a little*, when *Men* would go to trample upon us, and we venture to say, *Whereinsoever any is bold (we speak foolishly) we are bold also*.<sup>41</sup> The first Planters of these Colonies were a *Chosen Generation*<sup>42</sup> of men, who were first so *Pure*, as to disrelish many things which they thought wanted *Reformation* else where; and yet withal so *Peaceable*, that they Embraced a Voluntary Exile in a Squalid, horrid, *American* Desart, rather than to Live in Contentions with their Brethren. Those Good men imagined that they should Leave their Posterity, in a place, where they should never see the Inroads of *Profanity*, or *Superstition*; and a famous Person returning hence could in a Sermon before the Parliament, profess, *I have now been seven years in a Country, where I never saw one man drunk, or heard one Oath sworn, or beheld one Beggar in the Streets, all the while*.<sup>43</sup>

Such great persons as *Budæus* and others, who mistook Sir. *Thomas Mores* UTOPIA, for a Country really Existent, and stirr'd up some Divines Charitably to undertake a Voyage thither, might now have certainly found a Truth in their Mistake;<sup>44</sup> *New-England* was a true *Utopia*. But alas, the Children, and Servants of those Old [xi] Planters, must needs afford many, *Degenerate Plants*, and there is now Risen up a Number of people, otherwise Inclined than our *Joshua's* and the *Elders that outlived them*. Those two things, our Holy *Progenitors*, and our Happy *Advantages*, make *Omissions* of Duty, and such *Spiritual Disorders* as the whole World abroad is overwhelmed with, to be as Provoking

in *us*, as the most flagitious wickedness *Committed* in other places; and the Ministers of God are accordingly severe in their Testimonies. But in Short, Those Interests of the *Gospel*, which were the Errand of our Fathers into these Ends of the Earth, have been too much Neglected and Postponed, and the Attainments of an hand-some *Education*, have been too much undervalued, by *Multitudes*, that have not fallen into Exorbitancies of Wickedness; and *some*, especially of our Young ones, when they have got abroad from under the *Restraints* here laid upon them, have become extravagantly and abominably Vicious. Hence t[i]s, that the Happiness of *New-England*, has been, *but for a Time*,<sup>45</sup> as it was foretold, and not for a *Long Time*, as ha's been desir'd for us. A Variety of Calamity ha's long follow'd this Plantation; and we have all Reason imaginable to ascribe it unto the Rebuke of Heaven upon us for our manifold *Apostasies*; we make no Right use of our Disasters, if we do not, *Remember whence we are fallen, and Repent, and Do the first works*.<sup>46</sup> But yet our Afflictions may come under a further Consideration with us: there is further cause of our Afflictions, whose *Due* must be *Given* him.

S. II. The *New-Englanders*, are a People of God settled in those, which were once the *Devils Territories*;<sup>47</sup> and it may easily be supposed that the *Devil* was Exceedingly [xii] disturbed, when he perceived such a people here accomplishing the Promise of old made unto our Blessed Jesus *That He should have the Utmost parts of the Earth for His Possession*.<sup>48</sup> There was not a greater Uproar among the *Ephesians*, when the Gospel was first brought among them then there was among, *The Powers of the Air* (after whom those *Ephesians* walked)<sup>49</sup> when first the *Silver Trumpets*<sup>50</sup> of the Gospel here made the *Joyful*

*Sound.*<sup>51</sup> The Devil thus Irritated, immediately try'd all sorts of Methods to overturn this poor Plantation: and so much of the Church as was *Fled into this Wilderness*, immediately found, *The Serpent cast out of his Mouth, a Flood for the carrying of it away.*<sup>52</sup> I believe, that never were more *Satanical Devices* used for the Unsettling of any People under the Sun, than what have been Employ'd for the Extirpation of the *Vine*<sup>53</sup> which God has here *Planted, Casting out the Heathen and Preparing a Room before it, and causing it to take deep Root, and fill the Land; so that it sent its Boughs unto the Atlantic Sea Eastward, and its Branches unto the Connecticut River Westward, and the Hills were covered with the Shadow thereof.*<sup>54</sup> But, All those Attempts of Hell, have hitherto been Abortive, many an *Ebenezer*<sup>55</sup> has been Erected unto the Praise of God, by His Poor People here; and, *Having obtained Help from God, we continue to this Day.*<sup>56</sup> Wherefore the Devil is now making one Attempt more upon us; an Attempt more Difficult, more Surprising, more snarl'd with unintelligible Circumstances than any that we have hitherto Encountred; and [check text] Attempt so *Critical*, that if we get well through, we shall soon Enjoy *Halcyon Days* with all the *Vultures* of Hell,<sup>57</sup> *Trodden under our Feet.*<sup>58</sup> He has wanted his *Incarnate Legions*,<sup>59</sup> to Persecute us, as the People of God, have in the other Hemisphere been Persecuted: he has therefore drawn forth his more *Spiritual* ones to make an Attacque upon us. We have been advised, by some Credible Christians yet alive, that a Malefactor, accused of *Witchcraft* as well as *Murder*, and Executed in this place more than Forty Years ago, did then give Notice, of, *An Horrible PLOT against the Country, by WITCHCRAFT, and a Foundation of WITCHCRAFT then Laid, which if it were not seasonably Discovered, would probably*

*Blow up, and pull down all the Churches in the Country.*<sup>60</sup> And we have now with Horror seen the *Discovery* of such a *Witchcraft!* An Army of *Devils* is horribly broke in, upon the place which is the *Center* and after a sort, the *First-born* of our English Settlements:<sup>61</sup> and the Houses of the Good People there, are fill'd with the doleful Shrieks of their Children and Servants, Tormented by Invisible Hands, with Tortures altogether preternatural.<sup>62</sup> After the Mischiefs there Endeavoured, and since in part Conquered, the terrible Plague, of, *Evil Angels*,<sup>63</sup> hath made its progress into some other places, where other persons have been in like manner Diabolically handled. These our poor Afflicted Neighbours, quickly after they become *Infected* and *Infested*<sup>64</sup> with these *Dæmons*, arrive to a Capacity of Discerning those which they conceive the *Shapes* of their Troublers; and not withstanding the Great and Just Suspicion, that the *Dæmons* might Impose the *Shapes* of Innocent Persons in their *Spectral Exhibitions* upon the Sufferers, (which may perhaps prove no small part of the *Witch-Plot* in the issue) yet many of the persons thus Represented, being Examined, several of them have been Convicted of a very Damnable *Witchcraft*:<sup>65</sup> yea, more than One *Twenty* have *Confessed*, that they have Signed unto a *Book*, which the Devil show'd them, and Engaged in his Hellish Design of *Bewitching*, and *Ruining* our Land. *We* know not, at least *I* know not, how far the *Delusions* of Satan may be Interwoven into some Circumstances of the *Confessions*; but [xiv] one would think, all the Rules of Understanding Humane Affayrs are at an end, if after so many most Voluntry Harmonious *Confessions*, made by Intelligent persons of all Ages, in sundry Towns, at several Times, we must not Believe the *main strokes* wherein those *Confessions* all agree: especially when we have a

thousand preternatural Things every day before our eyes, wherein the *Confessors* do acknowledge their Concernment, and give Demonstration of their being so Concerned.<sup>66</sup>

If the Devils now can strike the minds of men, with any *Poisons* of so fine a Composition and Operation, that scores of Innocent People shall Unite, in *Confessions* of a Crime, which we see actually committed, it is a thing prodigious, beyond the Wonders of the former Ages, and it threatens no less than a sort of a Dissolution upon the World. Now, by these *Confessions* 'tis Agreed, *That* the Devil has made a dreadful Knot of *Witches* in the Country, and by the help of *Witches* has dreadfully Encreased that Knot:<sup>67</sup> *That* these *witches* have driven a Trade of Commissioning their *Confederate Spirits*,<sup>68</sup> to do all sorts of Mischiefs to the Neighbours, whereupon there have Ensued such Mischievous consequences upon the Bodies, and Estates of the Neighbourhood, as could not otherwise be accounted for: yea, *That* at prodigious *Witch-Meetings*, the Wretches have proceeded so far, as to Concert and Consult the Methods of Rooting out the Christian Religion from this Country, and setting up instead of it, perhaps a more gross *Diabolism*, than ever the World saw before.<sup>69</sup> And yet it will be a thing a little short of *Miracle*, if in so *spread* a Business, as this, the Devil should not get in some of his Juggles, to confound the Discovery of all the rest.<sup>70</sup>

S. 3. Doubtless, the Thoughts of many will re-[xv] ceive a Great Scandal against *New-England*, from the Number of Persons that have been Accused, or Suspected, for *Witchcraft*, in this Country: But it were easy to offer many things, that may Answer and Abate the Scandal. If the Holy God should any where permit the Devils to hook two or

three wicked *Scholars*, into *Witchcraft*, and then by their Assistance to Range with their *Poisonous Insinuations*, among Ignorant, Envious, Discontented People, till they have cunningly decoy'd them into some sudden *Act*, whereby the Toyls of Hell shall be perhaps inextricably cast over them: what Country in the World, would not afford *Witches* numerous to a Prodigy?<sup>71</sup> Accordingly, The Kingdoms of *Sweeden, Denmark, Scotland*, yea, and *England* it self, as well as the Province of *New-England*, have had their Storms of *Witchcrafts* breaking upon them, which have made most Lamentable Devastations: which also I wish, may be, *The Last*.<sup>72</sup> And it is not uneasy to be imagined, That God ha's not brought out all the *Witchcrafts* in many other Lands, with such a speedy, dreadful, destroying *Jealousy*, as burns forth upon such *High Treasons* committed here in, *A Land of Uprightness*: Transgressors, may more quickly here, than else where become a prey to the Vengeance of Him, *Who ha's Eyes like a Flame of Fire*, and, *who walks in the midst of the Golden Candlesticks*.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, There are many parts of the World, who if they do upon this Occasion insult over this People of God, need only to be told the Story of what happened at *Loim*, in the Duchy of *Gulic*, where, a Popish Curate, having ineffectually try'd many Charms, to Eject the Devil out of a Damsel there possessed, he Passionately bid the Devil come out of her, into himself; but the Devil answered him *Quid mihi Opus est eum tentare, quem Novissimo Die, [xvi] Jure Optimo sum Posseßurus?* that is, *What need meddle with one, whom I am sure to have and hold at the Last Day, as my own forever!*<sup>74</sup> {STLE}



But besides all this, give me Leave to add; it is to be hoped, That among the persons represented by the *Spectres* which now afflict our Neighbours, there will be found *some* that never explicitly contracted with any of the *Evil Angels*. The Witches have not only intimated but some of them acknowledged, That they have plotted the Representations of *Innocent Persons*, to cover and shelter themselves in their Witchcrafts;<sup>75</sup> now, altho' our good God has hitherto generally preserved us, from the Abuse therein Design'd by the Devils for us, yet who of us can Exactly State, *How far our God may for our Chastisement permit the Devil to proceed in such an Abuse?* It was the Result of a Discourse, lately held at a Meeting of some very Pious and Learned, Ministers among us, That *the Devils may sometimes have a permission to Represent an Innocent Person, as Tormenting such as are under Diabolical Molestations:*<sup>76</sup> But that *such Things are Rare and Extraordinary, especially, when such Matters come before Civil Judicature.* The Opinion Expressed with so much Caution and Judgment, seems to be the prevailing Sense of many others; who are men Eminently Cautious and Judicious; and have both *Argument* and *History* to Countenance them in it. It is *Rare and Extraordinary*, for an Honest *Naboth* to have his Life it self Sworn away, by two *Children of Belial*,<sup>77</sup> and yet no Infringement hereby made on the Rectoral<sup>78</sup> Righteousness of our Eternal Sovereign, whose *Judgments are a Great Deep*,<sup>79</sup> and who *gives none Account of His matters.*<sup>80</sup> Thus, although, the Appearance of Innocent Persons, in *Spectral Exhibitions* afflicting the Neighbourhood, be a thing *Rare and Extraordinary*; yet who can be sure, that the great *Belial*<sup>81</sup> of Hell must needs be [xvii] *always Yoked up*, from this Piece of *Mischief?* The best man that ever lived has been

called a *Witch*:<sup>82</sup> and why may not this too usual and unhappy Symptom of, A *Witch*, even a Spectral Representation, befall a person that shall be none of the worst? Is it not possible? the *Laplanders* will tell us 'tis possible: for Persons to be unwittingly attended with officious *Dæmons*, bequeathed unto them, and impos'd upon them, by Relations that have been *Witches*.<sup>83</sup> *Quære*, also, Whether at a Time, when the Devils with his Witches are engag'd in an actual *War* upon a people, some certain steps of ours, in such a *War*, may not be follow'd with our appearing so and so for a while among them in the Visions of our afflicted *Forlorns*!<sup>84</sup> And, Who can certainly say, what other Degrees, & Methods of sinning, besides that of a *Diabolical Compact*,<sup>85</sup> may give the Devils advantage, to act in the Shape of them that have miscarried? Besides what may happen for a while, to try the *Patience* of the Virtuous. May not some that have been ready upon feeble grounds uncharitably to Censure and Reproach other people, be punished for it by *Spectres* for a while exposing them to Censure and Reproach? And furthermore, I pray, that it may be considered, Whether a World of Magical Tricks often used in the World, may not insensibly oblige *Devils* to wait upon the Superstitious Users of them.<sup>86</sup> A Witty Writer against *Sadducism* has this Observation, That persons, who never made any Express Contract with *Apostate Spirits*, yet may Act strange Things by *Diabolick Aids*, which they procure by the use of those wicked *Forms* and *Arts*, that the Devil first Imparted unto his Confederates. And he adds, *We know not, but the Laws of the Dark Kingdom, may Enjoyn a particular Attendance upon all those that practice their Mysteries, whether they know them to be theirs or no.*<sup>87</sup> Some of them that have been Cry'd out upon as *Employing* [xviii] *Evil Spirits* to Hurt our Land, have been known to be most bloody

*Fortune-Tellers*; and some of them have Confessed, That when they told *Fortunes*, they would pretend the Rules of *Chiromancy*<sup>88</sup> and the like Ignorant Sciences, but indeed, they had no Rule (they said) but this, *The Things were then Darted into their Minds. Darted!* Ye Wretches; By whom, I pray. Surely, by none but the *Devils*; who, tho' perhaps they did not exactly *Foreknow* all the thus Predicted Contingencies; yet having once *Foretold* them, they stood bound in Honour now, to use their Interest, which alas, in *This World*, is very great, for the Accomplishment of their own Predictions.<sup>89</sup> There are others, that have used most wicked *Sorceries* to gratify their unlawful Curiosities, or to prevent Inconveniencies in Man and Beast;<sup>90</sup> *Sorceries*; which I will not *Name*, lest I should by Naming, *Teach* them.<sup>91</sup> Now, some *Devil* is evermore Invited into the Service of the Person that shall practice these *Witchcrafts*; and if they have gone on Impenitently in these Communions with any *Devil*, the *Devil* may perhaps become a last a *Familiar* to them, and so assume their *Livery*, that they cannot shake him off in any way, but that One, which I would most heartily prescribe unto them, Namely, That of a deep and long *Repentance*.<sup>92</sup> Should these *Impieties*, have been committed in such a place as *New-England*, for my part I should not wonder, if when *Devils* are Exposing the *Großer* Witches among us, God permit them, to bring in these *Leßer* ones with the rest, for their perpetual Humiliation. In the Issue therefore, may it not be found, that *New-England* is not so Stock'd with *Rattle Snakes*, as was imagined?<sup>93</sup>

S 4. But I do not believe, that the progress of *Witchcraft* among us, is all the Plot, which the Devil is managing in the *Witchcraft* now upon us. It is judg'd, That [xviv] the Devil Rais'd the Storm, whereof we read in the Eighth Chapter of *Matthew*, on purpose

to oversett the little Vessel, wherein the Disciples of Our Lord, were Embarqued with Him. And it may be fear'd, that in the *Horrible Tempest*, which is now upon ourselves, the design of the Devil is to sink that Happy settlement of Government, wherewith Almighty, God, has graciously enclined their Majesties to favour us. We are blessed with with a GOVERNOUR,<sup>94</sup> than whom no man can be more willing to serve their Majesties or this their Province: He is continually venturing his *All* to do it: and were not the Interests of His Prince, dearer to him, than his own, he could not but soon be weary of the *Helm* whereat he sits. We are under the Influence of a LIEVTENANT GOVERNOUR,<sup>95</sup> who not only by being admirably accomplished both with Natural and Acquired Endowments, is fitted for the Service of Their Majesties, but also with an unspotted Fidelity, applys himself to that Service. Our COUNCELLOURS, are some of our most Eminent persons, and as Loyal Subjects to the Crown, as hearty lovers of their Countrey. Our Constitution also is attended with singular Priviledges; All which Things are by the Devil exceedingly *Envy'd* unto us. And the Devil will doubtless take this occasion, for the Raising of such complaints and clamours, as may be of pernicious consequence, unto some part of our present Settlement, if he can so far *Impose*. But that which most of all Threatens us, in our present Circumstances, is the *Misunderstanding*, and so the *Animosity*, whereinto the *Witchcraft* now Raging, has Enchanted us. The Embroiling, first, of our *Spirits*, and then of our *Affayrs*, is evidently, as considerable a Branch of the Hellish Intreague, which now vexes us, as any one Thing whatever. The Devil has made us like a *Troubled Sea*; and the *Mire* and *Mud*, begins now also to heave up apace. Even, Good and Wise Men, [xx] suffer themselves to fall into their *Paroxysms*; and the Shake

which the Devil is now giving us, fetches up the *Dirt* which before lay still, at the Bottom of our sinful Hearts. If we allow the *Mad Dogs* of Hell to poison us by Biting us,<sup>96</sup> we shall imagine that we see nothing but *such Things* about us, and like *such Things* fly upon all that we see. Were it not for what is IN US, for my part, I should not fear a “Thousand *Legions* of Devils; ‘tis by our *Quarrels* that we spoil our *Prayers*; and if our Humble, Zealous, and United, *Prayers*, are once *Hindred*, alas, the *Philistines* of Hell have cut our Locks for us; they will then blind us, mock us, ruine us. In Truth, I cannot altogether blame it, If people are a little Transported, when they conceive all the Secular Interests of Themselves and their Families, at the Stake; and yet, at the sight of these Heart-Burnings, I cannot forbear the Exclamation of the Sweet-spirited *Austin*, in his Pacificatory Epistle, to *Jerom* on his Contest with *Ruffin*, *O misera et miseranda Conditio!* O Condition, truly *miserable!*<sup>97</sup> But what shall be done to cure these Distractions? It is wonderfully necessary, that some *Healing Attempts*, be made at this time; and *I* must needs confess, if I may speak so much, like a *Nazianzen*,<sup>98</sup> I am so desirous of a share in them, that if, *Being thrown Over-board*, were needful to allay the *Storm*, I should think, *Dying*, a Trifle to be undergone, for so great a Blessedness.

S 5. I would most importunately in the first place, entreat every man to maintain an Holy Jealousy over his own Soul, at this Time, and think, *May not the Devil make me, tho’ ignorantly, & unwillingly, to be an Instrument of doing something that he would have to be done?* For my part, I freely own my Suspicion, Lest something of *Enchantment*, have reach’d more Persons and Spirits among us, then we are well aware of. But then, let us more generally Agree to maintain a kind Opinion, one of another. That

*Charity* [xxi] without which, even our *Giving our Bodies to be Burned*, would *Profit Nothing*, uses to proceed by this Rule, *It is kind, it is not easily provoked, it is thinks no Evil, it believes all things, hopes all things*. But if we disregard this Rule, of *Charity*, we shall indeed give our *Body Politic to be Burned*.<sup>99</sup> I have heard it affirmed, That in the Late Great Flood upon *Connecticut*, those Creatures which could not but have Quarrelled at another Time, yet now being driven together, very Agreeably stood by one another. I am sure we shall be worse than *Bruitish*, if we fly upon one another, at a Time when the *Floods of Belial make us afraid*.<sup>100</sup> On the one *Side* [alas, my Pen, must thou write the word, *Side*, in the Business?] there are very worthy men, who having been call'd by God, when and where this *Witchcraft*, first Appeared upon the Stage, to Encounter it, are earnestly desirous to have it Sifted unto the Bottom if it. And, I pray, which of us all, that should live under the continual Impressions, of the Tortures, Outcries, and Havocks, which Devils confessedly Commissioned by *Witches*, make among their distressed Neighbours, would not have a *Bias* that way, beyond other men? Persons this way disposed, have been men eminent for *Wisdom* and *Vertue*, and men acted by a noble principle of conscience: Had not *Conscience* of Duty to God, prevailed above other Considerations with them, they would not for all they are worth in the world, have meddled in this *Thorny Business*! Have there been any *Disputed* Methods used, in Discovering the *Works of Darkness*? It may be none, but what have had *great Precedents* in other parts of the world: which may, tho' not altogether *Justify*, yet much *Alleviate* a mistake in us, if there should happen to be found any such mistake, in so *Dark* a matter. They have done, what they have done, with multiply'd *Addreßes* to God, for his gui-

[xxii] dance, and have not been Insensible how much they have exposed themselves in what they have done. Yea, they would gladly contrive, and receive, an expedient, how the Shedding of Blood, might be spared, by the Recovery of *Witches*, not gone beyond the reach of Pardon[.] And after all, They invite all Good men, in Terms to this purpose, *Being amazed, at the Number, and Quality of those Accused, of Late,*<sup>101</sup> *we do not know, but Satan, by his Wiles, may have Enwrapped some Innocent persons, and therefore should Earnestly and Humbly desire, the most Critical Enquiry upon the place, to find out the Fallacy; that there may be none of the Servants of the Lord, with the Worshippers of Baal.*<sup>102</sup> I may also add, That whereas, if once a *Witch* do ingenuously confess among us, no more *Spectres* do in their Shapes after this, Trouble the Vicinage; if any Guilty Creatures will accordingly to so good purpose Confess their Crime to any Minister of God, and get out of the Snare of the Devil, as no Minister will discover such a *Conscientious Confession*, so I believe none in the Authority, will press him to Discover it; but Rejoyce in, *A Soul sav'd from Death*. On the other *Side* [if I must again use the word, *Side*, which yet I hope, to Live, to blot out] there are very worthy men, who are not a Little Dissatisfy'd at the Proceedings in the Prosecution of this *Witchcraft*. And why? Not because they would have any such *Abominable Thing* Defended from the Strokes of Impartial Justice. No, those Reverend Persons who gave in this Advice unto the Honourable Council, "That *Presumptions*, whereupon Persons may be *Committed*, and much more *Convictions*, whereupon Persons may be *Condemned*, as Guilty of *Witchcrafts*, ought certainly to be more Considerable, than barely the Accused Persons being represented by a *Spectre*, unto the Afflicted; Nor are Alterations [xxiii] made In the

Sufferers, by a *Look* or *Touch* of the Accused, to be esteemed an Infallible Evidence of Guilt; but frequently Liable to be Abused by the Devils *Legerdemains*: I say, Those very men of God, most Conscientiously Subjoined this Article to that Advice,--*Nevertheless, we cannot but Humbly Recommend unto the Government, the Speedy and Vigorous Prosecution of such, as have rendred themselves Obnoxious; according to the best Directions given in the Laws of God, and the wholesome Statutes of the English Nation, for the Detection of Witchcraft.*<sup>103</sup> Only, Tis a most Commendable Cautiousness, in those Gracious men, to be very Shye lest the Devil get so far into our *Faith*, as that for the sake of many *Truths* which we find he tells us, we come at length, to believe any *Lies*, wherewith he may abuse us: whereupon, what a Desolation of *Names* would soon ensue, besides a thousand other Pernicious Consequences? and lest there should be any such *Principles* taken up, as when put into Practice must unavoidably cause the *Righteous to Perish with the Wicked*; or procure the Bloodshed of any Persons, like the *Gibeonites*, whom some Learned men suppose to be under a false Notion of *Witches*, by *Saul* Exterminated.<sup>104</sup> They would have all Due steps taken for the Extinction of *Witches*; but they would fain have them to be *Sure* ones: nor is it from any thing, but the Real and Hearty *Goodness* of such men, that they are Loth to surmise *Ill* of other men, till there be the fullest Evidence, for the surmises. As for the Honourable *Judges*, that have been hitherto in the Commission, they are *Above* my Consideration: wherefore, I will only say thus much of them, That such of them as I have the Honour of a Personal Acquaintance with, are *Men of an Excellent Spirit*; and as at first they went about the work for which they were Commission'd, [xxiv] with a very great Aversion, so they have still been under



Heart-breaking Sollicitudes, how they might therein best serve, both God and Man. *In* fine, Have there been Faults on any *Side* fallen into? Surely, They have at worst been but the Faults of a *well-meaning Ignorance*. On every *Side* then, Why should not we Endeavour with Amicable Correspondencies, to help one another out of the *Snares*, wherein the Devil would Involve us? To *Wrangle the Devil*, out of the Country, will be truly a New Experiment! Alas, we are not Aware of the *Devil*, if we do not think, that he aims at Enflaming us one against another; & shall we suffer our selves to be *Devil-Ridden*? or, by any *Unadviseableness*, contribute unto the Widening of our Breaches? To say no more, There is a Published and a Credible Relation, which affirms, That very lately, in a part of *England*, where some of the Neighbourhood were Quarrelling, a RAVEN, from the Top of a Tree very Articulately and Unaccountably cry'd out, *Read the Third to the Colossians, and the Fifteenth!*<sup>105</sup> Were I my self to chuse what sort of *Bird* I would be transformed into, I would say, *O that I had wings like a Dove!*<sup>106</sup> Nevertheless, I will for once do the Office, which as it seems, Heaven sent that *Raven* upon; even to beg, *That the Peace of God may Rule in our Hearts.*<sup>107</sup>

S 6 'Tis necessary that we *Unite* in every Thing: but there are especially *Two* Things wherein our *Union* must carry us along together. We are to *Unite* in our Endeavours to Deliver our Distressed Neighbours, from the horrible Annoyances and Molestations with which a dreadful *Witchcraft* is now persecuting of them. To have an Hand in any thing , that may stifle or obstruct a Regular Detection of that *Witchcraft*, is what we may well with an Holy Fear, Avoid. Their Majesties good Subjects must not every day be Torn to pieces, by Horrid *Witch-* [xxv] *es*, and those bloody *Felons*, be

wholly left Unprosecuted. The *Witchcraft* is a Business, that will not be *Sham'd*, without plunging us into *sore plagues and of Long Continuance*.<sup>108</sup> But then, we are to *Unite* in such *Methods*, for this Deliverance, as may be unquestionably *Safe*; Lest, *The Latter End be worse then the Beginning*.<sup>109</sup> And here, what I shall say? I will venture to say, thus much; That we are *Safe*, when we make just as much *Use* of all Advice from the Invisible World, as God sends it for. It is a *Safe* Principle, That when God Almighty permits any Spirits from the Unseen Regions, to visit us with Surprising Informations, there is then something to be *Enquired* after; we are then to *Enquire* of one another, *What Cause there is for such Things*? The peculiar Government of God, over the Unbodied Intelligences, is a sufficient Foundation for this Principle. When there has been a *Murder* Committed, an Apparition of the slain Party Accusing of any man, altho' such Apparitions have oftener spoke *True* than *False*, is not enough to Convict the man, as Guilty of that *Murder*; but yet it is a sufficient Occasion for Magistrates to make a particular *Enquiry*, whether such a man have afforded any ground for such an Accusation. Even so, a *Spectre*, exactly Resembling such or such a person, when the Neighbourhood are Tormented by such *Spectres*, may reasonably make Magistrates Inquisitive, whether the person so Represented have done or said any thing that may Argue their Confederacy with Evil Spirits; altho' it may be defective enough in point of *Conviction*; especially at a Time, when 'tis possible, some Over-powerful Conjuror may have got the skill of thus Exhibiting the *Shapes* of all sorts of persons, on purpose to stop the prosecution of the Wretches whom due *Enquiries* thus provoked, might have made obnoxious unto Justice. *Quære*, Whether if God would have us, to proceed any further than bare *Enquiry*, upon

what [xxvi] Reports there may come against any man, from the *World of Spirits*, He will not by His Providence at the same time have brought into our Hands, these more *Evident & Sensible* Things, whereupon, a man is to be esteemed a Criminal. But I will venture to say this Further; That it will be *Safe*, to account the *Names* as well as the *Lives* of our Neighbours, too considerable Things to be brought under a *Judicial Process*, until it be fund by *Humane Observations*, that the peace of Mankind, is thereby disturbed. We are *Humane Creatures*; and we are *Safe* while we say, there must be *Humane Witnesses*, who also have in the particular Act of Seeing, or Hearing, which enables them to be *Witneßes*, had no more more than *Humane Assistences*, that are to Turn the Scale, when *Laws* are to be Exectued. And upon this Head, I will further add; A Wise and a Just Magistrate, may so far give way to a common Stream of Dissatisfaction, as to forbear Acting up to the Heighth of his own perswasion, about, what may be judg'd *Convictive*, of a Crime, whose Nature shall be so abstruse and obscure, as to raise much Disputation. Tho' he may not *Do* what he should Leave *Undone*, yet he may Leave *Undone* something that else he could *Do*, when the Publick Saftey, makes an *Exigency*.

S 7. I was going to make one Venture more; that is, to offer some *Safe* Rules, for the finding out of the *Witches* which are at this Day our Accursed Troublers: but this were a Venture too *Presumptuous* and *Icarian* for *Me* to make. I leave that unto those Excellent and Judicious Persons, with whom I am not worthy to be Numbred: all that I shall do, shall be to lay before my Readers, a brief *Synopsis* of what has been Written on that

Subject by a *Triumvirate*, of as Eminent Persons, as have ever handled it. I will begin with, [xxvii]

An Abstract of Mr. *Perkin's* way for the  
Discovery of Witches.<sup>110</sup>

**I.** *There are Presumptions, which do at least Probably and Conjecturally note one to be a Witch. These, give Occasion to Examine, yet they are no Sufficient Causes of Conviction.* **II.** *If any man or woman, be notoriously defamed for a Witch; this yeelds a strong Suspicion. Yet the Judge ought Carefully to Look, that the Report be made by Men of Honesty and Credit.* **III.** *If a Fellow Witch, or Magician, give Testimony of any Person to be a Witch; this indeed is not sufficient for Condemnation; but it is a fit Presumption, to cause a strait Examination.* **IV:** *If after Cursing there follow Death, or at least, some mischief: for Witches are wont to practice their mischievous Facts,<sup>111</sup> by Cursing and Banning: This also is a sufficient matter of Examination, tho' not of Conviction.* **V.** *If after Enmity, Quarrelling, or Threatening, a present mischief do's follow; that also is a great Presumption.* **VI.** *If the Party suspected be the Son or Daughter, the man-servant or maid-servant, the Familiar Friend; near Neighbour, or old Companion, of a known and Convicted Witch: This may be likewise a presumption: for Witchcraft is an Art, that may be Learn'd, and Convey'd from man to man.<sup>112</sup>* **VII.** *Some add this for a Presumption; If the party Suspected be found to have the Devils mark; for it is Commonly thought, when the Devil makes his Covenant with them, he alwayes leaves his mark behind them, whereby he knows them for his own:--- a mark, whereof no Evident Reason, in Nature can be given.* **VIII.** *Lastly, If the party Examined*

*be Unconstant, or Contrary to himself, in his Deliberate Answers, it argueth a Guilty Conscience, which stops the Freedom of Utterance. And yet, there are causes of Astonishment,*<sup>113</sup> *which may befall the Good, as well as the Bad, IX. But then there is a Conviction, discovering the Witch; which must proceed from just and sufficient proofs, and not from bare Presumptions. X Scratch [xxviii] ing of the Suspected Party, and Recovery thereupon; with several other such weak proofs; as also, the Fleeting of the Suspected Party, thrown upon the Water; These proofs are so far from being sufficient, that some of them, are after a sort, practices of Witchcraft. XI. The Testimony of some Wizzard, tho' offering to show the Witches face in a Glass; This I grant may be a good presumption, to cause a strait Examination; but a sufficient proof of Conviction, it cannot be. If the Devil tell the Grand-Jury, that the Person in Question, is a Witch, and offers withal, to confirm the same by Oath, should the Inquest Receive his Oath or Accusation to Condemn the man? Aßuredly No. And yet, that is as much as the Testimony of another Wizzard, who only by the Devils Help, Reveals the Witch. XII. If a man being dangerously Sick, and like to Dy, upon Suspicion, will take it on his Death, that such an one hath Bewitched him, it is an Allegation of the same Nature, which may move the Judge to Examine the Party,; but it is of no moment for Conviction. XIII. Among the sufficient means of Conviction, the first is, the Free and Voluntary Confession of the Crime, made by the Party Suspected, and Accused, after Examination. I say not, that a bare Confession is sufficient, but a Confession after due Examination, taken upon pregnant presumptions. What needs now more Witness, or further Enquiry? XIV. There is a second sufficient Conviction, by the Testimony of Two Witnesses, of Good and*

*Honest Report avouching before the Magistrate upon their own Knowledge, these two Things: either that the Party Accused, hath made a League with the Devil, or hath done some known practices of Witchcraft. And, all Arguments that do Necessarily prove either of these, being brought by two sufficient Witnesses, are of Force, fully to Convince the party Suspected. XV. If it can be proved that the party Suspected, hath called upon the Devil, or desired his Help; this is a pregnant proof of a League formerly made between them. XVI. If it can be proved, that the Party hath Entertained a Familiar Spirit, and had Conference with [xxix] it, in the Likeness of some visible Creatures: here is Evidence of Witchcraft. XVII. If the Witneßes affirm upon Outh, that the Suspected person, hath done any Action, or work, which necessarily infers a Covenant made: as the he hath used Enchantments; Divined of things before they come to pass, and that peremptorily; Raised Tempests; caused the Form of a Dead Man to appear; it proveth sufficiently that he or she is a Witch. This is the Substance of Mr. Perkins. Take, Next, The Summ of Mr. Gaules<sup>114</sup> Judgment, about the Detection of Witches. “I[.] Some Tokens for the Trial of Witches, are altogether Unwarrantable. Such are the old Paganish Sign, The Witches Long Eyes; The Tradition, of the Witches not weeping; The casting of the Witch into the Water, with Thumbs, and Toes, ty’d across. And many more such Marks, which if they are to know a witch by, certainly ‘tis no other witch, but the User of them. II. There are some Tokens for the Trial of Witches, more probable: and yet not so certain as to afford Conviction. Such are, strong and long Suspicion: Suspected Ancestors: some Appearance of Fact: The Corpse bleeding upon the Witches Touch: The Testimony of the Party Bewitched: The Supposed, Witches unusual Bodily Marks; The Witches usual Cursing*

and Banning: The Witches lewd and naughty kind of Life. **III.** Some Signs there are of a *Witch*, more certain and infallible. As, *Firstly*, Declining of Judicature, or Faltring, Faulty, Unconstant, and Contrary Answers, upon Judicial and Deliberate Examination. *Secondly*, when upon due Enquiry, into a persons Faith and Manners, there are found *all* or *most* of the causes, which produce *Witchcraft*; namely, *God* Forsaking, *Satan* invading, particular *Sins* disposing, and Lastly a *Compact* compleating all. *Thirdly*, The Witches free Confession, together with Full Evidence of the Fact. *Confession* without *Fact*, may be a meer Delusion; and [xxx] *Fact* without *Confession* may be a meer Accident. *4thly*, The Semblable Gestures & Actions of the Suspected Witches, with the comparable Expressions of Affections, which in all Witches have been observ'd and found very much alike. *Fifthly*, The Testimony of the *Party Bewitched*, whether Pining or Dying, together with the joint Oaths of sufficient persons, that have seen certain prodigious *Pranks* or *Feats*, wrought by the Party Accused. **IV.** Among the most unhappy Circumstances, to Convict a Witch. One is, A Maligning and Oppugning, the Word, Work, and worship of God: and by any Extraordinary Sign seeking to seduce any from it. See Deut. 13. 1, 2. Math. 24. 24. Act. 13: 8, 10. 2 Tim. 3. 8. Do but mark well the places; & for this very Property (of thus Opposing and perverting) they are all there concluded arrant and absolute Witches. **V.** It is not requisite, that so *palpable Evidence* of *Conviction*, should here come in, as in other more sensible matters. Tis enough, if there be but so much *Circumstantial* proof or Evidence; as the *Substance*, matter, and Nature of such an Abstruse Mystery of Iniquity will well admit. [*I suppose he means, that whereas in other Crimes, we Look for more Direct Proofs, in this there is a greater use of Consequential*

ones] But I could heartily wish that the Juries were Empannelled of the most Eminent Physicians, Lawyers, and Divines, that a Country could afford. In the mean time, tis not to be called a *Toleration*, if Witches escape, where *Conviction* is wanting.” To this purpose our *Gaule*.

I will Transcribe a Little from one Author more. Tis the Judicious *Bernard of Batcombe*;<sup>115</sup> who in his *Guide to Grand-Jury men*, after he ha’s mentioned several Things that are shrow’d *Presumptions* of a *Witch*, proceeds to such Things as are the *Convictions* of such an one.<sup>116</sup> And he says, “*A Witch, in League with the Devil, is Convicted by [xxxi] these Evidences; I. By a Witches Mark; which is upon the Baser sort of Witches; and this, by the Devils either Sucking or Touching of them. Tertullian says, “It is the Devils custome to mark his.*<sup>117</sup> And note, That this mark is *Insensible*, and being prick’d, it will not Bleed. Sometimes, its like a *Teate*; sometimes but a *Blewish Spot*: sometimes a *Red* one; and sometimes the *Flesh Sunk*: but the Witches do sometimes cover them. *II. By the Witches Words*. As when they have been heard calling on, speaking to, or Talking of, their *Familiars*; or, when they have been heard *Telling* of *Hurt* they have done to man or beast: Or when they have been heard *Threatning* of such Hurt; Or if they have been heard Relating their *Transportations*. *III. By the Witches Deeds*. As when they have been *seen* with their Spirits, or seen sectetly Feeding of their *Imps*. Or, when there can be found their Pictures, Poppets, and other Hellish Compositions. *IV. By the Witches Extasies*: With the Delight whereof, Witches are so taken, that they will hardly conceal the same: Or, however at some time or other, they may be found in them. *V. By one or more Fellow-Witches, Confessing their own Witchcraft, & bearing Witness*



against others; if they can make good the Truth of their Witness, and give sufficient proof of it. As, that they have seen them with their Spirits; or, that they have Received Spirits from them; or, that they can tell, when they used Witchery-Tricks to Do Harm; or, that they told them what Harm they had done; or, that they can show the mark upon them; or, that they have been together in their Meetings; and such like. **VI.** By Some *Witness of God* Himself, happening upon the Execrable Curses of Witches upon themselves, Praying of God to show some Token, if they be Guilty. **VII.** By the Witches own *Confession*, of Giving their Souls to the Devil. It is no Rare thing, for Witches to Confess. [xxxii]

They are Considerable Things, which I have thus Recited; and yet it must be with *Open Eyes*, kept upon *Open Rules*, that we are to follow these things.

S. 8. But *Juries* are not the only Instruments to be imploy'd in such a Work; all *Christians* are to be concerned with daily and fervent *Prayers*, for the assisting of it. In the Days of *Athanasius*,<sup>118</sup> the Devils were found unable to stand before, that *Prayer*, however then used perhaps with too much Ceremony, *Let God Arise, Let his Enemies be Scattered, Let them also that Hate Him, flee before Him.*<sup>119</sup>

O that instead of letting our Hearts *Rise* against one another, our *Prayers* might *Rise* unto an high pitch of Importunity, for such a *Rising* of the Lord! Especially, Let them that are *Suffering* by *Witchcraft*, be sure to *stay* and *pray*, and *Beseech the Lord thrice*, even as much as ever they can, before they complain of any Neighbour for afflicting them[.] Let them also that are *Accused* of *Witchcraft*, set themselves to *Fast* and *Pray*, and to shake off the *Dæmons* that would like *Vipers* fasten upon them; and get the *Waters of Jealousie* made profitable to them.

*And Now, O Thou Hope of, New-England, and the Savior thereof in the Time of Trouble; Do thou look mercifully down upon us & Rescue us, out of the Trouble which at this time do's threaten to swallow us up. Let Satan be shortly bruised under our Feet, and Let the Covenanted Vassals of Satan which have Traiterously brought him in upon us, be Glorioulsy Conquered, by thy Powerful and Gracious Presence in the midst of us. Abhor us not, O God, but cleanse us, but heal us, but save us, for the sake of thy Glory, Enwrapped in our Salvations. By thy Spirit, Lift up a Standard against our infernal adversaries; Let us quickly find thee making of us glad, according to the Days wherein we have been afflicted. Accept of all our Endeavours to glorify thee, in the Fires that are upon us; and among the rest, Let these my poor and weak essays, composed with what Tears, what Cares, what Prayers, thou only knowest, not want the Acceptance of the Lord. Amen.*

[1]

A

## Discourse:

On

The Wonders of the *Invisible World*


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 Uttered (in part) on *Aug. 4. 1692*<sup>120</sup>


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Ecclesiastical History has Reported it unto us, That a Renowned Martyr at the Stake, seeing the Book of THE REVELATION thrown by his no less Profane than Bloody Persecutors, to be Burn'd in the same Fire with himself, he cry'd out, *O Beata Apocalypsis; quam bene meccum agitur, qui tecum Comburar!* BLESSED REVELATION! said he; *How blessed am I in this Fire, while I have Thee to bear me Company.*<sup>121</sup> As for our selves this Day, 'tis a *Fire* of sore Affliction and Confusion, wherein we are Embroiled; but it is no Inconsiderable Advantage unto us, that we have the Company of this Glorious and Sacred Book, THE REVELATION, to assist us in our

Exercises. From *that* Book, there is one Text, which I would single out, at this Time, to lay before you; 'tis that in [2]

Rev. XII. 12.

*Wo to the Inhabiters of the Earth, and of the Sea; for the Devil is come down unto you, having great Wrath; because he knoweth, that he hath but a short time.*<sup>122</sup>

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THE Text is like the Cloudy and Fiery Pillar, vouchsafed unto *Israel*, in the Wilderness of old;<sup>123</sup> there is a very *dark side* of it, in the Intimation, that, *The Devil is come down having great Wrath*; but it has also a *bright side*, when it assures us, that, *He has but a short time*; Unto the Contemplation of *both*, I do this Day Invite you.

We have in our Hands a Letter from our Ascended Lord in Heaven, to Advise us of his being still alive, and of his Purpose e're long, to give us a Visit, wherein we shall see our Living *Redeemer, stand at the latter day upon the Earth.*<sup>124</sup> 'Tis the last Advice that we have had from Heaven, for now sixteen Hundred years; and the scope of it, is, to represent how the Lord Jesus Christ, having begun to set up his Kingdom in the World, by the Preaching of the Gospel, he would from time to time utterly break to pieces all Powers that should make Head against it, until, *The Kingdomes of this World are become the Kingdomes of our Lord, and of his [3] Christ, and he shall Reign for ever and ever.*<sup>125</sup> 'Tis a Commentary on what had been written by *Daniel*, about, *The Fourth Monarchy*; with some Touches upon, *The Fifth*;<sup>126</sup> wherein, *The greatness of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven, shall be given to the people of the Saints of the most High.*<sup>127</sup> And altho' it have, as 'tis expressed by one of the Ancients, *Tot Sacramenta, quot verba*, a Mystery

in every Syllable,<sup>128</sup> yet it is not altogether to be neglected with such a Despair, as that, *I cannot Read, for the Book is Sealed*:<sup>129</sup> it is a REVELATION, and a singular, and notable *Blessing* is pronounc'd upon them that humbly study it.

The Divine Oracles, have with a most admirable Artifice and Carefulness, drawn, as the very pious *Beverly*,<sup>130</sup> has laboriously Evinc'd, an exact LINE OF TIME, from the First Sabbath at the *Creation* of the World, unto the great Sabbatism at the *Restitution* of all Things.<sup>131</sup> In that famous *Line of Time*, from the Decree for the Restoring of *Jerusalem*, after the *Babylonish Captivity*,<sup>132</sup> there seem to remain a matter of *Two Thousand and Three Hundred Years*, unto that *New Jerusalem*, whereto the Church is to be advanced, when the Mystical *Babylon* shall be *fallen*.<sup>133</sup> At the Resurrection of our Lord, there were seventeen or eighteen Hundred of those Years, yet upon the Line, to Run unto, *The Rest which Remains for the People of God*; and this Remnant in the *Line of Time*, is here in our *Apocalypse*, variously Embossed, Adorned, and Signalized with such Distinguished Events, if we [4] mind them, will help us escape that Censure, *Can ye not Discern the Signs of the Times?*<sup>134</sup>

The Apostle *John*, for the View of these Things, had laid before him, as I conceive, a *Book*, with leaves, or folds; which *Volumn* was written both on the *Backside*, & on the *Inside*, & Roll'd up in a Cylindriacal Form, under seven *Labels*, fastned with so many *Seals*. The First *Seal* being opened, and the First *Label* removed, under the first *Label* the Apostle saw what he saw, of a first *Rider* Pourtray'd, and so on, till the last *Seal* was broken up; each of the Sculptures being enlarged with Agreeable *Visions* and *Voices*,<sup>135</sup> to Illustrate it. The Book being now Unrolled, there were *Trumpets*, with

wonderful Concomitants, Exhibited successively on the Expanding *Backside* of it.

Whereupon the Book was *Eaten*, as it were to be Hidden, from Interpretations; till afterwards, in the *Inside* of it, the Kingdom of Antichrist came to be Exposed. Thus, the Judgments of God on the *Roman Empire*, first unto the Downfal of *Paganism*, and then, unto the Downfal of *Popery*, which is but Revised *Paganism*, are in these Displayes with Lively Colours and features made sensible unto us.<sup>136</sup>

Accordingly, in the Twelfth Chapter of this Book, we have an August Preface, to the Description of that Horrid *Kingdom*, which our Lord Christ refused, but Antichrist accepted, from the Devils Hands; a Kingdom, which for *Twelve Hundred and Sixty Years* together, was to be a continual oppression upon the People of God, and [5] opposition unto his Interests; until the Arrival of that Illustrious Day, wherein, *The Kingdom shall be the Lords, and he shall be Governour among the Nations*.<sup>137</sup> The Chapter is (as an Excellent Person calls it) an *Extravasated Account*,<sup>138</sup> of the Circumstances, which befel the *Primitive Church*, during the first Four or Five Hundred Years of *Christianity*: it shows us the Face of the Church, *first* in *Rome* Heathenish, and then in *Rome* Converted, before the *Man of Sin* was yet come to *Man's Estate*.<sup>139</sup> Our Text contains the Acclamations made upon the most Glorious Revolution that ever yet happened upon the Roman Empire; namely, *That* wherein the Travailing Church brought forth a Christian Emperour.<sup>140</sup> This was a most Eminent *Victory* over the Devil and a *Resemblance* of the State, wherein the World, ere long shall see, *The Kingdom of our God, and the Power of His Christ*.<sup>141</sup> It is here noted.

First, As a matter of *Triumph*. 'Tis said, *Rejoice, ye Heavens, and ye that dwell in them.*<sup>142</sup> The Saints in both Worlds, took the Comfort of this Revolution; the *Devout* Ones that had outlived the late Persecutions; were filled with Transporting Joyes, when they saw the *Christian* become the *Imperial* Religion, and when they saw Good Men come to give Law unto the rest of Mankind; the Deceas'd Ones also, whose Blood had been Sacrificed in the Ten Persecutions,<sup>143</sup> doubtless made the Light Regions to ring with *Hallelujahs* unto God,<sup>144</sup> when there were brought [6] unto them, the Tidings of the Advances now given to the *Christian* Religion, for which they had suffered *Martyrdom*.

Secondly, As a matter of *Horror*. 'Tis said, *Wo to the Inhabiters of the Earth and of the Sea*. The *Earth* still means the *False Church*, the *Sea* means the *Wide World*, in Prophetical Phrasæology. There was yet left a vast party of men that were Enemies to the Christian Religion, in the power of it; a vast party left for the *Devil* to work upon: unto these is, a *Wo* denounced; and why so? 'tis added *For the Devil is come down unto you, having great Wrath, because he knows, that he has but a short time*. These were it seems to have some desperate and peculiar Attempts of the Devil, made upon them. In the mean time, we may Entertain this for our

### DOCTRINE.

*Great WO proceeds from the Great WRATH, with which the DEVIL, towards the End of his TIME, will make a DESCENT upon a miserable World.*<sup>145</sup>

I have now Published a most awful and solemn Warning for our selves at this day; which has five *Propositions*, comprehended in it.

*Proposition I.*

That there is a *Devil*, is a Thing Doubted by none but such as are under the Influence of the [7] *Devil*. For any to Deny the Being of a *Devil* must be from an Ignorance or Profaneness, worse than *Diabolical*. *A Devil!* What is *that*? We have a Definition of the Monster, in *Eph. 6.12. A Spiritual Wickedness*, that is, *A wicked Spirit*. A Devil is a *Fallen Angel*, an Angel *Fallen* from the Fear and Love of God, and from all Celestial Glories; but *Fallen* to all manner of Wretchedness and Cursedness.<sup>146</sup> He was once in that Order of Heavenly Creatures, which God in the Beginning made *Ministring Spirits*,<sup>147</sup> for his own peculiar Service and Honour, in the management of the Universe; but we may now write that Epitaph upon him, *How art thou fallen from Heaven! thou hast said in thine Heart, I will Exalt my Throne above the Stars of God; but thou art brought down to Hell!*<sup>148</sup> A Devil is a *Spiritual* and a *Rational* Substance,<sup>149</sup> by his *Apostasy* from God, Inclined unto all that is Vicious, and for that *Apostasy* confin'd unto the Atmosphere of this Earth, in *Chains under Darkness, unto the Judgment of the Great Day*.<sup>150</sup> This is a *Devil*; and the *Experience* of Mankind as well as the *Testimony* of Scripture, does abundantly prove the Existence of such a Devil.

About this *Devil*, there are many Things, whereof we may reasonably and profitably be Inquisitive; such things, I mean, as are in our Bibles Reveal'd unto us; according to which if we do not speak, on so *Dark* a Subject, but according to our own uncertain, and perhaps humoursome Conjectures, *There is no light in us*.<sup>151</sup> I will carry



you [8] with me, but unto one Paragraph of the Bible to be informed of three Things, relating to the *Devil*; 'tis the Story of the *Gadaren Energumen*, in the fifth Chapter of *Mark*.<sup>152</sup>

Firstly then; 'Tis to be granted; The *Devils* are so many, that some *Thousands*, can sometimes at once apply themselves to vex *one* Child of Man. It is said, in Marc. 5. 15. *He that was Possessed with the Devil, had the Legion*. Dreadful to be spoken! A *Legion* consisted of Twelve Thousand Five Hundred people: and we see that in one man or two, so many *Devils* can be spared for a Garrison. As the Prophet cry'd out, *Multitudes, Multitudes in the valley of Decision!*<sup>153</sup> So I say, *There are multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of Destruction, where the Devils are!*<sup>154</sup> When we speak of, *The Devil*, 'tis, *A Name of Multitude*; it means not *One* Individual Devil, so Potent and Scient,<sup>155</sup> as perhaps a *Man chee*<sup>156</sup> would imagine; but it means a *Kind*, which a *Multitude* belongs unto. Alas, the *Devils*, they swarm about us like the *Frogs of Egypt*,<sup>157</sup> in the most Retired of our Chambers. Are we at our *Boards*? There will be Devils to Tempt us unto Sensuality: Are we in our *Beds*? There will be Devils to Tempt us unto Carnality; Are we in our *Shops*? There will be Devils to Tempt us unto Dishonesty. Yea, Tho' we get into the Church of God, there will be Devils to Haunt us in the very *Temple* it self, and there Tempt us to manifold Misbehaviours. I am verily perswaded, That there are very few Humane Affayrs, whereinto [9] some Devils are not Insinuated; There is not so much as a *Journey* intended, but *Satan* will have an Hand in *Hindering* or *Furthering* of it.

Secondly, 'Tis to be supposed, That there is a sort of Arbitrary, even Military *Government*, among the *Devils*. This is intimated, when in Mar. 5. 9. *The Unclean Spirit*

said, *My Name is Legion*:<sup>158</sup> they are under such a Discipline as *Legions* used to be. Hence we read about *The Prince of the Power of the Air: Our Air has a Power!*<sup>159</sup> Or an Army, of Devils in the *High Places* of it;<sup>160</sup> and these Devils have a *Prince* over them, who is, *King over the Children of Pride*.<sup>161</sup> 'This probable, That the Devil, who was the Ring-leader of that mutinous and rebellious Crew, which first shook off the Authority of God, is now the General of those Hellish Armies; Our Lord, that Conquer'd him, has told us the Name of him; tis *Belzebub*; 'tis he that is, *the Devil*, and the rest are, *his Angels*, or his Souldiers.<sup>162</sup> Think on, vast Regiments, of cruel, and bloody French *Dragoons*,<sup>163</sup> with an *Intendant* over them, over-running a pillaged Neighbourhood, and you will think a little, what the Constitution among the *Devils* is.

Thirdly, Tis to be Supposed, That some *Divels* are more peculiarly *Commission'd*, and perhaps *Qualify'd*, for some Countreys, while others are for others. This is intimated when in *Mar. 5. 10.* The Devils besought Our Lord, *Much, that he would not send them away out of the Countrey*. Why was that? But in all probability, Because *These Divels* [10] were more Able, to, *Do the Works of the Divel*, in such a Countrey, than in another. It is not likely that every Divel do's know every *Language*; or that every Divel can do every *Mischief*. Tis possible that the *Experience*, or, if I may call it so, the *Education* of all Divels, is not alike, and that there may be some Difference in their *Abilities*. If one might make an Inference from what the Divels *Do*, to what they *are*, One cannot forbear *Dreaming*, that there are *Degrees* of Divels. Who can allow that such Trifling *Daemons*, as that of *Mascon*,<sup>164</sup> or those that once infested our *New berry*,<sup>165</sup> are of so much Grandeur, as those *Dæmons*, whose Games are mighty Kingdoms? Yea, Tis Certain, that

all Divels do not make a like Figure, in the *Invisible World*. Nor do's it look agreeably, That the *Dæmons* which were the Familiars of such a Man as the Old *Apollonius*,<sup>166</sup> differ not from those Baser Goblins that chuse to Nest in the filthy and loathsome Rags, of a Beastly Sorceress.<sup>167</sup> Accordingly, why may not some Divels, be more Accomplished for what is to be done in such and such places: when others must be *Detach'd* for other Territories? Each Divel as he sees his advantage, Cries out, *Let me be in this Countrey, rather than another*.<sup>168</sup> But *Enough*, if not *Too much* of these Things.

*Proposition II.*

There is a Divellish *Wrath* against *Mankind*, with which the *Divel* is, for *Gods Sake* Inspired. The [11] Divel is himself broiling under the intollerable and interminable *Wrath of God*; and a fiery *Wrath* at God, is that with which the Divel is for that cause Enflamed. Methinks I see the posture of the Divels in *Isa. 8. 21. They fret themselves, and Curse their God, and look upward*. The first and chief *Wrath* of the Divel, is at the Almighty God Himself; He knows, *The God that made him, will not have mercy on him, and the God that formed him, will shew him no favour*;<sup>169</sup> and so he can have no *Kindness* for that God, who has no *Mercy*, nor *Favour* for him. Hence 'tis, that he cannot bear the *Name* of God should be Acknowledged in the World; Every Acknowledgement paid unto *God*, is a fresh Drop of Burning Brimstone falling upon the Divel;<sup>170</sup> He do's make his Insolent, tho' Impotent Batteries, even upon the *Throne* of God Himself: and foolishly affects to have himself exalted unto that *Glorious High Throne*,<sup>171</sup> by all

people, as he sometimes is, by Execrable *Witches*. This horrible Dragon do's not only with his Tayl strike at the *Stars of God*, but at the *God Himself*, who made the *Stars*, being desirous to outshine them all. God and the Divil are sworn Enemies to each other; the Terms between them, are those, in Zech. 11. 18. *My Soul Loathed them, and their soul also Abhorred me*. And from this Furious *Wrath*, or Displeasure and Prejudice at God, proceeds the Divels *Wrath* at us, the poor Children of Men. Our doing the *Service* of God, is one thing that Exposes us to the *Wrath* of the Divil. [12] We are the *High-Priests* of the World; when all Creatures are call'd upon, *Praise ye the Lord*,<sup>172</sup> they bring to us those demanded *Praises* of God, saying, *Do you Offer them for us*. Hence 'tis, that the Divil has a a Quarrel with us, as he had with the *High-Priest* in the Vision of Old. Our bearing the *Image* of God, is another thing that brings the *Wrath* of the Divil upon us. As a *Tygre*,<sup>173</sup> thro' his hatred at a man, will tear the very Picture of him, if it come in his way; such a *Tygre* the Devil is; because God said of old, *Let us make Man in our Image*,<sup>174</sup> the Devil is ever saying, *Let us pull this man to pieces*. But the envious *Pride* of the Devil, is one thing more that gives an Edge unto his Furious *Wrath* against us. The Apostle has given us an hint, as if *Pride* had been the *Condemnation* of the Devil. 'Tis not unlikely, that the Devils *Affectation* to be above that Condition which he might learn that Mankind was to be preferr'd unto, might be the occasion of his takingup Arms against the *Immortal King*. However, the Devil now sees *Man* lying in the Bosome of God, but *Himself* damned in the Bottom of Hell;<sup>175</sup> and this Enrages him exceedingly; O, says he, *I cannot bear it, that man should not be as miserable as myself*.

*Proposition III.*

The *Devil*, in the prosecution, & for the execution, of His *wrath* upon them, often gets a *Liberty* to make a *Descent* upon the Children of men. When [13] the Devil *does Hurt* unto us, he *Comes Down* unto us; for the *Randezvouze* of the *Infernal Troops*, is indeed in the *Supernal Parts* of our Air.<sup>176</sup> But as tis said, *A sparrow of the Air does not fall down without the will of God;*<sup>177</sup> so I may say, *Not a Devil in the Air, can come down without the leave of God.* Of this we have a famous Instance in that Arabian Prince, of whom the Devil was unable so much as to *Touch* any thing, till the most High God gave him a permission, to *go down*.<sup>178</sup> The Divil stands with all the Instruments of Death, aiming at us, and begging of the Lord, as that King ask'd for the Hood-wink'd *Syrians* of old, *Shall I Smite 'em, shall I Smite 'em?*<sup>179</sup> He cannot strike a Blow, till the Lord say, *Go down and smite*, but sometimes He *does* obtain from the *High Possessor of Heaven and Earth*, a License for the doing of it. The Divil sometimes does make most rueful Havock among us; but still we may say to him, as our Lord said unto a great servant of his, *Thou couldst have no power against me, except it were given thee from above.*<sup>180</sup> The Divil is called in I *pte.* 5. 8. *your Adversary*. Tis a Law-term; and it notes, *An Adversary at Law*. The Divil cannot come at us, except in some sence according to *Law*; but sometimes he does procure sad things to be inflicted, according to that *Law* of the eternal King, upon us. The Divil First *Goes up* as an *Accuser* against us: He is therefore styled *The Accuser*; and it is on this account, that his proper Name, does belong unto him. There is a Court somewhere kept; a Court of Spirits, where the Divil enters all sorts of Complaints against us [14] all; he charges us with manifold *sins* against the Lord our God: *There* he loads us

with heavy *Imputations*, of Hypocrisy, Iniquity, Disobedience; where upon he urges, *Lord, let 'em now have the Death, which is their Wages, paid unto 'em!* If our *Advocate* in the Heavens do not now take off his Libels, the Devil then with a Concession of God, *Comes down*, as a *Destroyer* upon us. Having first been an *Attorney*, to bespeak that the Judgments of Heaven may be Ordered for us, he then also pleads that he may be the *Executioner* of those Judgments; and the God of Heaven sometimes after a sort signs a Warrant, for this *Destroying Angel*, to do what has bin *desired* to be done for the *Destroying of men*. But such a *Permission* from God, for the Divil to *Come down*, and *Break in* upon mankind, oftentimes must be Accompanied with a *Commission* from some wretches of mankind it self. Every man is, as tis hinted in *Gen. 4. 9. His Brothers Keeper*. We are to *keep* one another from the Inroads of the Divil, by mutual and Cordial Wishes of prosperity to one another. When ungodly people, give their *Consents* in *witchcrafts* diabolically performed, for the Divil to annoy their Neighbours, he finds a Breach made in the Hedge about us, whereat he Rushes in upon us, with grievous molestations. Yea, when Impious people, that never saw the Divil, do but utter their *Curses* against their Neighbours, those are so many *Watch words* whereby the Mastives of Hell are animated presently to fall upon us. 'Tis thus, that the Devil gets *Leave* to worry us. [15]

*Proposition IV.*

Most Horrible *Woes* come to be inflicted upon Mankind, when the *Divel* do's in *Great Wrath*, make a *Descent* upon them. The *Divel*, is a *Do-Evil*,<sup>181</sup> and wholly set upon mischief. When Our Lord once was going to *Muzzel* him, that he might not mischief others, he cry'd out, *Art thou come to Torment me?* He is, it seems, himself *Tormented*, if he be but *Restrained* from the Tormenting of Men. If upon the Sounding of the Three last *Apocalyptical Angels*, it was an outcry made in Heaven, *Wo, Wo, Wo, to the inhabitants of the Earth by reason of the voice of the Trumpet.*<sup>182</sup> I am sure, a *Descent* made by the Angel of *Death* would give cause for the like Exclamation: *Wo to the World, by reason of the Wrath of the Divel!* What a *Woful* plight, Mankind would by the *Descent* of the *Divel*, be brought into, may be gathered from the *Woful* pains, and wounds, and hideous desolations, which the *Divel* brings upon them, of whom he has with a *Bodily Possession* made a *Siezure*.<sup>183</sup> You may both in Sacred and Profane History, read many a direful Account of the *Woes*, which they, that are possessed by the *Divel*, do undergo: And from thence conclude, *What must the Children of Men, hope from such a Divel!*<sup>184</sup> Moreover the *Tyrannical Ceremonies*, whereto the *Divel* uses to subjugate such *VVoful* Nations or Orders of men, as are more Entirely under his Dominion, do declare what *VVoful* Work, the *Divel* would make where he [16] comes. The very Devotions of those forlorn Pagans, to whom the *Divel* is a Leader, are most bloody *Penances*: and what *VVo*es indeed must we expect from such a *Divel* of a *Moloch*, as relishes no Sacrifices like those of Humane Heart-Blood, and unto whom there is no musick like the bitter, dying, doleful Groans, ejulated by the Roasting Children of men.<sup>185</sup>

Furthermore, the Servile, Abject, Needy Circumstances wherein the Devil keeps the Slaves, that are under his more sensible Vassallage, do suggest unto us, How *woful* the Devil would render all of our Lives. We that live in a Province, which affords unto us, all that may be Necessary or Comfortable for us, found the Province fill'd with vast Herds of Salvages, that never saw so much as a *Knife*, or a *Nail*, or a *Board*, or a Grain of *Salt*, in all their days. No better would the Devil have the World provided for! Nor should we, or any else, have one convenient Thing about us; but be as Indigent as usually our most Ragged *Witches* are; if the Devils Malice were not over-ruled by a Compassionate God, *Who Preserves Man and Beast*.<sup>186</sup> Hence tis, That the Devil, even like a *Dragon*, keeping a Guard upon such *Fruits* as would Refresh a Languishing World, has hindred Mankind for many Ages, from hitting upon those useful *Inventions*, which yet were so *Obvious* and *Facil*, that it is every bodies wonder, they were no sooner hit upon. The Bemisted World, must jog on for Thousands of Years, without the knowledge of the *Loadstone*, till a *Neapolitan* stumbled upon it, about three Hun- [17] dred years ago.<sup>187</sup> Nor must the world be blest with such a matchless Engine of Learning and Vertue, as that of, *Printing*, till about the middle of the Fifteenth Century. Nor could one Old Man all over the Face of the whole Earth, have the benefit of such a *Little*, tho' most *Needful*, Thing, as a pair of Spectacles, till a Dutch-Man, a little while ago accommodated us.<sup>188</sup>

Indeed, as the Divel do's begrutch us all manner of *Good*, so he do's Annoy us with all manner of *VVo*, as often as he finds himself capable of doing it. But shall vve mention some of the special *woes* with which the Divel do's usually infest the World! Breefly then; *Plagues* are some of those *woes*, with which the Divel troubles us. It is said



of the *Israelites*, in I. Cor. 10.10 *They were destroyed of the destroyer*. That is, they had the *Plague* among them. 'Tis the *Destroyer*, or the *Divel*, that scatters *Plagues* about the World: Pestilential and Contagious Diseases, 'tis the *Divel*, who do's oftentimes invade us with them. 'Tis no uneasy thing, for the *Divel*, to impregnate the Air about us, with such Malignant *Salts*, as meeting with the *Salt* of our Microcosin, shall immediately cast us into that Fermentation and Putrefaction, which will utterly dissolve all the Vital Tyes within us; Ev'n as an *Aqua-Fortis*,<sup>189</sup> made with a conjunction of Nitre<sup>190</sup> and Vitriol,<sup>191</sup> Corrodes what it Siezes upon. And when the *Divel* has raised those *Arsenical Fumes*, which become *Venemous Quivers* full of *Terrible Arrows*, how easily can he shoot the deleterious *Miasms*<sup>192</sup> into [18] those Juices or Bowels of Mens Bodies, which will soon Enflame them with Mortal Fire! Hence come such *Plagues*, as that *Beesome of Destruction* which within our memory swept away such a Throng of people from One English City in one Visitation:<sup>193</sup> and hence those Infectious Feavers, which are but so many *Disguised Plagues* among us, Causing Epidemical Desolations. Again, *Wars* are also some of those *VVo*es, with which the *Divel* causes our Trouble. It is said in Rev. 12.17. *The Dragon was wroth, and went to make war*: And there is in Truth, scarce any *War*, but what is of the *Dragons* kindling. The *Divel* is that *Vulcan*,<sup>194</sup> out of whose Forge come the instruments of our *Wars*, and it is he that finds us Employments for those Instruments. We read concerning *Dæmoniacks*, or people in whom the *Devil* was, that they would cut and wound themselves; and so, when the *Devil* is in Men, he puts 'em upon dealing in that barbarous fashion with one another. *Wars* do often furnish him with

some Thousands of Souls in one Morning from one Acre of Ground; and for the sake of such *Thyestæan*<sup>195</sup> Banquets, he will push us upon as many *Wars* as he can.

Once more, why may not *Storms* be reckoned among those *Woes*, with which the Devil do's disturb us? It is not improbable, that *Natural Storms*, on the World, are often of the Devils raising. We are told in Job. I. II. 12, 19. that the *Devil* made a *Storm*, which Hurricano'd the House of *Job*, upon the Heads of them that were feasting in it.<sup>196</sup> [19] *Paracelsus* could have informed the Devil, if he had not been informed, as be sure he was before, That if much *Aluminious* matter, with *Salt-Peter* not thoroughly prepared, be mixed, they will send up a cloud of Smoke, which will come down in Rain.<sup>197</sup> But undoubtedly the *Devil* understands as well the way to make a *Tempest*, as to turn the *Winds* at the Solicitation of a *Laplander*;<sup>198</sup> Whence perhaps it is, that Thunders are observed oftner to break upon *Churches*, than upon any other *Buildings*; and besides many a *Man*, yea many a *Ship*, yea many a *Town* has miscarried, when the *Devil* ha's been permitted from above to make an *Horrible tempest*. However that the Divil has raised many Metaphorical *Storms* upon the Church, is a thing, than which there is nothing more notorious. It was said unto Believers, in Rev. 2.10. *The Devil shall cast some of you into Prison*. The Divil was he that at first set *Cain* upon *Abel*, to butcher him, as the Apostle seems to suggest, for his Faith in God, as a *Rewarder*. And, in how many *Persecutions*, as well as *Hæresies*, has the Devil been ever since Engaging all the Children of *Cain*! That *Serpent* the Devil ha's acted his cursed *Seed*, in unwearied Endeavours to have them, *Of whom the World is not worthy*, treated as those who are, *Not Worthy to live in the World*. By the Impulse of the Devil, tis that first the old

*Heathens*, and then the mad *Arians*,<sup>199</sup> where *Pricking Briars*, to the true Servants of God; and that the *Papists* that came after them, have out-done them all, for Slaughters, upon those that have been *Accoun*-[20] *ted as the sheep for the Slaughters*.<sup>200</sup> The late *French Persecution*, is perhaps the Horriblest that ever was in the World: and as the Devil of *Mascon*<sup>201</sup> seems before to have meant it, in his outcries, upon, *The miseries preparing for the poor Hugonots!*<sup>202</sup> thus it ha's been all acted, by a singular Fury of the old Dragon inspiring of his Emissaries.

But in reality, *Spiritual Woes*, are the *Principal Woes*, among all those that the Devil would have us undone withal. *Sins* are the worst of *Woes*; and the Devil seeks nothing so much, as to plunge us into *Sins*. When men do commit a Crime for which they are to be Indicted, they are usually *Mov'd by the Instigation of the Devil*. The Devil will put *Ill Men* upon being worse. Was it not *he*, that said in I King 22. 22. *I will go forth, and be a Lying Spirit in the Mouth of all the Prophets*? Even so, the Devil becomes an *Unclean Spirit*, a *Drinking Spirit*, a *Swearing Spirit*, a *Worldly Spirit*, a *Passionate Spirit*, a *Revengful Spirit*, and the like, in the Hearts of those that are already too much of such a Spirit; and thus, they become Improv'd in Sinfulness. Yea, the Devil will put *Good Men* upon doing *Ill*. Thus we read, in I Chron. 21. 1. *Satan provoked David to Number Israel*.<sup>203</sup> And so, the Devil *provokes* men that are Eminent in Holiness, unto such Things as may become eminently pernicious; he *provokes* them especially unto *Pride*, and unto many unsuitable Emulations. There are likewise most lamentable Impressions, which the Devil makes upon the *Souls* of men, by way of punish [21] ment upon them for their *Sins*. 'Tis Thus, when an Offended God, puts the *Souls* of men over into the Hands of that

Officer, *Who has the Power of Death, that is, the Devil*. It is the woful misery of Unbelievers, in 2 Cor. 4. 4. *The God of this World has blinded their minds*. And thus it may be said of those Woful Wretches, whom the *Devil* is a God unto, *The Devil so Muffles them, that they cannot see the things of their Peace*.<sup>204</sup> And, *The Devil so Hardens them, that nothing will awaken their cares about their Souls*: How come so many to be *Seared* in their Sins? 'Tis the Devil, that with a Red Hot Iron fetch't from his Hell, does *cauterize* them. Thus tis, till perhaps a last they come to have a *Wounded Conscience* in them, and the Devil has often a share in their Torturing and Confounding Anguishes. The *Devil* who Terrify'd *Cain*, and *Saul*, and *Judas*, into Desperation, still becomes a *King of Terrors*,<sup>205</sup> to many Sinners, and frights them from laying hold on the Mercy of God in the Lord Jesus Christ. In these regards, *Wo to us, when the Devil comes down upon us*.

*Proposition V.*

Toward the *End* of his *Time* the *Descent* of the *Devil* in *Wrath* upon the World, will produce more *woful Effects*, than what have been in *Former Ages*. The *Dying Dragon*, will bite more Cruelly, & sting more Bloodily than ever he did before: The *Death-pangs* of the Devil will make him to be more [22] of a *Devil* than ever he was; and the Furnace of this *Nebuchadnezeæar* will be heated *seven times* hotter, just before its putting out.<sup>206</sup>

We are in the first place, to Apprehend, That there is a *Time* fixed and stated by God, for the Devil to enjoy a Dominion over our *sinful* and therefore *woful* World. The Devil once Exclaimed, in Mat. 8.29. *Jesus, thou Son of God, art thou come hither to Torment us before our Time?* It is plain, That until the *Second* Coming of our Lord, the *Devil* must have a *Time* of plaguing the World, which he was afraid, would have Expired at His *First*. The Devil is, *By the wrath of God, the Prince of this World*; and the *Time* of his Reign, is to continue until the *Time*, when our Lord Himself, shall, *Take to Himself, his great Power and Reign*. Then 'tis that the Devil shall hear the Son of God, swearing with loud Thunders against him, *Thy Time shall now be no more!* Then shall the Devil with his Angels, receive their Doom, which will be, *Depart into the Everlasting Fire prepared for you.*<sup>207</sup>

We are also to Apprehend, that in the *mean time*, the Divil can give a shrowd guess, when he drawes near to the *End of his Time*. When he saw Christianity enthron'd among the *Romans*, it is here said, in our *Rev*, 12 12, *He knows he hath but a short time*. And how does he *know* it? Why, *Reason* will make the Divil to *know* that God won't suffer him to have, *the Everlasting Dominion*; & that when God has once begun to rescue the world out of his hands [23] Hee'l go through with it, until *The Captives of the mighty shall be taken away and the prey of the Terrible shall be delivered.*<sup>208</sup> But the Divil will have *Scripture* also, to make him *Know* that when his Antichristian *Vicar* the *seven headed Beast* on the *seven-hilled City*, shall have spent his determined years, *he* with his *Vicar* must unavoidably go down into the *Bottomless Pitt*. It is not Improbable, that the Divil often hears the *Scripture* expounded in our congregations; yea that we never

Assemble without a *Satan* among us. As there are some *Divines*, who do with more uncertainty conjecture, from a *certain Place* in the Epistle to the *Ephesians*, That the Angels do some times come into our Churches, to gain some Advantage from our Ministry.<sup>209</sup> But be sure our *Demonstrable Interpretations*, may give Repeated Notices to the *Divel*, *That his time is almost out*: and what the preacher says unto the *Young Man*, *Know thou, that God will bring thee into Judgment!*<sup>210</sup> THAT may our Sermons tell unto that *Old Wretch*, *Know thou, that the time of Judgment is at hand!*

But we must now, likewise, Apprehend, that in *such a time*, the *Woes* of the world, will be heightened, beyond what they were at *any Time* yet from the foundation of the world. Hence ti's, that the Apostle has forewarned us, in 2. *Tim.* 3. 1. *this know, that in the last days, perillous times shall come.*, when the *Divel knows*, that he is got into his *Last days*, he will make *Perillous Times* for us; the times will grow more full of *Divels*, and therefore more full of *Perils*, than ever they were before. Of this if we [24] would *Know*, what cause is to be assigned; It is not only, because the *Divel* growes more *Able* and more *Eager* to Vex the world; but also, and chiefly, Because the world is more *worthy* to be Vexed by the *Divel*, than ever heretofore. The *Sins* of men in this Generation, will be more *mighty Sins*, than those of the Former Ages; men will be more Accurate & Exquisite, & Refined in the Arts of *Sinning*, than they use to be. And besides, their own sins, the sins of all the Former Ages will also lie upon the sinners of this generation. Do we ask why the *mischievous powers of darkness* are to prevail more in our days, than they did in those that are past & gone! Tis because that men by sinning over again the sins of the Former days, have a *Fellowship with all those unfruitful works of*

*darkness.* As 'twas said in *Math. 23. 36. All these things shall come upon this generation;* so, the men of the *Last generation*, will find themselves involved in the guilt of all that went before them. Of Sinners tis said, *They Heap up Wrath;* and the sinners of the *Last generations* do not only add unto the *Heap* of sin that has been piling up, ever since the Fall of man, but they Interest themselves in every sin of that enormous Heap. There has been a *Cry* of sin in all Former Ages going up to God, *That the Divel may come down!* and the sinners of the *Last generations*, do sharpen and louden that *cry*, till the thing do come to pass, as Destructively as Irremediably. From whence it follows, that the Thrice Holy God, with His Holy Angles, will now after a sort more *Abandon* the World, than in the former Ages. The Roaring Impieties of the *Old World*, [25] at last gave Mankind such a Distast in the Heart of the Just God, that he came to say, *It Repents me, that I have made such a Creature!* And however, it may be but a witty Fancy, in a Late Learned Writer, that the *Earth* before the Flood was nearer to the *Sun*, than it is at this Day; and that Gods Hurling down the *Earth* to a further Distance from the *Sun*, were the cause of that Flood;<sup>211</sup> yet we may fitly enough say, that men perished by a *Rejection* from the God of Heaven. Thus, the Enhanc'd Impieties of this *our World*, will Exasperate the Displeasure of God, at such a rate, as that he will more *Cast us off*, than heretofore; until at last, He do with a more than ordinary Indignation say, *Go Devils; do you take them, and make them beyond all former measures miserable!*

If Lastly, We are inquisitive after Instances of those Aggravated *Woes*, with which the Devil will towards the *End* of his *Time* assault us; Let it be Remembered, That all the Extremities which were foretold by the *Trumpets* and the *Vials* in the Apocalyptic

Schemes of these things, to come upon the world, were the *woes* to come from the *wrath* of the Divel, upon the *shortning* of his *Time*, The horrendous desolations that have come upon mankind, by the Irruptions of the old *Barbarians*<sup>212</sup> upon the Roman World, and then of the *Saracens*,<sup>213</sup> and since, of the *Turks*,<sup>214</sup> were such *woes*, as men had never seen before. The Infandous<sup>215</sup> *Blindness* and *Vileness* which then came upon mankind, and the Monstrous *Croisadoes*<sup>216</sup> which thereupon carried the Roman world by the [26] Millions together unto the shambles, where also such *woes* as had never yet had a Parallel. And yet these were some of the things here intended, when it was said, *wo! For the Divel is come down in Great wrath, having but a short Time.*

But besides all these things, and besides the Increase of *Plagues & Wars*, and *Storms*, and *Internal Maladies* now in our days, there are especially two most extraordinary *Woes*, one would fear, will in these days become very ordinary. One *Woe* that may be look'd for is, A frequent Repetition of *Earthquakes*, and this perhaps by the energy of the Divel in the *Earth*. The Divel will be clap't up, as a Prisoner in or near the Bowels of the earth, when once that *Conflagration* shall be dispatch'd which will make, *The New Earth wherein shall dwell Righteousness*;<sup>217</sup> and that *Conflagration* will doubtless be much promoted, by the Subterraneous *Fires*, which are a cause of the *Earthquakes* in our *Dayes*. Accordingly, we read, *Great Earthquakes in divers places*,<sup>218</sup> enumerated among the Tokens of the *Time* approaching, when the Devil shall have no longer *Time*. I suspect, That we shall now be visited with more Usual, and yet more Fatal *Earthquakes*, than were our Ancestors; inasmuch as the *Fires* that are shortly to, *Burn unto the Lowest Hell, and set on Fire the Foundations of the Mountains*,<sup>219</sup> will now get



more Head than they use to do; and it is not impossible, that the Devil, who is e're long to be punished in those *Fires*, may aforehand augment his Desert of it, by having an hand in [27] using some of those *Fires*, for our *Detriment*. Learned Men have made no scruple to charge the Devil with it; *Deo permittente, Terræmotus causat.*<sup>220</sup> The Devil surely, was a party in the *Earthquake*, whereby the Vengeance of God, in one black Night sunk Twelve considerable Cities of *Asia*, in the Reign of *Tiberius*.<sup>221</sup> But there will be more such *Catastrophe's* in our Dayes! *Italy* has lately been *Shaking*, till its *Earthquakes* have brought Ruines at once upon more than thirty Towns; but it will within a little while, *shake* again, and *shake* till the Fire of God have made an Entire *Etna* of it.<sup>222</sup> And behold, This very Morning, when I was intending to utter among you such Things as these, we are cast into an *Heartquake* by Tidings of an *Earthquake* that has lately happened at *Jamaica*: an horrible *Earthquake*, whereby the *Tyrus* of the English *America*, was at once pull'd into the Jawes of the Gaping and Groaning Earth, and many Hundreds of the Inhabitants buried alive.<sup>223</sup> The Lord sanctifie so dismal a Dispensation of his Providence, unto all the *American* Plantations! But be assured my Neighbours, the *Earthquakes* are not over yet! We have not yet seen *the Last*.<sup>224</sup> And then, Another *Wo* that may be Look'd for is, The Devils being now let Loose in *preternatural Operations* more than formerly; & perhaps in *Possessions & Obsessions* that shall be very marvellous. You are not Ignorant, That just before our Lords *First Coming*, there were most observable Outrages committed by the Devil upon the Children of Men:<sup>225</sup> [28] And I am suspicious, That there will again be an unusual Range of the Devil among us, a little before the *Second Coming* of our Lord, which will be, to give the last stroke in,

*Destroying the Works of the Devil.* The *Evening Wolves* will be much abroad, when we are near the *Evening* of the World.<sup>226</sup> The Devil is going to be Dislodged of the *Air*, where his present Quarters are; God will with flashes of hot *Lightning* upon him, cause him to *fall as Lightning* from his Ancient Habitations: And the *Raised Saints* will there have a *New Heaven*, which, *We expect according to the Promise of God*. Now, a little before this thing, you'll be like to see the Devil, more *sensibly* and *visibly* Busy upon *Earth* perhaps, than ever he was before: You shall oftner hear about *Apparitions* of the Devil, and about poor people strangely Bewitched, *Possessed* and *Obsessed*, by Infernal Fiends. When our Lord is going to set up His Kingdom, in the most *sensible* and *visible* manner that ever was, and in a manner answering the *Transfiguration* in the Mount, it is a thousand to one, but the Devil will in sundry parts of the World, assay the like for Himself, with a most Apish Imitation:<sup>227</sup> and Men, at least in *some* Corners of the World, and perhaps in *such* as God may have some special Designs upon, will to their Cost, be more Familiarized with the *World of Spirits* than they had been formerly.<sup>228</sup>

So that, in fine, if just before the *End* when the *Times of the Jews* were to be finished, a man then ran about every where, crying, *Wo to the Nation! Wo [29] to the City! Wo to the Temple! Wo! Wo! Wo!*<sup>229</sup> Much more may the decent of the Devil, just before his *End*, when also the *Times of the Gentiles*<sup>230</sup> will be finished, cause us to cry out, *Wo! Wo! Wo! because of the Black things that Threaten us!*

But it is now Time to make our Improvement of what has been said. And, first, we shall entertain ourselves with a few *Corollaries*: deduced from what has been thus asserted.

*Corollary I.*

What cause have we to bless God, for our preservation from the *Devils wrath*, in this which may too reasonably be call'd the *Devils VWorld*! While we are in, *this present evil world*, We are continually surrounded with swarms of those Devils, who make this *present world*, become so *evil*. What a wonder of Mercy is it, that no *Devil* could ever yet make a prey of us! We can set our foot no where but we shall tread in the midst of most Hellish *Rattle-Snakes*; and one of those *Rattle-Snakes* once thro' the mouth of a Man on whom he had Siezed, hissed out such a Truth as this, *If God would let me loose upon you, I should find enough in the Best of you all, to make you all mine*. What shall I say? The *VWilderness* thro' which we are passing to the *Promised Land*, is all over fill'd with, *Fiery flying serpents*. But blessed be God; None of them have hitherto so fastned upon us, as to confound us utterly! All our way to Heaven, lies by the *Dens of* [30] *Lions*, and the *Mounts of Leopards*;<sup>231</sup> there are incredible *Droves of Divels* in our way. But have we safely got on our way thus far? O let us be thankful to our Eternal preserver for it. It is said in, Psal. 76. 10. *Surely the wrath of Man shall praise thee, and the Remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain*;<sup>232</sup> But surely It becomes us to praise God, in that we have yet sustain'd no more *Damage by the wrath of the Devil*, and in that he has restrain'd that Overwhelming *wrath*. We are poor Travellers in a World, which is as well the Devils *Field*, as the Devils *Gaol*; a World, in every Nook whereof, the Devil is encamped, with *Bands of Robbers*, to pester all that have their *Face looking Zion-ward*:<sup>233</sup> And are we all

this while preserved from the undoing Snares of the *Devil*! It is, *Thou, O keeper of Israel, that hast hitherto been our Keeper!*<sup>234</sup> And therefore, *Bless the Lord, O my soul, Bless his Holy Name, who has redeemed thy Life from the Destroyer!*<sup>235</sup>

*Corollary. II.*

We may see the rise of those multiply'd magnify'd, and Singularly stinged Afflictions, with which *aged* or *dying* Saints frequently have their *Death* Prefaced, & their *Age* embittered. When the Saints of God are going to leave the World, it is usually a more *Stormy World* with them, than ever it was; and they find more *Vanity*, and more *Vexation* in the world than ever they did before. It is true, *That many are the afflictions of the Righteous* [31] but a little before they bid adieu to all those many *Afflictions*, they often have greater, harder, Sorer, Loads thereof laid upon them, than they had yet endured. It is true, *That thro' much Tribulation we must enter in the Kingdom of God;*<sup>236</sup> but a little before our *Entrance* thereinto, our *Tribulation* may have some sharper accents of Sorrow, than ever were yet upon it. And what is the cause of this! It is indeed the *Faithfulness of our God unto us*, that we should find the *Earth* more full of *Thorns* and *Briars* than ever, just before he fetches us from *Earth* to *Heaven*; that so we may go away the more willingly, the more easily, and with less Convulsion, at his calling for us. O there are *ugly Ties*, by which we are fastned unto this world; but God will by *Thorns* and *Briars* tear those *Ties* asunder. But, *Is not the Hand of Joab here?*<sup>237</sup> Sure, There is the *wrath* of the *Devil* also in it. A little before we step into Heaven, the Devil thinks with

himself, *My time to abuse that Saint is now but short; what Mischief I am to do that Saint, must be done quickly, if at all; he'l shortly be out of my Reach for ever.* And for this cause he will now fly upon us with the Fiercest Efforts and Furies of his *Wrath*. It was allowed unto the *Serpent*, in Gen.2.15. *To Bruise the Heel*. Why, at the *Heel*, or at the *Close*, of our Lives, the *Serpent* will be nibbling, more than ever in our Lives before: and it is, *Because now he has but a short time*. He knows, That we shall very shortly [32] be, *Where the Wicked cease from Troubling, and where the Weary are at Rest*; wherefore that *Wicked* one will now *Trouble* us, more than ever he did, and we shall have so much *Distrest*, as will make us more *weary* than ever we were, of things here below.

### Corollary. III

What a Reasonable Thing then is it, that they whose *Time* is but *short*, should make as great *Use* of their *Time*, as ever they Can! I pray, let us learn some *good*, even from the *Wicked One* himself. It has been advised, *Be Wise as Serpents*: why, there is a peece of *Wisdom*, whereto that *old Serpent*, the *Divel* himself, may be our Monitor. When the *Divel* perceives his *Time* is but *short*, it puts him upon *Great Wrath*. But how should it be with *us*, when we perceive that our *Time* is but *short*? why, it should put us upon *Great Work*. The motive which makes the *Divel* to be more full of *wrath*, should make us more full of *warmth*, more full of *watch*, and more full of *All Diligence to make our Vocation, and Election sure*. Our *Pace* in our Journey *Heaven-ward*, must be Quickened, if our *space* for that Journey be shortened: even as Israel went further the *two last* years of their

Journey *Canaanward*, than they did in *Thirty eight* years before. The Apostle brings this, as a *spur* to the Devotions of Christians, in. I. *Cor.* 7. 29. *This I say, Bretheren, the time is short.* Even so, I say this day; some things I lay before you, which I do only *think*, or *guess*, but here is a thing which I venture to *say* with all the [33] freedom Imaginable. You have now a *Time* to *Get* good; even a *Time* to make sure of *Grace and Glory, and every good thing*, by true Repentance; But, *This I say, the time is but short.* You have now *Time* to *Do* good; even to *serve out your generation*, as by the *Will*, so for the *Praise* of God; But, *This I say the time is but short.* And what I say thus to *All* People, I say to *Old* People, with a Peculiar Vehemency: Syrs, It Cannot be long, before your *Time* is out; there are but a few Sands Left in the glass of your *Time*: And it is of all things the saddest, for a man to say, *My Time is done but my work undone!* O then, To *work* as fast as you can; and of Soul-Work, and Church-Work, Dispatch as much as ever you can. Say to all *Hindrances*, as the Gracious *Jeremiah Burrows*<sup>238</sup> would sometimes to *Visitants*: *You'l excuse me if I ask you to be short with me, for my work is great, and my Time is but short.* Methinks every *Time*, we hear a clock, or see a watch, we have an Admonition given us, That our *Time* is upon the *wing*, and it will all be gone within a little while. I Remember I have read of a famous man, who having a *Clock-Watch* long Lying by him, out of Kilture in his Trunk, it unaccountably Struck *Eleven* just before he *Dy'd*. Why, there are many of you, for whom I am to do that office this day: I am to tell you, *Your are come to your Eleventh Hour*; there is not more than a *Twelfth Part* at most, of your life yet behind. But if we neglect our business, till our *short Time* shall be reduced into *None*,

then, wo to us, for the great wrath of God will send us down from whence there is no Redemption. [34]

Corollary. IV.

How wellcome should a *Death in the Lord*,<sup>239</sup> be unto them, that belong not unto the *Divel*, but unto the Lord! While We are sojourning in this world, we are in what may upon too many accounts be called *The Divels Country*: we are where the *Divel* may Come down upon us in *Great Wrath* continually. The day when God shall take us out of this world, will be, *The Day when the Lord will deliver us from the Hand of all our enemies*,<sup>240</sup> and from the Hand of Satan: In such a day, why should not our Song be that of the Psalmist, *Blessed by my Rock, and let the God of My Salvation be Exalted!* While we are here, we are in the *Valley of the shadow of Death*; and what is it that makes it so! Ti's because the *Wild Beasts of Hell* are lurking on every side of us, & every minute ready to Salley forth upon us. But our *Death* will fetch us out of that *Valley*, and carry us where we shall be, *For ever with the Lord*. We are now under the daily *Buffetings* of the *Divel*, and he does molest us with such *Fiery Darts*, as cause us even to cry out, *I am weary of my Life*.<sup>241</sup> Yea, but are we as *Willing to Dy*, as, *Weary of Life*? Our *Death* will then soon set us where we cannot be Reach'd by the *Fist of Wickedness*:<sup>242</sup> and where the, *Perfect cannot be shotten at*. It is said, in Rev. 14. 13. *Blessed are the Dead, which Dy in the Lord, They Rest from their Labours*.<sup>243</sup> But we may say, *Blessed are the Dead in the Lord, inasmuch as they Rest from the Devils!*<sup>244</sup> Our [35] *Dying* will be but our *Taking Wing*: When, attended with a Convoy of Winged Angels, we shall be convey'd into that Heaven, from whence the *Devil* having been thrown, he shall never more come

thither after us. What if God should now say to us, as to *Moses*, *Go up and Dy!* As long as we *Go up*, when we *Dy*, Let us receive the Message with a Joyful Soul; we shall soon be there, where the Devil can't *Come Down* upon us. If the, *God of our Life*, should now send that Order to us, which he gave to *Hezekiah*, *Set thy House in Order, for thou shalt Dy, and not Live;*<sup>245</sup> We need not be cast into such deadly Agonies thereupon, as *Hezekiah* was: We are but going to *House*, of the Golden Doors<sup>246</sup> whereof, cannot be Entred by the Devil that here did use to Persecute us. Methinks, I see the Departed *Spirit* of a Believer, Triumphantly carried thro' the Devils *Territories*, in Such a Stately and Fiery, Chariot, as the *Spiritualizing Body* of *Elias* had;<sup>247</sup> methinks, I see the Devil, with whole Flocks of *Harpies*, grinning at this Child of God, but unable to fasten any of their Gripping Talons upon him: And then, upon the utmost Edge of our *Atmosphære*,<sup>248</sup> methinks I over-hear the Holy Soul, with a most Heavenly Gallantry deriding the Defeated Fiend, and saying *Ah! Satan! Return to thy Dungeons again; I am going where thou canst not come for ever!* O 'tis a Brave Thing so to Dy! And especially so to Dy, in *Our Time*. For, tho' when we call to mind, *That the Devils Time is now but short*, it may almost make us wish to [36] *Live* unto the *End* of it; and to say with the Psalmist, *Because the Lord will shortly appear in His Glory, to Build up Zion. O my God, Take me not away in the midst of my Dayes!* Yet when we bear in mind, *That the Devils' Wrath is now most Great*, it would make one willing to be, *Out of the Way*. Inasmuch as now is the Time for the doing of those things in the prospect whereof *Balaam* long ago cry'd out, *Who shall live when such Things are done!*<sup>249</sup> We should not be inordinately loth to *Dy* at



such a Time. In a word, The *Times* are so *Bad*, that we may well count it , as *Good* a *Time* to Dy in, as ever we saw.

*Corollary. V.*

Good News for the *Israel* of God, and particularly for His *New-English Israel*! If the Devils *Time* were above a *Thousand Years ago*, pronounced, *Short*, What may we suppose it now in *Our Time*? Surely *We* are not a *Thousand Years* distant from those Happy *Thousand Years* of rest and peace, and [which is better] *Holiness*, reserved for the people of God in the latter days; and if we are not a *Thousand Years* yet short of that Golden Age, there is cause to think, that we are not an *Hundred*. That the blessed *Thousand Years* are not yet begun, is abundantly clear from this, *We do not see the Devil bound*; No, the Devil was never more let *Loose* than in our Days; and it is very much that any should imagine other- [37] wise: But the same thing that proves the *Thousand Years* of Prosperity for the Church of God, UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVEN, to be not yet *Begun*, do's also prove, that it is not very *Far Off*; and that is the prodigious *Wrath* with which the Devil do's in our Days Prosecute, yea, Desolate the World.<sup>250</sup> Let us cast our Eyes almost where we will, and we shall see the *Devils* Domineering at such a rate as may justly fill us with astonishment; it is Quæstionable whether *Iniquity* ever were so Rampant, or whether *Calamity* were ever so Pungent, as in this Lamentable *Time*; We may truly say, *Tis the Hour and the Power of Darkness*.<sup>251</sup> But, tho the *Wrath* be so *Great*, the *Time* is but *Short*: when we are perplexed with the *Wrath* of the Devil, the *Word* of our God at the same time unto us, is that, in Rom. 16. 20. *The God of Peace*

*shall bruise Satan under your feet SHORTLY. SHORTLY, didst thou say, Dearest Lord! O! Gladsome word! Amen, Even so, Come, Lord! Lord Jesus, Come Quickly! We shall never be rid of this Troublesome Devil, till, Thou do come to Chain him up!*<sup>252</sup>

But because the people of God, would willingly be told *Whereabouts* we are with reference to the *Wrath and the Time*, of the Devil, you shall give me leave humbly to set before you a few, *Conjectures*.

*The first Conjecture.*

The Devils *Eldest Son*<sup>253</sup> seems to be towards the [38] *End* of his last *Half-time*; and if it be so, the Devils *Whole-time*, cannot but be very near it's *End*. It is a very scandalous thing that any *Protestant*, should be at a loss where to find, *The Anti-Christ*. But, we have sufficient Assurance, that the Duration of *Antichrist*, is to be but for a *Time*, and for *Times*, and for *Half a time*; that is for *Twelve-Hundred and Sixty years*.<sup>254</sup> And indeed, those *Twelve Hundred and Sixty years*, were the very Spott of *Time* left for the *Devil*, and meant when 'tis here said, *He has but a short time*. Now, I should have an *Easy Time* of it, if I were never put upon an *Harder Task*, than to produce what might render it extreamly probable, That Antichrist entred his last *Half-time*, or the Last *Hundred and Fourscore* years of his Reign, *at or soon after* the Celebrated *Reformation* which began at the year 1517 in the former Century. Indeed, it is very agreeable to see how Antichrist then Lost *Half* of his Empire; and how that *Half* which then became *Reformed*, have been upon many accounts little more than *Half-Reformed*. But by this

Computation, we must needs bee within a very few years of such a *Mortification* to befall the See of *Rome*, as that Antichrist who ha's lately been planting (what proves no more lasting than) a *Tabernacle in the Glorious Holy Mountain between the Seas*, must quickly, *Come to his End and none shall help him*. So then, within a very little while, we shall see the Devil stript of the Grand, yea, the Last, *Vehicle*, wherein he will be capable to abuse our World. The *Fires*, with which, *That Beast*, is to be consu-[39] med will so singe the Wings of the *Devil* too, that he shall no more set the Affairs of *this* world on *Fire*. Yea, they shall both go into the same *Fire*, to be *tormented for ever and ever*.

*The Second Conjecture.*

That which is, perhaps, the greatest Effect of the *Divels Wrath*, seems to be in a manner at an *end*: and this would make one hope that the *Divels Time* cannot be far from its *end*. It is in PERSECUTION, that the *wrath* of the Divel uses to break forth, with its greatest Fury. Now there want not Probabilities, that the *Last Persecution* intended for the Church of God, before the Advent of Our Lord, has been upon it. When we see the, *Second Wo Passing away*, we have a fair signal given unto us, *That the Last Slaughter of our Lords Witnesses* is over: and then what QUICKLY followes? The Next thing is, *The Kingdomes of this World, are become the Kingdomes of Our Lord, and of His Christ*.<sup>255</sup> and then *Down* goes the Kingdome of the Divel, so that he cannot any more *come down* upon us. Now, the Irrecoverable & Irretrievable Humiliations that have Lately befallen the *Turkish Power*, are but so many Declarations of the, *Second Wo Passing away*. And the dealings of God with the *European* parts of the world, at this day, do further

strengthen this our Expectation. We *do* see, *At this Hour a great Earth-Quake all Europe over*:<sup>256</sup> and we *shall* see, that this *Great Earth-quake*, and these great Commotions, will [40] but Contribute unto the Advancement of Our Lords Hitherto-Depressed Interests. Tis also to be Remark'd that, A Disposition to Recognize the *Empire* of God over the *Conscience* of man, does now prevail more in the world than formerly; & God from on High more touches the Hearts of Princes & Rulers with an Averseness to Persecution. Tis Particularly the unspeakable Happiness of the English Nation, to be under the Influences of that Excellent Queen, who could say, *Inasmuch as a man cannot make himself Believe what he will, why should we Persecute men for not Believing as we do! I wish I could see all good men of one mind; but in the mean time I pray, let them however Love one another*. Words Worthy to be written in Letters of Gold! And by *us* the more to be considered because to one of *Ours* did that Royal Person Express Her Self so Excellently, so Obliginglly.<sup>257</sup> When the late King *James* published his Declaration for, *Liberty of Conscience*,<sup>258</sup> a Worthy Divine in the Church of *England*, then studying the *Revelation*, saw cause upon *Revelational* Grounds, , to Declare himself in such words as these, *Whatsoever others may intend or design by this Liberty of Conscience, I cannot believe, that it will ever be recalled in England, as long as the World stands*.<sup>259</sup> And you know how Miraculously the *Earth-Quake* which then immediately came upon the Kingdom,<sup>260</sup> has established that *Liberty*! But that which exceeds all the tendencies this way, is, The Dispensation of God at this Day, towards the blessed *Vaudois*. Those Renowned *Waldenses*,<sup>261</sup> which were a sort of *Root* unto all the Protestant Churches, [41] were never dissipated, by all the Persecutions of many Ages, till within these few years,

the *French King* and the *Duke of Savoy* Leagued for their *Dissipation*.<sup>262</sup> But just *Three years and half after the scattering* of that Holy people, to the Surprise of all the world, a *Spirit of Life from God* is come into them; and having with a Thousand Miracles Repossessed themselves of their antient Seats, their Hot *Persecutor* is become their great *Protector*. Whereupon the Reflection of the Worthy person, that writes the story is, *The Churches of Piemont*,<sup>263</sup> *being the Root of the Protestant Churches, They have been the first Established; the Churches of other places, being but the Branches, shall be Established in due time, God will deliver them speedily, He has already delivered the Mother, and He will not long leave the Daughter behind: He will Finish what he has Gloriously begun!*<sup>264</sup>

### *The Third Conjecture.*

There is a *Little Room* for Hope, that the *Great Wrath* of the Devil, will not prove the Present Ruine of our poor *New-England* in particular. I believe, there never was a poor Plantation, more Pursued by the *Wrath* of the Devil, than our poor *New-England*;<sup>265</sup> and that which makes our Condition very much the more deplorable is, That the *Wrath* of the *Great God* Himself, at the same Time also presses hard upon us. It was a Rowsing *Alarm* to the Devil, when a great Company of English [42] *Protestants* and *Puritans*, came to Erect Evangelical Churches, in a corner of the World, where he had Reign'd without any Controll for many Ages; and it is a vexing *Eye-sore*, to the Devil that our Lord Christ should be known, and own'd, and preached in the *Howling Wilderness*.<sup>266</sup>

Wherefore he has left no *Stone Unturned*, that so he might undermine his Plantation, and force us out of our Country.

First, The Indian *Powawes*, used all their Sorceries to molest the First Planters here; but God said unto them, *Touch them not!* Then, *Seducing Spirits*,<sup>267</sup> came to *Root* in this Vineyard, but God so Rated them off, that they have not prevail'd much further than the Edges of our Land. After this, we have had a continual *Blast* upon some of our principal Grain, Annually diminishing a vast part of our *Ordinary Food*. Herewithal, Wasting *Sicknesses*, especially Burning and Mortal Agues, have Shot the Arrows of Death in at our Windows. Next, We have had many Adversaries of our own Language, who have been perpetually assaying to deprive us of those *English Liberties*,<sup>268</sup> in the Encouragement whereof these Territories have been Settled. As if this had not been enough; The *Tawnies* among whom we came, have Watered our Soyl, with the Blood, of many Hundreds of our Inhabitants. Desolating *Fires* also have many times laid the chief Treasure of the whole Province in Ashes. As for *Losses* by Sea, *they* [43] have been multiply'd upon us: and particularly in the present *French War*,<sup>269</sup> the whole English Nation have observed, That no part of the Nation has proportionably had so many Vessles taken, as our poor *New-England*. Besides all which, now at last the Devils are (if I may so speak) *in Person* come down upon, us with such a *Wrath*, as is justly *much*, and will quicky be *more*, the Astonishment of the World. Alas, I may Sigh over *this* Wilderness, as *Moses* did over *his*, in Psal. 90. 7: 9. *We are consumed by thine Anger, and by thy Wrath we are Troubled: All our Dayes are passed away in thy Wrath.*<sup>270</sup> And I

may add this unto it, *The Wrath of the Devil too has been Troubling and Spending of us, all our Dayes.*<sup>271</sup>

But what will become of this poor *New-England* after all? Shall we Sink, Expire, Perish, before the *Short Time* of the Devil shall be finished? I must confess, That when I consider the lamentable *Unfruitfulness* of men, among us, under as powerful and perspicuous Dispensations of the Gospel, as are in the World; and when I consider the Declining State of the *Power of Godliness* in our Churches, with the most horrible Indisposition that perhaps ever was, to Recover out of this Declension; I cannot but *Fear* lest it comes to this, and lest an *Asiatic* removal of Candlesticks<sup>272</sup> come upon us. But upon some other Accounts, I would fain *Hope* otherwise; and I will give *you* therefore the opportunity to Try what Inferences may be drawn from these probable Prognostications.

[44] I say, First, That surely, *America's* Fate, must at the long run, include *New-Englands* in it. What was the Design of our God, in bringing over so man *Europæans* hither of later years? Of what Use or State will *America* be, when the *Kingdom of God* shall come? If it must all be the Devils propriety, while the *Saved Nations* of the other Hæmishpere, shall be, *Walking in the Light of the New Jerusalem*,<sup>273</sup> Our *New-England* has then, tis likely, done all that it was Erected for. But if God have a purpose to make here a Seat for any of, *Those Glorious Things, which are spoken of Thee, O thou City of God*;<sup>274</sup> then even Thou, O *New-England*, art within a very little while of Better *Dayes* than ever yet have Dawned upon thee.

I say, *Secondly*, That tho' there be very *Threatning* Symptoms on *America*, yet there are some *Hopeful* ones. I confess, when one thinks upon the crying Barbarities with

which the most of those *Europæans* that have Peopled this New world, became the Masters of it; it looks but *Ominously*.<sup>275</sup> When one also thinks, How much the way of Living in many parts of *America*, is utterly Inconsistent with the very Essentials of *Christianity*; yea, how much Injury and Violence is therein done to *Humanity* it self; it is enough to Damp the Hopes of the most Sanguine Complexion. And the *Frown* of Heaven which has hitherto been upon Attempts of better Gospellizing the Plantations, considered, will but increase the *Damp*.<sup>276</sup> Nevertheless, on the other side, what shall be said of all the [45] *Promises*, That our *Lord Jesus Christ shall have the uttermost parts of the Earth for his Possession?*<sup>277</sup> and of all the *Prophecies*, That *All the ends of the Earth shall Remember and Turn unto the Lord?*<sup>278</sup> Or does it look *Agreeably*, That such a Rich Quarter of the VWorld, equal in some Regards to all the Rest, should never be out of the *Devils* Hands, from the first Inhabitation unto the Last Dissolution of it? No sure; why may not the *last* be the *first*? And the *Sun of Righteousness* come to shine *Brightest*, in *Climates* which it Rose *Latest* upon!<sup>279</sup>

I say, *Thirdly*, That *as* it fares with *Old England*, so it will be most likely to fare with *New-England*. For which cause, by the way, there may be more of the Divine Favour in the present Circumstances of our Dependence on *England*, than we are well aware of. This is very sure, if matters *Go Ill* with our *Mother*, her poor American *Daughter* here, must feel fit; nor could our former Happy Settlement have hindred our Sympathy in that Unhappiness. But if matters *Go Well* in the Three Kingdoms; as long as God shall Bless the English Nation, with Rulers that shall Encourage *Piety*, *Honesty*, *Industry*, in their Subjects, and that shall cast a Benign Aspect upon the Interests of our



Glorious Gospel, *Abroad* as well as *at Home*; so long, *New-England* will at least keep its Head above Water: and so much the more, for our Comfortable Settlement in such a Form as we are now cast into. Unless, there should be any Singular, Destroying, *Topical Plagues*, whereby an offended God should at last make us [46] *Rise*; But *Alas, O Lord, what other Hive hast Thou Provided for us!*

I say, *Fourthly*, That the *Elder England* will certainly & Speedily be Visited with the *Ancient Loving kindness* of God. When one sees, how strangely the Curse of our *Joshua*, ha's fallen upon the Persons & Houses of them, that have attempted the Rebuilding of the *Old Romish Jerico*,<sup>280</sup> which has there been so far demolished, they cannot but say, That the *Reformation* there, shall not only be maintained, but also pursued, proceeded, perfected; and that God will shortly there have a *New Jerusalem*.<sup>281</sup> Or, Let a Man in his Thoughts run over; but the Series of amazing Providences towards the English Nation for the last *Thirty Years*:<sup>282</sup> Let him Reflect, How many *Plots* for the Ruine of the Nation, have been strangely discovered?<sup>283</sup> yea, How very unaccountably, those very *Persons*, yea, I may also say, and those very *Methods* which were intended for the Tools of that Ruine, have become the Instruments, or Occasions of Deliverances? A man cannot but say upon these Reflections, as the Wife of *Mansah* once prudently expressed her self, *If the Lord were pleased to have Destroyed us, He would not have show'd us, all these things*. Indeed, It is not unlikely, that the Enemies of the English Nation, may yet provoke such a *Shake* unto it, as may perhaps exceed any that has hitherto been undergone: the Lord prevent the Machinations of his Adversaries! But, that *Shake* will usher in the most *Glorious Times*, that ever arose upon the English *Horizon*.

[47] As for the *French* Cloud which hangs over *England*, tho' it be like to Rain Showers of *Blood* upon a Nation, where the Blood of the Blessed Jesus, has been too much treated, as an *Unholy Thing*; yet I believe, God will shortly scatter it: and my Belief is grounded upon a Bottom, that will bear it. If that overgrown *French Leviathan*,<sup>284</sup> should accomplish any thing like a Conquest of *England*, what could there be to hinder him from the Universal Empire of the *West*? But the *Visions* of the Western World, in the *Views* of both *Daniel* and of *John*, do assure us, that whatever Monarch, shall while the *Papacy* continues, go to swallow up the *Ten Kings* which received *Their Power* upon the Fall of the Western Empire, he must miscarry in the Attempt. The *French Phaetons*<sup>285</sup> Epitaph seems written in that, *Sure Word of Prophecy*!

[Since the making of this Conjecture, there are Arriv'd unto us, the News of a Victory obtain'd by the *English* over the *French*, which further confirms our Conjecture; and causes us to sing, *Phæraohs Chariots, and his Host, has the Lord cast down unto the Sea; Thy Right-hand has dashed in pieces the Enemy!*]<sup>286</sup>

Now, *In the Salvation of England*, the Plantations cannot but *Rejoyce*, and *New-England* also will *be Glad*.<sup>287</sup>

But so much for our *Corollaries*, I hasten to the main Thing designed for your Entertainment. And that is,

[48] {STLB} An Hortatory and Necessary

*ADDRESS.*

To a Country now Extraordinarily Alarum'd

By the *Wrath* of the *Devil*. Tis this,

LEt us now make a Good and Right use, of the Prodigious *Descent*,<sup>288</sup> which the *Devil*, in *Great Wrath*, is at this day making upon our Land. Upon the Death of a Great Man once, an Orator call'd the Town together, crying out, *Concurrere Cives Dilapsa sunt vestra Maenia!* That is, *Come together, Neighbours, your Towns-Walls, are fallen down!* But such is the Descent of the Devil at this day upon ourselves, that I may truly tell you, *The Walls of the whole World are broken down!*<sup>289</sup> The usual *Walls* of Defence about mankind have such a Gap made in them, that the very *Devils* are broke in upon us, to Seduce the *Souls*, Torment the *Bodies*, Sully the *Credits*, and consume the *Estates* of our Neighbours, with Impressions both as *Real* and as *Furious*, as if the *Invisible World* were becoming *Incaruate*,<sup>290</sup> on purpose for the vexing of us. And what use ought now to be made of so Tremendous a dispensation? We are engaged in a *Fast* this day; but shall we try to fetch, *Meat out of the Eater*,<sup>291</sup> and make the *Lion* to afford some *Hony* for our *Souls*.

That the Devil, is *Come down unto us with great Wrath*, we find, we feel, we now deplore. In many ways, for many years, that the Devil been assaying [49] to Extirpate the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus here. *New-England* may complain of the Devil, as in Psal. 129. 1,2. *Many a time have they Afflicted me, from my Youth, may, New England now say; many a time have they Afflicted me from my Youth; yet they have not prevailed against me.*<sup>292</sup> But now there is a more than Ordinary *Affliction*, with which the *Devil* is Galling of us: and such an one as is indeed Unparallellable. The Things Confessed by *Witches* and the Things Endured by *Others*, laid together, amount unto this account of our

Affliction. The *Devil*, Exhibiting himself ordinarily as a small *Black man*, has decoy'd a fearful Knot of Proud, Froward, Ignorant, Envious, and Malicious Creatures, to Lift themselves in his Horrid Service, by Entring their Names in a *Book* by him Tendred unto them.<sup>293</sup> These *Witches*, whereof above a Score have now *Confessed, and shown their Deeds*, and some are now Tormented by the Devils, for *Confessing*, have met in Hellish *Randezvouzes*, wherein the Confessors do say, they have had their Diabolical Sacraments, imitating the *Baptism* and the *Supper* of our Lord.<sup>294</sup> In these Hellish Meetings, these Monsters have associated themselves to do no less a Thing than, *To Destroy the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, in these parts of the World*;<sup>295</sup> and in order hereunto, First, they each of them have their *Spectres*, or Devils, Commission'd by them, and Representing of them, to be the Engines of their Malice. By these wicked *Spectres*, they Sieze poor people about the Country, with Various and bloody [50] *Torments*; and of those Evidently Preternatural Torments there are some some have *Dy'd*. They have bewitched some, even so far as to make them *Self-Destroyers*: and others are in many Towns here and there Langishing under their *Evil Hands*. The People thus Afflicted, are miserably Scratched and Bitten, so that the Marks are most *Visible* to all the World, but the causes utterly *Invisible*; and the same *Invisible* Furies, do most visibly stick *Pins* into the Bodies of the Afflicted, and *Scald* them & hideously Distort, and Disjoint all their members, besides a thousand other sorts of Plagues beyond these of any Natural Diseases which they give unto them.<sup>296</sup> Yea, they sometimes drag the poor People out of their Chambers, and Carry them over *Trees* and *Hills* for diverse Miles together.<sup>297</sup> A large part of the Persons tortured by these Diabolical *Spectres*, are horribly Tempted by them, sometimes with fair

Promises, and sometimes with hard Threatenings, but alwayes with felt Miseries, to sign the *Devils Laws*, in a Spectral *Book* laid before them; which two or three of these poor Sufferers, being by their Tiresome Sufferings overcome to do, they have immediately been released from all their Miseries, & they appear'd in *Spectre* then to Torture those that were before their Fellow-Sufferers. The *Witches* which by their Covenant with the Devil, are become owners of *Spectres*, are oftentimes by their own *Spectres* Required and Compelled to give their Consent, for the Molestation of some, which they had no mind otherwise to fall upon; and [51] Cruel Depredations are then made upon the Vicinage. In the Prosecution of these *Witchcrafts*, among a thousand other unaccountable Things, the *Spectres* have an odd Faculty of Cloathing the most Substantial and Corporeal Instruments of Torture, with *Invisibility*, while the Wounds thereby given have been the most palpable Things in the World; so that the Sufferers assaulted with Instruments of Iron wholly *unseen* to the Standers-by, tho' to their cost seen by themselves, have upon snatching, wrested the Instruments out of the *Spectres* Hands, and every one has then immediately not only *beheld*, but *handled*, an Iron Instrument taken by a Devil from a Neighbour. These wicked *Spectres* have proceeded so far, as to Steal several Quantities of Mony from divers people, part of which Money has before sufficient Spectators been dropt out of the Air into the Hands of the Sufferers, while the *Spectres* have been urging them to Subscribe their *Covenant with Death*.<sup>298</sup> In such extravagant wayes, have these Wretches propounded, the *Dragooning* of as many as they can, into their own Combination, and the *Destroying* of others, with Lingring, Spreading, Deadly Diseases; till our Country should at last become too hot for us. Among the Ghastly Instances of the

*Success* which those Bloody Witches have had, we have seen even some of their own *Children*, so Dedicated unto the Devil, that in their Infancy, it is found, the *Imps* have Sucked them, and Rendred them Venemous to a Prodigy. We have also seen [52] [the] Devils *First Batteries*,<sup>299</sup> upon the Town, where the *First Church* of our Lord in this Colony was Gathered, producing those *Distractions*, which have almost Ruined the Town.<sup>300</sup> We have seen likewise the *Plague* reaching afterwards into other Towns far and near, where the Houses of *Good Men* have the Devils filling of them with terrible Vexations!

This is the *Descent* which, as it seems, the Devil has now made upon us. But that which makes the *Descent* the more formidable is; The *Multitude* and *Quality* of Persons Accused of an Interest in this *Witchcraft*, by the Efficacy of the *Spectres* which take their Name and Shape upon them; causing very many Good and Wise, men to fear, That many *Innocent*, yea, and some *Vertuous* Persons, are by the Devils in this matter Imposed upon; That the Devils have obtain'd the power, to take on them the *Likeness* of Harmless People, and in that *Likeness* to Afflict other People, and these be so abused by Præstigious *Dæmons*,<sup>301</sup> that upon their *Look* or *Touch*, the Afflicted shall be oddly Affected. Arguments from the *Providence* of *God*, on the one side, and from our *Charity* towards *Man*, on the other side, have made This now to become a most Agitated Controversy among us.<sup>302</sup> There is an *Agony* produced in the minds of men, Lest the *Devil* should sham us with *Devices*, of perhaps a finer Thred, than was ever yet practiced upon the World. The whole Business is become hereupon so *Snarled*, and the Determination of the Question one way or another, so *Dismal*, that our Honour- [53] ble

Judges, have a Room for *Jehoshaphats* Exclamation, *We know not what to do!*<sup>303</sup> They have used, as Judges have heretofore done, the *Spectral Evidences*, to introduce their further Enquiries into the *Lives* of the Persons Accused; and they have thereupon, by the wonderful Providence of God, been so strengthened with *Other Evidences*, that some of the *Witch Gang* have been fairly Executed. But what shall be done, as to those against whom the *Evidence* is chiefly founded in the *Dark World*? Here they do solemnly demand our Adresses to the, *Father of Lights*,<sup>304</sup> on their Behalf. But in the mean time, the Devil improves the *Darkness* of this Affair, to push us into a *Blind Mans Buffet*, and we are even ready to be *Sinfully*, yea, Hotly, and Madly, Mauling one another, in the *Dark*.

The Consequence of these things, every *Considerate* man trembles at; and the more, because the frequent Cheats of Passion, and Rumour, do precipitate so many, that I wish I could say, The most were *Considerate*.

But that which carries on the Formidableness of our Trialls, unto that which may be called, *A wrath unto the uttermost*, is this: It is not without the *wrath* of the Almighty God Himself, that the *Devil* is permitted thus to come down upon us in *wrath*. It was said, In *Isa.* 9.19. *Thro the wrath of the Lord of Hosts, the Land is Darkned*. Our Land is *Darkned* indeed; since the *Powers of Darkness* are turned in upon us, tis a *Dark Time*, yea, a Black Night<sup>305</sup> indeed, [54] now the *Ty-Dogs* of the Pitt, are abroad among us: but, *It is thro the wrath of the Lord of Hosts!* Inasmuch as the *Fire-brands* of *Hell*<sup>306</sup> it self are used for the Scorching of us, with cause Enough may we cry out, *What means the Heat of this Anger?*<sup>307</sup> Blessed Lord! Are all the other Instruments of thy Vengeance, too Good

for the chastisement of such transgressors as we are? Must the very *Devils* be sent out of *Their own place*,<sup>308</sup> to be our Troublers? Must we be lash'd with *Scorpions*,<sup>309</sup> fetch'd from the *Place of Torment*?<sup>310</sup> Must this *Wilderness* be made a Receptacle for the *Dragons of the Wilderness*?<sup>311</sup> If a *Lapland* should nourish in it vast numbers, the Successors of the old *Biarmi*,<sup>312</sup> who can with looks or words bewitch other people, or Sell Winds to Marriners,<sup>313</sup> and have their *Familiar Spirits*<sup>314</sup> which they bequeath to their Children when they dy, and by their Enchanted Kettle-Drums can learn things done a Thousand Leagues off; If a *Swedeland* should afford a Village,<sup>315</sup> where some scores of Hags, may not only have their Meetings with *Familiar Spirits*, but also by their Enchantments drag many scores of poor Children out of their Bed-Chambers, to be spoiled at those meetings; This, were not altogether a matter of so much wonder! But that *New-England* should this way be harassed! They are not *Chaldeans*, that *Bitter*, and *Hasty Nation*, but they are, *Bitter and Burning Devils*,<sup>316</sup> They are not *Swarthy Indians*, but they are *Sooty Devils*; that are let loose upon us. Ah, Poor *New-England*! Must the plague of *Old Egypt* come upon thee? Whereof we read in Psal. [55] 78. 49 *He cast upon them, the fierceness of his Anger, Wrath, and Indignation, and Trouble, by sending Evil Angels among them.*<sup>317</sup> What? O what must next be looked for. Must that which is there next mentioned, be next encountered? *He spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the Pestilence.*<sup>318</sup> For my part, when I consider what *Melanchthon* saies in one of his Epistles, *That these Diabolical Spectacles are often Prodigies*,<sup>319</sup> and when I consider, how often people have been by *Spectres* called upon, just before their Deaths; I



am verily afraid, Lest some wasting *Mortality*, be among the things, which this plague is the *Forerunner* of. I pray God, prevent it.

But now, *What shall we do?*

I. Let the *Devils coming down in great wrath* upon us, cause us to *come down in great grief* before the Lord. We may truly and sadly say, *We are brought very low! Low,*<sup>320</sup> indeed when the Serpents of the dust, are crawling and coyling about us, and Insulting over us. May we not say, *We are in the very belly of Hell.* when *Hell* it self is feeding upon us? But how *Low* is that! O let us then most Penitently lay ourselves very *Low*, before the God of Heaven, who has thus Abased us. When a Truculent *Nero*, a *Devil* of a man, was turned in upon the World, it was said in, I. Pet. 5. 6, *Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God.* How much more now ought we to *Humble ourselves*, under that *Mighty Hand* of that God who indeed has the *Devil* in a *Chain*, but has horribly lengthened out the *Chain*! [56] When the Old People of God, heard any *Blasphemies* tearing of his Ever-Blessed Name to pieces, they were to *Rend their Cloathes* at what they heard. I am sure that we have cause to *Rend our Hearts* this *Day*, when we see what an High Treason has been committed against the most High God, by the Witch-crafts in our Neighbourhood. We may say; and shall we not be *Humbled* when we say it? *We have seen an horrible thing done in our Land!* O 'tis a most humbling thing, to think, that ever there should be such an abomination among us, as for a Crue of Humane Race, to renounce their *Maker*, and to unite with the *Devil*, for the Troubling of Mankind, and for People to be, (as is by some confess'd) *Baptized* by a *Fiend* using this form upon them, *Thou art mine, and I have a full power over thee!* Afterwards communicating in an

Hellish *Bread and Wine*, by that Fiend Administred unto them. It was said in Deut. 18. 10, 11, 12. *There shall not be found among you an Inchanter, or a Witch, or a Charmer, or a Consulter with Familiar Spirits, or a Wizzard or a Necromancer; For all that do these things are an Abomination to the Lord, and because of these Abominations, the Lord thy God doth drive them out before thee.* That New-England now should have these *Abominations* in it, yea, that some of no mean *Profession*, should be fund guilty of them: Alas, what *Humiliations* are we all hereby oblig'd unto? O 'Tis a *Defiled Land*, wherein we Live; Let us be Humbled for these *Defiling Abominations*, Lest we be driven out of our Land, It's a very *Humbling* Thing to [57] think, what Reproaches will be cast upon us, for this Matter, among, *The Daughters of the Philistines*.<sup>321</sup> Indeed, enough might easily be said for the Vindication of *this* Country from the *Singularity* of this Matter, by Ripping up, what has been discovered in *others*. *Great Britain* alone, and this also in our *Dayes of Greatest Light*, has had that in it, which may divert the Calumnies of an Ill-natured World, from Centring here. They are the words of the Devout Bishop *Hall*,<sup>322</sup> *Satans Prevalency in this Age, is most clear in the marvelous Number of Witches abounding in all places. Now Hundreds are discovered in one Shire; and, if Fame Deceive us not, in a Village of Fourteen Houses in the North, are found so many of this Damned Brood. Yea, and those of both Sexes, who have Professed much Knowledge, Holiness, and Devotion, are drawn into this Damnable Practice.*<sup>323</sup> I suppose the Doctor in the first of those Passages may refer to what happened in the Year 1645.<sup>324</sup> When so many Vassals of the Devil were Detected, that there were *Thirty* Try'd at one time, whereof about *Fourteen* were Hang'd, and an Hundred more Detained in the Prisons of

*Suffolk and Essex.*<sup>325</sup> Among other things which many of these Acknowledged, one was, That they were to undergo certain *Punishments*, if they did not such and such *Hurts*, as were appointed them. And, among the Rest that were then Executed, there was an Old Parson, called *Lowis*, who Confessed, that he had a Couple of *Imps*, whereof *One* was alwayes putting him upon the doing of Mischief; Once par- [58] ticularly, that *Imp* calling for his Consent so to do, went immediately and Sunk a *Ship*, then under Sail. I pray, Let not *New England* become of an Unsavoury and a Sulphurous Resentment in the Opinion of the World Abroad, for the Doleful Things which are now fallen out among us, while there are such *Histories* of other places abroad in the World. Nevertheless, I am sure that *we*, the People of *New-England*, have cause enough to *Humble* our selves under our most *Humbling* Circumstances. We must no more, be, *Haughty, because of the Lords Holy Mountain among us*; No, it becomes us rather to be, *Humble, because we have been such an Habitation of Unholy Devils!*<sup>326</sup>

II. Since the Diuel is *come down in great wrath* upon us, let not us in our *great wrath* against one another provide a *Lodging* for him. It was a most wholesome caution, in *Eph. 4. 26. 27. Let not the Sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the Diuel.* The Diuel is come down to see what *Quarter* he shall find among us: and, if his coming down, do now fill us with *wrath* against one another, and if between the cause of the *Sufferers* on one hand, and the cause of the *Suspected* on t'other, we carry things to such extreames of *Passion* as are now gaining upon us, the Devil will bless himself, to find such a convenient *Lodging* as we shall there-in afford unto him. And it may be that

the *wrath* which we have had against one another has had [59] more than a little Influence upon the coming down of the Divil in that *wrath* which now amazes us. Have not many of us been *Devils* one unto another for Slandering, for Backbitings, for Animosities? For *this*, among other causes, perhaps, God has permitted the *Devils* to be Worrying, as they now are, among us. But it is high time to leave off all *Devilism*, when the Devil himself is falling upon us: and it is *no time* for us to be Censuring and Reviling one another, with a *Devilish Wrath*, when the *Wrath* of the *Devil* is annoying of us. The way for us to out-wit the Devil, in the *Wiles* with which he now *Vexes* us, would be for us, to join as one man in our cries to God, for the Directing, and Issuing of this Thorny Business; but if we do not *Lift* up our Hands to Heaven, *Without Wrath*, we cannot then do it *without Doubt*, of speeding in it. I am ashamed when I read French Authors giving this Character of Englishmen [*Ils se haïssent Les uns les autres, et sont en Division Continue.*] *They hate one another, and are always Quarrelling one with another.* And I shall be much more ashamed, if it become the Character of *New-Englanders*; which is indeed, what the *Devil* would have. *Satan* would make us *Bruise* one another, by breaking of the *Peace* among us; but O let us disappoint him. We read of a thing that sometimes happens to the *Devil*, when he is foaming with his *Wrath*, in Mat. 12. 43. *The unclean Spirit seeds rest, and finds none.* But we give *Rest* unto the Devil, by *Wrath* one against another. If we would lay aside all fierceness, and [60] keenness in the disputes which the Devil has raised among us; and if we would use to one another none but the, *Soft Answers, which Turn away Wrath*.<sup>327</sup> I should hope that we might light upon such Counsels, as would quickly Extricate us out of our *Labyrinths*. But the Old *Incendiary* of

the world, is come from Hell, with *Sparks* of Hell-Fire Flashing on every side of him; and we make ourselves *Tynder* to the Sparks. When the Emperour *Henry III.* kept the Feast of *Pentecost*, at the City *Mentz*,<sup>328</sup> there aroze a Dissension among some of the People there, which came from words to Blows, and at last it passed on to the Shedding of Blood.<sup>329</sup> After the Tumult was over, when they came to that clause in their Devotions, *Thou hast made this day Glorious*; the Devil to the unexpressible Terrour of that vast Assembly, made the Temple Ring with that Outcry *But I have made this Day Quarrelsome!*<sup>330</sup> We are truly come into a day, which by being well managed might be very *Glorious*, for the exterminating of those, *Accursed Things*, which have hitherto been the Clogs of our Prosperity; but if we make this day *Quarrelsome*, thro' any *Raging Confidences*, Alas, *O Lord, my Flesh Trembles for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy Judgments.*<sup>331</sup> *Erasmus*,<sup>332</sup> among other Historians, tells us, that at a Town in *Germany*, a Witch or Devil, appear'd on the Top of a Chimney, Threatning to set the Town on *Fire*: [check punctuation] and at length, Scattering a Pot of Ashes abroad, the Town was presently and Horribly Burn't unto the Ground.<sup>333</sup> Methinks, I see the *Spectres*, from the [61] Tops of the Chimneys to the North, ward, threatning to Scatter *Fire*, about the Countrey; but let us Quench that *Fire* by the most amicable Correspondencies: Lest, as the *Spectres*, have, they say, already most Literally Burn't some of our Dwellings, there do come forth a further *Fire* from the *Brambles* of Hell, which may more terribly *Devour* us. Let us not be like a *Troubled House*,<sup>334</sup> altho we are so much haunted by the *Devils*. Let our *Long Suffering* be a Well-placed piece of *Armour*, about us, against the *Fiery Darts* of the wicked ones.<sup>335</sup> History informs us, That so long ago, as the year, 858. a certain Pestilent

and Malignant sort of a *Dæmon*, molested *Caumont* in *Germany* with all sorts of methods to stir up Strife among the Citizens.<sup>336</sup> He uttered Prophecies, he detected Villanies, he branded people with all kind of Infamies. He incensed the Neighbourhood against one Man particularly, as the cause of all the mischiefs: who yet proved himself innocent. He threw stones at the Inhabitants, and at length burn't their Habitations, till the Commission of the *Dæmon* could go no Further. I say, Let us be well aware lest such *Dæmons* do,  
*Come hither also!*

III. Inasmuch as the Devil is come down in *Great Wrath*, we had need Labour, with all the Care and Speed we can to Divert the *Great Wrath* of Heaven from coming at the same Time upon us. The God of Heaven has with long and loud Admonitions, been calling us to, [62] *A Reformation of our Provoking Evils*, as the only way to avoid that *Wrath* of His, which does not only *Threaten*, but *Consume* us. 'Tis because we have been Deaf to those *Calls*, that we are now by a provoked God, laid open to the *Wrath* of the Devil himself. It is said in Prov. 16. 7. *When a mans ways please the Lord, He maketh even his Enemies to be at peace with him.* The Devil is our Grand *Enemy*: and tho' we would not be at peace *with* him, yet we would be at peace *from* him; that is, we would have him unable to Disquiet our *Peace*. But inasmuch as the *Wrath* which we Endure from this *Enemy*, will allow us no *Peace*, we may be sure, *Our Ways have not pleased the Lord.* It is because we have *Broken the Hedge* of Gods *Precepts*, that the Hedge of Gods *Providence* is not so Entire as it uses to be about us; but *Serpents* are *Biting* of us. O let us then set our selves to make our *Peace* with our God, whom we have *Displeased* by our

Iniquities: and let us not imagine that we can Encounter the *Wrath* of the Devil, while there is the *Wrath* of God Almighty to set that Mastiff upon us. REFORMATION! REFORMATION! has been the Repeated *Cry*, of all the Judgments, that have hitherto been upon us: because we have been as *Deaf Adders*<sup>337</sup> thereunto, the *Adders* of the Infernal Pit are now hissing about us. At length, as it was of old said in Luc 16. 30. *If one went unto them, from the Dead, they will Repent*;<sup>338</sup> Even so, There are some come unto us from the *Damned*. [63] The Great God has Loosed the Bars of the Pit, so than many *Damned Spirits* are come in among us, to make us *Repent* of our Misdemeanours. The means which the Lord had formerly Employ'd for our *Awakening*, were such, that he might well have said, *What could I have done more?* and yet after all, He has done *more*, in some regards, than was ever done for the Awakening of any People in the World. The Things now done to Awaken our Enquiries after our *Provoking Evils*, and our Endeavours to Reform those Evils; are most EXTRAORDINARY Things; For which cause I would freely speak it, If we now do not some EXTRAORDINARY Things in Returning to God, we are the most *Incurable*, and I wish it be not quickly said, the most *Miserable*, People under the Sun. Believe me, 'tis a Time for all people to do something EXTRAORDINARY *In Searching and in Trying of their Ways, and in Turning to the Lord*. It is at an EXTRAORDINARY Rate of *Circumspection* and *Spiritual Mindedness*, that we should all now maintain a *Walk with God*. At such a Time as This, ought *Magistrates* to Do something EXTRAORDINARY in promoting of what is Laudable, and in Restraining and Chastising of *Evil Doers*. At such a Time as This, ought *Ministers* to Do something EXTRAORDINARY in pulling the Souls of men out of the *Snares* of

the Devil, not only by publick Preaching, but by personal Visits and Counsels, *from House to House*. At such a Time as This, ought *Churches* to Do something EXTRA-[64] ORDINARY, in *Renewing* of their Covenants, and in *Remembring*, and *Reviving* the Obligations of what they have Renewed. Some Admirable Designs about the *Reformation* of Manners, have lately been on foot in the English Nation, in pursuance of the most Excellent Admonitions, which have been given for it, by the Letters of Their Majesties. Besides the vigorous Agreements of the *Justices* here and there in the Kingdom; assisted by Godly Gentlemen and Informers, to Execute the *Laws* upon Profane Offenders: there has been started, A PROPOSAL, for the well-affected people in every Parish, to enter into orderly *Societies*, whereof every Member shall bind himself, not only to *Avoid* Profaneness in himself, but also according unto their Place, to do their utmost in first *Reproving*, and, if it must be so, then *Exposing*, and to *Punishing*, as the Law directs, for, others that shall be guilty. It has been observed, That the English Nation has had some of its greatest Success, upon some special, and signal *Actions* this way; and a *Discouragement* given unto Legal Proceedings of this Kind, must needs be very exercising to the, *Wise that observe these Things*. But, O why should not *New-England* by the most forward part of the English Nation in such *Reformations*? Methinks, I hear the Lord from Heaven saying over us, *O that my People had hearkened unto me;*<sup>339</sup> *Then I should soon have subdued the Devils, as well as their other Enemies!* There have been some some [extra some] feeble Essays towards *Reformation*, of late in [65] our *Churches*; but, I pray, what comes of them? Do we stay till the *Storm* of his *Wrath* be over? Nay, let us be Doing what we can as fast as we can, to divert the *Storm*. The *Devils*, having broke



in upon our World, there is great Asking, *Who is it that have brought them in?* and many do by *Spectral* Exhibitions come to be *cry'd out* upon. I hope in Gods Time, it will be found, that among those that are thus *Cry'd out* upon, there are persons yet *Clear from the Great Transgression*; but indeed, all the *Unreformed* among us, may justly be *Cry'd out* upon, as having too much of an Hand in letting of the Devils in to our Borders; 'tis *our* Worldliness, *our* Formality, *our* Sensuality, and *our* Iniquity, that has help'd this Letting of the Devils in. O Let us then at last, *Consider our Wayes*. 'Tis a strange passage recorded by Mr. *Clark*, in the Life of his Father,<sup>340</sup> That the People of his Parish refusing to be Reclaimed from their *Sabbath Breaking*, by all the zealous Testimonies which that good man bore against it; at last, on a Night after the people had Retired Home from a Revelling Profanation of the *Lords Day*, there was heard a Great Noise, with Rattling of Chains, up and down the Town, and an horrid Scent of Brimstone fill'd the Neighbourhood. Upon which the *Guilty Consciences* of the Wretches, told them, the Devil was come to fetch them away: and it so terrify'd them, that an Eminent *Reformation* follow'd the Sermons which that man of God Preached thereupon. Behold, [66] Sinners, Behold, and *Wonder*, lest you *Perish*; the very *Devils* are Walking about our Streets, with Lengthened *Chains*, making a dreadful Noise in our Ears, and *Brimstone*, even without a Metaphor,<sup>341</sup> is making an Hellish and Horrid Stench in our Nostrils. I Pray, Leave off all those things, whereof your *Guilty Consciences* may now accuse you, lest these Devils do yet more direfully fall upon you. *Reformation* is at this Time, our only *Preservation*. {STLE}

IV. When the Devil is come down in *Great Wrath*, Let every *Great Vice* which may have a more Particular Tendency to make us a Prey unto that *Wrath*, come into a due Discredit with us. It is the General Concession of all men, who are not become too *Unreasonable* for Common Conversation, That the Invitation of *Witchcrafts* is the Thing that ha's now Introduced the *Devil* into the midst of us. I say then, Let not only all *Witchcrafts* be duely abominated with us, but also Let us be duely Watchful against all the *Steps* Leading thereunto. There are Lesser *Sorceries* which, they say, are too frequent in our Land. As it was said in 2 Kings. 17. 9. *The Children of Israel did Secretly, those things that were not Right against the Lord their God.*<sup>342</sup> So tis to be feared, The Children of *New-England* have *Secretly* done many things that have been pleasing to the *Devil*. They say, That in some Towns, it ha's been an usual Thing for People to Cure Hurts with *Spells*, or to use Detestable Conjurations, with *Sieves*, & *Keyes*, and *Pease*, and *Nails*, and *Horse-Shooes*,<sup>343</sup> and I know not what other Implements, to Learn [67] the Things, for which they have a Forbidden and Impious *Curiositie*.<sup>344</sup> 'Tis in the *Devils* Name, that such Things are done; and in Gods Name I do this Day Charge them, as vile Impieties. By these Courses 'tis, that people play upon *The Hole of the Asp*;<sup>345</sup> till that cruelly venomous *Asp* has pull'd many of them, into the Deep *Hole*, of *Witchcraft* it self. It has been acknowledged by some who have sunk the deepest into this *Horrible Pit*, that they began, at these Little *Witchcrafts*; on which 'tis pittty but the Laws of the English Nation, whereby the Incorrigible Repetition of those *Tricks*, is made *Felony*, were severely Executed. From the like Sinful *Curiosity* it is, that the Prognostications of *Judicial Astrology*,<sup>346</sup> are so Injudiciously Regarded by multitudes among us; and although the

Jugling *Astrologers* do scarce ever hit Right, except it be in such *Weighty Judgments*, forsooth, as that many *Old Men* will Dy such a year, and that there will be many *Losses* felt by some that Venture to Sea, and that there will be much *Lying* and *Cheating* in the World; yet their Foolish Admirers, will not be perswaded, but that the Innocent *Stars* have been concern'd in these Events. It is a Disgrace to the English Nation, that the Phamphlets of such Idle, Futil, Trifling *Star-gazers* are so much Considered; and the Countenance hereby given to a Study, wherein at Last, all is done by *Impulse*, if any thing be done to any purpose at all, it not a little peril- [68] lous to the Souls of men. It is, (a *Science*, I dare not call it, but) a *Juggle*, whereof the Learned *Hall*,<sup>347</sup> well says, *It is presumptuous and unwarrantable, & cry'd ever down by Councils and Fathers, as unlawful as that which Lies in the mid-way between Magick, and Imposture, and partakes not a little of both.*<sup>348</sup> Men Consult the Aspects of Planets, whose Northern or Southern Motions receive *Denominations* from a *Celestial Dragon*, till the *Infernal Dragon* at length insinuate into them, with a *Poyson* of *Witchcraft* that can't be cured- Has there not also been a world of *Discontent* in our Borders? 'Tis no wonder, that the *Fiery Serpents*<sup>349</sup> are so Stinging of us; We have been a most *Murmuring Generation*.<sup>350</sup> It is not Irrational, to ascribe the late Stupendous Grownth of *Witches* among us, partly to the Bitter *Discontents*, which Affliction and Poverty has fill'd us with: it is inconceivable, what Advantage the Devil gains over men, by *Discontent*. Moreover, the Sin of *Unbelief* may be reckoned as perhaps the chief *Crime* of our Land. We are told, *God Swears in Wrath, against them that believe not;*<sup>351</sup> and what follows then but this, *That the Devil comes unto them in wrath?* Never were the Offers of the *Gospel*, more freely Tendered,

or more basely Despised, among any people under the whole Cope of Heaven, then in This *New-England*. Seems it at all marvellous unto us, that the *Devil* should get such Footing in our Country? Why, 'tis because the *Saviour* has been slighted here, perhaps more than any where.<sup>352</sup> The Blessed Lord Jesus Christ [69] has been profering to us, *Grace, and Glory, and every good thing,*<sup>353</sup> and been alluring of us to Accept of Him, with such Terms as these; *Undone Sinner, I am All; Art thou willing that I should be thy All?* But, as a proof of that Contempt which this Unbelief has cast upon these proffers, I would seriously ask of the so many Hundreds above a Thousand People within these Walls; Which of you all, O how few of you, can indeed say, *Christ is mine, and I am his, and He is the Beloved of my Soul?*<sup>354</sup> I would only say thus much: When the precious and glorious Jesus, is Entreating of us to Receive *Him*, in all His *Offices*, with all His *Benefits*; the Devil minds what Respect we pay unto that Heavenly Lord; if we *Refuse Him that speaks from Heaven*, then he that, *Comes from Hell*, does with a sort of claim set in, and cry out, *Lord, since this Wretch is not willing that thou shouldst have him, I pray, let me have him.*<sup>355</sup> And thus, by the just vengeance of Heaven, the Devil becomes a *Master, a Prince, a God*, unto the miserable Unbelievers: but O what are many of them then hurried unto! All of these Evil Things, do I now set before you, as *Branded* with the Mark of the Devil upon them.

V. With *Great Regard*, with *Great Pitty*, should we Lay to Heart the Condition of those, who are cast into Affliction, by the *Great Wrath* of the Devil. There is a Number of our Good Neighbours, and some of them very particularly noted for Goodness and

Vertue, of whom we may say, *Lord, [70] They are vexed with Devils.*<sup>356</sup> Their Tortures being primarily Inflicted on their *Spirits*, may indeed cause the Impressions thereof upon their bodies to be the less *Durable*, tho' rather the more *Sensible*: but they Endure Horrible Things, and many have been actually Murdered. Hard *Censures* now bestow'd upon these poor Sufferers, cannot but be very Displeasing unto our Lord, who, as He said, about some that had been Butchered by a *Pilate*, in Luc. 13. 2, 3. *Think ye that these were Sinners above others, because they suffered such Things? I tell you No, But except ye Repent, ye shall all likewise Perish*: Even so, he now says, *Think ye that they who now suffer by the Devil, have been greater Sinners than their Neighbours*. No, Do you Repent of your *own Sins*, Lest the Devil come to fall foul of *you*, as he has done to *them*. And if this be so, How *Rash* a thing would it be, if such of the poor Sufferers, as carry it with a Becoming Piety, Seriousness, and Humiliation under their present Suffering, should be unjustly *Censured*; or have their very *Calamity* imputed unto them as a *Crime*? It is an easy thing, for us to fall into, the Fault of, *Adding Affliction to the Afflicted*, and of, *Talking to the Grief of those that are already Wounded.*<sup>357</sup> Nor can it be Wisdom to slight the Dangers of such a Fault. In the mean time, We have no Bowels in us, if we do not Compassionate the Distressed County of *Essex*,<sup>358</sup> now crying to all these Colonies, *Have pity on me, O ye my [71] Friends, Have pity on me, for the Hand of the Lord has Touched me,*<sup>359</sup> *and the Wrath of the Devil has been therewithal turned upon me*. But indeed, if an hearty *pitty* be due to any, I am sure, the Difficulties which attend our Honourable *Judges*, doe demand no Inconsiderable share in that *Pitty*. What a Difficult, what an Arduous Task, have those Worthy Personages now upon their Hands?

To carry the *Knife* so exactly, that on the one side, there may be no Innocent Blood Shed, by too unseeing a *Zeal for the Children of Israel*;<sup>360</sup> and that on the other side, there may be no Shelter given to those Diabolical *Works of Darkness*,<sup>361</sup> without the Removal whereof we never shall have *Peace*; or to those *Furies* whereof several have kill'd *more people* perhaps than would serve to make a Village: *Hic Labor, Hoc Opus est!*<sup>362</sup> O what need have we, to be concerned, that the Sins of our *Israel*, may not provoke the God of Heaven to leave his  *Davids*, unto a wrong Step, in a matter of such Consequence, as is now before them! Our Disingenuous, Uncharitable, Unchristian Reproaching of such *Faithful Men*, after all, *The Prayers and Supplications, with strong Crying and Tears*,<sup>363</sup> with which we are daily plying the Throne of Grace,<sup>364</sup> that they may be kept, from what *They Fear*, is none of the way for our preventing of what *We Fear*. Nor all this while, ought our *Pitty* to forget such *Accused* ones, as call for indeed our most Compassionate *Pitty*, till there be fuller Evidences that they are less worthy of it. If *Satan* have any where mali- [72] ciously brought upon the *Stage*,<sup>365</sup> those that have hitherto had a just and good stock of Reputation, for their just and good Living, among us; If the *Evil One*<sup>366</sup> have obtained a permission to *Appear*, in the Figure of such as we have cause to think, have hitherto *Abstained*, even from the *Appearance of Evil*.<sup>367</sup> It is in Truth, such an Invasion upon *Mankind*, as may well Raise an Horror in us all: but, O what Compassions are due to such as may come under such Misrepresentations, of the *Great Accuser*!<sup>368</sup> Who of us can say, what may be shown in the *Glasses* of the Great *Lying Spirit*?<sup>369</sup> Altho' the *Usual Providence* of God [we praise Him!] keeps us from such a Mishap; yet where have we an *Absolute Promise*, that we shall every one alwayes be kept from it? As long as *Charity* is

bound, to Think *no Evil*,<sup>370</sup> it will not Hurt us that are *Private Persons*, to forbear the *Judgment* which belongs not unto us. Let it rather be our Wish: May the Lord help them to Learn the *Lessons*, for which they are now put unto so hard a School.

VI. With a *Great Zeal*, we should lay hold on the *Covenant* of God, that we may Secure *Us* and *Ours*, from the *Great Wrath*, with which the Devil Rages. Let us come into the *Covenant of Grace*,<sup>371</sup> and then we shall not be hook'd into a *Covenant with the Devil*, nor be altogether unfurnished with armour, against the Wretches that are in that *Covenant*. The way to come under the Saving Influences of the *New Covenant*,<sup>372</sup> is, to close with the Lord Jesus Christ, who is [73] the All sufficient *Mediator*<sup>373</sup> of it: Let us therefore do that, by Resigning up ourselves unto the Saving, Teaching, and Ruling, Hands of this Blessed *Mediator*. Then we shall be, what we read in Jude, I. *Preserved in Christ Jesus*: That is, as the *Destroying Angel*, could not meddle with such as had been distinguished, by the Blood of the *Passeover* on their Houses, Thus the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, Sprinkled on our Souls, will *Perserve* us from the Devil. The *Birds of prey* (and indeed the *Devils* most literally in the shape of great *Birds*!)<sup>374</sup> are flying about: Would we find a Covert from these *Vultures*:<sup>375</sup> Let us then Hear Our Lord Jesus from Heaven Clocqing<sup>376</sup> unto us, *O that you would be gathered under my Wings*.<sup>377</sup> Well; When this is done, Then let us own the *Covenant*, which we are now come into, by joining ourselves to a Particular *Church*, walking in the Order of the Gospel; at the doing whereof, according to that *Covenant* of God, We give up Ourselves unto the Lord, and in Him unto One Another. While others have had their Names Entred in the *Devils Book*,<sup>378</sup> let our Names be found in the *Church Book*,<sup>379</sup> and let us be, *Written among the Living in*

*Jerusalem.*<sup>380</sup> By no means let, *Church-Work* sink and fail in the midst of us; but let the Tragical Accidents which now happen, exceedingly Quickened that *Work*. So many of the *Rising Generation*, utterly forgetting the Errand of our Fathers to build Churches in this Wilderness,<sup>381</sup> and so many of Our *Cottages* being allow'd to Live, where they do not, and perhaps cannot, wait upon God with the Churches of His People! tis as likely as any one thing to [74] procure the swarmings of *Witch-crafts* among us.<sup>382</sup> But it becomes us, with a like Ardour, to bring our poor *Children* with us, as we shall do, when we come ourselves, into the *Covenant* of God. It would break an heart of Stone, to have seen, what I have lately seen; Even poor Children of several Ages even from seven to twenty more or less, *Confessing* their Familiarity with Devils; but at the same time, in Doleful bitter Lamentations, that made a Little Portraiture of *Hell* it self, Expostulating with their execrable Parents, for *Devoting* them to the Devil in their Infancy, and so *Entailing* of Devillism upon them!<sup>383</sup> Now, as the Psalmist could say, *My Zeal hath Consumed me, because my Enemies have forgotten thy Words:*<sup>384</sup> Even so, let the nefarious wickedness of those that have Explicitly dedicated their Children to the Devil, even with Devilish Symbols, of such a *Dedication*, Provoke our *Zeal* to have our Children, Sincerely, Signally, and openly *Consecrated* unto God; with an *Education* afterwards assuring and confirming that Consecration.

VII. Let our *Prayer* Go up with *Great Faith*, against the Devil, that comes down in Great *Wrath*. Such is the Antipathy of the Devil to our *Prayer*, that he cannot bear to stay long where much of it is: indeed it is *Diaboli Flagellum*, as well as *Miseriæ*



*Remedium*;<sup>385</sup> the Devil will soon be Scourg'd out of the Lords Temple, by a *Whip*, made and used, with the, *Effectual Fervent Prayer of Righteous Men*.<sup>386</sup> When the De- [75] vil by Afflicting of us, drives us to our Prayers, he is, *The Fool making a Whip for his own Back*.<sup>387</sup> Our Lord said of the Devil, in Mat. 17. 21. *This Kind goes not out, but by Prayer and Fasting*.<sup>388</sup> But, *Prayer and Fasting* will soon make the Devil be gone. Here are *Charms* indeed! Sacred and Blessed *Charms*, which the Devil cannot stand before. A *Promise* of God, being well managed in the *Hands* of them, that are much upon their *Knees*, will so, *Resist the Devil*, that he will *Flee from us*.<sup>389</sup> At every other Weapon, the *Devils* will be too hard for us; the *Spiritual Wickedness in High Places*,<sup>390</sup> have manifestly the Upper Hand of us; that *Old Serpent*<sup>391</sup> will be too Old for us, too cunning, too subtil; they will soon *out-wit* us, if we think to Encounter them with any *Wit* of our own. But when we come to *Prayers*, Incessant and Vehement *Prayers* before the Lord, *there* we shall be too hard for them. When well-directed *Prayers*, that great Artillery of Heaven, are brought into the Field, *There*, methinks I see, *There are these Workers of Iniquity fallen, all of them*!<sup>392</sup> And who can tell, how much the most *Obscure Christian* among you all, may do towards the Deliverance of our Land from the Molestations which the Devil is now giving unto us. I have Read, That on a Day of Prayer kept by some Good People for and with a Possessed Person, the Devil at last flew out of the Window, and referring to a Devout, plain, mean Woman then in the Room, he cry'd out, *O the Woman behind the [76] Door! 'Tis that Woman that forces me away!*<sup>393</sup> Thus, The Devil that now Troubles us, may be forced within a while to Forsake us: and it shall be said, *He was driven away by the prayers of some Obscure and Retired Souls, which the world has*

*taken but little notice of!* The Great God, is about a *Great Work* at this Day among us; now there is extream Hazard left the Devil who by *Compulsion* must submit unto that *Great Work*, may also by *Permission* come to Confound that *Work*: both in the *Detections* of some, and in the *Confessions* of others, whose *Ungodly Deeds*<sup>394</sup> may be brought forth, by a *Great Work*<sup>395</sup> of God, there is Hazzard lest the Devil intertwist some of his Delusions. 'Tis PRAYER, I say, 'tis PRAYER, that must carry us well thro' the Strange Things that are now upon us. Only that *Prayer*, must then be, *The Prayer of Faith*:<sup>396</sup> O where is our *Faith* in Him, Who *hath Spoiled these Principalities and Powers, on His Cross Triumphant over them!*<sup>397</sup>

VIII. Lastly, Shake off, every Soul, Shake off the *Hard Yoke*<sup>398</sup> of the Devil, if you would not perish under the *Great Wrath* of the Devil. Where 'tis said, *The whole World lies in Wickedness*,<sup>399</sup> 'tis by some of the Ancients rendred, *The whole world lies in the Devil*.<sup>400</sup> The Devil is a *Prince*,<sup>401</sup> yea, the Devil is a *God* unto all the Unregenerate; and alas, there is, *A whole world of them*.<sup>402</sup> Desolate Sinners, Consider what an Horrid *Lord* it is that your are Enslav'd unto; and Oh shake off your Slavery to such a *Lord*. Instead of *him*, now make your [77] Choice of the Eternal God in Jesus Christ; Choose *Him* with a most unalterable Resolution; and unto *Him* say, with *Thomas*, *My Lord, and my God!*<sup>403</sup> Say with the Chruch, *Lord, other Lords have had the Dominion over us, but now thou alone shalt be our Lord for ever*. Then instead of your perishing under the *wrath* of the Devils, God will fetch you to a place among those that fill up the *Room* of the Devils, left by their Fall from the Ethereal Regions. It was a most awful

Speech made by the Devil, Possessing a young Woman, at a Village in *Germany*, *By the Command of God, I am come to Torment the Body of this young Woman, though I can[-] not hurt her Soul; and it is that I may warn men, to take heed of Sinning against God. Indeed* (said he) *'tis very sore against my will that I do it; but the command of God forces me to declare what I do; However I know that at the Last Day, I shall have more Souls than God Himself.*<sup>404</sup> So spoke that horrible Devil! But O that none of our *Souls* may be found among the Prizes of the Devil, in the Day of God! O that what the Devil has been *forc'd to Declare*, of his Kingdom among us, may prejudice our Hearts against him for ever!

My Text saies, *The Devil is come down in Great Wrath, for he has but a short Time.* Yea, but if you do not by a Speedy and Thorough Conversion to God, Escape the *Wrath* of the Devil, you will yourselves *Go down*, where the Devil is to be, and you will there be sweltring under the Devils *Wrath*, not for a *Short Time*, but, *World without End;*<sup>405</sup> nor for a [78] *Short Time*, but for *Infinite Millions of Ages*. The smoke of your Torment under that *Wrath*, will *Ascend for ever and ever!*<sup>406</sup> Indeed the Devils Time for his *Wrath* upon you in this World, can be but short, but his *Time* for you to do his *Work*, or, which is all one, to delay your turning to God, that is a *Long Time*. When the Devil was going to be Dispossessed of a Man, he Roar'd out, *Am I to Be Tormented before my Time.* You will *Torment* the Devil, if you Rescue your Souls out of his hands, by true Repentance: if once you begin to look that way, hee'll Cry out, *O This is before my Time, I must have more Time, yet in the service of such a guilty Soul.* But, I beseech you, let us join thus to *Torment* the Devil, in an Holy Revenge upon him, for all the Injuries which

he has done unto us; let us tell him, *Satan, Thy Time with me is but short, Nay, thy Time with me shall be no more; I am unutterably sorry that it has been so much; Depart from me thou Evil-Doer, that would'st have me to be an Evil-Doer Like thy self; I will now for ever keep the Commadments of that God, in whom I Live, and Move, and have my Being!*<sup>407</sup> The Devil has plaid a fine Game for himself indeed, if by his Troubling of our Land, the souls of many People should come to, *Think upon their Wayes, till eurn [check] they turn their Feet into the Testimonies of the Lord.* Now that the Devil may be thus outshot in his own Bow, is the *Desire* of all that *Love the Salvation of God* among us, as well as of him, who has thus Addressed you. *Amen.*

[79] {STLB} Having thus discoursed on the *Wonders of the Invisible World*, I shall now, with Gods Help, go on to relate some Remarkable and Memorable Instances of *Wonders* which that *World* ha's given to ourselves. And altho' the chief Entertainment which my Readers do *Expect*, and shall Receive, will be, a True History of what ha's occurred, respecting the WITCHCRAFTS wherewith we are at this day persecuted, yet I shall choose to Usher in the mention of those Things, with

## A Narrative

### OF AN

# A P P A R I T I O N

Which a Gentleman in *Boston*, had of his Brother,

just then Murdered in *London*.<sup>408</sup>

**IT** was, on the Second of *May* in the Year 1687 that a most ingenious, accomplished and well-disposed young Gentleman, Mr. *Joseph Beacon*, by Name, about Five a clock in the Morning, as he lay, whether Sleeping or Waking he could not say,<sup>409</sup> (but judged the latter of them,) had a View of his Brother then at *London*, altho' he was now himself at Our *Boston*, distanced from him a Thousand [80] Leagues. This his Brother appear'd unto him, in the Morning, about five a Clock at *Boston*, having on him a *Bengale* Gown, which he usually wore, with a Napkin Ty'd about his Head; His Countenance was very Pale, Ghastly, Deadly, and he had a Bloody Wound On one Side of his Forehead! *Brother!* saies the Affrighted *Joseph*. *Brother!* Answered the Apparition. Said *Joseph*, *What's the matter, Brother! How came you here!* The Apparition reply'd, *Brother, I have been most Barbarously and Injuriously Butchered, by a Debauch'd, Drunken Fellow,*<sup>410</sup> *to whom I never did any wrong in my life.* Whereupon he gave a particular Description of the Murderer; adding, *Brother, This Fellow, changing his Name, is attempting to come over unto New-England, in Foy or Wild; I would pray you, on the first Arrival of either of these, to get an Order from the Governour, to Seiz the person, whom I have now described; and then do you Indict him*<sup>411</sup> *for the Murder of me your Brother: I'll Stand by you, and prove the Indictment.* And so he vanished. Mr. *Beacon* was extreamly astonished at what he had seen and heard; and the People of the Family<sup>412</sup> not only observed an extraordinary Alteration upon him, for the Week following, but have also given me under their Hands a full Testimony,<sup>413</sup> that he then gave them an Account of this Apparition.

All this while, Mr. *Beacon* had no Advice of any thing amiss attending his Brother then in *England*; but about the latter end of *June* fol- [81] lowing, he understood by the common ways of communication,<sup>414</sup> that the *April* before, his Brother going in hast by night to call a coach for a Lady, mett a fellow then in drink, with his *Doxy*<sup>415</sup> in his hand. Some way or other the fellow thought himself affronted in the hasty passage of this *Beacon*, & immediately ran in to the Fire-side of a Neighbouring Tavern, from whence he fetch'd out a Fire-fork, wherewith he grievously wounded *Beacon* in the skull; even in that very part, where the Apparition show'd his wound. Of this Wound he Languished until he Dy'd, on the second of *May*,<sup>416</sup> about five of the Clock in the morning at *London*. The murderer it seems, was endeavouring an escape as the Apparition affirm'd, but the Friends of the Deceased *Beacon* siezed him: and prosecuting him at Law,<sup>417</sup> he found the help of such Friends, as brought him off without the loss of his Life; since which, there has no more been heard of the Business.

This History I received of Mr. *Joseph Beacon* himself; who, a little before his own Pious & Hopeful Death, which follow'd not long after, gave me the Story written and signed with his own Hand, and Attested with the Circumstances I have already mentioned.

But I shall no longer detain my Reader, from His expected entertainment,<sup>418</sup> in a brief Account of the *Trials*, which have passed upon some of the Malefactors, Lately Executed at *Salem*, for the *Witchcrafts*, whereof they stood Convicted. For [82] my own part, I was not Present at any of *Them*; nor ever Had I any personal prejudice at the

persons thus brought upon the Stage; much less, at the Surviving Relations of those persons, with and for whom I would be as Hearty a mourner as any man Living in the World: *The Lord Comfort them!* But having Received a Command, so to do, I can do no other than shortly Relate the Chief *Matters of fact* which accurr'd in the Trials of some that were Executed; in an Abridgment collected out of the *Court-Papers*, on this occasion put into my Hands. You are to take the *Truth*, just as it was; and the *Truth* will hurt no good man. There might have been more of these, if my Book would not thereby have been swollen too big; and if some other worthy hands did not perhaps intend something further in these *Collections*; for which cause I have only singled out *Four* or *Five* which may serve to Illustrate the way of dealing, wherein *Witchcrafts* use to be concerned; and I Report matters not as an *Advocate* but as an *Historian*.<sup>419</sup>

They were some of the Gracious Words, inserted in the Advice, which many of the Neighbouring Ministers, did this Summer humbly lay before our Honorable Judges, *We cannot but with all thankfulness, acknowledge the success which the Merciful God has given unto the Sedulous and Assiduous endeavours of Our Honourable Rulers, to detect the abominable Witchcrafts which have been committed in the Country; Humbly Praying that the discovery of those mysterious and mischievous wickedneßes, may be perfected.* If in the midst of [83] the many Dissatisfactions among us, the publication of these Trials, may promote such a pious *Thankfulness* unto God, for Justice being *so far*, executed among us, I shall Rejoyce that God is Glorified; and pray that no wrong steps of ours may ever sully any of His any of His Glorious Works.

But we will begin with,

A Modern Instance of Witches Discovered and  
 Condemned, in a Trial, before that Celebrated  
 Judge, Sir. *Matthew Hale*.<sup>420</sup>

**IT** may cast some *Light* upon the *Dark* Things now in *America*, if we just give a glance upon the *Like Things* lately hapening in *Europe*. We may see the *Witchcrafts* here, most exactly resemble the *Witchcrafts* there; and we may learn what sort of Devils do trouble the World.

The Venerable Baxter very truly sais, *Judge Hale was a Person, than whom no Man, was more backward, to Condemn a Witch, without full Evidence*.<sup>421</sup>

Now, One of the Latest Printed Accounts, about a *Trial of Witches*, is of what was before *him*; and it ran on this wise. [Printed in the Year 1682] And it is here the rather mentioned, because it was a Trial, much considered by the Judges of *New-England*.

I. *Rose Cullender*, and *Amy Duny*, were severally Indicted, for Bewitching *Elizabeth Durent*, *Ann Durent*, *Jane Bocking*, *Susan Chandler*, *William Durent*, [84] *Elizabeth* and *Deborah Pacy*.<sup>422</sup> And the evidence, whereon they were Convicted, stood upon diverse particular Circumstances.

**II.** *Ann Durent*, *Susan Chandler*, and *Elizabeth Pacy*, when they came into the Hall, to give Instructions for the drawing the Bills of Indictments, they fell into strange



and violent Fitts, so that they were unable to give in their Depositions, not only then but also During the whole Assizes. *William Durent* being an Infant, his Mother Swore, That *Amy Duny* looking after her Child one Day in her absence, did at her return confess, that she had *given suck to the Child*: (tho' she were an Old Woman:) Whereat, when *Durent* expressed her displeasure, *Duny* went away with Discontents and Menaces.

The Night after, the Child fell into strange and sad Fitts, wherein it continued for Diverse Weeks. One Doctor *Jacob* advised her to hang up the Childs Blanket, in the Chimney Corner all Day, and at Night, when she went to put the Child into it, if she found any Thing in it then to throw it without fear into the Fire. Accordingly, at Night, there fell a great Toad out of the Blanket, which ran up & down the Hearth. A Boy, catch't it & held it in the Fire with the Tongs: where it made an horrible Noise, and Flash'd like to Gun-Powder, with a report like that of a Pistol: Whereupon the Toad was no more to be seen. The next Day a kinswoman of *Duny's*, told the Deponent, that [85] her Aunt was all grievously scorch'd with Fire, and the Deponent going to her House, found her in such a Condition. *Duny* told her, she might thank her for it; but she should live to see some of her Children Dead, and her self upon Crutches. But after the Burning of the Toad, this Child Recovered.

This Deponent further Testify'd, That Her Daughter *Elizabeth*, being about the Age of Ten Years, was taken in like manner, as her first Child was, and in her Fitts complained much of *Amy Duny*, and said, that she did appear to Her, and afflict her in such manner as the former. One Day she found *Amy Duny* in her House, and thrusting her out of Doors, *Duny* said, *You need not be so Angry, your Child won't live long*. And

within three Days the Child *Dyed*. The *Deponent* added, that she was Her self, not long after taken with such a Lameness, in both her Leggs, that she was forced to go upon Crutches; and she was now in Court upon them. [It was Remarkable, that immediately upon the Juries bringing in *Duny* Guilty, *Durent* was restored unto the use of her Limbs, and went Home without Her Crutches]<sup>423</sup>

III. As for *Elizabeth* and *Deborah Pacy*, one Aged Eleven years, the other Nine; the elder, being in Court, was made utterly senseless, during all the time of the Triall: or at least speechless. By the direction of the Judge, *Duny* was privately brought to *Eliza-* [86] *beth Pacy*, and she touched her Hand: whereupon the child, without, so much as seeing her, suddenly leap'd up and flew upon the prisoner; the younger was too ill, to be brought unto the Assizes. But *Samuel Pacy*, their Father, testify'd, that his Daughter *Deborah*, was taken with a sudden lameness; and upon the grumbling of *Amy Duny*, for being denied something, where this child was then sitting, the child was taken with an extreeme pain in her stomach,, like the pricking of pins; and shrieking at a dreadful manner, like a Whelp, rather than a Rational creature. The Physicians could not conjecture the cause of the Distemper; but *Amy Duny* being a woman of Ill Fame, and the child in fitts crying out of *Amy Duny*, as affrighting her with the Apparition of her person, the deponent suspected her, and procured her to be set in the stocks. While she was there, she said in the hearing of the two Witnesses, *Mr Pacy keeps a great stir about his child, but let him stay till he has done as much by his Children, as I have done by mine*: and being asked, What she had done to her Children, she answered, *She had been fain to open her Childs mouth with a Tap to give it Victuals*. The Deponent added, that within two

Days, the Fits of his Daughters were such, that they could not perserve either Life or Breath, without the help of a Tap. And that the Children cry'd out of *Amy Duny*, and of *Rose Cullender*, as afflicting them, with their Apparitions.

IV. The Fits of the Children, were various. [87] They would sometimes be Lame on one side; sometimes on t'other. Sometimes very sore; sometimes restored unto their Limbs, and then Deaf, or Blind, or Dumb, for a long while together. Upon the Recovery of their Speech, they would Cough extreamly; and with much Flegm, they would bring up Crooked Pins; & one time, a Two-penny Nail, with a very broad Head.<sup>424</sup> Commonly at the end of every Fit, they would cast up a Pin. When the Children Read, they could not pronounce the Name of, *Lord*, or *Jesus* or *Christ*, but would fall into Fitts; and say, *Amy Duny says, I must not use that Name*. When they came to the Name of *Satan*, or *Devil*, they would clap their Fingers on the Book, crying out, *This bites, but it makes me speak right well!* The Children in their Fitts, would often cry out, *There stands Amy Duny, or, Rose Cullender; and they would afterwards relate, That these Witches appearing before them, threatned them, that if they told what they saw or heard, they would Torment them ten times more than ever they did before.*

V. *Margaret Arnold*, the Sister of Mr. *Pacy*, testify'd unto the like Sufferings being upon the Children, at her House, whither her Brother had Removed them. And that sometimes, the Children (*only*) would see things like Mice, run about the House; and one of them suddenly snap't one with the Tongs, and threw it in- [88] to the Fire, where it screeched out like a Rat. At another time, a thing like a Bee, flew at the Face of the

younger Child; the Child fell into a Fitt; and at last Vomited up a *Two-penny Nail*, with a Broad Head; affirming, *That the Bee brought this Nail, and forced it into her mouth*. The Child would in like manner be assaulted with Flies, which brought Crooked Pins, unto her, and made her first swallow them, and then Vomit them. She one Day caught, an Invisible *Mouse*, and throwing it into the Fire, it Flash'd like to Gun-Powder. None besides the Child saw the *Mouse*, but every one saw the *Flash*. She also declared, out of her Fitts, that in them, *Amy Duny*, much tempted her to Destroy Her self.

VI. As for *Ann Durent*, her Father Testified That upon a Discontent of *Rose Cullender*, His Daughter was taken with much Illness in her Stomach and great and sore Pains, like the pricking of pins: and then Swooning Fitts, from which Recovering she declared, *She had seen the Apparition of Rose Cullender, Threatning to Torment her*. She likewise Vomited up diverse Pins. The Maid was Present at Court, but when *Cullender* look'd upon her, she fell into such Fitts, as made her utterly unable to declare any thing.

*Ann Baldwin*, diposed the same.

VII. Jame Bocking, was too weak, to be at [89 misnumbered 79] the Assizes. But her Mother Testify'd, that Her Daughter having formerly been Afflicted with Swooning Fitts, and Recovered of them; was now taken with a great Pain in her Stomach; and New Swooning Fitts. That she took little Food, but every Day Vomited Crooked Pins. In her first Fitts, she would Extend her Arms, and use Postures, as if she caught at something, and when her Clutched Hands were forced open, they would find several Pins diversely

Crooked, unaccountably lodged there. She would also maintain a Discourse with some that were Invisibly present, when casting abroad her Arms, she would often say, *I will not have it!* but at last say, *Then I will have it!* and closing her Hand, which when they presently after opened, a Lath-Nail was found in it. But Her great complaints were of being Visited by the shapes of *Amy Duny*, and *Rose Cullender*.

VIII. As for *Susan Chandler*, Her Mother Testified, That being at the search of *Rose Cullender*, they found on her Belly a thing like a Teat, of an Inch long; which the *said Rose* ascribed to a strain. But near her Privy parts, they found Three more that were smaller than the former. At the end of the long Teat, there was a little Hole, which appeared, as if newly Sucked; and upon straining it, a white milky matter issued out. The Deponent further said, That her Daughter being one day concerned at *Rose Cullenders* taking her by the Hand, she fell very sick, and at Night cry'd out, [90] *That Rose Cullender would come to Bed unto her*. Her Fitts grew violent, and in the Intervals of them, she declared, *That she saw Rose Cullender in them, and once having of a great Dog with her*. She also vomited up crooked Pins; and when she was brought into Court, she fell into her Fitts. She Recovered her self in some Time, and was asked by the Court, whether she was in a Condition to take an Oath, and give Evidence. She said, she could; but having been Sworn, she fell into her Fitts again, and, *Burn her! Burn her!* were all the words that she could obtain power to speak. Her Father likewise gave the same Testimony with her Mother; as to all but the Search.

IX. Here was the Sum of the Evidence: which Mr. Serjeant *Keeling*, thought not sufficient to Convict the Prisoners. For admitting the Children were Bewitched, yet, said he, it can never be Apply'd unto the Prisoners, upon the Imagination only of the Parties Afflicted; inasmuch as no person whatsoever could then be in Safety.<sup>425</sup>

Dr. *Brown*,<sup>426</sup> a very Learned Person then present, gave his Opinion, that these persons were Bewitched. He added, That in *Denmark*, there had been lately a great Discovery of Witches; who used the very same way of Afflicting people, by Conveying Pins and Nails into them *His* Opinion was, that the Devil in Witchcrafts, did Work upon the Bodies of Men and Women, upon a *Natural Foundation*; and that he did Extraordinarily af- [91] flict them, with such Distempers as their Bodies were most subject unto.

X. The Experiment about the *Usefulness*, yea, or *Lawfulness* whereof Good Men have sometimes disputed, was divers Times made, That though the Afflicted were utterly deprived of all sense in their Fitts, yet upon the *Touch* of the Accused, they would so screech out, and Fly up, as not upon any other persons. And yet it was also found that once upon the touch of an innocent person, the like effect follow'd, which put the whole Court unto a stand: altho' a small Reason was at length attempted to be given for it.

XI. However, to strengthen the Credit of what had been already produced against the Prisoners. One *John Soam* testify'd, That bringing home his Hay in three Carts, one of the Carts wrenched the Window of Rose Cullenders House, whereupon she flew out,

with violent Threatenings against the Deponent. The other two Carts, passed by twice, Loaded, that Day afterwards; but the Cart which touched *Cullenders* House, was twice or thrice that Day overturned. Having again Loaded it, as they brought it thro' the Gate which Leads out of the Field, the Cart stuck so fast in the Gates Head, that they could not possibly get it thro', but were forced to cut down the Post of the Gate, to make the Cart pass thro', altho' they could [92] not perceive that the Cart did of either side touch the Gate-Post. They afterwards, did with much Difficulty get it home to the yard; but could not for their Lives get the Cart near the place, where they should unload. They were fain to unload at a great Distance; and when they were Tired, the Noses of them that came to Assist them, would burst forth a Bleeding; so they were fain to give over till next morning; and then they unloaded without any Difficulty.

XII. *Robert Sherringham* also testify'd, That the Axle-Tree of his Cart, happening in passing, to break some part of *Rose Cullenders* House, in her Anger at it, she vehemently threatned him, *His Horses should suffer for it*. And within a short time, all his Four Horses dy'd; after which he sustained many other losses in the sudden Dying of his Cattle. He was also taken with a Lameness in his limbs; and so vexed with lice of an extraordinary Number and Bigness, that no Art could hinder the Swarming of them, till he burnt up, two suits of Apparel.

XIII. As for *Amy Duny*, t'was testifi'd by one *Richard Spencer*' that he heard her say, *The Devil would not lett her Rest; until she were Revenged on the wife of Cornelius Sandswel* And that *Sandswel* testify'd, that her Poultry dy'd suddenly, upon *Amy*

*Dunyes* threatning of them; and that her Husbands Chimney fell, quickly after *Duny* had spoken of [93] such a disaster. And a firkin of Fish could not be kept from falling into the water, upon suspicious words of *Duny's*.

XIV. The Judge, told the Jury, they were to inquire now, first, whether these Children were Bewitched; and secondly, Whether the Prisoners at the Bar were guilty of it. He made no doubt, there were such Creatures as Witches; for the Scriptures affirmed it; and the Wisdom of all Nations had provided Laws against such persons. He pray'd the God of Heaven, to direct their Hearts in the weighty thing they had in hand; for, *To Condemn the Innocent, and let the Guilty go free, were both an Abomination to the Lord.*<sup>427</sup>

The Jury in half an Hour, brought them in *Guilty*, upon their several Indictments, which were Nineteen in Number.<sup>428</sup>

The Next morning, the Children with their Parents, came to the Lodgings of the Lord Chief Justice, and were in as good Health, as ever in their Lives; being Restored within half an Hour after the Witches were Convicted.

The Witches were Executed; and *Confessed* nothing; which indeed will not be wondred by them, who Consider and Entertain the Judgment of a Judicious Writer, *That the Unpardonable Sin, is most usually Committed by Professors of the Christian Religion, falling into Witchcraft.*<sup>429</sup> [94]



We will now proceed unto several of the like Trials among our selves.

I.

THE

TRYAL of G.B.<sup>430</sup>

At a Court of

Oyer and Terminer,<sup>431</sup>

Held in *Salem*. 1692.

Glad should I have been, if I had never known the Name of this man; or never had this occasion to mention so much as the first Letters of his Name. But the Government requiring some Account, of his Trial, to be Inserted in this Book, it becomes me with all Obedience, to submit unto the Order.<sup>432</sup>

I. This G.B. was Indicted for *Witchcrafts*; and in the Prosecution of the Charge against him, he was Accused by five or six of the Bewitched, as the Author of their Miseries; he was Accused by eight of the Confessing Witches, as being an Head Actor at some of their Hellish Rendezvouzes,<sup>433</sup> and [95] one who had the promise of being a *King* in Satans Kingdom, now going to be Erected;<sup>434</sup> he was Accused by nine persons, for extraordinary Lifting, and such Feats of Strength, as could not be done without a Diabolical Assistance.<sup>435</sup> And for other such Things he was Accused, until about Thirty Testimonies were brought in against him; nor were these, judg'd the half of what might

have been considered, for his Conviction: however they were enough to fix the Character of a *Witch* upon him, according to the Rules of Reasoning, by the Judicious *Gaule*, in that Case directed.<sup>436</sup>

II. The Court being sensible, that the *Testimonies of the Parties Bewitched*, use to have a Room among the *Suspitions*, or *Presumptions*, brought in against one Indicted for Witchcraft, there were now heard the Testimonies of several Persons, who were most notoriously Bewitched, and every day Tortured by Invisible Hands, and these now all charged the Spectres of *G. B.* to have a share in their Torments.<sup>437</sup> At the Examination of this *G. B.* the Bewitched People were grievously harassed, with Preternatural Mischiefs, which could not possibly be Dissembled; and they still ascribed it unto the Endeavours of *G.B.* to kill them. And now upon his Trial, one of the Bewitched Persons testify'd, That in her Agonies, a little Black hair'd man came to her, saying his Name was *B*-<sup>438</sup> and bidding her set her hand unto a Book which he show'd unto her; and bragging that he was a [96] *Conjurer*[,] above the ordinary Rank of Witches;<sup>439</sup> That he often persecuted her, with the offer of that Book, saying, *She should be well, and need fear no body, if she would but Sign it:* but he inflicted cruel Pains and Hurts upon her, because of her Denying so to do. The Testimonies of the other Sufferers concurred with these; and it was Remarkable, that whereas *Biting*, was one of the ways which the Witches used, for the vexing of the Sufferers, when they cry'd out of *G. B.* biting them, the print of the Teeth, would be seen on the Flesh of the Complainers; and just such a sett of *Teeth*, as *G. B's* would then appear upon them, which could be distinguished from those of some other

mens.<sup>440</sup> Others of them testify'd, That in their Torments, *G. B.* tempted them, to go unto a Sacrament, unto which they perceived him with a sound of Trumpet Summoning of other Witches; [check punctuation] who quickly after the Sound would come from all Quarters unto the Rendezvouz. One of them falling into a kind of Trance, afterwards affirmed, That *G. B.* had carried her into a very high Mountain, where he show'd her mighty and glorious Kingdoms, and said, *He would give them all to her, if she would write in his Book*; but she told him, *They were none of his to give*; and refused the motions; enduring of much misery for that Refusal.<sup>441</sup>

It cost the Court a wonderful deal of Trouble, to hear the Testimonies of the Sufferers; for when they were going to give in their Depositions, they [97] would for a long while be taken with fitts, that made them incapable of saying any thing. The Chief Judge asked the prisoner, who he thought hindred these witnesses from giving their testimonies? and he answered, *He supposed, it was the Divil*? That Honourable person, then reply'd, *How comes the Divil so loathe to have any Testimony born against you?* Which cast him into very great confusion.<sup>442</sup>

III. It has been a frequent thing for the Bewitched people, to be entertained with Apparitions of *Ghosts* of murdered people, at the same time, that the *Spectres* of the witches trouble them.<sup>443</sup> These Ghosts do always afright the Beholders, more than all the other spectral Representations; and when they exhibit themselves, they cry out, of being Murdered by the witchcrafts or other violences of the persons who are then in spectre present. It is further considerable, that once or twice, these *Apparitions* have been seen by

others at the very same time that they have shown them selves to the Bewitched; & seldom have there been these *Apparitions* but when something unusual & suspected had attended the Death of the party thus Appearing. Some that have bin accused by these *Apparitions*, accosting of the Bewitched People, who had never heard a word of any such persons, ever being in the world, have upon a fair examination freely, and fully, confessed the murders of those very persons, altho' these also did not know how the *Apparitions* had complained of them. Accordingly several of the Bewitched,

# I

[98] had given in their Testimony, that they had been troubled with the *Apparitions* of two women, who said, that they were *G. Bs.* two wives; and that he had been the Death of them; and that the Magistrates must be told of it, before whom if *B.* upon his trial deny'd it, they did not know but that they should appear again in the Court.<sup>444</sup> Now, *G. B.* had been infamous for the Barbarous usage of his two successive *wives*, all the Country over. Moreover; It was testifi'd, the spectre of *G. B.* threatning of the sufferers told them, he had killed (besides others) Mrs *Lawson* and her Daughter *Ann*.<sup>445</sup> And it was noted, That these were the vertuous wife and Daughter, of one at whom this *G. B.* might have a prejudice for his being serviceable at *Salem-village*, from whence himself had in Ill Terms removed some years before: & that when they dy'd, which was long since, there were some odd circumstances about them, which made some of the Attendants there suspect something of witchcraft, tho' none Imagined from what Quarter it should come.

Well, *G. B.* being now upon his Triall, one of the Bewitched persons was cast into Horror at the Ghosts of *B's.* two deceased wives, then appearing before him, and crying

for, *Vengeance*, against him. Hereupon several of the Bewitched persons were successively called in, who all not knowing what the former had seen and said, concurred in their Horror, of the Apparition, which they affirmed, that he had before him. But he, tho' much appalled, utterly deny'd that he discerned anything of it; nor was it any part of his *Conviction*. [99] IV. Judicious Writers, have assigned it a great place, in the Conviction of *witches*, when persons are *Impeached by other Notorious witches, to be as Ill as themselves; especially, if the persons have been much noted for neglecting the Worship of God*. Now, as there might have been Testimonies Enough of G. B's. Antipathy to *Prayer* and the other Ordinances of God, tho' by his profession singularly obliged thereunto;<sup>446</sup> so, there now came in against the prisoner, the Testimonies of several persons, who confessed their own having been Horrible *Witches*, and ever since their confessions had been themselves terribly Tortured by the Devils and other Witches, even like the other Sufferers; and therein undergone the pains of many *Deaths* for their Confessions.

These now Testify'd, that *G. B.* had been at Witch-Meetings with them; and that he was the Person who had Seduced, and Compelled them into the snares of Witchcraft: That he promised them *Fine Cloaths*, for doing it; that he brought Poppets to them, and thorns to stick into those Poppets,<sup>447</sup> for the afflicting of other People: And that he exhorted them, with the rest of the Crue, to bewitch all *Salem-Village*, but be sure to do it Gradually, if they would prevail in what they did.

When the *Lancashire Witches*<sup>448</sup> were condemn'd, I don't Remember that there was any considerable further Evidence, than that of the Bewitched, and then that of some that confessed. We see so much already against *G. B.* But this being indeed not *Enough*, there [I 2] [100] were, other things to render what had been already produced *credible*.

V. A famous Divine,<sup>449</sup> recites this among the Convictions of a Witch; *The Testimony of the Party Bewitched, whether Pining or Dying; together with the Joint Oathes of Sufficient Persons, that have seen certain Prodigious Pranks or Feats, wrought by the party Accused.* Now God had been pleased so to leave this *G. B.* that he had ensnared himself, by several Instances which he had formerly given of a Preternatural strength, and which were now produced against him. He was a very Puny man; yet he had often done things beyond the strength of a Giant. A Gun of about seven foot barrel, and so heavy that strong men could not steadily hold it out, with both hands; there were several Testimonies, given in by Persons of Credit and Honour, that he made nothing of taking up such a Gun behind the Lock, with but one hand, and holding it out like a Pistol, at Arms-end. *G. B.* in his Vindication was so foolish as to say, *That an Indian was there, and held it out at the same time:* Whereas, none of the Spectators ever saw any such *Indian*; but they suppos'd the *Black man* (as the Witches call the *Devil*; and they generally say he resembles an *Indian*) might give him that Assistance.<sup>450</sup> There was Evidence, like-wise, brought in, that he made nothing of Taking up whole Barrels fill'd with *Malasses*, or *Cider*, in very Disadvantagious Postures, and Carrying of [101] them through the Difficultest Places, out of a Canoo to the Shore.

[Yea, there were Two Testimonies, that G. B. with only putting the Fore-Finger of his Right hand, into the Muzzel of an heavy Gun, a Fowling-piece, of about six or seven foot Barrel, did Lift up the Gun, and hold it out at Arms end; a Gun which the Deponents, though strong men, could not with both hands Lift up, and hold out, at the Butt end, as is usual. Indeed one of these Witnesses, was over perswaded by some persons, to be out of the way, upon G. B.'s Trial; but he came afterwards, with sorrow for his withdraw, and gave in his Testimony: Nor were either of these Witnesses made use of as evidences in the Trial.]<sup>451</sup>

VI. There came in several Testimonies, relating to the Domestick Affayrs of G. B. which had a very hard Aspect upon him; and not only prov'd him a very ill man; but also confirmed the Belief of the Character, which had been already fastned on him. e.g.

T'was testified, That keeping his two Successive Wives in a strange kind of Slavery, he would when he came home from abroad, pretend to tell the Talk which any had with them. That he ha's brought them to the point of Death, by his Harsh Dealings with his Wives, and then made the People about him to promise that in Case Death should happen, they would say no-

[102] thing of it. That he used all means to make his Wives, Write, Sign, Seal, and Swear a Covenant, never to Reveal any of his Secrets. That his Wives had privately complained unto the Neighbours about frightful Apparitions of Evil Spirits, with which their House was sometimes infested; and that many such things have been Whispered among the Neighbourhood. There were also some other Testimonies, relating to the Death of People,

where-by the Conscience of an Impartial Jury, were convinced, that *G. B.* had Bewitched the persons mentioned in the Complaints. But I am forced to omit several such passages, in this, as well as in all the succeeding *Trials*, because the Scribes who took Notice of them, have not Supplied me.

VII. One Mr. *Ruck*, Brother in Law to this *G. B.* Testify'd, that *G. B.* and he himself, and his Sister, who was *G. B.*'s Wife, going out for Two or three Miles, to gather Straw-Berries, *Ruck*, with his Sister the Wife of *G. B.* Rode home very Softly, with *G. B.* on Foot in their Company, *G. B.* stept aside a little into the Bushes; Whereupon they Halted and Halloo'd for him. He not answering, they went away homewards, with a Quickened pace; without any expectation of seeing him in a considerable while: and yet when they were got near home, to their Astonishment they found him on foot, with them, having a Basket of Straw-Berries. *G. B.* immediately, then fell to chiding his Wife, on the account of what she had been speaking to her [103] Brother, of him, on the Road: which when they wondred at, he said, *He knew their thoughts.* *Ruck* being startled at that, made some Reply, intimating that the Devil himself did not know so far; but *G. B.* answered, *My God, makes known your Thoughts unto me.* The prisoner now at the Barr had nothing to answer, unto what was thus Witnessed against him, that was worth considering. Only he said, *Ruck, and his Wife left a man with him, when they left him.* Which *Ruck* now affirm'd to be false; and when the Court asked *G. B.* *What the Man's Name was?* his countenance was much altered; nor could he say, who 'twas. But the Court began to think, that he then step'd aside, only that by the assistance of the *Black Man*, he might put



on his *Invisibility*, and in that *Fascinating Mist*, gratify his own Jealous humour, to hear what they said of him. Which trick of rendring themselves *Invisible*, our Witches do in their confessions pretend that they sometimes are Masters of; and it is the more credible, because there is Demonstration that they often render many other things utterly *Invisible*.

VIII. *Faltring, Faulty, unconstant, and contrary Answers upon Judicial and deliberate examination*, are counted some unlucky symptoms of guilt, in all crimes; Especially in Witchcrafts. Now there never was a prisoner more Eminent for them, than G. B. both at his Examination and on his Trial. His *Tergiversations*,<sup>452</sup> *Contradictions*, and *Falsehoods*, were very sensible: he had little to say, but that he had [104] heard some things that he could not prove, Reflecting upon the Reputation of some of the witnesses. Only he gave in a paper, to the Jury; wherein, altho' he had many times before, granted, not only that there are *Witches*, but also that the present sufferings of the Countrey are the Effect of horrible *Witchcrafts*, yet he now goes to, evince it, *That there neither are, nor ever were, Witches that having made a compact with the Divel, Can send a Divel to Torment other people at a distance*. This paper was Transcribed out of *Ady*;<sup>453</sup> which the Court presently knew, as soon as they heard it. But he said, he had taken none of it out of any Book; for which his evasion afterwards was, that a Gentleman gave him the discourse, in a manuscript, from whence he Transcribed it.

IX. The Jury brought him in *guilty*; But when he came to Dy, he utterly deny'd the Fact, whereof he had been thus convicted.

## II.

The TRIAL of *Bridget Bishop*: alias, *Oliver*.<sup>454</sup>

At the COURT of

## Oyer and Terminer

Held at *Salem*. June 2. 1692.

I.      **S**He was Indicted for Bewitching of several persons in the Neighbourhood, the Indictment being drawn up, according to the *Form* in such [105] Cases Usual.<sup>455</sup> And pleading , *Not Guilty*, there were brought in several persons, who had long undergone many kinds of Miseries, which were preternaturally Inflicted, and generally ascribed unto an horrible *Witchcraft*. There was little Occasion to prove the *Witchcraft*; it being Evident and Notorious to all Beholders. Now to fix the *Witchcraft* on the Prisoner at the Bar, the first thing used was, the Testimony of the *Bewitched*; whereof several Testify'd, That the *Shape* of the Prisoner did oftentimes very grievously pinch them, choak them, Bite them, & Afflict them; urging them to write their Names in a *Book*, which the said Spectre called, *Ours*. One of them did further Testify, that it was the *Shape* of this Prisoner, with another, which one Day took her from her Wheel, and carrying her to the River[punctuation of original] side, threatened there to Drown her, if she did not Sign to the Book mentioned: which yet she refused. Others of them did also Testify, that the said *Shape*, did in her Threats, brag to them, that she had been the Death of sundry persons, then by her Named; that she had *Ridden* a man,<sup>456</sup> then likewise Named. Another Testify'd, the Apparition of *Ghosts* unto the Spectre of *Bishop*, crying out, *You Murdered us!* About the Truth whereof, there was in the matter of Fact, but too much Suspicion.

**II.** It was Testify'd, That at the Examination of the Prisoner, before the Magistrates, the Bewitched were extreamly Tortured. If she did [106] but cast her Eyes on them, they were presently struck down; and this in such a manner as there could be no Collusion in the Business. But upon the Touch of her Hand upon them, when they lay in their Swoons, they would immediately Revive; and not upon the Touch of any ones else. Moreover, upon some Special Actions of her Body, as the shaking of her Head, or the Turning of her Eyes, they presently and painfully fell into the like postures. And many of the like Accidents now fell out, while she was at the Bar. One at the same time testifying, That she said, *She could not be Troubled to see the Afflicted thus Tormented.*

**III.** There was Testimony likewise brought in, that a man striking once at the place, where a Bewitched person said, the *Shape* of this *Bishop* stood, the Bewitched cried out, that he had Tore her Coat, in the place then particularly specify'd; and the Womans Coat, was found to be Torn in that very place.

**IV.** One *Deliverance Hobbs*, who had Confessed her being a Witch, was now Tormented by the Spectres, for her Confession. And she now Testify'd, That this *Bishop*, tempted her to Sign the *Book* again, and to Deny what she had Confess'd. She affirmed, that it was the Shape of this Prisoner, which whipped her with Iron Rods, to compel her thereunto. And she affirmed, that this *Bishop* was at a General Meeting of the Witches, in

a [107] Field at *Salem*-Village and there partook of a Diabolical Sacrament, in Bread and Wine then Administred!

V. To render it further Unquestionable, that the prisoner at the Bar, was the Person truly charged in THIS *Witchcraft*, there were produced many Evidences of OTHER *Witchcrafts*, by her perpetrated. For Instance, *John Cook* testify'd, that about five or six years ago, One morning, about Sun-Rise, he was in his Chamber, assaulted by the *Shape* of this prisoner: which Look'd on him, grin'd at him, and very much hurt him, with a Blow on the side of the Head: and that on the same day, about Noon, the same *Shape* walked in the Room where he was, and an Apple strangely flew out of his Hand, into the Lap of his mother, six or eight foot from him.

VI. *Samuel Gray*, testify'd, That about fourteen years ago, he wak'd on a Night, & saw the Room where he lay, full of Light; & that he then saw plainly a Woman between the Cradle, and the Bed-side, which look'd upon him. He Rose, and it vanished; tho' he found the Doors all fast. Looking out at the Entry Door, he saw the same Woman, in the same Garb again; and said, *In Gods Name, what do you come for?* He went to Bed, and had the same Woman again assaulting him. The Child in the Cradle gave a great schreech, and the Woman Disappeared. It was long before the Child [108] could be quieted; and tho' it were a very likely thriving Child, yet from this time it pined away, and after divers months dy'd in a sad Condition. He knew not *Bishop*, nor her Name; but

when he saw her after this, he knew by her Countenance, and Apparel, and all Circumstances, that it was the Apparition of this *Bishop*, which had thus troubled him.

**VII.** *John Bly* and his wife, testify'd that he bought a sow of *Edward Bishop*, the Husband of the prisoner; and was to pay the price agreed, unto another person. This Prisoner being Angry that she was thus hindred from fingring the money, Quarrell'd with *Bly*. Soon after which the Sow, was taken with strange Fits; Jumping, Leaping, and knocking her head against the Fence, she seem'd Blind and Deaf, and would neither eat nor be suck'd. Whereupon a neighbour said, she believed the Creature was *Over-Looked*; & sundry other circumstances concurred, which made the Deponents Believe that *Bishop* had Bewitched it.

**VIII.** *Richard Coman* testify'd, that eight years ago, as he lay Awake in his Bed, with a Light Burning in the Room, he was annoy'd with the Apparition of this *Bishop*, and of two more that were strangers to him; who came and oppressed him so that he could neither stir himself, nor wake any one else: and that he was the night after, molested again in the like manner; the said *Bishop* taking him by the Throat, and pulling him almost out of the Bed. His kinsman offered for this cause to lodge with him; and that Night, as they were Awake [109] Discoursing together: this *Coman* was once more visited, by the Guests which had formerly been so troublesome; his kinsman being at the same time strook speechless and unable to move Hand or Foot. He had laid his sword by him; which these unhappy spectres, did strive much to wrest from him; only he held too

fast for them. He then grew able to call the People of his house; but altho' they heard him, yet they had not power to speak or stirr, until at last, one of the people crying out, *what's the matter!* the spectres all vanished.

**IX.** *Samuel Shattock* testify'd, That in the Year 1680. this *Bridget Bishop*, often came to his house upon such frivolous and foolish errands, that they suspected she came indeed with a purpose of mischief. Presently whereupon his eldest child, which was of as promising Health & Sense, as any child of its Age, began to droop exceedingly; & the oftener that *Bishop* came to the House, the worse grew the Child. As the Child would be standing at the Door, he would be thrown and bruised against the Stones, by an Invisible Hand, and in like sort knock his Face against the sides of the House, and bruise it after a miserable manner. Afterwards this *Bishop* would bring him things to Dy, whereof he could not Imagine any use; and when she paid him a piece of Money, the Purse and Money were unaccountably conveyed out of a Lock'd box, and never seen more. The Child was immediately hereupon taken with terrible fits, whereof his Friends thought he [110] would have dyed: indeed he did almost nothing but cry and Sleep for several Months together: and at length his understanding was utterly taken away. Among other Symptoms of an Inchantment upon him, one was, that there was a Board in the Garden, whereon he would walk; and all the invitations in the world could never fetch him off. About Seventeen or Eighteen years after, there came a Stranger to *Shattocks* House, who seeing the Child, said, *This poor Child is Bewitched; and you have a Neighbour living not far off, who is a Witch.* He added, *Your Neighbour has had a falling out with your Wife;*

*and she said in her Heart, your Wife is a proud Woman, and she would bring down her Pride in this Child:* He then Remembred, that *Bishop* had parted from his Wife in muttering and menacing Terms, a little before the Child was taken Ill. The above-said Stranger would needs carry the Bewitched Boy with him, to *Bishops* House, on pretence of buying a pot of Cyder. The Woman Entertained him in furious manner; and flew also upon the Boy, scratching his Face till the Blood came, and saying, *Thou Rogue, what? dost thou bring this Fellow here to plague me?* Now it seems the man had said before he went, that he would fetch Blood of *her*. Ever after the Boy was follow'd with grievous Fits, which the Doctors themselves generally ascribed unto *Witchcraft*; and wherein he would be thrown still into the *Fire* or the *Water*, if he were not constantly look'd after; and it was verily believed that *Bishop* was the cause of it.

[111] X. *John Louder* testify'd, that upon some little controversy with *Bishop* about her fowles, going well to Bed, he did awake in the Night by moonlight, and did see clearly the likeness of this woman grievously oppressing him;<sup>457</sup> in which miserable condition she held him unable to help him self, till near Day. He told *Bishop* of this; but she deny'd it, and threatned him, very much. Quickly after this, being at home on a Lords Day, with the doors shutt about him, he saw a Black Pig approach him; at which he going to kick, it vanished away. Immediately after, sitting down, he saw a Black thing Jump in at the Window, & come & stand before him. The Body, was like that of a Monkey, the Feet like a Cocks, but the Face much like a mans. He being so extreemly affrighted, that he could not speak; this Monster spoke to him, and said, *I am a Messenger sent unto you, for I*

*understand that you are in some Trouble of Mind, and if you will be ruled by me, you shall want for nothing in this world.* Whereupon he endeavoured to clap his hands upon it; but he could feel no substance, and it jumped out of the window again; but immediately came in by the Porch, though the Doors were shut, and said, *You had better take my Counsel!* He then struck at it with a stick, but stuck only the Groundsel, and broke the Stick. The Arm with which he struck was presently Disenabled, and it vanished away. He presently went out at the Back-Door, and spyed, this *Bishop*, in her Orchard, going toward her House; but he had not power to set one foot forward [112] unto her. Whereupon returning into the House, he was immediately accosted by the Monster he had seen before; which Goblin was now going to Fly at him: whereat he cry'd out, *The whole Armour of God, be between me and you!* So it sprang back, and flew over the Apple Tree; shaking many Apples off the Tree, in its flying over. At its Leap, it flung Dirt with its Feet, against the Stomach of the man; whereon he was then struck Dumb, and so continued for three Days together. Upon the producing of this Testimony, *Bishop* deny'd that she knew this Deponent: yet their two Orchards joined, and they had often had their Little Quarrels for some years together.

**XI.** *William Stacy*, Testified, That receiving Money of this *Bishop*, for work done by him, he was gone but a matter of Three Rods from her, and looking for his money, found it unaccountably gone from him. Some time after, *Bishop* asked him whether his Father would grind her grist for her? He demanded why? she Reply'd, *Because Folks count me a witch.* He answered, *No Question, but he will grind it for you.* Being then



gone about six Rods from her, with a small Load in his Cart, suddenly the Off-wheel slump't and sunk down into an Hole upon plain ground, so that the Deponent, was forced to get help for the Recovering of the wheel. But stepping Back to look for the Hole which might give him this disaster, there was none at all to be found. Some time after, he was waked [113] in the Night; but it seem'd as Light as Day, and he perfectly saw the shape of this *Bishop*, in the Room, troubling of him; but upon her going out, all was Dark again. He charg'd *Bishop* afterwards with it: and she deny'd it not; but was very angry. Quickly after, this Deponent having been threatned by *Bishop*, as he was in a dark Night going to the Barn, he was very suddenly taken or lifted from the ground, and thrown against a stone wall; After that, he was again hoisted up and thrown down a Bank, at the end of his House. After this again, passing by this *Bishop*, his Horse with a small load, striving to Draw, all his Gears flew to pieces, and the Cart fell down; and this deponent going then to lift a Bag of corn, of about two Bushels; could not budge it, with all his might.

Many other pranks, of this *Bishops*, this deponent was Ready to testify. He also testify'd, that he verily Believed, the said Bishop, was the Instrument of his Daughter, *Pricilla's* Death; of which suspicion, pregnant Reasons were assigned.

**XII.** To Crown all, *John Bly*, and *William Bly*, Testify'd, That being Employ'd by *Bridget Bishop*, to help take down the Cellar-wall, of the old House, wherein she formerly Lived, they did in Holes of the said old Wall, find several *Poppets*, made up of Rags, and Hogs Brussels, with Headless Pins in them, the points being outward.

Whereof she could now give no Account unto the Court, that was Reasonable or Tolerable. [114]

**XIII.** One thing that made against the Prisoner was, her being evidently convicted of *Gross Lying*, in the Court, several Times, while she was making her Plea. But besides this, a Jury of Women, found a preternatural Teat upon her Body; but upon a second search, within Three or four Hours, there was no such thing to be seen. There was also an account of other people whom this woman had afflicted. And there might have been many more, if they had been, enquired for. But there was no need of them.

**XVI.** There was one very strange thing more, with which the Court was newly Entertained. As this Woman vvas under a Guard, passing by the Great and Spacious Meeting-House of *Salem*, she gave a *Look* towards the House. And immediately a *Dæmon* Invisibly Enttring the Meeting-house, Tore dovvn a part of it; so that tho' there vvere no person to be seen there, yet the people at the Noise running in, found a Board, vvhich was strongly fastned vvith several Nails, transported unto another quarter of the House.

### **III.**

The Tryal of *Susanna Martin*: At the Court of  
*Oyer and Terminer*: Held by Adjournment  
 at *Salem*. June 29, 1692.

I. *SUsanna Martin*, pleading, *Not Guilty*, to the Indictment of *Witchcrafts*

brought in [115] against her, there were produced the evidences of many persons very sensibly and grievously Bewitched; who all complained of the prisoner at the Bar, as the person whom they Believed the cause of their Miseries. And now, as well an in the other Trials, there was an extraordinary endeavour by *witchcrafts*, with Cruel and Frequent Fits, to hinder the poor sufferers, from giving in their complaints; which the Court was forced with much patience to obtain, by much waiting and watching for it.

II. There was now also an Account given, of what passed at her first examination before the Magistrates. The cast of her *eye*, then striking the Afflicted People to the ground, whether they saw that Cast or no; there were these among other passages, between the Magistrates, and the Examinee.

*Magistrate*. Pray, what ails these People?

*Martin*. I don't know.

*Magistrate*. But, what do you think ails them?

*Martin*. I don't desire to spend my Judgment upon it.

*Magistrate*. Don't you think they are Bewitch'd?

*Martin*. No, I do not think they are.

*Magistrate*. Tell us your thoughts about them then.

*Martin*. No, my thoughts are my own when they are in, but when they are out, they are anothers. Their Master.---

*Magistrate*. Their Master? who do you think, is their Master;

[116] *Martin*. If they be dealing in the Black Art, you may know as well as I.

*Magistrate*. Well, what have you done towards this?

*Martin*. Nothing at all.

*Magistrate*. Why, tis you or your Appearance.

*Martin*[.] I cannot help it.

*Magistrate*. Is it not *Your* Master? How comes your Appearance to hurt these?

*Martin*. How do I know? He that appear'd in the shape of a *Samuel*, a Glorify'd Saint, may Appear in any ones shape.

It was then also noted in her, as in others like her, that if the Afflicted went to approach her, they were flung down to the Ground. And, when she was asked the Reason of it, she said, *I cannot tell; it may be, the Devil bears me more Malice than another.*

**III.** The Court accounted themselves Alarum'd by these things, to Enquire further into the Conversation of the Prisoner; and see what there might occur, to render these Accusations further credible. Whereupon, *John Allen*, of *Salisbury*, testify'd, That he refusing, because of the weakness of his Oxen, to cart some Staves, at the request of this *Martin*, she was displeased at it, and said, *It had been as good that he had; for his Oxen should never do him much more Service.* Whereupon, this Deponent said, *Dost thou threaten me, thou old Witch: I' l throw thee into the Brook:* Which to avoid, she flew over the Bridge, and escaped. But, as he was going home, one of his Oxen Tired, so [117] that he was forced to Unyoke him, that he might get him home. He then put his Oxen, with many more, upon *Salisbury* Beach, where Cattle did use to get *Flesh*. In a few days, all the Oxen upon the Beach were found by their Tracks, to have run unto the mouth of

*Merrimack-River*, and not returned; but the next day they were found come ashore upon *Plum-Island*.<sup>458</sup> They that sought them, used all imaginable gentleness, but they would still run away with a violence that seemed wholly Diabolical, till they came near the mouth of *Merrimack-River*; when they ran right into the Sea, swimming as far as they could be seen. One of them then swam back again, with a swiftness, amazing to the Beholders, who stood ready to receive him, and help up his Tired Carcase: but the Beast ran furiously up into the Island, and from thence, thorough the Marishes, up into *Newbury Town*, and so up into the Woods; and there after a while found near *Amesbury*. So that, of Fourteen good Oxen, there was only this saved: the Rest were all cast up, some in one place, and some in another, Drowned.

IV. *John Atkinson* Testify'd, That he Exchanged a Cow, with a Son of *Susanna Martins*, whereat she muttered, and was unwilling he should have it. Going to Receive this Cow, tho' he Hamstring'd<sup>459</sup> her, and Halter'd her, she of a Tame Creature grew so mad, that they [118] could scarce get her along. She broke all the Ropes that were fastned unto her, and though she were Ty'd fast unto a Tree, yet she made her Escape, and gave them such further Trouble, as they could ascribe to no cause but Witchcraft.

V. *Bernard Peache* testify'd, That being in Bed, on a Lords-day'Night, he heard a scrabbling at the Window, whereat he then saw, *Susanna Martin* come in, and jump down upon the Floor. She took hold of this Deponents Feet, and drawing his Body up

into an Heap, she lay upon him, near Two Hours; in all which time he could neither speak nor stir. At length, when he could begin to move, he laid hold on her Hand, and pulling it up to his mouth, he bit three of her Fingers, as he judged, unto the Bone. Whereupon she went from the Chamber, down the Stairs, out at the Door. This Deponent thereupon called unto the people of the House, to advise them, of what passed; and he himself did follow her. The people saw her not; but there being a Bucket at the Left-hand of the Door, there was a drop of Blood found on it; and several more drops of Blood upon the Snow newly fallen abroad. There was likewise the print of her two Feet just without the Threshold; but no more sign of any Footing further off.

At another time this Deponent was desired by the Prisoner, to come unto an Husking of Corn, at her House; and she said, *If he did not come, it [119] were better that he did!* He went not; but the Night following, *Susanna Martin*, as he judged, and another came towards him. One of them said, *Here he is!* but he having a Quarter-staff, made a Blovv at them. The Roof of the Barn, broke his Blow; but following them to the Window, he made another Blow at them, and struck them down; yet they got up, and got out, and he saw no more of them.

About this time, there was a Rumour about the Town, that *Martin* had a Broken Head; but the Deponent could say nothing to that.

The said *Peache* also testify'd, the Bevvitching of Cattle to Death, upon *Martins* Discontents.

**VI.** *Robert Downer* testified, That this Prisoner being some years ago prosecuted at Court for a Witch, he then said unto her, *He believed she was a Witch*. Whereat she being Dissatisfied, Said, *That some Shee-Devil would Shortly fetch him away!* Which words were herd by others, as well as himself. The Night following, as he lay in his Bed, there came in at the Window, the likeness of a *Cat*, which Flew upon him, took fast hold of his Throat, lay on him a considerable while, and almost killed him. At length he remembred, what *Susanna Martin*, had threatned the Day before; and with much striving he cryed out, *Avoid, thou Shee-Devil! In the Name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, Avoid!* Whereupon it left him, leap'd on the Floor, and Flew out at the Window.

[120] And there also came in several Testimonies, that before ever *Downer* spoke a word of this Accident, *Susanna Martin* and her Family, had related, *How this Downer had been Handled!*

**VII.** *John Kembal*, testified, that *Susanna Martin*, upon a Causeless Disgust, had threatened him, about a certain Cow of his, *That she should never do him any more Good:* and it came to pass accordingly. For soon after the Cow was found stark Dead on the dry Ground; without any Distemper to be discerned upon her. Upon which he was followed with a strange Death upon more of his Cattle, whereof he lost in One Spring to the value of Thirty Pounds. But the said *John Kembal* had a further Testimony to give in against the Prisoner which was truly admirable.

Being desirous to furnish himself with a Dog, he applyed himself to buy one of this *Martin*, who had a Bitch with Whelps in her House. But she not letting him have his Choice, he said, he would supply himself then at one *Blezdels*. Having mark'd a puppy, which he lik'd at *Blezdels*, he met *George Martin*, the Husband of the prisoner, going by, who asked him, *Whether he would not have one of his Wives Puppies*; and he answered, *No*. The same Day, one *Edmund Eliot*, being at *Martins House*, heard *George Martin* relate, where this *Kemba* had been, and what he had said. Whereupon *Susanna Martin* replied, *If I live, I'll give him Puppies enough!* Within a few dayes after, this *Kemba* coming out of the Woods, [121] there arose a little Black Cloud, in the *N.W.* and *Kemba* immediately felt a Force upon him, which made him not able to avoid running upon the stumps of Trees, that were before him, albeit, he had a broad, plain Cart way, before him; but tho' he had his Ax also on his Shoulder to endanger him in his Falls, he could not forbear going out of his way to tumble over them. When he came below the Meeting-House, there appeared unto him, a little thing like a *Puppy*, of a Darkish Colour; and it shot Backwards and forwards between his Leggs. He had the Courage to use all possible Endeavours of Cutting it, with his Ax; but he could not Hit it; the Puppy gave a jump from him, and went, as to him, it seem'd into the Ground. Going a little further, there appeared unto him a Black Puppy, somewhat bigger than the first; but as Black as a Cole. Its motions were quicker than those of his Ax; it Flew at his Belly- and away; then at his Throat, so, over his Shoulder one way, and then over his Shoulder another way. His heart now began to fail him, and he thought the Dog would have Tore his Throat out. But he recovered himself, and called upon God in his Distress; and Naming the Name of JESUS



CHRIST, it Vanished away at once. The *Deponent* Spoke not one Word of these Accidents, for fear of affrighting his wife. But the next Morning, *Edmund Eliot*, going into *Martins* house, this woman asked him where *Kembal* was? He Replied, *At home, a bed, for ought he knew*. She returned, *They say, he was frighted last Night*. *Eliot* [122] asked *With what?* She answered, *With Puppies*. *Eliot* asked, *Where she heard of it, for he had heard nothing of it!* She rejoined, *About the Town*. Altho, *Kembal* had mentioned the Matter to no Creature Living.

VIII. *William Brown* testify'd, that Heaven haveing blessed him with a most Pious and prudent wife, this wife of his, one day mett with *Susanna Martin*; but when she approach'd just unto her *Martin*, vanished out of sight, and left her extremely affrighted. After which time, the said *Martin*, often appear'd unto her, giving her no little trouble; & when she did come, she was visited with Birds that sorely peck't and Prick'd her; and sometimes, a Bunch, like a pullets egg would Rise in her throat, ready to Choak her, till she cry'd out, *Witch, you shan't Choak me!* While this good Woman was in this Extremity, the Church appointed a Day of Prayer, on her behalf; whereupon her Trouble ceas'd; she saw not *Martin* as formerly; and the Church, instead of their Fast, gave Thanks for her Deliverance. But a considerable while after, she being Summoned to give in some Evidence at the Court, against this *Martin*, quickly thereupon, this *Martin* came behind her, while she was milking her Cow, and said unto her, *For thy defaming me at Court, I'l make thee the miserablest Creature in the World*. Soon after which, she fell into a strange kind of Distemper, and became horribly Frantick, and incapable of any

Reasonable Action; the Physici- [123] ans declaring, that her Distemper was preternatural, and that some Devil had certainly Bewitched her; and in that Condition she now remained.

IX. *Sarah Atkinson* testify'd, That *Susanna Martin* came from *Amesbury*, to their House at *Newbury*, in an extraordinary Season, when it was not fit for any one to Travel. She came (as she said, unto *Atkinson*,) all that long way on Foot. She brag'd, and show'd, how dry she was; nor could it be perceived that so much as the Soles of her shoes were wet. *Atkinson* was amazed at it; and professed, that she should her self have been wet up to the knees, if she had then came so far; but *Martin* reply'd, *She scorn'd to be Drabbled!*<sup>460</sup> It was noted, that this Testimony upon her Trial, cast her into a very singular Confusion.

X. *John Pressy*, testify'd, That being one Evening very unaccountably Bewildred, near a field of *Martins*, and several times, as one under an Enchantment, returning to the place he had left, at length he saw a marvellous Light, about the Bigness of an Half-Bushel, near two Rod, out of the way. He went, and struck at it with a Stick, and laid it on with all his might. He gave it near forty blows; and felt it a palpable substance. But going from it, his Heels were struck up, and he was laid with his Back on the Ground: Sliding as he thought, into a Pit; from whence he recover'd, by taking hold on the Bush; altho' afterwards he [124] could find no such Pit in the place. Having after his Recovery, gone five or six Rod, he saw *Susanna Martin* standing on his Left-hand, as the Light had done

before; but they changed no words with one another. He could scarce find his House in his Return; but at length he got home, extreamly affrighted. The next day, it was upon Enquiry understood, that *Martin* was in a miserable condition by pains and hurts that were upon her.

It was further testify'd by this Deponent, That after he had given in some Evidence against *Susanna Martin*, many years ago, she gave him foul words about it; and said, *He should never prosper more*; particularly, *That he should never have more than two Cows; that tho' he were never so likely to have more, yet he should never have them*. And that from that very Day to this; namely for Twenty Years together, he could never exceed that Number; but some strange thing or other- still prevented his having of any more.

XI. *Jarvis Ring*, testifyed, that about seven years ago, he was oftentimes and grievously Oppressed in the Night; but saw not who Troubled him, until at last he Lying perfectly Awake, plainly savv *Susanna Martin* approach him. She came to him, and forceably Bit him by the Finger; so that the Print of the Bite is now so long after to be seen upon him.

XII. But besides all of these Evidences, there was [125] a most wonderful Account of one *Joseph Ring*, produced on this Occasion.

This man has been strangely carried about by *Demons*, from one *Witch-Meeting* to another, for near two years together; and for one Quarter of this Time, they have made

him, and kept him Dumb, tho' he is now again able to speak. There was one T. H. who having as tis judged, a Design of engaging this *Joseph Ring*, in a Snare of Devillism, contrived a while, to bring this *Ring* two shillings in Debt unto him.

Afterwards, this poor man would be visited with unknown shapes, and this *T. H.* sometimes among them; which would force him away with them, unto unknown Places, where he saw meetings, Feastings, Dancings,; and after his Return, wherein they hurried him a long thro' the Air, he gave Demonstrations to the Neighbours, that he had indeed been so transported. When he was brought unto these Hellish meetings, one of the First things they still did unto him, was to give him a knock on the Back, whereupon he was ever as if Bound with Chains, incapable of Stirring out of the place, till they should Release him. He related, that there often came to him a man, who presented him a *Book*, whereto he would have him set his Hand; promising to him, that he should then have even what he would; and presenting him with all the Delectable Things, persons, and places, that he could imagine. But he refusing to subscribe, the business would end with dreadful Shapes, Noises and Screech- [126] es, which almost scared him out of his witts. Once with the Book, there was a Pen offered him, and an Inkhorn, with Liquor in it, that seemed like Blood: but he never toucht it.

This man did now affirm, that he saw the Prisoner, at several of those Hellish Randezvouzes.

Note, This Woman was one of the most Impudent, Scurrilous, wicked creatures in the world; & she did now throughout her whole Trial, discover her self to be such an one.

Yet when she was asked what she had to say for her self, her Cheef Plea was, *That she had Led a most virtuous and Holy Life!*

IV

**The TRIAL of**  
***ELIZABETH HOW,***  
 at the Court of  
**Oyer and Terminer,**

Held by Adjournment at *Salem,*

***June, 30. 1692.***

I. ***ELIZABETH HOW,*** pleading, *Not Guilty* to the Indictment of Witchcrafts, then charged upon her; the Court, according to the usual proceeding of the Courts in *England*, in such Cases, began with hearing the Depositions of Several Afflicted People, who were grievously Tortured by sensible and evident *Witchcrafts*, and all complained of the Prisoner, as the cause of their Trouble. It was also found that the Sufferers were not able to bear her *Look*, as likewise, that in their greatest Swoons, they distinguished her *Touch* from other peoples, being thereby raised out of them.

And there was other Testimony of people to whom the shape of this *How*, gave trouble Nine or Ten years ago.

II. It has been a most usual thing for the Bewitched persons, at the same time that the *Spectres* representing the *Witches* Troubled them, to be visited with Apparitions of *Ghosts*, pretending to have bin Murdered by the *Witches* then represented. And sometimes the confessions of the witches afterwards acknowledged those very Murders, which these *Apparitions*, charged upon them; altho' they had never heard what Informations had been given by the Sufferers.

There were such Apparitions of Ghosts testified by some of the present sufferers, & the Ghosts affirmed that his *How* had Murdered them: which things were *Fear'd* but not *prov'd*.

III. This *How*, had made some Attempts of Joyning to the Church, at *Ipswich*, several years ago; but she was deny'd an Admission into that Holy So- [128] ciety, partly thro a suspicion of witchcraft, then urged against her. And there now came in Testimony, of Preternatural Mischiefs, presently befalling some that had been Instrumental to Debar her from the Communion, whereupon she was Intruding.

IV. There was a particular Deposition of *Joseph Safford*, That his Wife had conceived an extream Aversion, to this *How*, on the Reports of her Witchcrafts: but *How*, one day taking her by the hand, and saying, *I believe you are Not Ignorant of the great Scandal, that I ly under, by an evil Report Raised upon me*. She immediately, unreasonably, and unperswadeably, even like one Enchanted, began to take this Womans part. *How* being soon after propounded, as desiring an Admission to the Table of the

Lord, some of the pious Bretheren were unsatisfy'd about her. The Elders appointed, a Meeting to hear Matters objected against her; and no Arguments in the world could hinder this Goodwife *Safford*, from going to the Lecture. She did indeed promise with much ado, that she would not go to the Church-Meeting, yet she could not refrain going thither also. *How's* Affayrs there were so Canvased, that she came off rather *Guilty*, than *Cleared*; nevertheless Goodwife *Safford* could not forbear taking her by the hand, and saying, *Tho' you are Condemned before men, you are Justify'd before God*. She was quickly taken in a very strange manner; Frantick, Raving, Raging [129] and Crying out, *Goody How must come into the Church; she is a precious Saint, and tho' she be Condemned before Men, she is Justify'd before God*. So she continued for the space of two or three Hours; and then fell into a Trance. But coming to herself, she cry'd out, *Ha! I was mistaken*, and afterwards again repeated, *Ha! I was mistaken!* Being asked by a stander-by, *Wherein?* She replied, *I thought Goody How, had been a Precious Saint of God, but now I see she is a Witch. She has Bewitched me, and my Child, and we shall never be well, till there be Testimony for her, that she may be taken into the Church*. And *How* said afterwards, that she was very Sorry to see *Safford* at the Church-Meeting mentioned. *Safford* after this, declared herself to be afflicted by the Shape, of *How*; and from that shape she endured many Miseries.

V. *John How* Brother to the Husband of the prisoner testified, that he refusing to accompany the prisoner unto her Examination as was by her desired, immediately some of his Cattle, were Bewitched to Death, Leaping three or four foot high, turning about,

Squeaking, Falling, and Dying, at once; and going to cut off an Ear, for an use, that might as well perhaps have been Omitted, the hand wherein he held his knife, was taken very Numb; and so it remained, and full of Pain for several Dayes; being not well at this very Time. And he suspected this prisoner, for the Author of it.

[130] VI. *Nehemiah Abbot* testify'd, that unusual and mischievous Accidents would befall his cattle, whenever he had any Difference with this Prisoner. Once, Particularly, she wished his Oxe Choaked; and within a Little while, that Oxe was Choaked with a Turnip in his Throat. At another time, refusing to lend his horse, at the Reuest of her Daughter, the horse was in a Preternatural manner abused. And several other Odd Things, of that kind were testify'd.

VII. There came in Testimony, that one good-wife *Sherwin*, upon some Difference with *How*, was Bewitched, and, that she Dy'd, Charging this *How* of having an Hand in her Death. And that other People, had their Barrels of Drink unaccountably mischief'd, spoilt, and spilt, upon their Displeasing of her.

The things in themselves, were Trivial; but there being such a Course of them, it made them the more to be considered. Among others, *Martha Wood* gave her Testimony, that a Little after, her Father had been employ'd in gathering an Account of this *Howes* Conversation, they once and again Lost Great Quantities of Drink, out of their Uessels' in such a manner, as they could ascribe to nothing but Witchcraft. As also, that *How* giving her some Apples, when she had eaten of them, she was taken with a very strange kind of a maze, insomuch that she knew not what she said or did.



VIII. There was Likewise a cluster of Depositions, that one *Isaac Cummings*, refusing to lend his [131] Mare, unto the Husband of this *How*, the mare was within a Day or two, taken in a strange condition. The Beast seemed much Abused; being Bruised, as if she had been Running over the Rocks, and marked where the Bridle went, as if burnt with a Red hot Bridle. Moreover, one using a Pipe of Tobacco for the Cure of the Beast, a blew Flame issued out of her, took hold of her Hair, and not only Spread and Burnt on her, but it also flew upwards towards the Roof of the Barn, and had like to have set the Barn on Fire. And the Mare dy'd very suddenly.

IX. *Timothy Perley* and his Wife, Testify'd, not only that unaccountable Mischiefs, befel their Cattle, upon their having of Differences, with this Prisoner: but also, that they had a Daughter destroy'd by Witchcrafts; which Daughter still charged *How*, as the cause of her Affliction: and it was noted, that she would be struck down, whenever *How* were spoken of. She was often endeavoured to be Thrown into the Fire, and into the Water, in her strange Fits; tho' her Father had Corrected her, for Charging *How* with Bewitching her, yet (as was testify'd by others also) she said, she was sure of it, and must dy standing to it. Accordingly she Charged *How* to the very Death; and said, *Tho' How could Afflict and Torment her Body, yet she could not Hurt her Soul: and, that the Truth of this matter would appear, when she should be Dead and Gone.*

## L2

[132] X. *Francis Lane*, testify'd, That being hired by the Husband of this *How*, to get him a parcel of Posts and Rails, this *Lane* hired *John Pearly* to assist him. This

Prisoner then told *Lane*, that she believed the Posts and Rails would not do, because *John Perley* helped him; but that if he had got them alone, without *John Pearlies* help, they might have done well enough. When *James How* came to receive his Posts and Rails of *Lane*, *How* taking them up by the ends, they, tho' good and sound, yet unaccountably broke off, so that *Lane* was forced to get Thirty or Forty more. And this Prisoner being informed of it, she said, she told him so before; because *Pearly* help'd about them.

XI. Afterwards, there came in the Confessions of several other (penitent) Witches, which affirmed this *How*, to be one of those, who with them had been baptized by the Devil, in the River, at *Newbery-Falls*: before which, he made them there kneel down by the Brink of the River, and Worship him.<sup>461</sup>

## V

The TRIAL of

**MARTHA CARRIER,**

at the Court of

**Oyer and Terminer**

Held by Adjournment at, *Salem*.

*August 2. 1692.*

I. **MARTHA CARRIER**, was Indicted for the Bewitching of certain Persons [133] according to the Form usual in such Cases. Pleading *Not Guilty*, to her Indictment, there were First brought in a considerable number of the Bewitched Persons; who not only made the Court sensible of an horrid *Witchcraft* committed upon them, but also deposed, That it was *Martha Carrier*, or her *Shape*, that Grievously Tormented them, by Biting,

Pricking, Pinching, and Choaking of them. It was further deposed, that while this *Carrier* was on her Examination, before the Magistrates, the Poor People were so Tortured that every one Expected their Death upon the very Spott; but that upon the binding of *Carrier*, they were eased. Moreover, the *Look* of *Carrier*, then lai'd the Afflicted people for Dead; and her *Touch*, if her *Eye* at the same Time were off them, raised them again. Which things were also now seen upon her Trial. And it was Testified, that upon the mention of some having their Necks twisted almost round,<sup>462</sup> by the Shape of this *Carrier*, she replied, *Its no matter, tho' their Necks had been twisted quite off.*

II. Before the Trial of this prisoner, several of her own *Children*, had frankly and fully confessed, not only that they were *Witches* themselves, but that this their *Mother* had made them so. This Confession they made with great shows of Repentance, and with much Demonstration of Truth. The Related Place, Time, Occasion; they gave in account of Journeyes, Meetings, and Mischiefs by them performed; and were very credible in [134] what they said. Nevertheless, this Evidence was not produced against the Prisoner at the Bar, inasmuch as there was other Evidence enough to proceed upon.

III. *Benjamin Abbott*, gave in his Testimony, that last *March* was a twelve month, this *Carrier* was very Angry with him, upon laying out some Land, near her Husbands: Her Expressions in this Anger, were, *That she would stick as close to Abbott, as the Bark stuck to the Tree, and that he should Repent of it, afore seven years came to an end, so as Doctor Prescot should never cure him.* These words were heard by others, besides *Abbott*

himself; who also heard her say, *She would hold his Nose as close to the Grindstone, as ever it was held since his Name was Abbott*. Presently after this, he was taken with a swelling in his Foot, and then with a pain in his side: and exceedingly Tormented. It bred unto a sore, which was Lanced by Doctor *Prescot*, and several Gallons of Corruption ran out of it.<sup>463</sup> For six weeks it continued very bad; and then another sore bred in his Groin, which was also Lanc'd by Doctor *Prescot*. Another Sore then bred in his Groin, which was likewise Cut, and put him to very great Misery. He was brought unto Deaths Door, and so remained until *Carrier* was taken, and carried away by the Constable; from which very day, he began to mend, and so grew better every day, and is well ever since.<sup>464</sup>

*Sarah Abbot* also his Wife testify'd, that her Hus- [135] band was not only all this while Afflicted in his body, but also that strange, extraordinary and unaccountable Calamities befel his Cattel; their Death being such as they could guess at no Natural Reason for.

IV. *Allin Toothaker* testify'd, That *Richard*, the Son of *Martha Carrier*, having some Difference with him, pull'd him down by the Hair of the Head. When he Rose again, he was going to strike at *Richard Carrier*; but fell down flat on his Back to the ground, and had not power to stir hand or foot, until he told *Carrier* he yielded; and then he saw the Shape of *Martha Carrier*, go off his Breast.

This *Toothaker*, had Received a Wound in the Wars; and he now testify'd, that *Martha Carrier* told him, *He should never be Cured*. Just afore the Apprehending of

*Carrier*, he could thrust a knitting Needle into his Wound, four Inches Deep; but presently after her being Siezed, he was thoroughly Healed.

He further testify'd, That when *Carrier* and he sometimes were at variance, she would clap her hands at him, and say, *He should get nothing by it*; Whereupon he several times lost his Cattle, by strange Deaths, whereof no Natural Causes could be given.

V. *John Rogger* also testified, That upon the threatning words of this malicious *Carrier*, his [136] Cattle would be strangely Bewitched; as was more particularly then described.

VI. *Samuel Preston* testify'd, that about two years ago, having some Difference with *Martha Carrier*, he lost a Cow in a strange Preternatural unusual manner; and about a month after this, the said *Carrier*, having again some Difference with him, she told him; *He had Lately lost a Cow, and it should not be long before he Lost another!* which according came to Pass; for he had a Thriving and well-kept Cow, which without any known cause quickly fell down and Dy'd.

VII. *Phebe Chandler* testify'd, that about a Fortnight before the apprehension of *Martha Carrier*, on a Lords-Day, while the Psalm was singing, in the Church, this *Carrier* then took her by the shoulder and shaking her, asked her, *where she Lived?* she made her no Answer, although as *Carrier*, who lived next door to her Fathers House, could not in reason but know who she was. Quickly after this, as she was at several times crossing the Fields, she heard a voice, that she took to be *Martha Carriers*, and it seem'd

as if it was over her Head. The voice told her, *she should within two or three dayes be Poisoned*. Accordingly, within such a Little time, One Half of her Right Hand, became greatly swollen, and very painful; as also part of her Face; whereof she can give no account how it came. It continued very Bad for some dayes; and several [137] times since, she has had a great pain in her Breast; and been so siezed on her Legs, that she has hardly been able to go. She added, that lately, going well to the House of God, *Richard*, the Son of *Martha Carrier*, Look'd very earnestly upon her, and immediately her hand, which had formerly been poisoned, as is abovesaid, began to pain her greatley, and she had a strange Burning at her stomach; but was then struck deaf, so that she could not hear any of the prayer, or singing, till the two or three last words of the Psalme.

VIII. One *Foster*, who confessed her own Share in the Witchcraft for which the Prisoner stood indicted, affirm'd, That she had seen the Prisoner at some of their *Witch-Meetings*, and that it was this *Carrier*, who perswaded her to be a Witch. She confessed, That the Devil carry'd them on a Pole, to a Witch-Meeting; but the Pole broke, and she hanging about *Carriers* Neck, they both fell down, and she then Received an Hurt by the Fall, whereof she was not at this very time Recovered.<sup>465</sup>

IX. One *Lacy*, who likewise confessed her Share in this Witchcraft, now Testify'd, That she and the Prisoner were once Bodily present at a *Witch-meeting* in *Salem-Village*; and that she knew the Prisoner to be a Witch, and to have been at a

Diabolical Sacrament, and that the Prisoner was the undoing of her, and her Children, by En- [138] ticing them into the snare of the Devil.

X. Another *Lacy*, who also Confessed her share in this Witchcraft, now Testify'd, That the Prisoner was at the *Witch-Meeting*, in *Salem Village*, Where they had Bread and Wine Administred unto them.

XI. In the Time of this Prisoners Trial, one *Susanna Sheldon* in open Court had her Hands Unaccountably Ty'd together with a Wheel-band, so fast that without Cutting, it could not be Loosed: It was done by a *Spectre*; and the Sufferer affirm'd, it was the *Prisoners*.

*Memorandum.* This Rampant Hag, *Martha Carrier*, was the Person of whom the Confessions of the Witches, and of her own Children among the rest, agreed, That the Devil had promised her, she should be *Queen of Hell*.<sup>466</sup>

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HAVING thus far done the Service imposed upon me; I will further pursue it, by relating a few of those Matchless, CURIOSITIES, with which the *Witchcraft* now upon us, has entertained us. And I shall Report nothing but with Good Authority, and what I would Invite all my Readers to examine, while tis yet Fresh and New, that if [139] there be found any mistake, it may be as willingly *Retracted*, as it was unwillingly *Committed*.

### The First CURIOSITIE.

I. Tis very Remarkable to see whan an Impious & Impudent *Imitation* of Divine Things, is Apishly affected by the *Devil*, in several of those matters, whereof the Confessions of our *Witches*, and the Afflictions of our *Sufferers* have informed us.

That Reverend and Excellent Person, Mr. *John Higginson*,<sup>467</sup> in My Conversation with him, Once invited me to this Reflection; That the Indians which came from far to settle about *Mexico*, were in their Progress to that Settlement, under a Conduct of the *Devil*, very strangely Emulating what the Blessed God gave to *Israel* in the Wilderness.

*Acosta*,<sup>468</sup> is our Author for it, That the Devil in their Idol *Vitzlipultzli*, governed that mighty Nation. He commanded them to leave their Country, promising to make them *Lords* over all the Provinces possessed by *Six* other Nations of Indians, and give them a Land abounding with all precious things. They went forth, carrying their Idol with them, in a Coffe of *Reeds*, supported by Four of their Principal *Priests*; with whom he still *Discoursed*, in secret; Revealing to them the Successes, and Accidents of their way. He advised them, when to *March*, and where to *Stay*, and without his Commandment they moved not. The first thing they did, wherever they came, was to [140] “Erect a *Tabernacle*, for their False God; which they set always in the midst of their Camp, and there placed the *Ark* upon an *Altar*. When they, Tired with pains, talked of, *proceeding no further* in their Journey, than a certain pleasant Stage, whereto they were arrived, this



Devil in one Night, horribly kill'd them that had started this Talk, by pulling out their Hearts. And so they passed on, till they come to *Mexico*."

The Devil which *then* thus imitated what was in the Church of the *Old Testament*, now among *Us* could Imitate the Affayrs of the Church in the *New*. The *Witches* do say, that they form themselves much after the manner of *Congregational Churches*; and that they have a *Baptism* and a *Supper*, and *Officers* among them, abominably Resembling those of our Lord.

But there are many more of these Bloody *Imitations*, if the Confessions of the *Witches* are to be Received; which I confess, ought to be but with very much of Caution.

What is their striking down with a fierce *Look*? What is their making of the Afflicted *Rise*, with a touch of their *Hand*? What is their Transportation thro' the *Air*? What is their Travelling in *Spirit*, while their Body is cast into a Trance? What is their causing of *Cattle* to run mad and perish? What is their Entring their Names in a *Book*? What is their coming together from all parts, at the Sound of a *Trumpet*? [141] What is their Appearing sometimes Cloathed with *Light* or *Fire* upon them? What is their covering of themselves and their Instruments with *Invisibility*? But a Blasphemous Imitation of certain Things recorded about our Saviour, or His Prophets, or the Saints in the Kingdom of God.<sup>469</sup>

A Second CURIOSITIE.

II. In all the *Witchcraft* which now Grievously Vexes us, I know not whether any thing be more *Unaccountable*, than the Trick which the Witches have to render themselves, and their Tools *Invisible*. *Witchcraft* seems to be the Skill of Applying the *Plastic Spirit* of the World, unto some unlawful purposes, by means of a Confederacy with *Evil Spirits*. Yet one would wonder how the *Evil Spirits* themselves can do some things; especially at *Invisiblizing* of the Grossest Bodies. I can tell the Name of an Ancient Author, who pretends to show the *way*, how a man may come to walk about *Invisible*,<sup>470</sup> and I can tell the Name of another Ancient Author, who pretends to Explode that way.<sup>471</sup> But I will not speak too plainly, Lest I should unawares Poison some of my *Readers*, as the Pious *Hemingius* did one of his *Pupils*, when he only by way of Diversion recited a *Spell*, which, they had said, would cure *Agues*.<sup>472</sup> Thus much I will say; The notion of procuring *Invisibility*, by any *Natural Expedient*, yet known, is, I Be- [142] lieve, a meer PLINYISM;<sup>473</sup> How far it may be obtained by a *Magical Sacrament*, is best known to the Dangerous Knaves that have Try'd it. But our *Witches* do seem to have got the Knack: and this is one of the Things, that make me think, *Witchcraft* will not be fully understood, until the Day when there shall not be one *Witch* in the World.<sup>474</sup>

There are certain people, very *Dogmatical* about these matters; but I'll give them only these Three Bones to Pick.

First, One of our Bewitched people, was cruelly assaulted by a *Spectre*, that, she said, ran at her with a *Spindle*: tho' no body else in the Room, could see either the *Spectre* or the *Spindle*. At last, in her miseries, giving a Snatch at the *Spectre*, she pull'd the *Spindle* away; and it was no sooner got into her hand, but the other people then present,

beheld, that it was indeed a Real, Proper, Iron *Spindle*, belonging they knew, to whom; which when they Lock'd up very safe, it was nevertheless by *Dæmons* unaccountably stole away, to do further mischief.

Secondly. Another of our Bewitched People, was haunted with a most abusive *Spectre*, which came to her, she said, with a *Sheet* about her. After she had undergone a deal of Teaze, from the Annoyances of the *Spectre*, she gave a Violent Snatch at the *Sheet* that was upon it; wherefrom she tore a Corner, which in her Hand Immediately became *Visible* to a Roomful of Spectators; a [143] Palpable Corner of a Sheet. Her Father, who was now holding her, *Catch'd* that he might *Keep* what his Daughter had so strangely Siezed, but the unseen *Spectre* had like to have pull'd his Hand off, by Endeavouring to wrest it from him; however he still held it, and I suppose has it, still to show: it being but a few Hours ago, namely about the Beginning of this *October*, that this Accident happened; in the family of one *Pitman*, at *Manchester*.

Thirdly, A young man, delaying to procure Testimonials for his Parents, who being under confinement on Suspicion of *Witchcraft*, required him to do that Service for them, was quickly pursued with odd Inconveniences. But once above the Rest, an Officer going to put his *Brand* on the Horns of some *Cows*, belonging to these people, which tho' he had Sieze'd for some of their *Debts*, yet he was willing to leave in their Possession, for the Subsistence, of the poor Family: this young man help'd in holding the *Cows* to be thus Branded. The three first *Cows* he held well enough; but when the hot Brand was clap't upon the Fourth, he *winc'd* and *shrunk* at such a rate, as that he could hold the Cow no longer. Being afterwards Examined about it, he Confessed, That at that very Instant

when the *Brand* entred the *Cows Horn*, exactly the like Burning *Brand* was clap'd upon his *own Thigh*; where he has Exposed the Lasting Marks of it, unto such as asked to see them. [144] Unriddle these Things.----*Et Eris mihi magnus Apollo.*<sup>475</sup>

### A Third CURIOSITE.

III. If a Drop of *Innocent Blood* should be shed, in the Prosecution of the *Witchcrafts* among us, how unhappy are we! For which casue, I cannot express my self in better terms, than those of a most Worthy Person, who lives near the present Center of these things. *The Mind of God in these matters, is to be carefully look'd into, with due Circumspection, that Satan deceive us not with his Devices, who transforms himself into an Angel of Light, and may pretend Justice, and yet intend Mischief.*<sup>476</sup> But on the other side, if the Storm of Justice do now fall only on the Heads of those Guilty *Witches* and *Wretches* which have defiled our Land, *How Happy!*

The Execution of some that have lately Dyed, has been immediately attended, with a strange Deliverance of some, that had lain for many years, in a most sad Condition, under, they knew not whose *Evil Hands*. As I am abundantly satisfy'd, That many of the Self-Murders committed here, have been the effects of a Cruel, and Bloody, *Witchcraft* leting fly *Dæmons* upon the miserable *Seneca's*<sup>477</sup> thus, it has been admirable unto me to see, how a Devillish *Witchcraft* sending Devils upon them, has, driven many poor people to *Despair*, and persecuted their minds, with such Buzzes of *Atheism* and *Blasphemy*, as has made them even run *Distracted* [145] *with Terrors*: and some long

*Bow'd down* under such a *Spirit of Infirmary*, have been marvelously Recovered upon the Death of the Witches.

One *Whetford* particularly ten years ago, challenging of *Bridget Bishop* (whose Trial you have had) with Stealing of a Spoon, *Bishop* threatned her very direfully: presently after this, was *Whetford* in the Night, and in her Bed, visited by *Bishop*, with one *Parker*, who Making the Room Light at their coming in, there discoursed of several mischiefs they would inflict upon her. At last, they pull'd her out, and carried her unto the Sea-side, there to *drown* her; but she calling upon God, they left her, tho' not without Expressions of their Fury. From that very Time, this poor *Whetford* was utterly spoilt, and grew, a Tempted, Froward, Crazed sort of a Woman; a vexation to her self, and all about her; and many ways unreasonable. In this Distraction she lay, till those women were Apprehended, by the Authority; *then* she began to mend; and upon their Execution, was presently and perfectly Recovered, from the ten years madness that had been upon her.

#### A Fourth CURIOSITIE.

IV. 'Tis a thousand pitties, that we should permit our Eyes, to be so *Blood-shot* with passions, as to loose the sight of many wonderful Things, wherein the Wisdom and Justice of God, would be Glorify'd. Some of those Things, are the frequent **Apparitions** of Ghosts, whereby many Old **Murders** among us, come to be considered. And, among many Instances of this kind, I will single out one, which concerned a poor man, lately *Prest* unto Death, because of his Refusing to *Plead* for his Life. I shall make an Extract of a

Letter, which was written to my Honourable Friend, [146] *Samuel Sewal*,<sup>478</sup> Esq; by *Mr. Putman*, to this purpose;

“The Last Night my Daughter *Ann*, was grievously Tormented by Witches, Threatning that she should be *Preßed* to Death, before *Giles Cory*.<sup>479</sup> But thro’ the Goodness of a Gracious God, she had at last a little Respite. Whereupon there appeared unto her (she said) a man in a Winding Sheet; who told her that *Giles Cory* had Murdered him, by *Pressing* him to Death with his Feet; but that the Devil there appeared unto him and Covenanted with him, and promised him, *He should not be Hanged*. The Apparition said, God Hardened his Heart; that he should not hearken to the Advice of the Court, and so Dy an easy Death; because as it said, *It must be done to him as he has done to me*. The Apparition also said, That *Giles Cory*, was carry’d to the Court for this, and that the Jury had found the Murder, and that her Father knew the man, and the thing was done before she was born. Now Sir, This is not a little strange to us; that no body should Remember these things, all the while that *Giles Cory* was in Prison, and so often before the Court. For all people now Remember very well, (and the Records of the Court also mention it,) That about Seventeen Years ago, *Giles Cory* kept a man in his House, that was almost a Natural Fool; which Man Dy’d suddenly. A Jury was Impanel’d upon him, among whom was Dr. *Zorobabel Endicot*;<sup>480</sup> who found the man bruised to Death, and having clodders of Blood about his Heart. The Jury, whereof several are yet alive, brought in the man Murdered; but as if some Enchantment had hindred the Prosecution of the Matter, the Court Proceeded not against *Giles Cory*, tho’ it cost him a great deal of Mony to get off. Thus the Story.

[147] *THE Reverend and Worthy Author, having at the Direction of His EXCELLENCY the Governour, so far Obliged the Publick, as to give some Account of the Sufferings brought upon the Countrey by Witchcraft; and of the Trials which have passed upon several Executed for the Same:*

*Upon Perusal thereof, We find the Matters of Fact and Evidence, Truly reported. And a Prospect given, of the, Methods of Conviction, used in the Proceedings of the Court at Salem*

Boston Octob. 11

William Stoughton

1692.

Samuel Sewall.

BUT is *New-England*, the only Christian Countrey, that hath undergone such Diabolical Molestations? No, there are other Good people, that have in this way been harrassed; but none in Circumstances more like to *Ours*, than the people of God, in *Sweedland*.<sup>481</sup> The story is a very Famous one; and it comes to Speak English by the Acute Pen of the Excellent and Renowned Dr. *Horneck*.<sup>482</sup> I shall only single out a few of the more Memorable passages therein Occurring; and where it agrees with what happened among ourselves, my Reader shall understand, by my inserting a Word of every such thing in **Black Letter**.<sup>483</sup>

I. It was in the Year 1669. and 1670. That at *Mohra* in *Sweedland*, the **Devils** by the help of **Witches**, committed a most horrible outrage. Among the other Instances of Hellish Tyranny there exercised, One was, That Hundreds of their Children, were usually

in the Night fetcht from their *Lodgings*, to a Diabolical Rendezvouz, at a place they called, *Blockula*,<sup>484</sup> where the Monsters that so Spirited them, **Tempted** them all manner of Ways to [148] **Associate** with them. Yea, such was the perillous Growth of this *Witchcraft*, that Persons of Quality began to send their Children into other Countries to avoid it.

**II.** The Inhabitants had earnestly sought God by **Prayer**; and **Yet** their Affliction **Continued**.<sup>485</sup> Whereupon **Judges** had a Special **Commission**,<sup>486</sup> to find and root out the Hellish Crew; and the rather, because another County in the Kingdom, which had been so molested, was Delivered upon the Execution of the *Witches*.

**III.** The **Examination**,<sup>487</sup> was begun with a Day of **humiliation**, appointed by Authority.<sup>488</sup> Whereupon the Commissioners **Consulting**, how they might resist such a Dangerous Flood, the **Suffering Children**, were first Examined; and tho' they were Questioned **One** by **One** apart, yet their **Declarations All Agreed**. The **Witches** Accus'd in these Declarations, were then Examined; and tho' at first they obstinately **Denied**, yet at length many of them Ingenuously **Confessed** the Truth of what the Children had said; owning with Tears, that the **Devil**, whom they call'd, *Loeyta*, had **Stopt** their **Mouths**,<sup>489</sup> but he being now **Gone** from them, they could **No Longer Conceal** the Business. The things by them **Acknowledged**, most wonderfully **Agreed** with what other Witches in other places had Confessed.

**IV.** They Confessed, That they did use to **Call upon the Devil**, who thereupon would **Carry** them away, over the Tops of Houses, to a Green Meddow, where they gave



themselves unto him. Only one of them said, That sometimes the *Devil* only took away her **Strength**, Leaving her **Body** on the Ground; but she went at other times in **Body** too.

V. Their manner was to come into the **Chambers** of people, and fetch away their Children upon Beasts, of the Devils providing: promising **Fine Clothes** and other [149] Fine Things unto them, to Inveagle them. They said, They never had power to do thus, till of Late; but now the Devil did **Plague** and **Beat** them, if they did not gratifie him, in this piece of Mischief. They said, They made use of all sorts of **Instruments** in their Journeys! of **Men**, of **Beasts**, of **Horses**; the *Men* they commonly laid asleep at the place, whereto they Rode them; & if the Children mentioned the **Names** of them that Stole them away, they were miserably **Scourged** for it, until some of them were killed. The **Judges** found the **Marks** of the Lashes on some of them; but the Witches said, **They would Quickly vanish**. Moreover the Children would be in **Strange Fits**, after they were brought home, from these Transportations.

VI. The **First Thing**, they said, they were to do at *Blockula*, was to **Give** **Themselves** unto the Devil, and **Swear** that they would serve him. Hereupon, they **Cut** **their Fingers**, and with **Blood**, writ their **Names** in his **Book**. And he also caused them to be **Baptised** by such **Priests**, as he had, in this Horrid Company. In **some** of them, the **Mark** of the **Cut Finger** was to be found. They said, That the Devil gave **Meat** and **Drink**, as to *Them*, so to the Children they brought with them: that afterwards their Custome was to **Dance** before him; and **Swear** and **Curse** most horribly. They said, That the Devil show'd them a great, Frightful, Cruel *Dragon*, telling them, **If they Confessed any Thing**, he would let loose that Great Devil upon them. They added, That the Devil had a **Church**;

and that when the **Judges** were coming, he told them, **we would kill them all**; and that some of them had **Attempted to Murder the Judges** but **Could Not**.

VII. Some of the **Children**, talked much of a **White Angel**,<sup>490</sup> which did use to **Forbid** them, what the Devil [150] had Bid them to do; and **Assure** them that these Doings would **Not Last Long**; but that what had been done was permitted for the wickedness of the People. This **White Angel**, would sometimes rescue the Children, from **Going in**, with the Witches.<sup>491</sup>

VIII. The Witches confessed many mischiefs done by them; declaring with what kind of **Enchanted Tools**, they did their Mischiefs. They sought especially to **Kill the Minister**, of *Elfdale*,<sup>492</sup> but could not. But some of them said, That such as they wounded, would **Be recovered**, upon or before their Execution.

IX. The **Judges** would fain have seen them show some of their **Tricks**; but they Unanimously Declared, That **Since they had Confessed**, all, they found all their **Witchcraft gone**; and the Devil then **Appeared very Terrible** unto them, threatening with and **Iron Fork**, to thrust them into a Burning Pit, if they persisited in their Confession.

X. There were discovered no less than *Threescore and ten* Witches: in One Village, **Three and Twenty** of which **Freely Confessing** their Crimes,<sup>493</sup> were condemned to Dy. The rest, (**One** pretending she was with **Child**)<sup>494</sup> were sent to *Fahluna*, where most of them were afterwards executed. Fifteen Children, which confessed themselves engaged in this Witchery, Dyed as the Rest. Six and Thirty of them, between Nine and Sixteen years of Age, who had been less guilty, were forced to run the Gantlet, and be lashed on their hands, once a Week, for a year together. Twenty more who had less

inclination to these Infernal enterprises, were lashed with Rods upon their Hands for three Sundays together, at the Church-Door. The number of the seduced Children, was about Three Hundred. This course, together with Weekly ~~Prayers~~, in all the Churches thro' the Kingdome, issued in the Deliverance of the Countrey.

[151] XI. The most Accomplished Dr. *Horneck* inserts a most wise caution, in his preface to this Narrative; saies he, *There is no Publick Calamity, but some Ill people, will serve themselves of the sad providence, and make use of it for their own Ends; as Thieves, when an House or Town is on Fire, will steal what they can.* And he mentions a Remarkable Story of a Young Woman, at *Stockholm*, in the year, 1676. Who accused her own Mother of being a Witch; and swore positively, that she had carried her away in the Night. The poor Woman was burnt upon it: professing her Innocency to the last. But tho' she had been an Ill Woman, yet it afterwards prov'd, that she was not *such* an one; for her Daughter came to the Judges, with hideous Lamentations, Confessing, That she had wronged her Mother, out of a wicked spite against her; whereupon the Judges gave order for her Execution too.

But, so much of these things; And, now, *Lord, make these Labours of thy Servant, Profitable to thy People!* {FSTLE}

## Errata

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[n.p.] **Errata.**<sup>495</sup>

Page 3. l. *Last* r. as, if p. 6. l. 22. f. four. r. five. p. 19. l. 3. r. Aluinious. p. 52. l. 20. r. these be. p. 57. l. 21. r. whereof. p. 67. l. 14. r. Severely. p. 80. l. 16. r. over. The Discourse on, *The Devil Discovered* is wrong paged, after p. 8. (17) being put for (9)

The

[(1)] {N} THE  
**Devil Discovered**

2. Cor. II. II.

*We are not Ignorant of His DEVICES.*<sup>496</sup>

Our Blessed Saviour has blessed us, with a counsel, as Wholsome and as Needful,  
 as any that can be given us, in Math. 26. 41. *Watch and Pray, that yee Enter not into*

*Temptation*. As there is a Tempting *Flesh*, and a Tempting *World*, which would seduce us from Our Obedience to the Laws of God, so there is a Busy *Devil*, who is by way of Eminency called, *The Tempter*;<sup>497</sup> because by him, the Temptations of the *Flesh* and the *World* are managed<sup>498</sup>.

It is not *One Devil* alone, that has Cunning or Power enough to apply the *Multitudes of Temptations*, whereby Mankind is daily diverted from the Service of God; No, the *High Places*<sup>499</sup> of Our Air, are Swarming full of those *Wicked Spirits*,<sup>500</sup> whose Temptations trouble us; they are so many, that it seems, no less than a *Legion*, or more than Twelve Thousands may be spared, for the Vexation of [2] one miserable man<sup>501</sup>. But because those Apostate Angels, are all *United*, under one Infernal Monarch, in the Designs of Mischief, 'tis in the Singular Number, that they are spoken of. Now, the *Devil*, whose Malice and Envy, prompts him to do what he can, that *We* may be as Unhappy as himself, do's ordinarily use more *Fraud*, than *Force*, in his assaulting of us; he that assail'd our First Parents, *in a Serpent*,<sup>502</sup> will still Act *Like a Serpent*, rather than a *Lion*, in prosecuting of his wicked purposes upon us, and for us to guard against the *Wiles* of the *Wicked One*,<sup>503</sup> is one of the greatest cares, with which our God ha's charged us.

We are all of us liable to various *Temptations* every day, whereby if we are carried aside from the strait *Paths of Righteousness*,<sup>504</sup> we get all sorts of wounds unto ourselves. Of *Temptation*, I may say, as the Wise Man said, of *Mortality*; *There is no discharge from that War*.<sup>505</sup> The *Devil* fell hard upon both *Adams*,<sup>506</sup> nor may any among the Children of both, imagine to be excused. The *Son* of God Himself, had this *Dog* of

Hell, barking at Him; and much more may the Children of *Men*, look to be thus Visited; indeed, there is hardly any *Temptation*, but what is, *Common to Man*. When I was considering, how to spend one Hour in Raising a most Effectual & Profitable *Breast-Work*,<sup>507</sup> against the Inroads of this Enemy, I perceived it would be done, by a short answer to this

### C A S E

*What are those Usual Methods of Temptation, with which the Powers of Darkness do assault the Children of Men?*

The *Corinthians*, having upon the Apostles Direction, Excommunicated one of their Society, who had married [3] his Mother-in law,<sup>508</sup> and this, as it is thought, while his own Father was Living too; the Apostle encourages them to Re-admit that man, upon his very deep and sharp *Repentance*. He gives divers Reasons of his propounding this unto them; whereof one is, *Lest Satan should get advantage of them*;<sup>509</sup> for, had the man miscarried, under any Rigour of the Sentence continued upon him, after his *Repentance*, 'tis well is the Church it self had not quickly fallen to pieces thereupon; be sure, the Success of the Gospel had been more than a little Incommoded. The Apostle upon this Occasion, intimates, That *Satan* has his *Devices*; by which word are meant, Artifices or Contrivances used for the *Deceiving* of those that are Treated with them. Well, But what shall we do that we may come to this *Corinthian Attainment*, *We are not Ignorant of Satans Devices?* [*Non cuivis homini Contingit!*]<sup>510</sup>

Truly, The Devil has *Mille Nocendi Artes*;<sup>511</sup> and it will be impossible for us, to run over all the *Stratagems* and *Policies* of our Adversary. I shall only attempt a few

Observations upon the *Temptations* of our Lord Jesus Christ: who was *Tempted in all things like unto us, except in our Sins*.<sup>512</sup> When we read the *Temptations* of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Fourth Chapter of *Matthew*, There, Thence, you will understand, what was once counted so difficult; Even, *The way of a Serpent upon the Rock*.<sup>513</sup> There are certain Ancient and Famous *Methods* which the Devil in his *Temptations*, does mostly accustom himself unto; which is not so much from any Barrenness, or Sluggishness in the Devil, but because he has had the Encouragement of a, *probatum est*, upon those horrid *Methods*. How did the Devil assault the First *Adam*? It was with *Temptations* drawn from *Pleasure*, and *Profit*, and *Honour*, which, as the Apostle notes, in I Joh. 2. 16. are, *All that is in the World*. With the very same *Temptations* it was, that he fell upon the Second *Adam* too. Now, in those *Temptations*, you will see the more *Usual Methods*, whereby the Devil would be Ensnaring of us; and I beseech you to attend unto the following Admonitions, as those *Warnings* of God, which the Lives of your Souls depend upon your taking of.

There were especially Three *Remarkable Assaults of Temptations*, which the Devil it seems, visibly made upon our Lord; after he had been more Invisibly for Forty Days together *Tempting* of that Holy One; and we may make a few *Distinct Remarks* upon them all.

§. The first of our Lords three *Temptations* is thus related, in Mat. 4.3. *He was an Hungry; and when the Tempter came to Him, he said, If thou be the son of God, Command that these Stones be made Bread*.<sup>514</sup>

From whence, take these *Remarks*.



I. The Devil will ordinarily make our *Conditions*, to be the Advantages of his *Temptations*. When our Lord was *Hungry*, then, *Bread! Bread!* shall be all the Cry of his Temptation; the Devil puts him upon a wrong step, for the getting of *Bread*. There is no Condition, but what has indeed some *Hunger* accompanying of it; and the Devil marks what it is, that we are *Hungry* for. One man's Condition makes him *Hunger* for Preferments, or Employments; another mans makes him *Hunger* for Cash, or Land, or Trade; another mans makes him *Hunger* for Merriments, or Diversions: And the Condition of every Afflicted Man, makes him *Hunger* with Impatience for Deliverance. Now the Devil will be sure to suit his Perswasions with our *Conditions*. When he has our *Condition* to speak with him, and for him, then thinks he, *I am sure this man will now hearken to my Proposals!* Hence, if men are in *Prosperity*, the Devil will Tempt them to [5] Forgetfulness of God; if they are in *Adversity*, he will Tempt them to Murmuring at God; in all the Expressions of those Impieties. Wise *Agur*<sup>515</sup> was aware of this; in *Prov.* 30 9. says he, If a man be *Full*, he shall be Tempted, *To Deny God and say, Who is the Lord?*<sup>516</sup> If a man be *Poor*, he shall be Tempted, *To Steal, and take the Name of God in vain.*<sup>517</sup> The Devil will Talk *suitably*. If you ponder your *Conditions*, you may expect you shall be tempted agreeably thereunto.

II. The Devil does often manage his *Temptations*, by urging of our *Necessities*. Our Lord, was thus by the Devil bawl'd<sup>518</sup> upon; *You want Bread; and you'l Starve, if in my way you get it not.*<sup>519</sup> The Devil will show some Forbidden Thing unto us, and plead

concerning it, as of *Bread* we use to say, *It must be had*. *Necessity* has a wonderful Compulsion in it. You may see what *Necessity* will do, if you read in Deut. 28. 56. *The Tender and the Delicate Woman among you, her eye shall be evil towards the Children that she shall Bear, for she shall eat them for want of all Things.*<sup>520</sup> The Devil will perswade us that there is a *Necessity* of our doing what he does propound unto us; and then tho' the *Laws* of God about us were so many *Walls* of Stone, yet we shall break through them all. That little Inconvenience, of our coming to Beg our *Bread*, O what a fearful Representation does the Devil make of it! and when once the Devil feares us to think of a sinful thing, *It must be done*, we soon come to think, *It may be done.*<sup>521</sup> When the Devil has frightened us, into an Apprehension, that it is a *Needful* thing which we are prompted unto, he presently Engages all the Faculties of our Souls, to prove, that it may be a *Lawful* one. The Devil told *Esau*, *You'l Dy if you don't Sell your Birthright;*<sup>522</sup> the Devil told *Aaron*, *You'l pull all the People about your ears, if you do not countenance their Superstitions;*<sup>523</sup> and then they comply'd immediately. Yea, sometimes, if the Devil do but *Feign* a *Necessity*, he does thereby *Gain* the Hearts of Men; he did but *Feign* a *Need*, when he told *Saul*, *The Cattel must be Spared,*, [emendation needed] *and the Sacrifice must be precipitated;*<sup>524</sup> and he does but *Feign* a *Need*, when he tells many a man, *If you do no Servile work on the Sabbath-day, and if you don't Rob God of His Evening, you'l never subsist in the World.*<sup>525</sup> All the Denials of God, in the world, use to be from this Fallacy Impos'd upon us. It never can be *Neceßary* for us to violate any Negative Commandment in the Law of our God; where God says, *Thou shalt not*, we cannot upon any pretence Reply, *I must*. But the Devil will put a most

formidable and astonishing face of *Necessity* upon many of those, *Abominable Things* which are hateful to the Soul of God.<sup>526</sup> He'll say nothing to us about *The One Thing Needful*;<sup>527</sup> but the petite and the sorry *Need-nots*<sup>528</sup> of this world, he'l set off with most bloody Colours of *Necessity*. He will not say, '*Tis neceßary for you to maintain the Favour of your God, and secure the Welfare of your Soul*;<sup>529</sup> but he'l say, '*Tis Neceßary for you to keep in with your Neighbours; and that you and yours may have a Good Living among them*.'<sup>530</sup>

**III.** The Divel does insinuate his most Horrible *Temptations*, with pretence, of much *Friendship* and *Kindness* for us. He seemed very unwilling that our Lord should want any thing that might be comfortable for him; but he was a *Divel* still! The *Divel* flatters our Mother *Eve*,<sup>531</sup> as if he was desirous to make her more Happy than her Maker did; but there was the *Devil* in that flattery. *Sub Amici fallere Nomen*;<sup>532</sup> ----to Salute men with profers to do all [7] manner of Service for them; and at the same time to Stab them as *Joab* did *Abner* of old;<sup>533</sup> this is just like the *Devil*; and the *Devil* truly has many Children that Imitate him in it. Some very Affectionate Things were spoken once unto our Lord; *Lord, be it far from thee, that thou shouldest suffer any Trouble*!<sup>534</sup> but our Lords Answer was, in Math. 16. 23. *Get thee behind me, Satan*. The Devil will say to a man, *I would have thee to Consult thy own Interest, and I would have Trouble to be far from thee*.<sup>535</sup> He speaks these *Fair Things*, by the Mouths of our professed Friends unto us, as he did by the Tongue of a Speckled Snake unto our Deluded Parents at the first.

But all this while, tis a Direction that ha's been wisely given us; *When he speaks fair, Believe him not; for there are Seven Aboninations in his Heart.*<sup>536</sup>

**IV.** Things in themselves *Allowable* and *Convenient*, are oftentimes turned into sore *Temptations* by the Devil. He press'd our Lord unto the making of *Bread*; Why, that very thing was afterwards done by our Lord, in the Miracles of the *Loaves*;<sup>537</sup> and yet it is now a motion of the *Devil*, *Pray, make thy self a Little Bread*. The Devil will frequently put men by, from the doing of a *Seasonable Duty*; but how? truly by putting us upon another *Duty*, which may be at that juncture a most *Unseasonable* Thing. It is said in Eccl. 8. 5. *A Wise mans heart discerns both Time and Judgment*. The *Ill-Timing* of Good Things, is One of the chief Intregues, which the Devil has to Prosecute. The Devil himself, will Egg us on to many a *Duty*; and why so? but because at that very Time a more proper and Useful Duty, will have a *Supersedes*<sup>538</sup> given thereunto. And, thus there are many Things, whereof we can say, though no more than this, yet so much as this, *They are Lawful ones*; by which [8] Lawful Things ---- *Perimus Omnes*. Where shall we find that the Devil ha's Laid our most fatal *Snares*? Truly our Snares are on the *Bed*, where it is Lawful for us to Sleep; at the *Board*, where it is *Lawful* for us to Sit; in the *Cups*, where 'tis Lawful to Drink; and in the *Shops*, where we have *Lawful* Business to do. The *Devil* will decoye us, unto the utmost Edge of the *Liberty* that is *Lawful* for us; and then one Little push, hurries us into a Transgression against the Lord. And the *Devil* by Inviting us to a *Lawful* Thing, at a wrong Time for it, Layes us under further Entanglement of Guilt before God. Tis *Lawful* for people to use Recreations; but in the

Evening of the *Lords Day*, or the Morning of any Day, how Ensnaring are they! the *Devil* then too commonly bears part in the Sport. If *Promiscuous Dancing*<sup>539</sup> were Lawful; though almost all the Christian Churches in the World, have made a Scandal of it; yet for persons to go presently from a *Sermon* to a *Dance*, is to do a thing, which Doubtless the *Devil* makes good Earnings of.

V. To *Distrust* Gods Providence and Protection, is one of the Worst Things, into which the Devil by his *Temptations* would be hurrying of us. He would fain have driven our Lord unto a Suspicion of Gods care about Him; said the Devil, *You may Dy for Lack of Bread*,<sup>540</sup> *if you not Look better after your self, than God is like to do for you.*<sup>541</sup> It is an usual Thing for Persons to despair of Gods *Fatherly Care* Concerning them.; they torture themselves with distracting and amazing Fears that they shall come to want before they dy; Yet they e'vn say with *Jonas*, in Chap. 2. 4. *I am cast out of the Sight of God*; He won't look after me! But it is the *Devil* that is the Author of all such Melancholly [9] {O} Suggestions in the minds of men. It is a Thought that often raises a Fever in the Hearts of *Married* Persons, when Charges grow upon them; *God will never be able in the way of my Calling, to feed and cloath all my Little Folks.* It is a Thought with which *Aged* Persons are often tormented, *Tho' God has all my Dayes hitherto supplied me, yet I shall be pinch'd with Straits before I come to my Journeys end.*<sup>542</sup> 'Tis a malicious Devil that raises these *Evil Surmisings* in the Hearts of men. And sometimes a Distemper of Body affords a Lodging for the Devil, from whence he shoots the cruel Bombs of such *Fiery Thoughts* into the minds of many other persons. With such Thoughts does the Devil

choose to persecute us; because thereby we come to *Forfeit* what we *Question*. We *Question* the Care of God, and so we *Forfeit* it, until perhaps the Devil do utterly *Drown* us in *Perdition*. Our God says, *Trust in the Lord, and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed.*<sup>543</sup> But the Devil says, *Don't you Trust in God; Be afraid that you shall not be fed;*<sup>544</sup> and thus he hinders men from the *Doing of Good*.

VI. There is nothing more Frequent in the *Temptations* of the Devil, then for our *Adoption* to be doubted, because of our *Affliction*. When our Lord was in his Penury, then says the Devil, *If thou be the Son of God;*<sup>545</sup> he now makes an *If*, of it; *What? the Son of God, and yet not be able to Command a Bit of Bread!* Thus, when we are in very Afflictive Circumstances, this will be the Devils Inference, *Thou art not a Child of God*. The Bible says in Heb. 12. 7. *If you are Chastened, it is a shrow'd*<sup>546</sup> *sign that you can't be Children.*<sup>547</sup> Since he can't Rob us of our *Grace*, he would Rob us of our *Joy*; and therefore having Accused us unto [10] {O1} God, he then Accuses God unto us. When *Israel* was weak and faint in the Wilderness, then did *Amalek* set upon them;<sup>548</sup> just so, does the Devil set upon the People of God, when their Losses, their Crosses, their Exercises have Enfeebled their Souls within them; and what says the *Devil*? E'en the same that was mutter'd in the Ear of the Afflicted *Job*, *Is not this the Uprightness of thy Ways? Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being Innocent?*<sup>549</sup> *If thou wer't a Child of God, He would never follow thee, with such Testimonies of his Indignation*. This is the *Logic* of the *Devil*; and he thus interrupts that patience, and that Chearfulness wherewith we should *Suffer the Will of God.*<sup>550</sup>

**VII.** To Dispute the Divine Original and Authority of *Gods Word*, is not the least of those *Temptations* with which the Devil Troubles us. God from Heaven, had newly said unto our Lord, *This is my beloved Son*;<sup>551</sup> but now the Devil would have him to make a Dispute of it, *If thou be the Son of God*. The Devil durst not be so Impudent, and Brasen-faced, as to bid men use *Pharaohs* Language, *Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?*<sup>552</sup> But he will whisper into our Ears, what he did unto our Mother *Eve* of old, *It is not the Lord, that hath spoken, what you call his Word.*<sup>553</sup> The Devil would have men say unto the *Scripture*, what they said unto the *Prophet*, in Jer. 43. 2. *Thou speakest falsely; the Lord our God hath not sent thee to speak what thou sayst unto us*; and he would fain have secret and cursed Misgivings in our Hearts, *That things are not altogether so as the Scripture has represented them*. The Devil would with all his Heart, make one huge Bonfire of all the Bibles in the World; and he has got millions of Persecutors to assist him in the Suppression of that Miraculous Book. It was the Devil once in the Tongue of a Papist that cry'd out, *A Plague on this Bible; this 'tis that* [11] {O2} *does all our mischief.*<sup>554</sup> But because he can't *Suppress* this Book, he sets himself, to *Disgrace* it all that he can. Altho' the *Scripture* carries its own *Evidence* with it, and be all over, so pure, so great, so true, and so powerful, that it is impossible it should proceed from any but God alone; yet the Devil would gladly bring some Discredit upon it, as if it were but some *Humane Contrivance*;<sup>555</sup> Of nothing, is the Devil more desirous, than this; That we should not count, *Christ* so precious, *Heaven* so Glorious, *Hell* so Dreadful, and *Sin* so odious, as the *Scripture* has declared it.

§ The Second of our Lords Three Temptations, is related after this manner, In  
 Mat. 4. 5, 6. *Then the Devil taketh him up, into the Holy City, and setteth him upon a  
 Pinnacle of the Temple; and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thy self down;  
 For it is written, He shall give his Angels charge concerning thee, and in thy Hands, they  
 shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy Foot against a Stone.*

From whence take these *Remarks*.

I. The places of the greatest *Holiness* will not secure us from Annoyance by the  
*Temptations* of the Devil, to the greatest wickedness. When our Lord was in the *Holy  
 City*, the Devil fell upon him there. Indeed, there is now no proper *Holiness* of *Places* in  
 our Days; the Signs and Means of Gods more special Presence are not under the Gospel,  
 ty'd unto any certain *places*: Nevertheless there are *places*, where we use to enjoy much  
 of God; and where altho' God visit not the *Persons* for the sake of the *Places*, yet he  
 visits the *Places* for the sake of the *Persons*. But, I am to tell you, that the Devil will visit  
 those *Places* and the best *Persons* there. [12] No *Place*, that I know of, has got such a  
*Spell* upon it, as will always keep the Devil out. The *Meeting-House* wherein we  
 Assemble for the Worship of God, is filled with many Holy People, and many Holy  
 Concerns continually; but if our Eyes were so refined as the Servant of the Prophet had  
 his of old, I suppose we should now see a Throng of *Devils* in this very place. The  
 Apostle has intimated, that *Angels* come in among us;<sup>556</sup> there are *Angels* it seems, that



hark, how I *Preach*, and how you *Hear*, at this Hour. And our own sad Experience is enough to intimate, That the *Devils* are likewise Rendevouzing here. It is Reported, in *Job* 1. 5. *When the Sons of God, came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them.* When we are in our Church-Assemblies, O how many *Devils*, do you imagine, croud in among us! There is a *Devil* that rocques one to Sleep; there is a *Devil* that makes another to be thinking of, he scarce knows what himself; and there is a *Devil*, that makes another, to be pleasing himself with wanton and wicked Speculations. It is also possible, that we have our *Closets*, or our *Studies*, gloriously perfumed with Devotions every day; but alas, can we shut the Devil out of them? No, Let us go where we will, we shall still find a *Devil* nigh unto us. Onely, when we come to Heaven, we shall be out of his Reach for ever; *O thou foul Devil; we are going where thou canst not come!* He was hissed out of *Paradise*, and shall never enter it any more. Yea, more than so, when the *New Jerusalem* comes down into the *High Places* of our Air, from whence the Devil shall then be Banished, there shall be no *Devil* within the Walls of that *Holy City*. Amen, Even so, Lord Jesus, Come quickly!

**II.** Any other Acknowledgements of the Lord Jesus [13] Christ, will be permitted by the *Temptations* of the Devil, provided those Acknowledgements of Him, which are *True* and *Full*, may be thereby prevented. What was it, that the Devil hurried our Lord Jesus Christ unto the Top of the *Temple* for? Surely it could not meerly be to find *Precipices*; any part of the Wilderness would have afforded *Them*. No, it was rather to have *Spectators*. And why so? Why, the carnal Jews had an Expectation among them;

that *Elias* was to fly from Heaven to the Temple; and the Devil seems willing, that our Lord should be cry'd up for *Elias*, among the giddy multitude; or any thing in the World, tho' never so considerable otherwise, rather than to be Received as, *The Christ of God*. The *Devil* will allow his Followers to think very highly of the Lord Jesus Christ; O but he is very lothe to have them think, *All*. We read in Col. 1. 19. *It has pleased the Father, that in Him there should all Fulness dwell*. But it is pleasing to the *Devil*, that we Deny something of the Immense *Fullness*, which is in our Lord. The *Devil* would confess to our Lord, *Thou art the Holy One of God!* But then he claps in, *Thou art Jesus of Nazareth*; which was to conceal our Lords being, *Jesus of Bethlehem*, and so, his being, *The True Messiah*. All the *Heresies*, and all the *Persecutions*, that ever plagued the Church of God, have still been, to strike at some *Glory* of our Lord Jesus Christ. A CHRIST Entirely Acknowledged, will save the Souls of them that so Acknowledge Him; but, says the Devil, *Whatever I do, I must not give way to that*. As they say, the Devil makes *Witches* unable to utter all the *Lords Prayer*, or some such System of Religion, without some Depravations of it; thus the Devil will consent that we may make a very large Confession of the Lord Jesus Christ; only he will have us to deprave it, at least in some one Important Article. Some one *Honour*, some one [14] *Office*, and some one *Ordinance* of the Lord Jesus Christ, must be always left unacknowledged, by those that will do as the Devil would have them.

**III.** *High Stations* in the Church of God, lay men open to violent and peculiar *Temptations* of the Devil. When Our Lord was upon the *Pinacle*, that is, not the *Fane*, or

*Spire* but the *Battlements* of the *Temple*,<sup>557</sup> there did the Devil pester him, with singular Molestations, and he therein, seems to intend an Entanglement for the Jews, as well as for Our Lord. Believe me, they that *Stand High*, cannot *Stand safe*. The Devil is a *Nimrod*,<sup>558</sup> a mighty Hunter; and common or little Game, will not serve his Turn: he is a *Leviathan*, of whom we may say, as in Job. 41. 34. *He beholds all high Things*. Men of *High* Attainments, and Men of *High* Employments, in the Church of God, must look, like *Peter* to be more *Sifted*, and like *Paul*, to be more *Buffeted* than other Men. *Feriant Summos Fulmina Montes*<sup>559</sup> ----The Devil can raise a Storm, when God permitteth it, but as for those Men that stand near Heaven, the Devil will attack them with his most cruel storms of Thunder and Lightning. It was said, *Let him that stands take heed*,<sup>560</sup> but we may say, *They that stand most high, have cause to take most Heed*. The Devil is a *Goliath*; and when he finds a *Champion*,<sup>561</sup> he'll be sure most fiercely to Combate such a man. He is for, *Killing many Birds with one Stone*,<sup>562</sup> and he knows that he shall hinder a world of *Good*, and produce a world of *Ill*, if once he can bring a man *Eminently Stationed* into his Toyls. Hence 'tis that the *Ministers* of God, are more dogg'd by the Devil, than other persons are. Especially such *Ministers*, as move in the highest Orb of Serviceableness; and most of all such *Ministers* as have spent many years in Laudable Endeavours to be Serviceable; Those Ministers are the [15] *Stars* of Heaven, at which the *Tayl* of the *Dragon*, will give the most sweeping and most stinging strokes; the Devil will find that for them, that shall make them *Walk softly* all their Days. These are the men, that have creepled,<sup>563</sup> and vexed the *Devil* more than other men; for which the *Devil* has an old Quarrel with them. O Neighbours, Little do you think, what black Dayes of Mourning,

and Fasting, and Praying before the Lord, a Raging Devil do's fill the lives of such *Men of God* withal.

IV. The devil will make a deceitful and unfaithful use of the *Scriptures* to make his *Temptations* forceable. When the Devil Solicited our Lord, unto an evil thing, he quoted the *Ninety first* Psalm unto him, tho' indeed he fallaciously clip'd it, and maim'd it, of one clause very material in it.<sup>564</sup> O never do's the Devil make such dangerous *Papæes* at us, as when he does wrest our *own Sword* out of our Hands, and push *That* upon us. We have to defend us, that Weapon in *Eph. 6. 16. The Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*; but when the Devil has that very Weapon to fight us with, he makes terrible work of it. When the Devil would poyson men with false *Doctrines*, he'l quote *Scriptures* for them; a *Quaker* himself, will have the First Chapter of *John* always in his mouth.<sup>565</sup> When the Devil would perswade men to vile *Actions*, he'l quote *Scriptures* for them; he'l encourage men to go on in Sin, by showing them, where 'tis said, *The Lord is Ready to Pardon*.<sup>566</sup> I say this, The One Story of *Dauids* Fall, in the *Scripture*, has been made by the Devil, an Engine for the Damnation of many millions.<sup>567</sup> The Devil will fright men from doing those things, that are, *The Things of their Peace*;<sup>568</sup> but How? He'l turn a *Scripture* into a *Scare-crow* for them. The Devil will fright them from all [16] constant Prayer to God, by quoting that *Scripture, The Sacrifice of the Wicked, is an Abomination to the Lord*;<sup>569</sup> the Devil will fright them from the Holy Supper of God, by quoting that *Scripture, He that Eats and Drinks unworthily, Eats and Drinks Damnation to himself*.<sup>570</sup> And thus the Devil will by some Abused *Scripture*, Terrify the Children of

God; the Scripture is written, as we are told, *For our Comfort*;<sup>571</sup> but it is quoted by the Devil, *For our Terror*. How many Godly Souls have been cast into sinful *Doubts* and *Fears*, by the Devils foolish glosses upon that Scripture, *He that Doubts is Damned*;<sup>572</sup> and that, *The Fearful shall have their portion in the Burning Lake*.<sup>573</sup> The Devil sometimes has play'd the *Preacher*, but I say, *Beware all silly Souls, when such a Fool is Preaching*.

V. Grievous and Pulling<sup>574</sup> Hurries to *Self-Murder* are none of the smallest outrages, which the Devil in his *Temptations* commits upon us.<sup>575</sup> Why, did the Devil say to Our Lord, *Cast thy self down*, but in hopes that Our Lord would have broke his Bones, in the fall? The Devil is an *Old Murtherer*;<sup>576</sup> and he loves to *Murder* men; but no *Murder* gives him so much satisfaction, as that which at his Instigation, Men perpetrate upon themselves. We see that such as are *Bewitched* and *Poßeßed* by the devil, do quickly lay violent hands upon themselves, if they be not watched continually, and we see that when persons have begun that *Unnatural* business of *killing themselves*, there is a *Preternatural* Stupendous Prodigious Assistance, by the devil given thereunto. When people are going to Harm themselves, we call upon them, like those to the Jailor, in Acts. 16. 28[.] *Do thy self no harm*!<sup>577</sup> And we have this Argument for it, *It is the Devil that is dragging of you to this mischief; but will you believe, will you obey such an one as the* [17] {P} *Devil is*? What was it that made *Judas* to Strangle himself? We read it was when the *Devil was in him*. I suppose there are few *Self-Murderers*, but what are first very strangely fallen into the Devils hands; and possibly, 'tis by some Extraordinary

*Discontent*, against God, or *Backsliding* from Him, that the Devil first entred into those disturbed Souls. Indeed, some very great Saints of God, have sometimes had hideous Royls raised by the Devil in their minds; until thy have e'en cry'd out with *Job, I choose Strangling rather than life;*<sup>578</sup> and sometimes the Ill Humours or Vapours in the Bodies of such Good Men, do so harbour the Devil that they have this woful motion every day thence made unto them; *You must kill your self! you must! you must!* But it is rarely any other than a *Saul*, an *Abimeleck*, an *Achitophel*, or a *Judas*;<sup>579</sup> rarely any other, than a very Reprobate, whom the Devil can drive, while the man is, *Compos Mentis*,<sup>580</sup> to Consummate such a Villany. Yea, no Child of God, in his Right Senses can go so far in this Impeity, as to be left without all Time and Room, for true *Repentance* of the Crime; 'tis thus done, by none but those that go to the Devil. A *Self-Murder*, acted by one that is upon other accounts, a Reasonable Man, is but such an Attempt of *Revenge* upon the God that made him, as none but one full of the Devil can be guilty of. If any of you are Dragoon'd by the Devil, unto the Murdering of your selves, my Advice to you is, *Disclose it, Reveal it, make it known immediately.* One that Cut his own Throat among us, Expired crying out, *O that I had told! O that I had told!* You may *Spoil* the Devil, if you'l *Tell* what he is a doing of.

VI. Presumptuous and Unwarrantable *Trials* of the Blessed God, are some of those things whereinto the Devil would fain hook us with his *Temptations*. This [18] was that which the Devil would have brought our Lord unto, even, *A Tempting of the Lord our God*. It is the charge of our God upon us, in *Deut. 6. 16. Thou shalt not Tempt the Lord thy God*. But that which the Devil *Tries*, is, to put us upon *Trying* in a

sinful way, whether God be such a God as indeed He is. 'Tis true, as to the Ways of *Obedience*, our God says unto us, *Prove me, in those wayes; Try, Whether I won't be as Good as my Word*. But then, there are ways of *Presumption*, wherein the Devil would have us to *Try*, what a God it is, *With whom we have to do*. The Devil would have us to *Try* the *Purpose* of God, about our selves or others; but how? By going to the *Devil* himself; by Consulting *Astrologers*, or *Fortune-tellers*; or perhaps, by letting the Bible fall open, to see what is the first Sentence we light upon. The Devil would have us *Try* the *Mercy* of God; But how? By running into *Dangers*, which we have no call unto. He would have us *Try* the *Power* of God; But how? By Looking for Good Things, without the use of *Means* for the getting of them. He would have us *Try* the *Justice* of God; but how? By venturing upon Sin, in a *Corner*, with an Imagination that God will never bring us out. He would have us *Try* the *Promise* of God; but how? By *Limiting* the Lord, unto such or such a way of Manifesting Himself, or else believing of nothing at all. He would have us *Try* the *Threatning* of God; but how? By going on Impenitently in those things, for which the *Wrath of God comes upon the Children of Disobedience*. Thus would the Devil have us, to affront the Majesty of Heaven every day.

VII. The *Temptations* of the Devil, aim at puffing and Bloating of us up, with *Pride*; as much perhaps as any one iniquity. The Devil would have had Our Lord make a *Vain-glorious* Discovery of himself unto the world, by *Flying in the air*, so as no mortal can. *Hoc Ithacus velit*<sup>581</sup>---the Devil would have us to soar aloft, and not only to *be* above other [19] men, but also to *know* that we are so. *Pride* is the Devils own sin; and he affects especially to be, *The King over the Children of Pride*, It is a caution, in 1. Tim. 3.

6. A Pastor must not be *A Novice*; *Lest being lifted up with Pride, He fall into the condemnation of the Devil.* [*Summo ac Pio cum Tremore Hunc Textum Legamus nos Ministri Juvenes!*]<sup>582</sup> Accordingly, the Devil would have us to be inordinately taken and moved with what *Excellencies* our God ha's bestowed upon us. If we have been blessed with beauty, with breeding, with Honour, with Success, with Attire, with spiritual Priviledges, or with Praise-worthy Performances; Now saies the Devil, *Think thy self better than other Men.* Yea, the Devil, would have us arrogate unto ourselves, those *Excellencies*, which really we never were owners of; and, *Boast of a false gift.* He would have us moreover to Thirst after Applause among others that may see Our *Excellencies*; and be impatient if we are not accounted *some-body*. He would have us furthermore, to aspire after such a *Figure*, as God ha's never yet seen fitting for us; & croud into some *High Chair* that becomes us not. Thus would the Devil Elevate us into he *Air*, above our Neighbours; and why so! Tis that we may be punished with such *Falls*, as may make us cry out with *David*, *O my bones are broken with my Falls!*<sup>583</sup> The Devil can't endure to see men lying in the *Dust*; because there is no falling thence. He is a *Fallen Spirit* himself, and it pleases him to see the *Falls* of men.

§ The Third of Our Lords Three Temptations, is related in such Terms as these. Math. 4. 8, 9. *Again the Divel taketh him up, into an exceeding High Mountain, and sheweth him all the Kingdomes of the world, and the glory of them: and saith unto him, all these things will I give thee, if Thou wilt fall down and Worship me.*<sup>584</sup> From whence take these Remarks.



I. The Devil in his *Temptations* will set the Delights of [20] this world before us; but he's set a fair, and a false *Varnish* upon those Delights. They were some unknown *Perspectives*, which the Devil had, both for the Refracting of the *Medium*, and for the Magnifying of the *Object*, whereby he gave our Lord at once a prospect of the whole Roman Empire; but what was it? It was the *World*, and the *Glory* of it; he says not a word of the *World*, and the *Trouble* of it. No sure; not a word of that; The Devil will not have his Hook so barely expos'd unto us. The Devil sets off the Delights of Sin, which he offers unto us, with a stretched and a raised Rhetoric; but he will not own, *That in the midst of our Laughter, our Heart shall be sorrowful*; and, *That the end of our Mirth shall be Heaviness*.<sup>585</sup> There is but one Glass in the Spectacles, with which the Devil would have us to read, those passages in Eccl. 11. 9. *Rejoyce*, [emendation] *O young man in thy in thy youth, and let thy Heart chear thee in the Dayes of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy Heart, and in the sight of thine Eyes*. Thus far the Devil would have us to Read; and he'll make many a fine Comment upon it; he'll tell us, That if we'll follow the Courses of the World, we shall swim in all the Delights of the World. But he is not willing you should Read out the next words; *But know thou, that for all these things God shall bring thee into Judgment*.<sup>586</sup> O he's loth we should be aware of the dreadful Issues, and Reckonings that our Worldly Delights will be attended with. He sets before us, *The Pleasures of Sin*; but he will not say, *These are but for a Season*.<sup>587</sup> He sets before us, *The sweet Waters of Stealth*; but he will not say, *There is Death in the Pot*.<sup>588</sup> He is a *Mountebank*, that will bestow nothing but Romantic Praises upon all that he makes us the Offers of.<sup>589</sup>

**II.** There are most Hellish *Blasphemies* often buzz'd by the *Temptations* of the Devil, into the minds of the best men alive. What a most Execrable Thing was here laid before our Lord Himself: Even, To own the *Devil* as [21] *God!* a thing that cannot be uttered, without unutterable Horror of Soul. The best man on earth, may have such *Fiery Darts* from Hell shot into his mind. One that was acted by the *Devil*, had the impudence to propound this, unto such a good man as *Job*, *Curse God*. And the Devil pleases himself, by chafing the Hearts of good men, with his base Injections, *That there is no God*, or, *That God is not a Righteous God*; and a thousand more such things, too Devillish to be mentioned[.] A good man is extreamly griev'd at it, when he hears a *Blasphemy* from the mouth of another man; said the Psalmist, in Psal. 44 15, 16. *My Confusion is continually before me, for the voice of him that Blasphemeth*. But much more, when a good man finds a *Blasphemy* in his own Heart; O it throws him into most Feavourish Agonies of Soul. For this cause, a mischievous Devil, will *Fly-blow*<sup>590</sup> the Heart of such a man, with such Blasphemous Thoughts, as make him cry out, *Lord, I am e'n weary of my life*. Yea, the Devil serves the man just as the Mistress of *Joseph* dealt with him; he importunes the man to *Think wickedly* from Day to Day; and if the man refuse, he cries out at last, *Behold, what wicked Thoughts this man has lodging in him*. Sayst thou so? *Satan!* No, they are Brats of thy own; and at thy Door alone shall they be laid for ever.

**III.** There is a sort of *Witchcraft* in those things, whereto the *Temptations* of the Devil would Inveigle us. To worship the Devil is *Witchcraft*, and under that notion was Our Lord urged unto Sin. We are told in, 1. Sam. 15. 23. *Rebellion is as the sin of*

*Witchcraft:* When the Devil would have us to sin, he would have us to do the things which the forlorn Witches use to do. Perhaps there are few persons, ever allured by the Devil unto an Explicit Covenant with himself. If any among ourselves be so, my counsel is, that you hunt the Devil from you, with such words as the Psalmist had, *Be gone: Depart from me, ye evil Doers, for I will keep the Commandments of [22] my God.* But alas, the most of men, are by the Devil, put upon doing the Things that are Analogous to the worst usages of Witches. The Devil saies to the sinner, *Despite thy Baptism, and all the Bond of it, and all the Good of it.* The Devil saies to the sinner, *Come, cast off the Authority of God, and refuse the Salvation of Christ, for ever.* Yea the Devil who is called, *The God of this World*, would have us to take *Him* for Our God; and rather hear *Him*, Trust *Him*, Serve *Him*, than the *God* that formed us.

**IV.** The *Temptations* of the Devil do Tug and Pull for nothing more, than the *Rulers* of the World may yield Homage unto him. Our Lord has had this by His Father Engag'd unto him, *That He shall one day be Governour of the Nations.* The Devil do's extreemly dread the Approach of that Illustrious time when, *The Kingdome of God shall come and His Will be done, as in Heaven, and on Earth.* For this cause it was that he was desirous, Our Lord should rather have Accepted of him, that Kingdom, which *Antichrist* afterwards accepted of him, for the Establishment of *Devil-worship*, in the World. I may tell you, The Devil is mighty unwilling, that there should be one *Godly Magistrate* upon the face of the Earth. Such is the influence of *Government*, that the Devil will every where stickle<sup>591</sup> mightily, to have *That* siding with him. What *Rulers* would the Devil

have, to command all mankind, if he might have his will? Even, such as are called, in Psal. 94. 20. *The Throne of Iniquity, which frames mischief by a Law*; such as will promote *Vice*, by both Connivance, and Example; and such as will Oppress all that shall be *Holy, and Just and Good*. All men have cause therefore, to be jealous, what Use the Devil may make of them, with reference to the Affairs of *Government*; but *Rulers* may most of all think, that the Lord Jesus from Heaven calls upon them, *Sa-[23] tan has desired that he might Sift you, and have you; O Look to it, what side you Take.*

Thus have you in the Temptations of our Lord, seen the principal of those *Devices*, which the Devil has to Entrap our Souls. But what shall we now do, that we may be fortify'd against those *Devices*? O that we might be well furnished with the *whole Armour of God!*<sup>592</sup> But, methinks, there were some things attending the Temptations of our Lord, which would especially Recommend those few Hints unto us for our Guard.

First, If you are not fond of *Temptation*, be not fond of Needless, or Too much *Retirement*. Where was it, that the Devil fell upon our Lord? it was when he was *Alone* in the Wilderness. We should all have our Times to be *Alone* every Day; and if the *Devil* go to scare us out of our Chambers, with such a Bugbear, as *That hee'll appear to us*, yet stay in spite of his teeth, stay to finish your Devotions; he *Lyes*, he dare not show his head. But on the other-side by being too solitary, we may lay ourselves too much open to the Devil; You know who saies, *Wo to him that is alone.*<sup>593</sup>

Secondly, Let an *Oracle* of God be your defence against a *Temptation* of Hell. How did our Lord Silence the Devil? It was with an, *It is Written!*<sup>594</sup> And all his Three Citations were from that One Book of *Deuteronomy*.<sup>595</sup> What a full armoury then have we, in all the sacred Pages that ly before us? Whatever the Words of the *Devil* are, drown them with the words of the *Great God*. Say, *It is Written*. The *Belshazzar* of Hell will Tremble and Withdraw, if you show these *Hand-writings* of the Lord.<sup>596</sup>

Lastly, Since the Lord Jesus Christ, has Conquered [24] all the *Temptations* of the Devil, Fly to that Lord, Cry to that Lord, that He would give *you* a share in his Happy Victory. It was for *Us* that our Lord overcame the Devil: and when he did but say, *Satan, Get hence*, away presently the Tygre<sup>597</sup> flew. Does the Devil Molest *Us*? Then Let us Repair to our Lord, who says, *I know how to Succour the Tempted*.<sup>598</sup> Said the Psalmist, in Psal. 61. 2. *Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I*. A Woman in this Land being under the Possession of Devils, the Devils within her, audibly spoke of divers Harms they would inflict upon her; but still they made this answer, *Ah! She Runs to the Rock! She Runs to the Rock!* and that hindred all.<sup>599</sup> O this *Running to the Rock*, 'tis the best Preservation in the World; the *Vultures* of Hell can not prey upon the *Doves* in the Clefts of that *Rock*. May our God now Lead us thereunto.

F I N I S.

### Notes to The Wonders of the Invisible World

<sup>1</sup> According to the English Short Title Catalog Online, the term “invisible world” first appeared in the title of an English printed book in Joseph Hall’s (1574-1656), The Great Myserie of Godliness, Laid Forth by Way of Affectuous and Feeling Meditation. Also, the Invisible World, Discovered to Spirituall Eyes, and Reduced to Usefull Meditation (London, 1651). The title also echoes Glasgow professor George Sinclair’s (d.

1696?) popular compilation of stories of apparitions and witchcraft, Satan's Invisible World Discovered (Edinburgh, 1685). Cotton Mather may have also derived his title from Nathaniel Wanley (1634-1680) or Wonders of the Little World: or a General History of Man (London, 1678). Increase Mather paraphrases from Wanley's book concerning the Bohemian conjurer Zyto, in Cases of Conscience (Boston, 1692), p. 25. Mather's extended title also bears a strange resemblance to that of a book by Pedro Mexica, The Wonders of the World: Or, Choice Observations and Passages, Concerning the Beginning, Continuation, And Endings, Of Kingdomes And Commonwealths. With an Exact Division of the Several Ages of the World, and the Most Remarkable Passages and Memorable Accidents That Have Come to Pass Therein: ... The Opinions of Divers Great Emperours and Kings Touching the Person of Christ, and the Life of Mankind; With The Strange Events That Have Befaln Several of Them: ... Together With the Miserable Death That Befel Pontius Pilate, After That He Had Condemned Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; the Place Of His Birth and Burial, ... A Work Very Profitable and Necessary For All. Written originally in Spanish, translated into French, and now made English, by that pious and learned gentleman Joshua Baildon. (London, 1656).

<sup>2</sup> Sir William Phips (1651-1695) first royal governor of Massachusetts, was born on the frontier in Woolwich, Maine and died in London. He was knighted in 1687 for finding sunken treasure worth £30,000 off the coast of Haiti. Phips's New England birth, his military experience, and friendship with the Mather faction all helped him become governor. Baptized by Cotton Mather in adulthood, he became a member of Mather's

church in Boston in 1690. In negotiations for the new 1692 charter, the King William granted Increase Mather's request that Phips become the first governor. Phips returned to the colony in May 1692 during the height of the Salem witchcraft outbreak. He left the colony in August, however, to Pemmaquid on the Maine coast to build Fort William Henry and did not return until the end of September. Cotton Mather wrote a life of Phips entitled Pietas in Patriam: The Life of His Excellency Sir William Phips, Knt. (London, 1697). See Emerxon W. Baker and John G. Reid, The New England Knight: Sir William Phips, 1651-1695, Toronto, U of Toronto P, 1998.

<sup>3</sup> Wilhelm Adolf Scribonius or Guilielmus Adolphus Scribonius (1550-1600), was a professor natural philosophy and logic at the Lutheran University in Marburg, Germany, where he obtained his doctorate. Like his Margurg colleague, Rudolf Goclenius (1547-1628), Scribonius was a follower of the French reformer Peter Ramus (1515-1572). Like Mather, he combined interest in witchcraft with an orthodox Christian view of physics. Scribonius is remembered as a chief advocate of the swimming test for the detection of witches, involving casting the suspect bound thumbs-to-toes into cold water. Possessing an aerie and ethereal nature, the witch would float, while the innocent, naturally incarnated, and therefore heavier, human being would sink. Since the devil was "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2.2), he was able to convey the aiery quality of lightness to his subjects. The witches' buoyancy in water also constituted evidence of their ability to fly through the air to attend their sabbats. Evidence of belief in witches' abilities to fly appears in some of the testimony against the accused at Salem, and



Governor Phips recounts such instances in a letter to the home government (see Burr Narratives 196).

Mather's reference appears in Scribonius' De Sagarum Natura et Potestate, deque his recte cognoscendis et puniendis Physiologia (Of the Nature and Power of Witches and the Correct Way to Identify and Punish them According to Natural Science) (Marburg 1588), pp. 82-83. Like Mather, Scribonius sought for empirical evidence of the invisible world of the kind he relates here. Mather's source is the Puritan divine Richard Baxter (1615-91), who retells Scribonius's story in his Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits (London, 1691), giving the following account:

Abundance of credible Histories tell us of Men and Women struck and bruised by the Devil . . . . I will ad one Example: At Marpurg (where he dwelt,) *Anno* 1678. a young Rustick that had a Devil, was by the Council of Divines brought into the Temple at the time of publick Prayers, that they might try whether they could cast out the Devil. And when Prayers were ended, and he was brought again into the Hospital, (their *Bedlam*,) a certain Citizen, well known to me, standing alone by his own Chimney-fire and seeing the Demoniack Man pass by in the Street, by the noise of the Company, he earnestly prayed to God for him: in the very Moment of his praying, by some invisible Genius, he had suddenly such a Stroke on his Neck, as cast him down on his Face on the Ground; I think, because that malignant Spirit would not that men should pray for him that he had

possess'd. He profess'd that he did sensibly perceive something like the Hand of a strong Man strike him, his Face being toward the Fire. The Man revealed it to me the same Day, but secretly, lest it should cast his Wife or Children into a Fright. (104)

<sup>4</sup> For Mather and his peers, a physical blow from an invisible opponent is a superlatively palpable and empirical indicator of the world of spirits —just what Protestant demonologists of the seventeenth century wanted to provide to satisfy the requirement of the new science. Mather, therefore, begins his treatise with a literal bang on the head, making it clear from the first sentence that specters really exist and can afflict the physical world. Mather's account in Wonders of the trial of Bridget Bishop, the first witch executed at Salem, included testimony her that her specter had beat Deliverance Hobbs with iron rods *WIW* 106). Mather is obsessed with discovering and recording empirical evidence of such encounters with inhabitants of the invisible world, in this case to bolster his argument that Salem witchcraft was real and that the judges acted properly in executing the first witch and, hence, others found guilty based on spectral evidence. Some of Mather's other seventeenth-century models for presenting "empirical" evidence include Joseph Glanvill, George Sinclair, Richard Baxter, and Henry More, all Protestant compilers of witchcraft and apparition narratives who attempted to present tangible, "scientific" evidence of the invisible world.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. 12.12. Mather refers to this verse repeatedly throughout Wonders.

<sup>6</sup> Mather alludes to James 3.6: “And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquitie: so is the tongue amongst our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell.” Typologically, wagging tongues would be the opposite of the tongues of fire representing the Holy Spirit in Acts 2.2, which Jesus’s apostles received and began speaking the truth in tongues. Mather’s rhetorical progression linking different kinds of “buffeting” leads from a remarkable anecdote of physical buffeting by the devil, to his own expectations of similar buffetings for exposing him, to a buffeting of his reputation by some for his defending the judges’ actions, to the ill effects brought about by spiteful tongues falsely accusing others of witchcraft. Mather compares people who slander him to those whose spiteful tongues have caused others to be falsely accused. All of it is the devil’s ploy.

<sup>7</sup> That is, blood. Mather believes in the idea of the witch’s Sabbath and covenant, which had been hotly debated. The idea of the flight to the witches’ Sabbath was not nearly as prevalent in England as on the continent. Reginald Scot describes and ridicules the idea in bk. 3, chs. 1-6 of The Discoverie of Witchcraft (1584). Accounts in collections of witchcraft narratives such as Malleus Maleficarum (1485), Compendium Maleficarum (1608), and various editions of Joseph Glanvill’s Saducismus Triumphatus, tell of witches writing covenants with Satan in their own blood. Strangely, the idea of riding on poles to witch meetings was quite prevalent at the Salem trials, showing continental, Scandinavian, or Scottish influence. The origin of the idea of the witches’ Sabbath is still

a subject much debated. This motif later appears in such works as Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust* pt. 1 (1809) and Matthew Lewis's gothic novel *The Monk* (1796).

<sup>8</sup> See 2 Sam 23.7.

<sup>9</sup> "Not to be guided; not manageable or docile; uncontrollable; refractory, stubborn" (qtd. in OED).

<sup>10</sup> 1 Sam 18.10; 19.9.

<sup>11</sup> Matt. 8.28.

<sup>12</sup> See 1 Tim. 1.8.

<sup>13</sup> The phrase "least among" is used in Matt. 2.5-7 and Luke 9.48.

<sup>14</sup> Matt. 6.4, 6. Mather may also have in mind his earthly father, Increase. See David Levin. "Did the Mathers Disagree about the Salem Witch Trials?" Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society: A Journal of American History and Culture Through 1876. 95:1 (1985) 19-37.

<sup>15</sup> Mark 10.21; Luke 10.42; 18.22 all speak about the need for doing one thing to attain salvation. That "one thing" needful or lacking in the case of the ruler who wants to attain salvation (Mark 10.21, Luke 10.42) is to give his wealth to the poor. To Martha the one thing needful is to give up concern "about many things" and pay attention to Jesus as does her sister, Mary. Thus the "one thing needful" is invariably to forget about worldly things and put one's attention only on Jesus Christ.

<sup>16</sup> Adapted perhaps from Ps. 56.4, 11; Ps. 118.6; Heb. 13.6. Mather substitutes the word "Satan" for "man."

<sup>17</sup> Echoes Eccles. 42. 15 and Ps. 106.12-13.

<sup>18</sup> King James I wrote Dæmonologie, published first in Edinburgh in 1597.

Dæmonologie asserts the truth of witchcraft and was written in refutation of the skeptic Reginald Scott's Discovery of Witchcraft (1584), which ridiculed most witch beliefs.

Shakespeare wrote Macbeth in honor of James I's ascension to the throne incorporating concepts of witchcraft found in James's Demonologie.

<sup>19</sup> Rom. 13.12; Eph. 5.11.

<sup>20</sup> Mather identifies his own country as America, not England. Cotton Mather is characteristically complaining about his "lack of friends" in Boston. When his father, Increase, and Governor William Phips returned with the new charter, great opposition arose by the carping of Elisha Cook and his party. Cotton Mather also has Richard Baxter in mind, who wrote the preface to Cotton Mather's London edition of Memorable Providences (1691). New England's Puritans did not recognize the Church of England as their ecclesiastical authority.

<sup>21</sup> The OED defines "parter" as "One who or that which parts; a divider, separator, distributor, etc." Wycliffe used the term in a sermon in his Select Works 2.231: "Who made me jure and partere among you?"

<sup>22</sup> Mather's choice of this ambiguous word is appropriate because "keen" has many meanings, some or all of which Mather intends as ironic. The OED contains the following definitions for "keen":

1. Wise, learned, clever. Obs. (Cf. 7b.)”; “2. a. Brave, bold, valiant, daring. Obs.”; “b. As an alliterative epithet of kings or other rulers; hence, Mighty, powerful, strong. Obs.”; c. Fierce, savage (chiefly of beasts); cruel; harsh (to a person). Obs.”; “d. Bold, proud, forward, insolent, heinous.”; “3. a. Of weapons, cutting instruments, and the like: Having a very sharp edge or point; able to cut or pierce with ease. Also of an edge or point: Extremely sharp. (Now somewhat rhetorical, exc. in keen edge, the ordinary word being sharp.)”; “b. Of prices: competitive. Cf. quot. 1862, sense 6 below, and KEENLY adv. 6.”; “4. transf. Of things, substances, or agencies that affect the senses: a. Operating on the touch or taste like a sharp instrument; causing pain or smarting; acrid, pungent, stinging. (Now unusual.)”; “ b. Of cold (or heat): Piercing, intense. Of wind, air, etc.: Very sharp, biting, piercing.”; “c. Of sound, light, scent: Sharp, piercing, penetrating; shrill; vivid; clear; strong.” “d. Jolly good, very nice, splendid. colloq. (orig. U.S.).”; “5. Of agencies that affect the mind: a. Of circumstances, thoughts, feelings, etc.: Causing acute pain or deep distress. Also, of pain, grief, etc.: Acute, intense, bitter.”; “b. Of language: Sharp, severe, incisive, cutting.”; “6. a. Of persons: Eager, ardent, fervid; full of, or manifesting, intense desire, interest, excitement, etc. Also, of desire, feeling, etc.: Intense.”; “b. Const. about, against, at, for, of, or with inf.; also colloq. on (upon): interested in; also, sweet on, in

love with.”; “7. a. Of the eyes or eyesight: Sharp, penetrating. Hence, of hearing, smell, or other sense: Acute, highly sensitive. Also of persons or animals: Sharp of (sight, smell, etc.).” ; “b. Of persons: Intellectually acute, sharpwitted, shrewd: often with mixture of sense 6. Also of the mind or mental operations: Endowed or conducted with great acuteness.”; “c. Of the face or looks: Suggestive of mental acuteness or sharpness.”

<sup>23</sup> William Stoughton (1631-1701) was probably born in England. He was appointed Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts-Bay in May, 1692, under the new charter, upon the return of the new Governor, William Phips, and Increase Mather. Stoughton’s appointment also carried the position of chief justice, the position he held at the Salem trials. He graduated from Harvard in 1650, went to England and graduated with an MA from New College, Oxford, in 1653. In 1659 he was appointed curate of Rumboldswycke, Sussex, near Chichester. A nonconformist, after the restoration of Charles II in 1660, Stoughton lost his Oxford fellowship and returned to Massachusetts in the summer of 1662. He preached for several years in the church in Dorchester, Massachusetts. He was on the council of Sir Edmund Andros, but turned against the governor, and was later lieutenant-governor under William Phips. After Phip’s departure in 1694, Stoughton acted as governor, except from May 1699 to July 1700, until his death in July 1701. He presided as Chief Justice of the Court of Oyer and Terminer at the Salem witchcraft trials, and was largely responsible for the tragic outcome because of his insistence on admitting spectral evidence. He expressed his views of a ‘Covenant-state’

in his election sermon on April 29, 1668, *New Englands True Interest*, which contains one of the most quoted lines in early New England literature: “God sifted a whole Nation that he might send choice Grain over into this Wilderness” (qtd. in Miller *Puritans* 246).

<sup>24</sup> “Literally ‘to hear and to determine.’ This designation was formerly applied to a special court established to deal with some crisis or unusual circumstance, such as a sudden outbreak or insurrection” (Boyer and Nissenbaum *SWP* 1: “Glossary” 41).

William Stoughton was Chief Justice of the Court of Oyer and Terminer.

<sup>25</sup> In his prosecuting of witches, Chief Justice Stoughton was less interested in moderation than in rooting out witchcraft. He was a chief advocate of the trials and disagreed with Governor Phipps over his ending of the trials.

<sup>26</sup> Probably the Rev. John Wilson (c. 1591-1667) first minister of Boston and a writer of verse. Born in England, Wilson received an MA from Cambridge in 1613. His conversion to Puritanism and his nonconformity led him to emigrate to Massachusetts in 1630, where he became a teacher at the First Church in Boston. Wilson became one of the most influential of Massachusetts divines. Cotton Mather wrote a biography of Wilson, entitled Memoria Wilsoniana (Boston, 1695), reprinted in Book III of Magnalia Christi Americana (1702).

<sup>27</sup> The Sadducees were a Jewish religious sect from the second century B.C. to the first century A.D. They accepted only the written Law and rejected oral tradition. They denied the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the existence of angels, and the world of spirits (see Mark 12.18; Luke 20.27; Acts 23.8). They were



denounced by John the Baptist (Matt. 3:7, 8) and Jesus (Matt. 16:6, 11, 12). They opposed Christ (Matt. 21:12 ff.; Mark 11:15 ff; Luke 19:47). They also opposed the preaching, healing of the sick, and the proselytizing of the Apostles at the temple in Jerusalem (Acts 5:17, 33). According to Josephus, they rejected life after death, believed all human actions resulted from the exercise of free will, not from the guidance of Providence.

<sup>28</sup> The words “writ it,” italicized by Mather, appear together in the Geneva Bible in Jer. 32:10: “And I writ it in the booke and signed it, and tooke witnesses, and weighed him the siluer in the balances,” which seems an appropriate Scripture to use when preparing to deal with apocalyptic themes, betrayal of Christ, and satanic covenants.

<sup>29</sup> Edward Symons (or Symmons) (c.1607- 1649) was a Church of England clergyman and author. In 1630 he was appointed rector of Little Rayne in Essex, England. Symmons was born at Cottered and was educated at Cambridge where he received an MA. Thomas Fuller (1608-61) writes about him in his History of the Worthies of England. Symmons took the Royalist side in favor of King Charles I and was deprived of his income by the parliamentarians. In 1643 he became embroiled in a written controversy with Stephen Marshal (1594?-1655), the Church of England clergyman and reformer, who took the parliamentary side. Symmons wrote the 348-page treatise in quarto A Vindication of King Charles (1647). He died in London and was buried there in St. Peters’, Paul’s Wharf.

<sup>30</sup> Mather also quotes Symmons' translation, which immediately follows the Latin phrase. Cotton Mather also includes this passage from Symmons' sermon in his Magnalia 1.5.21. The Latin phrase echoes that of a passage from Seneca (4 BC-AD 65):

Venient annis  
 Saecula seris, quibus Oceanus  
 Vincula rerum laxet, et ingens  
 Pateat Tellus, Tiphysque novos  
 Detegat orbes; nec sit terries  
 Ultima Thule. (Medea 2.374-78; qtd. in Jones Francis Bacon 105)

Francis Bacon (1561-1626) incorporates these verses into his essay "Of Prophecies" in his Essayes or Counsels. Bacon interprets Seneca's lines to be a prophecy of the discovery of America. Bacon's editor translates Seneca's lines as follows: "In later years there will come a time when Oceanus [god of the ocean] will relax the chains that bind the world, and the vast earth will lie exposed, and Tiphys will discover new lands, and Thule will not be the end of the earth" (qtd. in Jones Francis Bacon 105). Thus, Mather's use of the passage from Seneca quoted by Symmons in relation to New England also echoes Mather's chiliastic interpretation of Israel's destiny.

<sup>31</sup> The KJV refers several times to a cloud that overshadows. See Matt. 17.5; Mark 9.7; Luke 1.35; Luke 9.34; Rev. 8.12; 9.2

<sup>32</sup> Matt. 24.29; Mark 13.24

<sup>33</sup> Mather quotes from a sermon by Edward Symmons entitled “A Wisemans Carriage in Evill Times,” the second sermon in a collection entitled Foure Sermons (London 1642) 52. The title page of the individual sermon states it was first delivered on Aug. 3, 1637.

<sup>34</sup> Mather begins his jeremiad here by implying that New England’s first generation of settlers were once so pious and holy that, even in their present state of degeneracy, they are still more religious, loyal, honest, and industrious than those found anywhere else.

<sup>35</sup> *Late Memorable Providences Relating to Witchcraft and Possessions*. (Boston, 1689).

<sup>36</sup> Richard Baxter (1615-91) Puritan divine, in his Unreasonableness of Infidelity, The Saints Everlasting Rest, and The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits includes many histories of witches, apparitions, possessions, and temptations of the devil, along with other accounts of the supernatural.

<sup>37</sup> Richard Baxter wrote the preface to the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Mather’s Late Memorable Providences Relating to Memorable Providences (London, 1691). Mather quotes Baxter verbatim here with one significant exception. Baxter’s text reads,

*If any are Scandalized, that New-England a place of as serious Piety as any I can hear of under Heaven, should be troubled so much with Witches, and with Melancholics, and self-murderers, as Mr. Mather tells us, I think it is no wonder: where will the Devil shew most malice, but where he is*

*hated and hateth most: Where will he cast his New but where is the best  
Prey. Those that he cannot Damn, he will do his worst to trouble.*

Mather leaves out Baxter's reference to melancholics and self-murderers, perhaps not wishing to confuse the issues of melancholia and self-murder with the outcomes of witchcraft in Salem.

<sup>38</sup> Partially as a result of King William's Toleration Act of 1689, Mather became more ecumenical and tolerant toward other English Nonconformists. The Congregationalists had long been at odds with Presbyterians over the issue of a national church. Congregationalists wished each local church to remain autonomous, out of fear of becoming centralized, like the Church of England. As a result of the Toleration Act, Nonconformists stopped fighting with each other and with the Church of England over what were now beginning to be considered minor points of doctrine. Mather began urging fellow Congregationalists to ignore their lesser differences with Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Antipaedobaptists (i.e. Baptists), and other denominations, and emphasize instead their common identity as Christians. See Kenneth Silverman, The Life and Times of Cotton Mather (140 ff.). Note that Mather does not include "Papists" under the rubric of "Christian," they being tantamount to followers of Antichrist.

<sup>39</sup> "A mischievous and ugly demon" (OED). Mather uses words evoking the realm of the supernatural to draw connections between ordinary, natural sins and the sin of witchcraft.

<sup>40</sup> Mather alludes to Revelation 2.4: “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.” Mather continues the pattern of scriptural allusion to Revelation 2 started at the beginning of this section, drawing further parallels between Salem and Ephesus. Mather paints a rosy picture of New England’s morality to support his contention that there is (or was) something truly different about New England that has survived the general decline in sanctity since the first generation of Puritan settlers. Mather is setting up the rhetorical stratagem of the jeremiad. For a clear example of the Jeremiad form in verse, see Michael Wigglesworth’s “God’s Controversy with New England,” composed in 1662.

The history of the American jeremiad and its rhetorical implications are discussed by Sacvan Bercovitch in The American Jeremiad (1978). The jeremiad was a rhetorical form used in many sermons of the period. The form takes its name from the book of Jeremiah. For example, verse 1.14 begins with the Lord saying, “Out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land . . . who have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, and worshiped the works of their own hands.” The message shifts at Jeremiah 4.1: If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the LORD, return unto me: and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove. The jeremiad usually begins by recalling a righteous or golden age of the Father or patriarchs, followed by an account of the sins of subsequent generations. The causes of falling into sin are identified. Accounts of sins and their causes are followed by threats of God’s punishment. These threats give way to offers of reconciliation if the people return

to the ways of the Father. I am grateful to Reiner Smolinski for this taxonomy of the jeremiad, which I paraphrase above.

<sup>41</sup> 2 Cor. 11.21.

<sup>42</sup> The term “chosen generation” occurs in 1 Peter 2.9-10: “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.” In this jeremiad Mather starts drawing a typological parallel between the first settlers of New England and the early Christian church. In his first letter, Peter writes to encourage persecuted Christians to undergird their faith in Christ’s second coming. Mather is also mapping out Christ’s imminent return.

<sup>43</sup> Mather refers to a sermon by Hugh Peters (1598-1660) (or Peter), Gods Doings, and Mans Duty, Opened in a Sermon Preached Before Both Houses of Parliament, The Lord Maior and Aldermen of The City of London, and The Assembly of Divines; at the Last Thansgiving [Sic] Day, April 2. for The Recovery of The West, and Disbanding 5000 of The Kings Horse, &C. 1645. (London, 1646). Similar statements about the first generation of Puritan settlers in New England have also been attributed to both Nathaniel Ward and his son-in-law Giles Firmin. In 1639 Giles Firmin married Susan Ward, daughter of Rev. Nathaniel Ward of Ipswich (on 26 December 1639 he refers to “my father[-in-]law Ward” see *NEHGR* 4. 1850. p. 11.

<sup>44</sup> Budaeus, Guillaume, Latinized form of Guillaume Budé (1467-1540) was a French humanist scholar born in Paris. He studied law in universities at Orleans and Paris. In 1515, Budaeus was appointed royal librarian by Francis I. In this capacity, he established the royal library at Fountainbleu, which later moved to Paris and became the Bibliothèque Nationale. Budaeus contributed to a revival of interest in the Greek language and classical scholarship with his work Commentarii Linguae Graecae (1529; Commentaries on the Greek Language), which served as a lexicon. He also wrote a book on the value of ancient coins, De asse et partibus ejus (1515; On the Ass and Its Parts). His De studio litterarum (1527; Of the Study of Literature) encourages the young to pursue literary studies.

Contrary to what Mather seems to think, Budaeus did not actually believe that More's Utopia was a real place but did engage in a literary hoax involving fellow humanist scholars that succeeded in fooling many by building on Utopia's sense of verisimilitude. In More's letter to Peter Giles, which begins the charade, More mentions "a devout man and a professor of theology" who wanted to go to Utopia and had arranged to be sent there by the Pope to become Bishop to the Utopians. More could have been either serious or joking about the actual existence of the clergyman. In the second edition of Utopia (Paris, 1517), in a letter to Thomas Lupset, Budé carries on the surreptitious joke about Utopia as a factual but hitherto unknown place in the New World in a way that disguises his true intention of generating interest and publicity through the humanist principle of instructing to delight while carrying on the elaborate joke with Lupset and

others. Mather does not seem to be aware that Budaeus is in part joking. For the chain of letters involved, including Budé's, see "The Humanist Circle: Letters" in More, Sir Thomas. Utopia. Trans. and ed. by Robert M. Adams 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Norton, 1992. 108-133.

<sup>45</sup> The phrase Mather italicizes occurs in Mark 4.17.

<sup>46</sup> Adapted from Revelation 2.5.

<sup>47</sup> Mather pays lip service, at least, to the millennial theories of Joseph Mede (1586-1638), who in Clavis Apocalyptica or Key to the Revelation (London, 1627; 1650) asserted that the New World would be spared the great conflagration at Christ's Second Coming. Instead, America and the western hemisphere would be home to Satan's minions, Gog and Magog (Rev. 20.8-9), who, at the end of Christ's thousand-year reign, would rise up for the final battle of Armageddon, only to be destroyed by the fire from heaven at the Last Judgment. Mede believed that the New World and its aboriginal inhabitants were to remain outside the "Christianography of Christ's millennial kingdom," beyond the pale of redemption (Smolinski "General Introduction" viii-xii). Cotton Mather and other New England divines, however, took exception with Mede over the exclusion of America from the saved nations (Smolinski "Israel Revivivius" 369-374). New England was, however, "once the Devil's territories" (*WIW* [xi]). Cotton Mather concurred with Mede about the origin of America's native inhabitants. In Mede's view, the Indians were originally "Scythian and Northern" ("A Conjecture" 32). Writing in Magnalia in 1702, Mather said, "There has been little Doubt that our Northern Indians



are Originally *Scythians*” (7.67). In the seventeenth century the term “Scythian” was applied generally to mean “those living on barbarous Nations dwelling upon the the northern ocean” (Mede “Epistle 43” 36). Mede published Clavis Apocalyptica three years before the establishment of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in Boston in 1630. His work greatly influenced the views of the Puritans toward America’s indigenous population and their religious practices. See Reiner Smolinski, Introduction, The Threefold Paradise of Cotton Mather 41-42.

<sup>48</sup> In Ps. 2 the Lord says, “Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel” (6-9). Mather speaks typologically, inferring that the Lord in the Psalms is speaking of future events. He has plenty of scriptural evidence echoing this passage in Psalms. In Revelation 2.27 John quotes Jesus as saying, “And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. See also Rev. 12.5 and Rev. 19.5. Mather believes that the New Englanders are helping to fulfill ancient scriptural prophecy.

<sup>49</sup> Mather draws a typological analogy between witchcraft at Salem and the beliefs of the ancient Ephesians in magic. He refers to Eph. 2.1-2: “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the

course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.” In Acts 19.27 a silversmith who sold little silver images of the goddess Diana complained that Paul preached “that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.” Ephesus was a noted center of magic and thaumaturgy with a temple to the Goddess Artemis (the Roman Diana) that was considered one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. The city attracted both Jewish and gentile exorcists such as Appolonius of Tyana. Ephesus became so identified with magical books and apotropaic incantations that such books and spells were often called Ephesia grammata, “Ephesian letters.” According to Acts 19 the Ephesians were persuaded by the preaching of the apostle Paul and by the Holy Spirit to turn out and burn their books of “curious arts,” which were so numerous that the price of the burned books amounted to 50,000 pieces of silver. By burning their books they were effectively giving up their livelihood as magicians in favor of a life as Christians. Paul spent three months in Ephesus disputing and persuading at the synagogue before the people hardened their hearts, rioted, shouting out in unison, “Great is Diana of the Ephesians!” The Ephesians “began disputing in the school of one Tyrannus” for the remainder of Paul’s two-year stay.

Through writings such as the Canon Episcopi, first printed in 906, the pagan Diana became identified with witchcraft. Key parts of the Canon Episcopi itself were quoted (on purpose to refute it) in the most influential book on witchcraft The Malleus

Maleficarum (1486), or the “Witch Hammer.” Increase Mather quotes from the *Malleus* in Cases of Conscience (Boston, 1693). Diana was also identified with the goddess Cybelê or the Sybil, Herodias, and Hecate. The apostle Paul preached in Ephesus, an ancient Ioniaian city in west Asia Minor, known for its temples to the goddess Diana. There, he encountered much hostility from the people he attempted to convert.

Mather probably came into knowledge of the identification of Diana of the Ephesians with witchcraft by his reading of such influential works as the *Malleus Maleficarum*, which contains the following from the first chapter:

As regards [. . .] those who [. . .] do not deny that there are demons and that demons possess a natural power, but who differ among themselves concerning the possible effects of magic and the possible operations of witches: the one school holding that a witch can truly bring about certain effects, yet these effects are not real but phantastical, the other school allowing that some real harm does befall their person or persons injured, but that when a witch imagines this damage is the effect of her arts she is grossly deceived. This error seems to be based upon two passages from the Canons where certain women are condemned who falsely imagine that during the night they ride abroad with Diana or Herodias. Yet because such things often happen by illusion and merely in the imagination, those who suppose that all the effects of witchcraft are mere illusion and imagination are very greatly deceived [. . .] .

[H]e who thinks wishes to argue from this Canon that the effects of witchcraft, the infliction of disease or any sickness, are purely imaginary, utterly mistakes the tenor of the Canon, and errs most grossly [. . .].

The second point is this, that although these women imagine they are riding (as they think and say) with Diana or with Herodias, in truth they are riding with the devil, who calls himself by some such heathen name and throws a glamour before their eyes. (3, 5)

Mather clearly agrees with those who think the witches' flights and their magical abilities were real. That the Mathers had access to the infamous Malleus Maleficarum is evident in Increase Mather's citation of the Malleus in Cases of Conscience, written at about the same time as Cotton was writing *WW*, where the Malleus Maleficarum discourages the trial by ordeal of the red-hot iron, in part because witches could use the supernatural power of the devil to pass through the ordeal unscathed.

There is also a typological connection with the Jews of the Old Testament and the moon, a symbol of Islam and the Babylonian captivity. In Things To Be Looked For (1691) Mather quotes from Ps. 72.7: "In his days shall the Righteous Flourish, and there shall be an abundance of Peace while there is no Moon [. . .] as the Jews will then have no *Moon*, that is, no *Turk* to afflict them" [. . .] (12). As the Jews were afflicted by the "Turks," the Babylonians, and the Christians in Ephesus by the worship of the moon goddess Diana, so the Christians in Salem are now being tormented by witchcraft, of

which Diana had been a symbol. But soon the Christians will have no witches to torment them, for now Christ will return, banish Satan, and set up his kingdom on earth.

<sup>50</sup> Sirach 50.16.

<sup>51</sup> Ps. 89.15.

<sup>52</sup> Revelation 12.15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

<sup>53</sup> John 15.5. I am the vine, ye [are] the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

<sup>54</sup> Mather inserts geography pertaining to the east and west boundaries of New England into Psalm 80.8-11 to form a typological reading of these verses.

<sup>55</sup> “Stone of help” in I Samuel 7.12: “Then Samuel took a stone, and set [it] between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.”

<sup>56</sup> Adapted from Acts 26.22.

<sup>57</sup> Isaiah 34.1-15 describes a hellish place with vultures in an apocalyptic setting

<sup>58</sup> See Isaiah 18.7

<sup>59</sup> See Mark 5.9, 15; Luke 8.30

<sup>60</sup> Notice that Mather only says that the “malefactor” was accused of witchcraft murder and then executed. Mather never says what the accused was convicted of. This “malefactor” may have been Mary Parsons of Springfield, whose case fits all the criteria Mather cryptically outlines. Parsons was accused in Springfield of witchcraft and of

murdering her child. She was taken to Boston and imprisoned. Tried on May 7, 1651 before the General Court in Boston, she was acquitted of witchcraft but pleaded guilty to murdering her child, for which she received a death sentence. See Samuel G. Drake, (Annals 67).

The Salem court records speak similarly of the Examination of Elizabeth Johnson, Jr. on August 11, 1692:

about six score att the witch meeting att the Villadge that she saw: she s'd the ocasion of her first signing the devils book was: the devill & good wife Carrier threatned to tere in peices if she did not doe it, she s'd she wrought then att s'd Carriers hous: she s'd they had bread & wine at the witch Sacrement att the Villadge & they filled the wine out into Cups to drink she s'd there was a minister att that meeting & he was a short man & she thought his name was Borroughs: she s'd they agreed that time to afflict folk: & to pull downe the kingdom of Christ & to sett up the devils kingdom . . . . (*SWP* 2: 504)

<sup>61</sup> The firstborn male child was given sanctified status in the Hebrew Bible (see Exod. 13.12-15; Num. 18.16-18). Mather refers to Salem as “first-born” because Salem was the first town settled by the Puritans from the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and the first Congregational church in America was set up there in 1629. Salem was first incorporated as a town in 1626 by Roger Conant. Governor John Endecott arrived in

1628 with his band of settlers. Salem was the first settlement of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. (Boston was not founded until 1630).

<sup>62</sup> Supernatural. More people were executed during the Salem witchcraft trials of 1692 than had been previously executed for witchcraft in seventeenth-century New England. Since the founding of the Plymouth colony in 1620, only 14-16 people had been executed for witchcraft, beginning in the year 1647. The last execution before those in Salem had been Glover in Boston in 1688, the accused witch in Mather's *Memorable Providences* (London, 1689). (See Goodbeer, *The Devil's Dominion* 235-37).

<sup>63</sup> Ps. 78.49.

<sup>64</sup> The Hebrew word for "witch," Chasapah, meaning "poisoner," occurs 12 times in the Hebrew Bible. See Rossell Hope Robbins, Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology. New York: Crown, 1959. 46. Witches were frequently thought to spread diseases such as the plague along with other acts of maleficium.

<sup>65</sup> Mather admits to the possibility that demons might possess the power to assume the shape even of innocent people, an idea that chief justice Stoughton rejected but was asserted conclusively in Increase Mather's Cases of Conscience (1693) published immediately after *WIW* and signed by 14 ministers from the area.

<sup>66</sup> Mather makes a cogent point that confession constituted guilt. Much of the other evidence of witchcraft could have been dismissed were it not for the confessions. The accused in Salem confessed to save their lives, but according to Boyer and Nissenbaum, it may never have been the judges' intention to spare the confessors' lives

indefinitely but to obtain testimony against other witches. See “Introduction” to *SWP* 1:24. According to William Perkins, confession backed by other evidence was admissible evidence of witchcraft. Confessions were thought to constitute the best evidence. Bernard Rosenthal points out that the accused quickly caught on to the idea that no one who confessed would be executed (Salem Story 42). From the Andover phase of the witchcraft outbreak beginning in mid-July, 1692, confessions actually drove the trials.

<sup>67</sup> A “knot” of witches carries the connotation not only of a band or interwoven group but also of disease, such as a tumor or carbuncle. “Knot” also evokes meanings such as a spell that binds, the “endless knot,” a pentagram, the witches’ knot, “a knot tied for the purpose of making or averting a spell,” a “bushy tuft of twigs on a tree,” equated with the witches’ besom, and “a tangled knot of hair supposed to be made by witches,” also known as an “elf lock” (OED).

<sup>68</sup> See Ps. 83.1-8.

<sup>69</sup> Mather is a believer in a literal witches’ Sabbath, an idea that seems to have begun around Lake Geneva late in the fourteenth century and spread with the publication of Johannes Nider’s (1389/90-1438) *Formicarius* (1475; written about 1435) and Kramer’s and Sprenger’s *Malleus Maleficarum* (1486). See Wolfgang Beringer, *The Shaman of Oberstdorf* (130-32).

<sup>70</sup> In the *Compendium Maleficarum* (1608) and elsewhere, the devil was thought to achieve magic by illusion only, into which category were placed feats such as juggling.



<sup>71</sup> A scholar's propensity to dabble in witchcraft or magic is proverbial by the seventeenth century, embodied in such individuals as Faust, Paracelsus, John Dee. Mather's warning about dabbling with the devil reflects his own worries that he may have been visited unwittingly by Satan in the form of an angel of light. The close alliance between the devil and magic or alchemical practices of scholars was illustrated in the life of the English Elizabethan, Dr. John Dee in Meric Casaubon's A true & faithful relation of what passed for many yeeres between Dr. John Dee (a mathematician of great fame in Q. Eliz. and King James their reignes) and some spirits (London, 1659). The Faust legend, recorded in English in The historie of the damnable life, and deserved death of Doctor Iohn Faustus (London, 1592), upon which Christopher Marlowe based his play Dr. Faustus was well known, as were the lives of other scholars throughout history associated with witchcraft or the supernatural such as Appolonius of Tyana, Paracelsus, Cornelius Agrippa, and many others. Mather's own fascination with witchcraft suggests this association.

<sup>72</sup> This is an allusion to Matthew 19:30, 20:8, 20:16, 26:60 and 27:64 and to the idea that the devil is to be let loose once more before Christ's return. At the end of *WIT* Mather includes an account of the famous witchcraft outbreak in Mohra, Sweden in 1669-70. Wolfgang Behringer, using approximate population figures for 1660, estimates that in Sweden, 300 out of a population of 800,000 were executed, or one in 2,667. Sweden's largest witchcraft outbreak occurred in the years 1668-1676. In all, Denmark, with a population of 570,000, executed 1,000 witches, a ratio of one in 570 people.

Prosecution for witchcraft in Denmark peaked in the years 1612-37 (Henningsen 135). In Britain, in a population of 7,000,000, approximately 1,500 witches were executed, or one in 4,667 (Witches and Witch Hunts 150). Witch hunts in England peaked in the years 1645-47 with the Matthew Hopkins trials, which probably claimed from 120-200 victims (Briggs 53). In Scotland, from spring, 1661, through autumn 1662, there were perhaps 300 executions (Briggs 207). John Demos estimates that in New England, with a population in the years between 1630 and 1700 averaging 50,000, thirty-six executions took place, a ratio of one in 1,389 people (Entertaining Satan 12). By comparison, Germany, with a population of 16,000,000, executed 25,000 witches or one in 640 people. Switzerland, its population only 1,000,000, executed 4,000, or one in 250. Such figures would not really support Mather's implication that the degree of Satan's rage in New England was unprecedented.

<sup>73</sup> Mather quotes from Rev. 2.1 from John's letter to the "angel" of the church at Ephesus. The stars and candlesticks of Rev. 2.1 are to Mather a reference to the seven-pronged Menorah, the seven churches of Asia minor, and the founding of the churches in New England. Mather vivifies the description of Christ in his spiritual body and adapts it to his purpose by conflating Rev. 1.14; 2.1; 2.18; and 19.12. By his allusion to the seven churches, Mather picks up and continues his previous allusion to the battle with Satan in Ephesus in Acts 19, and carries it forward to the seven churches of the Revelation. Just as Ephesus was one of the churches of Asia Minor, so Salem was among the first churches in New England on whose behalf Mather must now do battle with Satan. Mather thus

draws a definite parallel between the church at Ephesus and the backsliding Christians in New England. The Ephesians were in danger turning away from Christ back to their worship of Diana, a pagan goddess traditionally identified by the Church with witchcraft (see note 49 above).

<sup>74</sup> This account also appears in Nathaniel Crouch's Wonderful Prodigies of Judgment and Mercy (London, 1682) 57.

<sup>75</sup> Mather's warning that demons might impersonate the specters of the innocent is an argument against the use of spectral evidence. Unfortunately, Mather doesn't heed his own warning in his own accounts of the trials.

<sup>76</sup> Cotton Mather quotes from Increase Mather's Cases of Conscience (Boston, 1692), p. 32, published about the same time as Wonders of the Invisible World, which in many ways takes a negative view—opposite to Cotton Mather's—of the witchcraft proceedings and the judges' use of spectral evidence.

<sup>77</sup> Belial in Hebrew means “wickedness,” “worthlessness.” Matthew Poole (1624?-1679) defines the word as “A title oft used in Scripture, as Judg. 19. 22. I Sam. 1. 16. and 25 . . . 2 Sam. 16. 7. It signifies properly persons without yoke, vile and wretched miscreants, lawless and rebellious, that will suffer no restraint, that neither fear God, nor reverence Man” (Annotations Deut. 13:13).

In 1 Kings 21 Naboth, a Jezreelite, had refused to give up his vineyard to King Ahab. Ahab's wife Jezebel then plotted against Naboth by having two sons of Belial “falsely accuse Naboth of blasphemy before a crowd. Mob rule prevailed, and Naboth

was stoned as a result of their accusations. One connotation of the word “Satan” is “the accuser.” In the case of Naboth, Ahab took possession of his property. The property of many who had been convicted of witchcraft or had confessed was also confiscated.

<sup>78</sup> “Of or pertaining to a rector or ruler.” (OED)

<sup>79</sup> Ps. 36.6

<sup>80</sup> Adapted from Job 33.13

<sup>81</sup> See the definition of Belial in note 77 above.

<sup>82</sup> In Matthew 9.34, 12.24, and Mark 3.22 the Pharisees accuse Jesus of casting out devils with the help of Beelzebub. In Luke 11.14-15, the same story occurs but the common “people” are the accusers.

<sup>83</sup> Witchcraft was thought to be handed down or learned from one person to another. Family members and friends of witches often became suspect.

<sup>84</sup> Although many (including Chief Justice William Stoughton) thought that the devil could not appear in the shape of an innocent person, Mather rationalizes about how the specter of an innocent person might actually appear unto the afflicted. He seems to be suggesting that actively engaging in spiritual battle against the demons of hell may cause the apparition of an innocent person to appear to the afflicted since the battle with Satan is occurring in the invisible realm just as it is in the visible world. Because the eyes of the afflicted are opened to the invisible world, they may actually witness this battle between the righteous and the damned taking place there. Mather’s rationalization may explain the concept of certain European folk beliefs like that of the “good people” or benandanti

who were thought to engage in spiritual night-battles against the witches in the unseen regions. The concept is explored by Carlo Ginsburg in Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches's Sabbath (1989, 1991), and in Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (1966, 1983). Many claiming to be benandanti were actually burned for witches in Italy since the concept of the benandanti seemed strange and unorthodox to the clergy. Mather seems to have arrived at this concept independently by sheer rationalization.

<sup>85</sup> Mather believes in a literal pact with the devil, an act ridiculed in Reginald Scot's *Discovery of Witchcraft*, but supported in many other treatises on witchcraft such as the *Malleus Maleficarum* (1485) *Saducismus Triumphatus* (1682, etc.), and by the judges at Salem, as well as by Increase Mather.

<sup>86</sup> Mather refers obliquely to one theory of how the witchcraft outbreak got started: some girls were meddling with magic spells and divination, which invited the devil into Salem. This is the approach taken in Arthur Miller's The Crucible (1953).

<sup>87</sup> Mather quotes from Joseph Glanvill's Sadducismus Triumphatus (London, 1681) 66-67.

<sup>88</sup> The art or practice of fortelling a person's future by studying the palm of the hand. Same as palmistry.

<sup>89</sup> Mather accuses demons of using indirect means to fulfill the predictions they placed in the minds of fortune tellers, creating their own self-fulfilling prophecies. The

devils would suggest an outcome into the minds of fortune tellers and then influence events to bring these predictions about.

<sup>90</sup> Mather says that even seemingly innocent magic used to overcome obstacles constitutes an invitation to the devil to aid the participant in more malevolent acts.

<sup>91</sup> Mather shows astonishing familiarity with such use of magic, echoing his statement about wicked scholars above. It takes one to know one?

<sup>92</sup> Mather suggests the subtle ways the devil entices and entraps people into witchcraft through the possibility of material gain.

<sup>93</sup> Mather uses Rattlesnakes as an apt and effective New-World emblem for Satan.

<sup>94</sup> Sir William Phips (1651-1695) was born at the Phips plantation at Jeremisquam Neck, Nequasett, Maine. He was baptized into Cotton Mather's church on March 23, 1690. Phips was named colonial governor under the new charter in 1692. Mather wrote a biography of Phips, Pietas in Patriam: The Life of His Excellency Sir William Phips, Knt. (London, 1697).

<sup>95</sup> William Stoughton (1631-1701) lieutenant-governor under William Phips. At Phips's departure in 1694, Stoughton became acting governor, except for one year, until his death.

<sup>96</sup> This is a reference, perhaps, to Jason and the Argonauts. Before killing Medusa, Jason has to kill the five-headed hell hounds.

<sup>97</sup> Letter 73 from Augustine of Hippo to Jerome. Tyrannius Rufinus (c. 345-410) was born in Aquileia. He studied in Rome, where he met Jerome (347-420), who

encouraged him to become a monk. The rift between Rufinius and Jerome started with Jerome's attack on Rufinius's translation of Origen's *On First Principles*. Jerome accused Rufinus of leaving much out of his translation to make Origen appear more orthodox.

<sup>98</sup> Mather refers to Gregory of Nazianzus (c. 329 – c. 390 CE). On a voyage by sea from Alexandria to Athens, Gregory of Nazianus was almost drowned in a great storm.

Having acquired grammar-learning in the schools of his own country, and being formed to piety by domestic examples, he was sent to Caesarea, in Palestine, where the study of eloquence flourished. He pursued the same studies some time at Alexandria, and there embarked for Athens in November. The vessel was beaten by a furious storm during twenty days, without any hopes either for the ship or passengers; all which time he lay upon the deck, bemoaning the danger of his soul on account of his not having been as yet baptized, imploring the divine mercy with many tears and loud groans, and frequently renewing his promise of devoting himself entirely to God in case he survived the danger. God was pleased to hear his prayer: the tempest ceased and the vessel arrived safe at Rhodes, and soon after at Aegina, an island near Athens (From Alban Butler's Lives of the Saints)

Some of his biographers infer that when in danger of death he and his companions received the rite of baptism. Mather probably also refers to Gregory's well-known rhetorical skills. Nazianzus was said to have taught Saint Jerome to use rhetoric (OED).

<sup>99</sup> Mather's several allusions to "charity" in this passage refer to 1 Corinthians chapter 13.

<sup>100</sup> See definition of Belial in note 77 above.

<sup>101</sup> Cotton Mather refers to the fact that accusations against the governor's wife, clergy such as Samuel Willard, and wealthy merchants of Salem such as Philip English and John Alden had forced governor Phips to stop the judges' proceedings. Cotton Mather refers to the fact that accusations against the governor's wife, clergy such as Samuel Willard, and wealthy merchants of Salem such as Philip English and John Alden had forced governor Phips to stop the judges' proceedings.

<sup>102</sup> Baal was a Cananite god. The word literally means "owner." In Mather's application it is the false god or the devil.

<sup>103</sup> The execution of the first witch Bridget Bishop, who was hanged on June 10 alarmed many ministers in the area. Immediately after Bishop's execution judge Nathaniel Saltonstall had resigned in protest. The justices then asked the ministers for advice. It was Cotton Mather himself who wrote the contradictory counsel quoted above in a document entitled "The Return of Several Ministers," signed by twelve ministers in the area and delivered to the magistrates at Salem. It was delivered to Governor Phips and his council around June 15. Though Mather warned against the exclusive use or excessive



dependence upon spectral evidence in the “Return,” his advice also sanctioned the prior actions of the court, essentially agreeing with their methods, since to have condemned the judges for executing Bishop would have reflected badly upon New England’s elite, including the newly instated Governor, Sir William Phips, who was a friend of the Mathers .

<sup>104</sup> 2 Sam. 21 tells the story of Saul’s treachery against the Gibeonites and David’s sacrificing of Saul’s five sons as recompense.

<sup>105</sup> Col. 3:15. Mather’s source is unidentified.

<sup>106</sup> Ps. 55.6.

<sup>107</sup> Col. 3:15.

<sup>108</sup> Deut. 28.59.

<sup>109</sup> 2 Pet. 2:20.

<sup>110</sup> William Perkins (1555-1602) demonologist and Puritan minister, delineated criteria for identifying witches and witchcraft in his *Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft*, published posthumously (London, 1608), 186-219.

<sup>111</sup> A *fact* in the sixteenth and seventeenth century did not simply mean primarily something known with certainty or something that could be objectively verified but a thing done or performed, which included, especially, an evil deed or a crime. See “fact, n.” (OED).

<sup>112</sup> Perkins's (and Mather's) description of how knowledge of witchcraft is conveyed fits the very definition of folk learning, that of something that is learned and taught from one person to another.

<sup>113</sup> Gaul and Mather both use astonishment in its now obsolete sense of "Loss of sense or 'wits'; being out of one's wits or at one's wits' end; mental prostration, stupor" (OED).

<sup>114</sup> English clergyman John Gaule (1603/4-1687). *Select Cases of Conscience Touching Witches and Witchcraft* (London, 1646), 74-87.

<sup>115</sup> Bernard, Richard (1568-1641). Puritan nonconformist divine and minister at Batcomb in Somersetshire. Born at Epworth, Lincolnshire. Bernard attained a BA at Cambridge in 1594-5 and an MA in 1595. Wrote "A Guide to Grande Iury Men, Divided Into Two Bookes: In the *First*, is the Authors best advice to them what to doe, before they bring in a *Billa vera* in cases of *Witchcraft*, with a *Christian Direction* to such as are too much given vpon euery crosse to thinke themselues bewitched. In the *Second*, is a *Treatise touching witches* good and bad, how they may be knowne, euicted, condemned, with many particulars tending thereunto" (London, 1627).

<sup>116</sup> Shrewd (OED); Mather does not repeat these presumptions. See chapter three of my introduction, the second subheading, "Cotton Mather's Rerrangement of the Witchcraft Guidelines."

<sup>117</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>118</sup> Athanasius (c. 295-373) Early Christian theologian and Doctor of the Church.

He became Bishop of Alexandria in 328 and spent much of his time in exile for his opposition to Arianism, supported by various emperors, including Constantine.

Athanasius was asserting faith over reason.

<sup>119</sup> Ps. 68.1. Mather quotes the italicized clause verbatim from the King James Version. The Geneva Bible of 1560 reads, “God wil arise, & his enemies shal be scattered: thei also that hate him, shal flee before him.

<sup>120</sup> By the time Cotton Mather delivered this sermon, Bridget Bishop, Sarah Good, Elizabeth Howe, Susannah Martin, Rebecca Nurse, and Sarah Wildes had been hanged for witchcraft. The next day (August 5<sup>th</sup>) George Burroughs, John and Elizabeth Proctor, John Willard, George Jacobs and Martha Carrier were brought to trial. On August 19, Burroughs, John Proctor, Willard, Jacobs, and Carrier were hanged. Elizabeth Proctor escaped hanging because of pregnancy.

<sup>121</sup> This “Renowned Martyr” appears in John Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments* as “The Story of one Stile, a Martyr, burned in Smithfield, with the Apocalypse”:

In the company of these blessed saints and martyrs of Christ, who innocently suffered within the time of king Henry’s reign for the testimony of God’s word and truth, another good man also cometh to my mind, not to be excluded out of this number, who was with like cruelty oppressed, and was burned in Smithfield about the latter end of the time of Cuthbert Tonstall, bishop of London. His name was called Stile, as is

credibly reported unto us by a worthy and ancient knight, named sir Robert Outred, who was the same time present himself at his burning, and witness of the same. With him there was burned also a book of the Apocalypse, which belike he was wont to read upon. This book when he saw fastened to the stake, to be burned with him, lifting up his voice, “O blessed Apocalypse,” said he, “how happy am I, that shall be burned with thee!” And so this good man, and the blessed Apocalypse, were both together in the fire consumed. (5.655)

Mather also quotes from this passage in “The Third Paradise” of his *Triparadisus*. (See *The Threefold Paradise of Cotton Mather*. Ed. Reiner Smolinski. Athens: U of Georgia P, 1995. 242 and 395 n. My gratitude to Reiner Smolinski for locating this reference.

<sup>122</sup> Rev. 12:12. People of Salem must have been shocked at the scale and magnitude of the witchcraft outbreak and at the number of executions, which exceeded the total number of previous executions for witchcraft since the founding of New England. Mather’s explanation for this diabolical eruption is based on Revelation 12.12 above and Revelation 20.1-3, which states that the devil will be chained for a thousand years and then be loosed for a little season. Satan will then go out and deceive the nations, gathering the forces of Gog and Magog for the final battle of Armageddon. Satan and his minions will be destroyed by fire from heaven and cast into the lake of fire. The Last Judgment will then ensue. See also Mather’s notes to these verses in the Biblia Americana.

<sup>123</sup> Mather alludes to the Lord's appearance as a pillar of cloud by day and as a pillar of fire by night to the Israelites wandering in the desert. God's refulgent and revealing light is known in Hebrew as the Shekinah. The term does not appear in the Bible, but is used in the Targums. The term was also applied by Christians to Jesus Christ. See Exod. 13.21-22; Exod. 14.24; Num. 14.14; Neh. 9.12, 19; Ezra 1.14; Wis. 18.3.

<sup>124</sup> Job 19.25: "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth."

<sup>125</sup> Rev. 11.15.

<sup>126</sup> Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Dan. 2.31-45 to signify the four monarchies. These monarchies correspond to the passing of historic kingdoms on earth that will make way for the Kingdom of God. These empires are (to Daniel) the Babylonian, the Mede, the Persian, and the Greeks. Daniel's dream of the four beasts in Dan. 7.1-7 also corresponds with these four kingdoms. These four kingdoms and four beasts in Daniel were interpreted by Joseph Mede, Thomas Beverley, and other theologians, including Mather, to stand for the Babylonian, the Persian, the Greek, and the Roman empires. They were now living in the vestiges of the Roman monarchy in the form of the Roman Catholic Pope, or Antichrist. These verses from Daniel were interpreted together with prophesies in Rev. 11.2-3 and 13.15 concerning the length of the rule of Antichrist and the duration of the woman's wilderness condition. The length of exile for the woman in the wilderness, representing the true Church, would be that of

the rule of Antichrist in Rome before Christ's return to set up His millennial Kingdom.

The time of the woman's exile was to be 1260 days, interpreted as years by application of the prophetic rendering of a day into a year in Ezek. 4.6. See Reiner Smolinski's introduction to The Threefold Paradise of Cotton Mather, 65-66 and 70-71.

<sup>127</sup> Daniel 7.22.

<sup>128</sup> This phrase is found in Jerome's Letter 53 to Paulinum Presbyterum. The entire sentence from which Mather takes the phrase reads, "Apocalypsis Joannis tot habet Sacramenta quot verba - parum dixi, in verbis singulis multiplices latent intelligentiae" (Epistulae 1.463). The quotation can be paraphrased as "The Apocalypse of John contains as many mysteries as words, and mysteries in every word."

<sup>129</sup> See Isa. 29.11; Dan. 12.9; Rev. 5.1; Rev. 7.3-8.

<sup>130</sup> Thomas Beverley (d. 1702) Independent minister and author of *A Scripture Line of Time* (1687), a discourse on Daniel 8.14. He received an MA from Kings College, Aberdeen in 1643. He published over fifty works in the 1680s and 1690s, many having to do with his belief that Christ would return in 1697.

<sup>131</sup> Acts 3.21.

<sup>132</sup> According to Beverly, the end of the Babylonian captivity occurred in 528 B.C. Beverly predicted that twenty-three hundred years later, in the year 1772, the "new Time," the "cubical thousand Years of the Glorious Kingdom of Christ," the state of the New Jerusalem, would begin. The figure of 2300 comes from Daniel's vision of the restoration of the temple (Daniel 8.14-25) in "two thousand three hundred evenings and

mornings.” Taking a day for a year (Ezekiel 4.6), Beverly predicts that 2300 “evenings and mornings” (from the time of Daniel’s vision in days until the end of captivity and the restoration of the temple) was a type or foreshadowing of the 2300 years from the restoration of the temple until the advent of the New Jerusalem.

<sup>133</sup> The “Mystical *Babylon*” is the Antichrist and his kingdom in the visible and invisible worlds. Mather means old Babylon as the new Rome. He refers to the whore of Babylon in Rev. 17 and her identification with Rome. Mather now identifies Babylon analogically with the Roman Church and Antichrist. George Herbert’s The Church Militant (1633).

<sup>134</sup> Matt. 16.3. Mather means, of course, the signs of the end times.

<sup>135</sup> For this episode, see Revelation 5-10. Mather calls attention to the primary components of ecstatic experience, voices and visions. The same Shekinah or glorious and revelatory light of God contained in the pillar of cloud and fire may have been a component in John’s experience. (See James 1.17.)

<sup>136</sup> Mather says that with perfect hindsight we can see past biblical prophecies having been fulfilled, first, with the Christianity replacing paganism as the state religion of the Roman Empire in 436, and second, with the downfall of Roman Catholicism at the commencement of the Reformation in 1517. See note 255 below. See also Reiner Smolinski’s discussion of Mather’s early and later eschatology in his introduction to the Threefold Paradise, esp. 60-78.

<sup>137</sup> Ps. 22-28.

<sup>138</sup> “Placed outside a vessel” (OED). Mather applies this verse typologically to the early church.

<sup>139</sup> See 2 Thes. 2.3. Mather means Antichrist, whom he interprets as the Pope. Mather refers to a time in early Christianity when the Church was truly righteous, before the devil infiltrated and corrupted it, before “Sinne being not able to extirpate quite / The Churches here, bravely resolv’d one night / To be a Church-man too, and wear a Mitre” (Herbert The Church Militant 161-63).

<sup>140</sup> Constantine I (c. 280-337). Mather alludes not only to Constantine, who made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire but also to England’s own Glorious Revolution of 1688-89 when the Catholic King James II was deposed and succeeded by his Daughter Mary II and her husband, William III, Prince of Orange, who were Protestant. Parliament passed a bill that made it illegal for Roman Catholics to hold the throne. Just as William and Mary established a Protestant Monarchy, Constantine I was the first Roman emperor to adopt Christianity. Under Constantine the Roman Empire ceased persecuting Christians and became a Christian state. Accounts of Constantine’s conversion vary, but according to Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea (c. 260-340), after seeing a vision of a cross of light in the sky above the sun with the words, in hoc signo vinces (in this sign you shall conquer) inscribed on it, Constantine henceforward sought divine aid from the Christian God. Constantine’s vision was confirmed by a vision in a dream in which Christ asked him to inscribe the sign of the cross on his standards. Constantine inscribed the Greek letters chi-rho (X-P), a symbol of Christianity on soldiers shields,



helmets, and battle standards. In 313 co-emperors Constantine and Licinius (died 325) proclaimed the Edict of Milan, which granted all people the right to worship whatever deity they wished. As time went on, Constantine showed greater and greater favor to the Christians. In 324 Constantine was enthroned as sole emperor of the Roman Empire. In 325 Constantine I established the Council of Nicaea, which put down the Arian controversy by declaring that Christ was a separate being but homooousios (of one substance) with God the Father.

<sup>141</sup> See Rev. 12.10.

<sup>142</sup> Rev. 12.12.

<sup>143</sup> Various persecutions of the early Christians under the Roman emperors Nero (54-68); Domitian (81-96); Trajan (98-117); Marcus Aurelius (161-80); Septimus Severus (193-211); Gaius Julius Maximus (235-238); Decius (249-251); Valerian (253-260); Aurelian (270-275), and Diocletian (284-305). Eusebius Pamphili, Bishop of Caesarea in Palestine (c. 260-339) wrote an account of the persecutions by Rome against the Christians in his Ecclesiastical History.

<sup>144</sup> Mather continues to propound the ecstatic state of visions and voices he mentions two paragraphs above. He emphasizes the synaesthetic effect of divine light blended with heavenly music, something Mather may have experienced recurrently through fasting and meditation (see David Levin, “When did Cotton Mather See the Angel?”). In this passage Mather exemplifies the use of verbal synaesthesia to create word pictures of a heavenly realm ringing with light. Such verbal synaesthesia abound in

the Bible, Dante, Blake, Percy Shelley, Emily Dickinson, and the language of mysticism. See, for example, the Exodus 3 account where the Lord speaks to Moses out of the burning bush with the message “I AM that I AM” (3.1-14).

<sup>145</sup> Mather alludes again to Rev. 12.12. Mather bolds these words to remind his readers to turn to God and repent to avoid the descent into hell and the eternal woe and wrath of the devil that awaits the unredeemed following the end of time.

<sup>146</sup> See Isa. 14.12-15.

<sup>147</sup> The phrase “ministering spirits” is from Heb. 1.14.

<sup>148</sup> Adapted from Isa. 14.13-15.

<sup>149</sup> The devil is rational because he is endowed with the faculty of reason. Unlike Thomas Hobbes in Leviathan (34.207-08), Mather sees no contradiction in referring to a spiritual “substance.”

<sup>150</sup> Jude 3.6

<sup>151</sup> Humorsome: “Subject to or full of humours; fanciful, capricious, fantastic; peevish, ill-humoured . . .” (*OED*). See Isaiah 8.18-22 and John 11.10.

<sup>152</sup> Jesus exorcised a “legion” of demons from the man. The demons then entered a flock of swine, who rushed down a steep bank to the sea of Galilee and were drowned. The Gadarene energumen may refer to a demoniac from Gadara, a city near the southeast end of the Sea of Galilee. Different manuscript sources list the location alternately as the country of Gadarenes, Gerasenes, and Gergesenes.

<sup>153</sup> Joel 3.8

<sup>154</sup> Mather's apocalyptic imagery derives from Joel 3, especially verses 8-21. The name of the valley in Joel 3.8 has been variously translated. The Geneva Bible renders it as the "valley of threshing." "Threshing" meant beating, knocking, or striking with a flail (OED). "Threshing" also means to separate the seed of grain from the husk and straw, which symbolizes the separating the believers from the unbelievers. The valley of Jehoshaphat in Joel 3.2, 12 is a name for the site where all nations are to be gathered together by Jehovah to be judged.

<sup>155</sup> "Having science, knowledge, or skill" (OED).

<sup>156</sup> A Manichean. Manes, or Mani, the founder of the religion, died about 254. Augustine of Hippo had been a Manichean, and it was once considered a Christian heresy, though it was also a religion in its own right. Manicheans viewed the world as a stark dichotomy between spirit and matter, light and darkness, goodness and evil. Manicheans believed the physical world was totally evil and that the only salvation was through knowledge of and contact with the spirit. Consequently, the Manicheans taught that Christ had no real or substantial body. Manicheans would have seen the devil as evil manifested everywhere as the physical world, hence Mather's allusion to them.

<sup>157</sup> The second of the ten great plagues instituted against Egypt. See Exodus 8.1-15 and ff.

<sup>158</sup> From 3000 to 6000 infantry troops and 100-200 cavalrymen constituted a Roman legion. Hence "legion" came to mean any large number. In Mark 5.9 the Gadarene Energumen describes the number of devils that possessed him as a "legion."

<sup>159</sup> See Eph. 2.2.

<sup>160</sup> High places, mentioned frequently in the Old Testament, were platforms, usually built on elevated locations, devoted to religious ceremonies. In the Old Testament high places are most often associated with the Canaanite fertility religion and the worship of Baal. Ritual prostitution (1 Kings 14:23-24; Ezek. 16:16) and child sacrifice (Jer. 7:31; 19.5; 32.35; Ezek. 16.20) were said to occur on the high places, just as Mather and others connected with the Salem trials believed such actions took place at witches' Sabbaths. Typologically, the witches' meetings said to have occurred at Salem corresponded with the Old Testament Canaanite worship of Baal at the high places.

<sup>161</sup> Job 41.34 says of Leviathan that "He beholdeth all high things; he is a king over all the children of pride." Satan was believed to have fallen as a result of pride, and his children would have been children of pride. Leviathan was interpreted as the devil through an allegorical or typological reading of Isaiah 27.1 where it is referred to as "a crooked serpent." See also Ps. 74.13-14.

<sup>162</sup> Baal-zebub was originally the name of a god worshiped by the Philistines at Ekron in 2 Kings 1.2-16. The original term may have meant "Lord of the lofty abode." (Lord of the high places?) Later, because of its competition with Yahweh, the Hebrews may have altered the name to "Beel-zebub," meaning "lord of the flies." In Matt. 12.24-27; Mark 3.22-26, and Luke 11.15-19, Jesus denied that he cast out demons by Beel-zebub, what the scribes and Pharisees term the "chief" or "prince" "of the devils." See "Baal-zebub" ([HCBDB](#)).

<sup>163</sup> Dragoons were heavily armed troops in some European armies during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. “Dragoon” comes from the French “dragon,” which fits Mather’s apocalyptic context. In the seventeenth century “Dragoon” was also the name of a kind of carbine or musket named for its breathing fire like a dragon (OED). The Dragoons Mather mentions were specifically French and Catholic, therefore fighting for the Pope, or—to Mather—Antichrist.

<sup>164</sup> The account of The Devil of Mascon (or Macon) was related by a minister, François Perreault (or Perreaud) in his Démonologie ou Tracité des Démons et Sorciers (Geneva, 1653). “The Devil of Mascon” is retold in George Sinclair’s Satan’s Invisible World Discovered (Edinburgh, 1685) 193-99. The chemist, natural philosopher, and Royal Society confrere Robert Boyle (1627-91) wrote of his belief in the Devil of Mascon in a preface to the English translation of The Devill of Mascon, by Pierre du Moulin (Oxford, 1658).

<sup>165</sup> Increase Mather records the story of a 1679 haunting by a demon of William Morse’s house in “*Newberry in New-England*,” in An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences (Boston, 1684) 142-56. Cotton Mather also retells the story in “The Third Example” in Thaumtographia Pneumatica, Book VI Chapter VII of Magnalia Christi Americana (London, 1702) 68-69.

<sup>166</sup> Apollonius of Tyana (fl. 1<sup>st</sup> century AD) a Greek Neo-Pythagorean philosopher and contemporary of Christ, was born in Tyana in Asia Minor. The only source of information about him is a biography by Philostratus (AD 170-245) written at

the behest of Empress Julia Domna (d. 217), second wife of the Roman emperor Septimus Severus (reigned 193-211). The biography of Apollonius, who was a pagan Christ-figure said to perform miracles, including raising the dead, was probably written to counteract the influence of Christianity. He is thus a good example to Mather of a sorcerer who opposed Christ.

<sup>167</sup> Mather makes a firm connection between the devil in New England and the devil in all ages. Demons, therefore, provide a link between the time of Christ and New England's Salem that transcends typology. Mather links the demons of old with the more modern stereotypical witch.

<sup>168</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>169</sup> Adapted from Isa. 27.11.

<sup>170</sup> This passage may be part of Mather's attempt to get his audience to focus their wrath on the devil and not on each other.

<sup>171</sup> See Jer. 17.12.

<sup>172</sup> The term "Praise ye the Lord" occurs 26 times in the King James Bible, mostly in Psalms 104, 105, 106, 111, 112, 113, 116, 117, 135, 146, 147, 148, 149, and 150. See also Jer. 20.13, Judges 5.2, and Sirach 39.35.

<sup>173</sup> A recurrent image in *Wonders* is the Devil as a tiger ready to devour followers of Christ, the Lamb of God.

<sup>174</sup> Gen. 1.26

<sup>175</sup> Mather contrasts God's Bosom with Hell's Bottom.

<sup>176</sup> Mather combines his scientific interest in the composition of the atmosphere with his spiritual interest in the prince of the power of the air, bringing the devil of Ephesus up to date. See Eph. 2.2.

<sup>177</sup> See Ps. 84.3; Ps. 102.7; Mat. 10.29-31; Luke 12.6-7.

<sup>178</sup> Mather obliquely summarizes the first two chapters of Job.

<sup>179</sup> 2 Kings 6.21.

<sup>180</sup> Jesus's words to Pilate in John 19.11.

<sup>181</sup> The opposite of Bonifacious. Richard Baxter uses the same phrase on page 241 of *The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits* (London, 1691).

<sup>182</sup> See Rev. 8.13, 12.12, and Exodus 19.16. In the book of Revelation, after the Lamb opens the seventh—and last—seal there is silence. Subsequently, God gives the seven angels seven trumpets and the sound of each trumpet brings a different woe upon the earth's inhabitants, which continues through Rev. 10.

<sup>183</sup> Mather uses seizure ambiguously, meaning both to seize or grasp forcibly and also to cause a seizure, in the sense of causing convulsions.

<sup>184</sup> Mather is probably thinking of cases like the Gadarene energumen described in Mark 5.1-16 and Luke 8.26-39, contemporary cases as described in witchcraft and apparition narratives such as “The Drummer of Tedworth” in Joseph Glanvill's Saducismus Triumphatus (1689) 321-339; local cases of possession, like that of the Goodwin children of Boston, of whom he wrote in Memorable Providences (1689), and of course, the symptoms of possession of the afflicted at Salem.

<sup>185</sup> Matthew Poole defined Moloch as “an Idol chiefly of the Ammonites . . . .

This seems to be the Saturn of the Heathens, to whom especially children and men were sacrificed” (Annotations Lev. 18.21). Mather conjures the images of witches burning at the stake, but his real purpose is to compare the temporal burning with the eternal roasting that witches and the unsaved will experience. Mather also shows that sacrifice to the devil—and the devil’s association with burning bodies—is as old as time and that the burning will continue in eternity. No witches were burned at the stake in England or in America, though they were burned in Scotland, and many treatises that Mather knew from the European continent tell of such punishment. Witches were burned at Mohra, Sweden in 1669-70, though not alive, apparently. Mather does not mention in his version of Swedish account that witches were burned, though in one passage he describes the devil with a pitchfork attempting to drive those who confess into a burning pit (*WIW* 151). Many witchcraft treatises also bear witness to the dire consequences of disobeying the Devil once one signs the Devil’s book.

<sup>186</sup> Here, Mather expresses the theory that Native Americans are the children of the Devil (see Joseph Mede). Here, he also attributes the children of the devil with indigence.

<sup>187</sup> By *loadstone*, Mather means a magnet for a nautical compass. The Italian Mather credits with the invention of the marine compass is Flavio Gioia (fl. early fourteenth century), who was credited with inventing or introducing it. The magnetic compass actually began to be used sometime in the twelfth century by mariners in both



China and Europe. Mather's discusses of the loadstone and magnetic compass at greater length in *The Christian Philosopher* 112-18. He also mentions the loadstone's assistance in the discovery of America in the *Magnalia* 1.1.2 (Murdock's ed. 117).

<sup>188</sup> Mather refers to the German spectacle-maker Hans Lippershay (c. 1570-c. 1619), who has traditionally been credited with inventing the telescope c. 1594, which he sold to the Estates General of Holland, having modified the device into binoculars their request. Galileo heard of Lippershay's invention and made his own telescope.

<sup>189</sup> Nitric acid, a transparent, colorless to yellowish , fuming, corrosive liquid, a highly reactive oxidizing agent used in the production of explosives.

<sup>190</sup> A white, grey, or colorless mineral of potassium nitrate, also known as saltpeter, used in the making of gunpowder,.

<sup>191</sup> Sulfuric acid.

<sup>192</sup> A poisonous atmosphere formerly thought to rise from swamps and putrid matter and cause disease.

<sup>193</sup> Mather probably refers to the great outbreak of bubonic plague that struck London in 1665, described by Daniel Defoe in *Journal of The Plague Year* (1754). It is interesting here that Mather identifies the devil so closely with the causing of disease. Following his logic, since the devil caused the plague, any disease might be of the devil's doing, and hence any illness, mental or physical, could be viewed as the result of a visitation by the devil. Mather's close association of the devil with illness speaks to how

the judges in Salem could have interpreted a physical and mental disorder caused by thornapple poisoning, for instance, as a direct assault by the devil.

<sup>194</sup> Roman god of fire, especially destructive fire, as that of volcanoes and conflagrations. In Greece, Hephaestus possessed the same attributes as the Roman Vulcan. His ability as a smith made him the patron saint of craftsmen. Mather attributes, not only wars and illnesses, but conflagrations, earthquakes and volcanoes to the Devil's wrath (see *WIW* 26-27).

<sup>195</sup> Of or belonging to Thyestes, in ancient Greek legend brother of Atreus, who at a banquet made him eat of the flesh of his own two sons; hence used allusively (OED).

<sup>196</sup> Satan is allowed to "touch" everything that belongs to Job—except for his life. Hence, Cotton Mather can attribute the storm to Satan since it took Job's children. From Satan's affliction of Job, theologians could infer that the devil was able to inflict harm directly without the use of a witch, a point Increase Mather makes in his diatribe against the use of spectral evidence in Cases of Conscience (1693) 10.

<sup>197</sup> In The Christian Philosopher (London, 1721) Mather writes of lightning being created by the mixing in the air of "*nitrous particles* of a spiritual nature" with material of a *sulphureous* nature. Sulphur and nitre, or saltpeter, as Mather tells us, are the principal ingredients in gunpowder. Sulphur, known in the Bible as brimstone, is frequently associated with the devil. Paracelsus publicly burned the works of Galen and Avicenna in a vase containing nitrate and sulphur. In Paracelsus' alchemical thought, the properties of saltpeter was the physical counterpart of the divine substance. Saltpeter, or potassium

nitrate, when combined in the air with sulfurous particles such as aluminum nitrate, and heated under friction, created a lightning flash and thunder. Because of the extremely dry nature of saltpeter, it was thought to attract copious amounts of water vapor. Hence, when the various particles combined, lightning would flash, the explosion would produce thunder and water vapor would be released in the form of rain. Paracelsus compared the flash of saltpeter to the Second Coming of Christ (Principe and Weeks 59). The lightning flash produced corresponded to the light of God, and sound effect of the explosion corresponded with the voice of God, and the life-giving properties of water were comparable to the life-sustaining properties of the Holy Spirit. See Principe and Weeks “Jacob Boehme’s Divine Substance Lalliter: its Nature, Origin, and Relationship to Seventeenth-Century Scientific Theories.” See also Allen G. Debus, “The Paracelsian Aerial Niter” and Henry Guerlac, “The Poet’s Nitre.”

<sup>198</sup> Mather may get this information on Lapland sorcery from from Richard Baxter’s *Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits*. Baxter writes: “The selling of Winds in the Northern Seas towards *Lapland* and *Iseland*, is so common asserted by Mariners and Historians, that I shall omit particular Instances; *Olaus Magnus*, and others, will tell the reader of that, and more, in those cold parts” (105). Olaus Magnus (1490-1558) historian and archbishop of Uppsala is known primarily for two works, *Carta marina* (Venice, 1539) a map of the Scandinavian countries, and *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus* (Rome, 1555), originally intended as a commentary on the map, containing information

on the early Scandinavian people. The Laplanders were thought especially to practice witchcraft.

<sup>199</sup> The Arian controversy involved a dispute over whether the Son of God was separate or of one substance with God the Father. Arius (256-336) and his followers believed that the Son, as a created being, was less than the God the Father. The dispute was settled at the Council of Nicea in 325 in favor of consubstantiality or homoousion, that the Son and the Father were of one substance. Arius was excommunicated in 321 but later reinstated to communion by Constantine. Arius, however, died on the day of the ceremony.

<sup>200</sup> Ps. 44.22; Jer. 12.3.

<sup>201</sup> The Devil of Mascon is reported to have said, "O poor Hugonits (those of the reformed Religion) you shall suffer much within a few years; O what mischief is intended against you!" (Sinclair, Satan's Invisible World Discovered 197-198). Mather believed that the devil of Mascon had predicted the Massacre of the Huguenots.

<sup>202</sup> Mather refers the Bartholomew's Day Massacre which occurred in Paris August 24, 1572. The unrest spread to the Provinces and, in all, about 20,000 French Huguenots were killed by Roman Catholic mobs. The massacre was authorized by Charles IX at the instigation of Catherine de Médicis. Mather also refers to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. The proclamation, issued at Nantes, France in 1598, gave religious and civil liberties to the French Protestants, the Huguenots.

<sup>203</sup> 1 Chron. 21:1

<sup>204</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>205</sup> Death. See Job 18:14.

<sup>206</sup> See Dan. 3:19.

<sup>207</sup> Matt 25.41.

<sup>208</sup> Isa. 49:25.

<sup>209</sup> See Ephesians 3.10. The gloss for this verse in the Geneva Bible reads, “The vnlooked for calling of the Gentiles, was as it were a glasse to the heauenly Angels, wherein they might behold the marueilous wisdom of God.”

<sup>210</sup> Ecc. 11.9.

<sup>211</sup> Mather’s source is Thomas Burnet’s *Sacred Theory of the Earth* (47-73). My thanks goes to Reiner Smolinski for identifying this source.

<sup>212</sup> Mather probably refers to the pagan Germanic Franks, Goths, and Vandals who attacked the Roman Empire.

<sup>213</sup> Arabs or Muslims.

<sup>214</sup> Mather probably means “Turks” in the sense of those belonging to the Ottoman Empire, with whom the Christians fought during the Crusades.

<sup>215</sup> “Unspeakable, not to be spoken of; nefarious.” (OED)

<sup>216</sup> Archaic form of “Crusade” (OED).

<sup>217</sup> Adapted from Isa. 65.17, 66.22; 2 Pet. 3.13; Rev. 21.1

<sup>218</sup> Mat. 24.7; Mark 13.8; Luke 21.11

<sup>219</sup> Adapted from Deut. 32.22. Mather quotes from the same verse in *Trip paradisus* (193) and in his *Christian Philosopher* (108).

<sup>220</sup> God permitting, he causes an earthquake.

<sup>221</sup> Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus (42 B.C.—A.D. 31). Mather gets his information on this terrible earthquake from Pliny *Natural History* 2.86, 200.

<sup>222</sup> Mt. Etna or Aetna, an active volcano on the east coast of Sicily. Mather believed at the time that the great conflagration at the beginning of the millennium would begin in Italy with its active volcanos. Mather wrote in *Christianus Per Ignem* (Boston, 1702) “that the *Conflagration* will be at first *partial*, and *liesurely* and *progressive*: And that the first Efforts and Effects of it, are like to be felt by *Italy*, whose horrendous *Volcano*’s, together with the like Shakings and Breakings of the Earth, in the Bowels of it, would suggest further suspicions of such a *Catastrophe* impending over that *Seat of the Beast*” (the Vatican, Rome) (qtd. in Smolinski, Introduction, Threefold Paradise, 41).

<sup>223</sup> Accounts of this earthquake occur elsewhere in Mather’s Diary 1.142-43, in Samuel Sewall’s Phaenomena 38-39, and John Ray Three Physico-Theological Discourses. London, 1693) 186-194. (See Smolinski Threefold Paradise 390 n. 57.) On August 5, 1692 (a day after this sermon was delivered) Mather writes to John Cotton:

The whole town yesterday turned the lecture into a fast, kept in our meeting-house; god give a good return. But in the morning we were entertained with the horrible tidings of the late earthquake at Jamaica, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June last. When, on a fair day, the sea suddenly swelled, and the

earth shook and broke in many places; and in a minute's time, the rich town of Port-Royal, the Tyrus of the whole English America, but a very Sodom for wickedness, was immediately swallowed up, and the sea came rolling over the town. No less than seventeen-hundred souls of that one town are missing, besides other incredible devastations all over the island, where houses are demolished, mountains overturned, rocks rent, and all manner of destruction inflicted. The Non-conformist minister there escaped wonderfully with his life. Some of our poor New England people are lost in the ruins, and others have their bones broke. Forty vessels were sunk—namely all whose cables did not break; but no New England ones. Behold, and accident speaking to all our English America. (*Selected Letters of Cotton Mather*. Compiled with Commentary by Kenneth Silverman. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1971. 40-41.)

<sup>224</sup> Cotton Mather believes the Second Coming will arrive in 1697, then 1716, then 1736. Reiner Smolinski, Introduction, Threefold Paradise, 60-78.

<sup>225</sup> Mather refers the King Herod's slaughter of all the male children from two years old and under in Bethehem and "all the coasts thereof." See Matthew 2.1-18.

<sup>226</sup> Hab. 1.8; Zeph. 3.3

<sup>227</sup> See, for instance, Thomas Heywood's treatment of the witches' pact and Sabbath as "contrarie Rites and ceremonies" in Hierarchie of the Blessed Angells, (London, 1653), 471-73.

<sup>228</sup> Mather refers to New England. In the preface to Mather's second edition of *Memorable Providences*, Richard Baxter wrote that the Devil would show the most malice "where he is hated and hateth most . . . ." (See note 37.)

<sup>229</sup> See Rev. 8.13, which signals the beginning of the three woes in the text. The first woe was in the form of locusts. John's description of the invading locusts in the first woe resembles the seventh-century conception of demons.

<sup>230</sup> Luke 21.24.

<sup>231</sup> Cant. 4.8.

<sup>232</sup> See Ps. 76.10.

<sup>233</sup> Jer. 50.5.

<sup>234</sup> See Ps. 121.

<sup>235</sup> See Ps. 103.1-4.

<sup>236</sup> Acts 14.22.

<sup>237</sup> Joab influenced Absalom to rebel against King David, his father.

<sup>238</sup> Jeremiah Burroughs (bap. 1601?, d. 1646). Burroughs was an Independent minister and active Puritan reformer in both England and Holland. He received a BA in 1621 and an MA in 1624 from Cambridge, where his tutor was Thomas Hooker (1586?–1647). He joined with other ministers in following Hooker's spiritual exercises in the mid-1620s. He worked to unite Congregationalists and Presbyterians.

<sup>239</sup> See Rev. 14.13.

<sup>240</sup> See 1 Sam 4.3; 1 Sam. 12.10; 2 Sam. 19.9; Luke 1.74.



<sup>241</sup> See Job 10.1 and Gen. 27.46.

<sup>242</sup> Isa. 58.4.

<sup>243</sup> Rev. 14.13.

<sup>244</sup> In the subsequent passage, one wonders at Mather's reasons for emphasizing the glorious nature of this respite from the Devil for those who "die in the Lord." Mather is perhaps alluding to those innocent victims of the witch trials who were condemned and executed on the basis of spectral evidence, reminding the families of those victims that the executed innocents would receive heavenly compensation as would any other martyr who had been unjustly condemned. Truly, the innocent who did not confess guilt "died in the Lord" even though they were condemned and executed as witches. Mather may be suggesting either that the judges had been unintentionally wrong or over-reliant on spectral evidence or that the Devil, the "father of lies" had feigned the specters or apparitions of innocent people who died as a result of the Devil's malevolent chicanery. Increase Mather's treatise *Cases of Conscience*, which was published in Boston shortly after *Wonders*, claims that the devil is capable of doing just that. It became, therefore, the Devil, in effect, who had killed the victims, and not an error of the judges, whom Mather was defending. The judges had based their decisions on the "evidence." Whether Mather meant this or not, surely he could not have missed how such promises of a heaven free from Satanic influence for those who "die in the Lord" would be interpreted. Mather does not exclude those who died in the witch trials from the reward. Many of the fundamentals of the christian faith mather is talking about still applies today. Ample evidence.

<sup>245</sup> 2 Kings 20.1; Isa. 38.1.

<sup>246</sup> An allusion to the golden doors of the temple in Jerusalem from the reign of Hezekiah c. 724-695 B.C. See 2 Kings 18.16. Hezekiah was forced to sell the golden doors of the temple in Jerusalem to pay tribute to Sennacherib, king of Assyria. In answers to Hezekiah's prayers for deliverance, an angel of the Lord slew 185,000 of Sennacherib's army and saved Jerusalem from destruction. Sennacherib was forced to return to Assyria and was assassinated by his sons.

<sup>247</sup> Mather refers to the astral body or the *Nishmath Chajim*. See Mather's discussion of the soul's vehicle in the "Second Paradise" of Mather's "Triparadisus" (122-126) and in his Angel of Bethesda 28-23. Mather States, "It is probable, that when we dy, the Nishmath-Chajim goes away as a Vehicle to the Rational Soul" (Triparadisus 126).

<sup>248</sup> Mather connects both body and soul with the *Nishmath-Chajim* and it to movement within both the spiritual and physical "*Atmosphære*."

<sup>249</sup> Adaptation of Num. 24.23.

<sup>250</sup> It does seem that the Devil was responsible for a great many of the prosecutions.

<sup>251</sup> Luke 22.53.

<sup>252</sup> Mather is praying for the Lord's return and his millennium on earth, at the beginning of which, the devil will be bound for a thousand years.

<sup>253</sup> Antichrist or Satan.

<sup>254</sup> Wonders of the Invisible World is an excellent example of Mather's application of his early millennialism. Following Thomas Beverley's A Scripture Line of Time (London, 1684), Mather marked the beginning of the reign of the Popes or the Antichrist at the year 437. According to an interpretation of passages in Revelation, Antichrist was to rule for 1260 years, ending with in the year 1697:  $437 \text{ AD} + 1260 \text{ years} = 1697$ . Mather gets the number 1260 from Revelation 11.3-5: "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesie a thousand two hundred and threescore dayes clothed in sackcloth." and 12.6 "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand, two hundred, and threescore dayes." He gets another indication of the period of time that the woman is to remain in the wilderness from Revelation 12.14: "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times and half a time, from the face of the serpent." Following the formula for prophetic time in Ezekiel 4.6, Mather interprets a day to mean a year. A time, two times, and half a time = 3.5 times.  $1260 \text{ days divided by } 3.5 = 360 \text{ days}$ . A time, times, and half a time could then be interpreted as  $360 + 360 + 360 + 180 = 1260$ . Mather gets this number from Revelation 11.3-5 and 12.6. Mather believed the Woman in the wilderness or the true church would remain in the "wilderness" for 1260 years. Following Thomas Beverley, Cotton Mather marked the beginning of the wilderness for the Church by the year 437, when the Holy Roman Empire was invaded by barbarian hordes and disintegrated under the reign of Valentinus

III (419-455). The dissolution of the empire was accompanied by Valentinian III's granting of greater authority to Pope Leo the Great (440-461). Thus, the reign of the Antichrist was thought to have begun around 437 with the consolidation of power by Pope Leo, which to Mather and others marked the beginning of the Antichrist's reign. 1080 years (or three times) later, Martin Luther nailed his Ninety-five Theses to the door of Wittenberg Cathedral, marking the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. Mather, following Beverley, concludes that Luther's act constituted the beginning of the last half time ( $1080 + 180 = 1260$ ). Since  $1517 + 180$  (half of 360) = 1697, Mather expected the millennium to begin in 1697. The closeness of 1692 to 1697 helps explain the magnitude of devil's wrath in Salem. This time frame was also interpreted in light of the prophecies of Daniel concerning the four empires and the four beasts (2.31-45, 7.1-7). Cotton Mather, following Joseph Mede and others, interpreted the four empires represented by the four beasts to be the Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and Roman empires. The Roman Empire, according to Beverley, ended in 437, but Rome still ruled in the form of the Roman Catholic Antichrist. The fifth monarchy, the Kingdom of God, would begin during the last or fourth kingdom or monarchy, that of Rome. It was this period from 437 to 1697 that the woman, or true Church, would remain in her wilderness condition. In 1697, thought Beverley and Mather in 1692, Christ's millennial rule, the Fifth Monarchy, would begin. See Reiner Smolinski's discussion in his introduction to Threefold Paradise.

<sup>255</sup> Rev. 11.15.

<sup>256</sup> Here, Mather refers primarily to two events. The first was the the clear decline of the Ottoman Turks following their defeat at Nis, Serbia in 1689. The second event was that of the War of the League of Augsburg (1689-1697) that finally ended with the Peace of Ryswick (1697). In Britain the War of the League of Augsburg was called the War of the Grand Alliance, and in New England it was called King William's War. It was this war that was responsible for the Indian raids on the Maine frontier since 1689, during, and after the Salem witchcraft trials. This French and Indian war may have actually played an indirect role in fueling the Salem incidents, as it contributed to the general anxiety in the colony and supported the idea of the Indians as devils and their rites and practices as demonic.

<sup>257</sup> These words were spoken by Queen Mary to Increase Mather in a dialogue recorded in Cotton Mather's *Parentator*. The words of the Queen appear in *Parentator* as follows:

It is not in the Power of Men to Believe what they Please; and therefore I think, they should not be forced in matters of Religion, contrary to their Perswasions and their Consciences. I WISH ALL GOOD MEN WERE OF ONE MIND; HOWEVER IN THE MEAN TIME, I WOULD HAVE THEM LIVE PEACEABLY, AND LOVE ONE ANOTHER. (130)

<sup>258</sup> *His Majesties gracious declaration to all his loving subjects for liberty of conscience.* (London, 1687).

<sup>259</sup> This worthy divine is unidentified.

<sup>260</sup> Mather refers to the dethronement of James II in the Glorious Revolution of 1689.

<sup>261</sup> The Waldenses were named after the French religious reformer Peter Waldo (c. 1140- c. 1218). Waldo had been a wealthy merchant of Lyons, France, but after undergoing a conversion experience, he gave his house to his wife, put his daughters in a nunnery, gave the rest of his wealth to the poor, and became a lay preacher. Waldo and his followers of lay evangelists stressed simple dress and poverty and wandered about in pairs preaching the gospel in the vernacular. Waldo was antagonistic to the Pope and to the religious hierarchy. He opposed such elements of worship and belief as the adoration of saints, the use of iconic images, and the power of the clergy to absolve sin. Waldenses were known in French as the Vaudois (named for the Swiss Canton of Vaud) or Protestants at Geneva.

<sup>262</sup> On April 13, 1598 Henry IV of France granted religious liberty to French Protestants, the Huguenots. On Oct. 18, 1685, King Louis XIV revoked the edict of Nantes.

<sup>263</sup> Piedmont.

<sup>264</sup> Cotton Mather hopes for the Second Coming in 1679. He refers to the “Glorious Return” of the Wadenses to the Vaudois valleys in 1689 under Waldensian pastor and soldier, Henry Arnaud (1641-1721). Arnaud led a group of Waldensens against the allied forces of France and Victor Amadeus II, Duke of Savoy (1689-90). In

1690, the Duke of Savoy sided with Arnaud and the Waldensians against the French in return for their support. Arnaud served as agent to the Duke and was able to secure the repatriation of the Waldenses (1690-1698). He later wrote *Historie de la glorieuse rentree des Vaudois dans leur vallees* (1710).

<sup>265</sup> Mather is making a case for witchcraft in New England by stressing New England's special status, like that of the Waldenses, as the Lord's chosen. The devil is most eager to afflict New England because of their hitherto high standards of righteousness. God's allows Satan to afflict New England disproportionately because he is most concerned for their spiritual welfare and ready to allow chastisement for error. Evidence of Satan's presence in the invisible world is also evidence of the hand of God. Mather continues to refer to Richard Baxter's statements about New England in his preface to the London edition of Memorable Providences to support his assertions.

<sup>266</sup> Deut. 32.10. Mather compares New England in their wilderness to Israel as the people of His inheritance.

<sup>267</sup> 1 Chron 16:22; 1 Tim. 4:1. Mather refers to the Antinomianism controversy centered on Anne Hutchinson (1591-1643) and her followers, to the Gortonists, New England followers of Samuel Gorton (b. 1593, d. 1677), and to the Quakers, all of whom sought, in one way or other, direct mystical communication with the Holy Spirit. See Philip Gura, A Glimpse of Zion's Glory: Puritan Radicalism in New England 1620-1660.

<sup>268</sup> Mather refers to the loss of the first charter under Colonial Governor Edmund Andros (1637-1714) in 1684. Andros was deposed in 1689 in a bloodless coup after

William of Orange invaded England. Increase Mather returned to New England in May, 1692 with a new governor, William Phips (1651-1695) and a new charter. Increase Mather and Phips found the jails filled with those accused of witchcraft.

<sup>269</sup> Like the Waldenses, New England is fighting against France and their Catholic rulers Louis XIV and the Pope. Mather refers to the current King William's War between the English Puritans in New England and French and Indians.

<sup>270</sup> Adapted from Ps. 90.7, 9.

<sup>271</sup> Michael Wigglesworth gives a poetic chronicle of the reasons for New England's troubles "God's Controversy with New England"(see bibliography).

<sup>272</sup> Mather refers to the seven churches of Asia Minor then in the hands of the Turks.

<sup>273</sup> See Rev. 21.24 and 21.2. Mather is arguing against Joseph Mede, who, in *Clavis Apocalyptica* (1627) wrote that Christ's millennial kingdom on earth would be limited to the confines of the former Roman Empire. Mede believed that America would be excluded from the Saved Nations and retained as the seat of Satan's minions, Gog and Magog. Mather disagreed with Mede, instead insisting that New England was to be included and have a function in Christ's millennial Kingdom. Mather never claims that the seat of the New Jerusalem is to be in New England, however. Following Romans 11, Cotton Mather, his father, Increase, and many others believed Christ's Second Coming depended upon the conversion of the Jews and their return to Palestine, where they would bask in the eternal light of the New Jerusalem hovering over its terrestrial counterpart in



Judea, peopled by the Raised Saints of the First Resurrection. See Reiner Smolinski, “Israel Redivivus: The Eschatological Limits of Puritan Typology in New England.”

<sup>274</sup> See Ps. 87.3. See also Cotton Mather’s Theolopolis Americana (1710).

<sup>275</sup> The coming of the Europeans decimated the Native American population in the New World. See Bartolomé de Las Casas (1474-1566), The Very Brief Relation of the Devastation of the Indies (1552).

<sup>276</sup> Mather is thinking of John Eliot’s (1604-1690) praying Indian communities and King Philip’s War in 1676. Joseph Mede, earlier, believed that conversion of the Indians was doomed to failure, for these were Satan’s minions and destined allies of Antichrist’s forces of Gog and Magog. Other New English Puritans like Eliot, Sameul Sewall (1652-1730), and especially those of the first generation of Puritans, following Dutch Hebraist Rabbi Menasseh ben Israel (1604-57), believed America’s aboriginal population might be descended from Israel’s Ten Lost Tribes. Cotton Mather believed the gospel should be preached to the Indians but did not believe in their Judaical origin. See Reiner Smolinski’s discussion of the controversy surrounding origin of the Indians in his introduction to Cotton Mather’s Threefold Paradise 23-29.

<sup>277</sup> Ps. 2:8.

<sup>278</sup> Ps. 22.27.

<sup>279</sup> See Matt. 19.30 and Mark 10.31. Cotton Mather refers to the old Joseph Mede claim that America would be excluded from God’s millennial kingdom. Mather, however, believes that New England is to be included in God’s Kingdom. He was not

suggesting that New England would be the New Jerusalem. See Reiner Smolinski's *NEQ* article "Israel Redivivus."

<sup>280</sup> Mather refers to the Counter-Reformation.

<sup>281</sup> Note Mather's use of the the article *a* New Jerusalem, not *the* New Jerusalem.

Mather believed the future site of the New Jerusalem would be in the clouds above the terrestrial Jerusalem, not in England or America. For a full discussion and help in locating other sources, see Reiner Smolinski's "Israel Redivivus" 357-395.

<sup>282</sup> Mather alludes to the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) between the Holy Roman Empire of the Hapsburgs and the Protestant, anti-Catholic powers of Sweden and the United Netherlands. New England had been fighting its counterpart of The Thirty Years War against the Catholic French and the Indians since

<sup>283</sup> The Guy Fawkes (bap. 1570, d. 1606) gunpowder plot of 1605.

<sup>284</sup> King Louis XIV of France. See Cotton Mather's *Shaking Dispensations* (Boston, 1715), a funeral sermon on the death of the French king.

<sup>285</sup> King Louis XIV. Phaeton, son of Helios (Apollo), attempts to drive the chariot of the sun but miscarries in the attempt. Mather's implication is, of course, that the Catholic Church has imposed itself between the believer and the source of spiritual light, usurping the Father's place and attempting to guide the truth of Christ. According to Mather's reading of biblical prophecy, Louis XIV (and the devil who drives him) will fail.

<sup>286</sup> Adapted from Exodus 15.4-6. Mather probably refers to the English and Dutch naval victory against the French in 1692 at La Hogue, a cape in northeast France on the English Channel. The battle ended French naval supremacy.

<sup>287</sup> See Anne Bradstreet's poem, "A Dialogue Between Old England and New."

<sup>288</sup> Mather uses "prodigious" in the sense of "ominous, portentous, unnatural, abnormal, monstrous, or, in a bad sense, amazing" (OED).

<sup>289</sup> See Neh. 2.13.

<sup>290</sup> Mather's rhetoric attempts to make the invisible world seem as real to the reader as it is to himself. Mather aims for tangible evidence of the invisible world. Cotton Mather, like Henry More, Joseph Glanvill, Richard Baxter, his Father, Increase, and others before him, attempted in his writing on the supernatural to satisfy the new demands of emerging seventeenth-century science for empirical proof. Of course, Mather's ideas of the existence of this invisible world were based not only on what he had read, but on what he had witnessed three years before with the possession of the Goodwin children (see Memorable Providences Boston, 1689). Mather also experienced the invisible world directly during fasting and meditation as outlined in books like Joseph Hall's, The Invisible World, Discovered to Spirituall Eyes and Reduced to Useful Meditation (London, 1659). See David Levin's "When Did Cotton Mather See the Angel?" EAL 15.3 (1980/81): 271-75.

<sup>291</sup> Judg. 14.14. Meat out of the Eater is also the title of Michael Wigglesworth's collection of poems (Boston, 1670).

<sup>292</sup> Ps. 129.1-2. Mather quotes verbatim from the KJV.

<sup>293</sup> Several witnesses at the Salem trials testified to having been asked to sign a book by a black man. These witnesses include William Barker, Jr., Stephen Johnson, Mary Marston, William Barker, Sr. The term “black man” appears no fewer than 85 times in the records of the Salem Witchcraft Papers, uttered by judges, the accused, and witnesses.

<sup>294</sup> In this paragraphs Mather has in mind the main components of the compact with Satan and elements of the witches Sabbath, including a form of the witches’ flight (transvection) to and from the witch meetings. As many have pointed out, the witches’ flight seems closely allied to the medieval idea of being spirited away by faeries and modern ideas of alien abduction and out-of-body experiences. Mather mentions witches meeting elsewhere in Wonders (94-96, 99, 106-7, 125, 133, 137-8). See also George Lyman Kittredge, Witchcraft in Old and New England 565 n. 151. For theories of how the witches’ practices became diabolical inversions of Christian sacraments, see Stuart Clark, “Inversion”; Carlo Ginzburg, “Deciphering”; and Éva Pócs, “Alternative.”

<sup>295</sup> A reference to New England and America at large.

<sup>296</sup> These symptoms sound a lot like those associated with ergot poisoning.

<sup>297</sup> Governor William Phips, in his letter to the home government written from Boston on October 12, 1692, seems to quote this passage from Mather. Phips also alludes to the famous case of the witches in Mohra, Sweden in 1699-1670, which Cotton Mather

also summarizes in Wonders. Phip's letter was dated 12 October 1692, in Burr Narratives. 196-98.

<sup>298</sup> Isa. 28.15. Jerome interprets this passage to indicate a formal compact with Satan. For the part the church fathers played in the formation of the idea of the witch's compact and Sabbath see Kittredge, *Witchcraft in Old and New England* 239ff.

<sup>299</sup> A sermon by Cotton Mather entitled Batteries upon the Kingdom of the Devil was published in Boston in 1695.

<sup>300</sup> What is now Salem was first begun as a fishing settlement on Cape Ann by the Dorchester Company.

<sup>301</sup> Prestigious: "Practising juggling or legerdemain; of the nature of or characterized by juggling or magic; cheating, deluding, deceitful; deceptive, illusory" (OED).

<sup>302</sup> The use of spectral evidence was stopped when ministers became outspoken about the opinion that Satan might be able to represent an innocent person. Increase Mather's Cases of Conscience (Boston, 1692) made the strongest case against the use of spectral evidence.

<sup>303</sup> 2 Chron. 20:12. "Jehoshaphat" means "Jehovah is judge." Jehoshaphat, fourth king of Judah, took away the high places where Israelites were worshipping false gods and taught the law of the Lord. In 2 Chron. 20 Jehoshaphat is attacked by a great multitude from Edom including Moabites, Ammonites, and Meunites. In desperation Jehoshaphat exclaims, "O our God, wilt thou not iudge them? for wee haue no might

against this great company that commeth against vs? neither know wee what to doe; but our eyes are vpon thee” (20:12). The spirit of the Lord then comes upon Jahaziel and he says, “Hearken yee, all Iudah, and ye inhabitants of Ierusalem, and thou king Iehoshaphat, Thus sayth the Lord vnto you; Be not afraid, nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battell is not yours, but Gods” (20.15). As the army of Judah looks on, the three groups of Edomites destroy each other in battle. Mather seems to be advising those who rely on spectral evidence to let God fight the battle instead of taking matters into their own hands. On June 15, Governor Phips asked the ministers’ advice on what to do about the witchcraft crisis. The response was “The Return of Several Ministers,” written by Cotton Mather and signed by delivered to the judges around June 15, signed by fourteen ministers from the area. In typical, ambidextrous fashion for Cotton Mather, it criticized the use of spectral evidence but sanctioned the judges’ prior use of it.

<sup>304</sup> James 1.17.

<sup>305</sup> See, for example Proverbs chapter 7, especially verses 7-10 where the youth visiting a harlot can be read metaphorically as a person attending a witch’s Sabbath or as Israel committing adultery with the whore of Babylon.

<sup>306</sup> See Amos 4.11, in which “firebrand” can be read metaphorically as a soul in hell.

<sup>307</sup> Deut. 29.24

<sup>308</sup> See 1 Sam. 14.46

<sup>309</sup> 2 Chron. 10.11, 14.

<sup>310</sup> Luke 16.28

<sup>311</sup> See Revelation 12 and Malachi 1.3.

<sup>312</sup> The Biarmi were predecessors of the Laplanders who were thought to possess great skill in casting enchantments. According to Johannes Scheffer (1621-1679) in his History of Lapland (Oxford, 1674), the Biarmi could “either by looks, words, or some other wicked artifice so ensnare and bewitch men, as to deprive them of the use of limbs and reason, and very often bring them into extreme danger of their lives” (45-46). Mather seems to be quoting Scheffer directly.

<sup>313</sup> See Richard Baxter’s Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits (London, 1691) 105.

<sup>314</sup> This term appears in the following verses in the KJV: Lev. 19.31; Lev. 20.6; Lev. 20.27; Deut. 18.11; 1 Sam. 28.3; 1 Sam 28.7; 1 Sam. 28.8; 1 Sam. 28.9; 2 Kings 21.6; 2 Kings 23.24; 1 Chron. 10.13; 2 Chron. 33.6; Isa. 8.19; Isa. 19.3; Isa. 29.4.

<sup>315</sup> Mather refers to the witchcraft outbreak in 1669-70 in Mora, Sweden. Mora is a town on the shores of Lake Siljan. Mora was then on the border of Lapland. In *Wonders* ([147-151]), Mather summarizes the account by of the Swedish trials by Church of England clergyman Anthony Horneck (1641-1697). Horneck’s account appeared in the 1681 edition of Joseph Glanvill’s Sadducismus Triumphans and in all subsequent seventeenth and eighteenth-century editions.

<sup>316</sup> See Habakuk 1.6. Mather compares the devils to the Chaldeans who have their own sense of justice and worship their own might.

<sup>317</sup> Ps. 78.49.

<sup>318</sup> Ps. 78.50

<sup>319</sup> Melancthon, Philipp. German name Philipp Schwarzerd (1497-1560) German theologian and humanist, associate of Martin Luther, and leader in the Lutheran Reformation. He was one of the most important theologians of the Reformation. As a professor at the University of Wittenberg, Melancthon presented Protestant doctrines in Latin to the non-German world. He and other humanists introduced classical scholarship to universities in Cologne, Leipzig, Vienna, and other cities, and he helped found new universities in Königsberg, Jena, and Marburg. Mather seems to derive this passage from Melancthon from Baxter's The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits (1691) (126-27). Baxter paraphrases Melancthon's letter to Hubert Languetus (see *Epistolar*. L.2. p.550). Mather (and Melancthon and Baxter) use the word "prodigy" mainly in its archaic sense of a "portent" or "omen." Melancthon is speaking of diabolical spectacles of prophecy induced through demonic possession. Mather, Baxter, and Melancthon of course also mean "prodigy" in the sense of an "extraordinary or rare event or wonder." Jacob Ludwig Karl Grimm (1785-1863) and Wilhelm Karl Grimm (1786-1859) were born in Hanau-- Jacob on Jan. 4, 1785, and Wilhelm on Feb. 24, 1786—and they were educated at the University of Marburg, the university where Wilhelm Adolph Scribonius had been a professor.

<sup>320</sup> Ps. 79.8; 142.6; 4 Ezra 9.41.

<sup>321</sup> Judg. 14,1-2; 2 Sam. 1.20; Ezek. 16.27, 57.



<sup>322</sup> Joseph Hall (1574-1656) was educated at Ashby de la Zouch and Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Hall tried to act as a mediator between the Puritan and Episcopal factions in England, one reason Mather may have alluded to him here and chosen part of Hall's title, The Invisible World, Discovered to Spirituall Eyes, and Reduced to Usefull Meditation (London, 1659) for his own. He became bishop of Exeter in 1627 and bishop of Norwich in 1641. His contribution to the literature of witchcraft is contained in the above title.

<sup>323</sup> The quote is from Joseph Hall's Soliloquy 15 (Works 8.34-34). Mather probably takes this passage from Richard Baxter's Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits (London, 1691) 122-123.

<sup>324</sup> Mather probably refers to the witch trial at Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk instigated by Matthew Hopkins, the "Witch Finder General," where 18 witches were executed 27 August 1645.

<sup>325</sup> Witchcraft in Suffolk and Essex 1645

<sup>326</sup> Indeed New England did live in humble circumstance compared with the high civilization of England with its cathedrals, buildings, and other physical and cultural infrastructure.

<sup>327</sup> Prov. 15.1

<sup>328</sup> Mainz, near Frankfurt, Germany.

<sup>329</sup> Mather refers to Henry III of Germany (1017-56). He became German king in 1039 and Holy Roman emperor from 1046-1056. He sought to purify the Church in the eleventh century. The incident to which Mather refers is told in . . .

<sup>330</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>331</sup> Ps. 119.120

<sup>332</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, also known as Geert Geerts (1466?-1536), Dutch theologian, scholar, humanist, and traveler.

<sup>333</sup> Mather may have taken this account from Richard Baxter's *Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits* (1691): "*Erasmus* and others tell us of a Witch at a Town near them, (or rather, as Devil, that appeared and threatned to burn their Houses, and on the top of a Chimney, holding a Pot of Ashes, scattered them abroad, and presently the Town was burnt" (105). Increase Mather in his *Cases of Conscience*, which appeared print just after *WIW*, writes about the same story: "Both Erasmus and Cardanus write that the Town of *Schiltach* in *Germany*, was in the Month of April 1533. Set on Fire by a Devil and Burnt to the Ground, in an Hours space" (18). Increase Mather cites as his source De Subtilitate Rerum, "Lib. 19" of Girolamo Cardano (1501-1576). Erasmus gives his account in "Epistle MCCLIII," dated July 1533. See Kenneth Murdock's note and citation for Erasmus' letter: "Erasmus, Opera Omnia, Leyden, 1703; reprinted 10 vols., London, 1962 <sup>3b</sup> : 1473" (Murdock Magnalia 475 n. 335:46-50). Mather's version borrows some of Baxter's structure and diction.

<sup>334</sup> This phrase alludes, perhaps, to Proverbs 11.29 and 15.27.

<sup>335</sup> See Ephesians 6.11-17.

<sup>336</sup> Mather probably takes this account of the stone-throwing demon of Caumont on the Rhine from Nathaniel Crouch's The Kingdom of Darkness (1688), 67-68.

<sup>337</sup> Ps. 58.4

<sup>338</sup> Luke 16.30

<sup>339</sup> Mather invents Scripture for his purposes here.

<sup>340</sup> Samuel Clarke (1599-1682), English clergyman and biographer. He was the author of the famous Lives of Sundry Eminent Persons (1683), in which the biography of his father, the Reverend Hugh Clarke, appeared. He was ejected from his ministry in 1662 for nonconformity.

<sup>341</sup> Literal sulphur. Cotton Mather rejects allegorization of the Bible.

<sup>342</sup> 2 Kings 17.9.

<sup>343</sup> Sieves, keys, peas, nails, and horseshoes were standard objects associated with magic in witch narratives.

<sup>344</sup> The English settlers of New England brought many folk traditions, including superstitious customs and folk magic of ancient pagan origin.

<sup>345</sup> Isa. 11.8

<sup>346</sup> Judicial astrology involved making judgments about the astrological influence on humans. It differed from natural astrology. Ptolemy was one of the first to make a distinction between natural and judicial astrology. In Dan. 2 Daniel outdoes the

astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers in interpreting Nebucanezzar's dream and in predicting the future.

<sup>347</sup> Juggle: A piece of juggling; a trick or act of skill performed by legerdemain; a conjurer's trick, *esp.* one claiming to be done by magic or occult influence; hence, an act of deception, an imposture, cheat, fraud (*OED*). Joseph Hall, Bishop of Norwich (1574-1656), English clergyman, religious writer, poet, and satirist. He is the author of *The Invisible World, Discovered to Spiritual Eyes* (1659).

<sup>348</sup> The source is unidentified.

<sup>349</sup> For this expression see Num. 21.6 and Deut. 8.15

<sup>350</sup> "Murmuring" is used in the Bible repeatedly in a negative sense of the rabble murmuring against God or one of his servants. See Ex. 15.24; Ex. 16.2,7,8,9,12; Ex. 17.3; Num. 14.2,27,29,36; etc.

<sup>351</sup> Mather adapts Scripture to his purpose. This is probably an adaptation of Psa. 78.22-32.

<sup>352</sup> Mather attributes the outbreak of witchcraft to a combination of belief in folk magic and unbelief in the truth of the Scriptures. The atheistic materialism of Hobbes figures into the sin of unbelief decried in Mather's jeremiad.

<sup>353</sup> Ps. 84:11; Phil. 1:6

<sup>354</sup> Christian adaptation of Song Sol., esp. 2: 16. These are the words of the Shulamite woman.

<sup>355</sup> Echoes dialogue between God and Satan in Job 1:11-12 and 2:5-6

<sup>356</sup> See Tob. 6:7, Wis. 17:15; Matthew 15:22; 17:25; Luke 6:18; Acts 5:16.

Thomas Hobbes would have said of the Lunatic in Luke who was sore vexed that it was a common convention of the time to attribute any illness anyone had to a devil. See *Leviathan* chapters 45 and 46.

<sup>357</sup> Adapted from Ps. 69.26

<sup>358</sup> Essex County, Massachusetts, where Salem is located.

<sup>359</sup> Mather's conflation of Job 20.21 and, perhaps, Revelation 12.12. and, less likely, Ephesians 4.26-27.

<sup>360</sup> Adapted from 2 Sam. 21.2

<sup>361</sup> This phrase is used twice in the KJV: Rom.13.12; Eph. 5.11.

<sup>362</sup> "This is the work, this is the task." The passage from Vergil's *Aeneid* actually reads "hoc opus, hic labor est" (6. 129). Translated by John Dryden, this passage and three lines preceding it read,

The gates of hell are open night and day;  
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way:  
But to return, and view the cheerful skies,  
In this the task and mighty labor lies.

<sup>363</sup> Adaptation of Heb. 5.7.

<sup>364</sup> See Heb. 4.16

<sup>365</sup> Mather associates Satan with the theater.

<sup>366</sup> The King James Version does not use the expression “evil one,” which is the translation offered in the translators note in the RSV for the word “evil” occurring near or at the end of the Lord’s Prayer of Mat. 6.9-13, depending on the original manuscript. Mather is using a version other than the KJV or relying on his knowledge of Greek. John Wesley’s later translation of the NT uses the term “evil one” four times, notably in Matthew 5.37. The Geneva Bible (16 translates it as simply “evil,” adding in a note, “From the Deuil, or from all aduersitie.”

<sup>367</sup> 1 Thes. 5.22

<sup>368</sup> Adapted from Rev. 12:10

<sup>369</sup> See 1 Kings 22.22; 22.23; 2 Chron. 18.21; 18.22. Mather here defends the possibility that the devil could assume the shape of an innocent person. If that were true, then a great deal of the evidence at the Salem trials would have had to be discounted.

<sup>370</sup> 1 Cor. 13.5

<sup>371</sup> See John 1.17. See also Rom. 11.5-6; 2 Tim. 1.9.

<sup>372</sup> Jer. 31.31; Heb. 8.8; Heb. 8.13

<sup>373</sup> See Gal. 3.19; 3.20; 1 Tim 2.5; Heb. 8.6; Heb. 9.15; Heb 12.24.

<sup>374</sup> Mather may allude to the parable of the mustard seed in which the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a tree. Birds of the air come to roost in its branches. See Matt. 13:31-32; Mark 4:31-32; Luke 13.19.

<sup>375</sup> Isa. 34.15

<sup>376</sup> Clocqing. The sound a hen makes to her brood.

<sup>377</sup> Matt. 23.37; Luke 13.34.

<sup>378</sup> Rev. 13.8; 14.9-10; 17.8; 20.15.

<sup>379</sup> Adapted from Song Sol. 2.16

<sup>380</sup> Isa. 4.3

<sup>381</sup> The risings generation that has fallen is a favorite subject of the Jeremiad. See Samuel Danforth's *A Brief Recognition of New Englands Errand into the Wilderness* (1671).

<sup>382</sup> Mather is perhaps responding to the folk idea of the isolated cottage of the witch.

<sup>383</sup> An interesting play on words since the Devil in folklore is often depicted with a tail.

<sup>384</sup> Ps. 119.139

<sup>385</sup> Latin: "Prayer torments the devil and is the remedy for distress."

<sup>386</sup> Adapted from James 5.16

<sup>387</sup> Adapted from Proverbs 26.3

<sup>388</sup> See Matthew 17.21; Mark 9.29

<sup>389</sup> Adapted from James 4.7

<sup>390</sup> Adapted from Eph. 6.12

<sup>391</sup> Refers to the devil in Rev. 12.9 and 20.2

<sup>392</sup> Adapted from Ps. 36.12

<sup>393</sup> Increase Mather tells this story taken from one Dr. Winter, in his *Prevalency of Prayer* ( Boston, 1677):

I have also heard a worthy Divine in *Dublin*, speak of a man, that being under bodily possession by an evil spirit, a Company of praying Christians met together, to seek the Lord on his behalf; amongst them there was a precious holy woman, who kneeled behind the door in the room where they were praying together, and there were strong actings of Faith in her soul; at last the Devil was forced to depart; only as he was going out of the possessed party, he cried out, *O the Woman, the Woman behind the door!* (15)

The Mathers may also be drawing on the OT typology of Judges 9.52-54:

And Abimelech came unto the tower, and fought against it, and went hard unto the door of the tower to burn it with fire. And a certain woman cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to brake his skull.

Then he called hastily unto the young man his armor-bearer, and said unto him, Draw thy sword, and slay me, that men say not of me, A woman slew him. And his young man thrust him through and he died.

<sup>394</sup> This expression is from Jude 1.15

<sup>395</sup> The terms “great work” or “great works” occur in the following verses from the Bible: Ex. 14.31; Judg. 2.7; 1 Chr. 29.1; Neh. 4.19; 6.3; Ps. 111.2; Eccl. 2.4.

<sup>396</sup> This expression is from James 5.15

<sup>397</sup> Adaptation of Col. 2.15.



<sup>398</sup> Mather's Inversion of Matthew 11.30. Since God's yoke is easy, the devil must have a yoke too that is hard.

<sup>399</sup> 1 John 5.19

<sup>400</sup> 1 John 5.19 in the NRSV reads, "We know that we are God's children, and that the whole world lies under the power of the evil one."

<sup>401</sup> Mat. 9.34; 12.24; Mark 3.22.

<sup>402</sup> Adapted from Rev. 16.14.

<sup>403</sup> John 20.28.

<sup>404</sup> This account appears in Nathaniel Crouch's Kingdom of Darknesse 88. Crouch cites his source as "Fincelim 3. Book Miracles." Hence, the author and the book are Jobus Fincelius, *Wunderzeichen* (Nürnberg, 1556). Fincelius also tells the story of the Pied Piper of Hamlein.

<sup>405</sup> For the source of Mather's phrasing see Isa. 45.17; Eph. 3.21.

<sup>406</sup> Rev. 14.11.

<sup>407</sup> Adapted from Acts 17.28.

<sup>408</sup> Mather repeats this story of Joseph Beacon twice in his works: in *Magnalia Christi Americana* 6.77-78, and in the "Second Paradise" of his "Triparadisus" (Smolinski ed. 115-116).

<sup>409</sup> Mather's "Second Paradise" reads "could not certainly say" (115).

<sup>410</sup> Both the *Magnalia* (77) and the "Second Paradise" (115) read "*barbarously & inhumanely murdered, by a debauched fellow.*"

<sup>411</sup> The “Second Paradise” reads “do you get him indicted” (115).

<sup>412</sup> Ibid. adds, “where he sojourned” (115).

<sup>413</sup> Ibid. reads, “gave me under their hands a full Testimony ready to be deposed upon Oath,” (115).

<sup>414</sup> *Not* by praeternatural means, that is.

<sup>415</sup> A prostitute, mistress, or sweetheart.

<sup>416</sup> Ibid. adds “aforesaid” (115).

<sup>417</sup> Ibid. omits “at Law” (115).

<sup>418</sup> Mather uses *entertainment* earlier in the same sense on pages [47] and [79].

<sup>419</sup> Mather distances himself from the proceedings and outcomes because he was asked by Lt. Governor William Stoughton to write a defense of the court proceedings.

<sup>420</sup> Matthew Hale (1609-76), lord chief justice of England, published *A Tryal of Vvitches, at the Assizes Held at Bury St. Edmonds for The County Of Suffolk; on the Tenth Day of March, 1664. before Sir Matthew Hale Kt. Then Lord Chief Baron of His Majesties Court of Exchequer. Taken by a Person Then Attending the Court.* London, 1682).

<sup>421</sup> Richard Baxter makes this assertion on page 80 of The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits (London, 1691).

<sup>422</sup> Elizabeth Durent was ten; The Age of her sister, Ann Durent, is not known. Jane Bocking was the daughter of Diana Bocking. Jane was at least old enough to speak

complete sentences. Susan Chandler was eighteen. William Durent was an infant.

Elizabeth Pacy was eleven; her sister, Deborah, was nine.

<sup>423</sup> The brackets are Mather's. The "victim" who gets better as soon as the witch is punished is a familiar motif in witch narratives. See Stith Thompson.

<sup>424</sup> Allotriophagy is the vomiting or disgorgement of strange objects such as stones, pins, nails, etc. Cases of allotriophagy are often found in witchcraft narratives.

<sup>425</sup> Mather portrays Keeling's rejection of spectral evidence, yet spectral evidence was used for most of the condemned cases in New England.

<sup>426</sup> Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682) was a physican and author of *Religio Medici* (1642) *Pseudodoxia Epidemica or, Enquiries into Very Many Received Tienents and CommonlyPpresumed Truths* (1646), commonly known as Vulgar Errors. He received a BA and MD from Oxford and an MD from the University of Leiden, which kept more than a thousand species of plants in its botanical garden. Two of his works, *Hydriotaphia, or Urn Burial* and *The Garden of Cyrus* were published as companion pieces in 1658 and both contained information about plants and horticulture.

<sup>427</sup> This passage is found in A Trial of Witches at the Assizes held at Bury St. Edmonds. 1664. (London, 1682) p. 55-56.

<sup>428</sup> The text of A Trial of Witches (1682) says the number of indictments was thirteen (56-57).

<sup>429</sup> Matt. 12.31. The unpardonable sin is one of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Those fully aware of the Christian religion who make a pact with the devil commit

blasphemy because they willfully reject the Holy Spirit and mock God by worshipping the evil one. Their pact with Satan imitates mocks the covenant of grace, just as the devil apes God.

<sup>430</sup> “G. B.” is Mather’s defamatory appellation for the Rev. George Burroughs.

Burroughs graduated from Harvard in 1670. He was minister at Salem Village from 1680-83. After contentious parties at Salem village refused to pay his salary, he stopped meeting his congregation. He received credit from John Putnam on the understanding that when the Village did pay his salary, the money would go back to Putnam. When Burroughs’ wife died, he borrowed money from John Putnam to pay for the funeral. While Burroughs was in Salem Village settling accounts, Putnam had him arrested. The matter was settled out of court (Boyer and Nissenbaum, Salem Possessed (55-56).

Burroughs left Salem Village and went to Maine and became pastor. He was succeeded at Salem Village by the Reverend Deodat Lawson. His acrimonious relationship with the Putnams was probably the initial factor in his being named as a witch. Probably because he was a minister with Baptist leanings, Burroughs was accused of being ringleader in the supposed knot of witches at Salem. He was arrested in Wells, Maine and brought back to Salem in 1692. According to Robert Calef, Burroughs, standing upon a ladder awaiting execution, made a persuasive speech for his innocence and recited perfectly the Lord’s prayer. (The inability to recite the Lord’s Prayer flawlessly was thought by many to be an indication of witchcraft.) According to Mather’s nemesis, Robert Calef, when it appeared that the crowd might be swayed to hinder Burrough’s

execution, “Mr. Cotton Mather, being mounted upon a Horse, addressed himself to the People, partly to declare, that he was no ordained Minister, and partly to possess the People of his guilt; saying, That the Devil has often been transformed into an Angel of Light; and this did somewhat appease the people, and the Executions went on . . .” (Burr, Narratives 361). He was executed along with Martha Carrier, John Willard, George Jacobs Sr., and John Proctor on August 19, 1692

<sup>431</sup> “Oyer and Terminer” means “to listen and determine.” Governor William Phips established the court on May 27, 1692 and disbanded it on October 29, 1692. Phips named Lieutenant Governor William Stoughton as chief justice. The other Justices included Bartholomew Gedney of Salem, John Richards, Wait-Still Winthrop, Peter Sergeant, and Samuel Sewall of Boston; Jonathan Corwin and John Hathorne of Salem, and Nathaniel Saltonstall of Haverhill. Five or more justices made a quorum to hear a case, and at least one of its members had to be Stoughton, Gedney, or Richards (see Roach, The Salem Witch Trials 143-144). Its last session was on September 22, 1692, when Mary Esty, Alice Parker, Ann Puteator, Martha Corey, Margaret Scott, Wilmot Read, Mary Parker, and Samuel Wardwell were executed.

<sup>432</sup> Here, Mather refers again to his commission by someone in the government, to write an account of the trials. The first time was on the verso of the title page. The second time occurred immediately following the prefatory letter of imprimatur to Mather’s work by Lieutenant Governor Stoughton [vi-vii]. The second reference to some type of commission occurs immediately below that in Mather’s line, “**I** Live by *Neighbours*, that

force me to produce these Undeserved Lines” ([vii]). William Stoughton and Samuel Sewall also make a statement underscored by both of their names at the end of the “Fourth Curiousitie,” dated October 11, referring to Mather as “*having at the Direction of His EXCELLENCY the Governour*” been “*Obliged*” . . . *to give some Account of the Sufferings brought upon the Countrey by Witchcraft*” . . . (147). The extent to which Mather felt compelled to write his account of the trials, or was actually doing it of his own volition is in our reading of Wonders. See my discussion on Mather’s commission at the beginning of chapter three.

<sup>433</sup> Mather’s use of the French term for “meeting” is here because it evokes the French, who were Catholic, and therefore led by the Pope, whom Mather and other Puritans thought of as Antichrist. The French Catholics had a close relationship with the Indians, who were thought to be Satan’s minions and who were at that time attacking the frontier in Wells, Maine. George Burroughs had bravely defended the English settlements there and had been captured and brought to Salem to stand trial for witchcraft after being accused by the “afflicted” in Salem. “Witch meeting” was the term frequently used in Salem for the witches’ “Sabbath.” “Going to meeting” was also the common term used for attending church. Several accused witches, including Mary Barker and William Barker, Sr., testified about such meetings in which Rev. George Burroughs and a “black man” presided over a diabolical communion involving bread and wine, an inversion of the Christian Lord’s Supper. See *SWP* 1: 65-67.

<sup>434</sup> Mather's information seems to come from the examination of Mary Lacey, Jr., who is being asked by the judge,

Q. did you hear the 77 witches names called over A yes the Divel Called them Q. w't Speech did he use to them A he bid them obey him and doe his Commands & it would be Bett'r for them & they Should obtain Crownes In hell. & Goody Carrier told me the Divell Said to her she should be a Queen In hell, Q. how was to be King A the Minist'r Q. w't kind of Man Is Mr. Burroughs A a pretty little man and he has Come to Us Somtimes In his Spiritt in the Shape of a Catt & I think somtimes In his prop'r Shape[.] (*SWP* 2: 523)

<sup>435</sup> These witnesses include Samuel Webber, Thomas Greenslit, Simon Willard, Captain William Wormal, Benjamin Hutchinson, Tomas Evans, Major John (?) Browne, Captain Putnam, and a Captain Wormwood, perhaps Jacob Wormwood who was summoned to appear at the court of Oyer and Terminer in Salem on September 14 to testify concerning Wilmott Reed (executed Sept. 22).

<sup>436</sup> John Gaule (1604?-1687). See Mather's summary of Gaule's guidelines for the detection of witches on pages xxiv-xxx of *WIW*.

<sup>437</sup> These victims included Ann Putnam, Mary Walcott, Mary Webber, Elizabeth Hubbard, Mary Warren, Abigail Hobbs, Mercy Lewis, Sarah Bibber, and Susannah Sheldon. Abigail Hobbs, Mary Warren, Sarah Wilson, and Martha Tyler all testified about a witch meeting involving Burroughs.

<sup>438</sup> Burroughs.

<sup>439</sup> See Elizabeth Hubbard's testimony against George Burroughs in *SWP* 2: 170.

<sup>440</sup> Two young women, Elizabeth Hubbard and Mary Walcott, testified that Burroughs bit them, but no surviving accounts mention anything about measuring Burroughs teeth prints nor are there accounts of any of Burroughs teeth prints in any but Mather's account. This bit of Mather's empirical evidence against Burroughs unfortunately cannot be verified elsewhere.

<sup>441</sup> See Mercy Lewis vs. George Burroughs *SWP* 1: 168-69.

<sup>442</sup> Other than Mather's account, no record of this examination of George Burroughs by Chief Justice William Stoughton seems to have survived.

<sup>443</sup> Various ghosts and specters appearing alongside the witch's specter is, as Mather implies, a common occurrence in witchcraft accounts and is a common motif in folklore. See Stith Thompson.

<sup>444</sup> Mather seems to be summarizing Ann Putnam's vision of May 5<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>445</sup> Mather's use of the word "others" here presents a problem. Ann's deposition of her spectral visitation on May 5<sup>th</sup> mentions that Burroughs had killed only one other person besides his two wives, Mrs. Lawson, and her daughter: "goodman fuller's first wife" (*SWP* 1: 167). In her vision of May 5<sup>th</sup> Ann also says, "they [Burroughs's two dead wives] both charged me that I sould tell these things to the Magestraits before Mr Burroughs face and if he did not own them they did not know but that they should appere their: thes morning also Mis Lawson and hir daughter Ann appeared to me whom I knew:



and tould me that Mr. burroughs murthered them” (*SWP* 1: 166). But Mather speaks of testimony that Burroughs had killed “others” besides the wives, Mrs. Lawson, and her daughter, not just one other. In Ann Putnam’s vision of April 21 Burroughs states that besides his two wives, Mrs. Lawson, and her daughter, he had also “bewitched a grate many souldiers to death at the eastword” (*SWP* 1: 164). For Mather to know that Ann Putnam testified about the wives appearing before the magistrates and also to know that Burroughs had killed more than one other person besides his two wives, Mrs. Lawson and her daughter, and Goodman Fuller’s wife, he would either have had to have read both depositions and combined their content, making him aware of many discrepancies in what the specters had told Ann, or else received the information by word of mouth, perhaps from his friend, Samuel Sewall. On August 3, 1692, of her first vision, Ann Putnam claims that Burroughs dead wives had told her that Burroughs had “bewitched the Two first of them to death: and that he kiled Mist. Lawson because she was so unwilling to go from the village” (*SWP* 1: 164). In the other deposition, also dated August 3, but recounting her spectral encounter of May 5<sup>th</sup>, Ann Putnam declares that Burroughs’s first wife had told Ann that he “stabed hir under the left Arme and put a peace of sealing wax on the wound [. . .] and other [second wife] told me that Mr Burrough and that wife which he hath now kiled hir in the vessell as she was coming to se hir friends because they would have one another” (*SWP* 1: 166). Ann’s two versions of the way Burrough’s wives were murdered should have been a warning to the magistrates and especially to Mather as to the unreliability of spectral evidence.

<sup>446</sup> Mather's statement about Burroughs antipathy to prayer seems especially unjust and cruel because, according to Robert Calef, Samuel Sewall, and Thomas Brattle (possibly all eyewitnesses), Mather had attended the execution of George Burroughs. According to Robert Calef,

“when he was upon the Ladder, . . . [Burroughs] made a Speech for the clearing of his Innocency, with such Solemn and Serious Expressions, as were to the Admiration of all present; his Prayer (which he concluded by repeating the Lord's Prayer,) was so well worded, and uttered with such composedness, and such (at least seeming) fervency of Spirit, as was very affecting, and drew Tears from many (so it seemed to some, that the Spectators would hinder the Execution). (More Wonders in Burr, Narratives 360-361).

Thomas Brattle's account reads

As to the late executions, I shall only tell you, that in the opinion of many unprejudiced, considerate and considerable spectatours, some of the condemned went out of the world not only with as great protestations, but also with as good shews of innocency, as men could do.

They protested their innocency as in the presence of the great God, whom forthwith they were to appear before: they wished, and declared their wish, that their blood might be the last innocent blood shed upon that account. With great affection they intreated Mr. C.[otton] M.[ather] to

pray with them: they prayed that God would discover what witchcrafts were among us; they forgave their accusers; they spake without reflection on Jury and Judges, for bringing them in guilty, and condemning them: they prayed earnestly for pardon for all other sins, and for an interest in the pretious blood of our dear Redeemer; and seemed to be very sincere, upright, and sensible of their circumstances on all accounts . . . . (qtd. in Burr, Narratives 177)

Samuel Sewall's account reads,

This day [in the margin, Dolefull! Witchcraft] George Burrough, John Willard, Jn<sup>o</sup> Procter, Martha Carrier and George Jacobs were executed at Salem, a very great number of Spectators being present. Mr. Cotton Mather was there, Mr. Sims, Hale Noyes, Chiever, &c. All of them said they were innocent, Carrier and all. Mr. Mather says they all died by a Righteous Sentence. Mr. Burrough by his Speech, Prayer, protestation of his Innocence, did much move unthinking persons, which occasions their speaking hardly concerning his being executed. (Diary 1: 294)

It was a common belief in Salem at that time that the devil would not allow the witch to say the Lord's Prayer or that witches could not say it because they were used to saying it backwards. John Willard was thought to have been executed in part because of his inability to say the Lord's Prayer. He was the nephew of Samuel Willard, pastor of

the Old South Church in Boston, and an outspoken critic of the Salem trials (Robbins 216; Calef in Burr Narratives 360). Samuel Willard was also accused.

<sup>447</sup> The Black Man promised William Barker a suit of clothes. He also promised Johanna Tyler some “fine Cloaths” (*SWP* 1: 74; *SWP* 3: 775). The Devil promised Sarah Wardwell “cloathing” (*SWP* 3: 791). Abigail Hobbs testified that George Burroughs brought her thorns and poppets. See *SWP* 2: 405-417.

<sup>448</sup> Mather refers to The VVonderfull Discouerie of Witches In the Countie of Lancaster. London, 1613. The Lancashire trials of twenty people were the largest witch trials in England to that date (1612).

<sup>449</sup> John Gaule in the fifth of his “more certain signs” page 82 of Select Cases of Conscience.

<sup>450</sup> George Burroughs had actually been quite heroic in protecting the garrison and fighting the Indians in Wells, Maine.

<sup>451</sup> The brackets are Mather’s, supposedly placed there to emphasize that this evidence was not given at the trials. They not included in the first London edition of Wonders. This is the most sensational testimony about Burroughs holding out the gun was given by Thomas Greenslit on September 15, almost a month after Burroughs had been executed on August 19. By then, there would have been less reason to question such remarkable testimony since Burroughs could no longer defend himself. All other accounts given before Burroughs’s execution refer to the far less improbable feat of his holding out the gun behind the forelock with one hand.

<sup>452</sup> A “tergiversation” is the forsaking of something originally committed to or asserted, a going back on one’s word, the making of equivocal statements.

<sup>453</sup> Thomas Ady (fl. 1656) wrote A Candle in the Dark (London 1656) later reprinted as A Perfect Discovery of Witches (1661). The full 1656 or second edition title is more descriptive of its purpose: A Candle In The Dark: or, A Treatise Concerning The Nature of Witches & Witchcraft: Being Advice to Judges, Sheriffes, Justices of The Peace and Grand-Jury-Men, What to Do, Before They Passe Sentence on Such As Are Arraigned for Their Lives, As Witches. London, 1656. Ady’s argument centers on the fact that many of the acts and characteristics attributed to witches can be found nowhere in the Bible. Immediately after the preface is a section entitled “A Dilemma that Connot Bee Answered by Witch-Mongers” in which Ady lists and describes 20 characteristics commonly believed to be true of witches that have no Biblical support. Ady writes,

Where is it written in all the Old and New Testaments that a witch is a murderer, or hath power to kill by witchcraft, or to afflict with any disease or infirmity? Where is it written that witches have imps sucking of their bodies? Where is it written that witches have biggs for imps to suck on . . . that the devil setteth privy marks upon witches . . . that witches can hurt corn or cattle . . . or can fly in the aire. . . where do we read of a he-devil or a she-devil, called incubus or succubus, that useth generation or copulation?” (6-7).

<sup>454</sup> Bridget Bishop was the first witch executed at Salem. Her execution opened the door for the other executions to follow. It also stirred up considerable controversy resulting in the resignation of Judge Nathaniel Saltonstall, who disagreed with the judges' tactics. The court then took a two-week hiatus while the justices sorted things out and consulted fourteen ministers in the area. Cotton Mather wrote the ambiguous reply which cleared the way for the use of spectral evidence

Bishop was born in England about 1640. Her maiden name was Playfer. She married in England about 1660 Samuel Wasselbee, and after he died in 1664, she married a Salem widower, Thomas Oliver. He died in 1679, and in 1680 the widow Bridget Oliver was accused of witchcraft. She was acquitted, but the stain to her reputation remained. In 1684 she married another widower, Edward Bishop, a sawyer, who was her husband when she was tried and executed in Salem in 1692. Apparently this Bridget Bishop did not keep a tavern, as so many writers have claimed. For more on her history, see Enders A. Robinson, The Devil Discovered. New York: Hippocrene Books, 1991.

<sup>455</sup> At least four indictments against Bishop survive in the Salem court records. They all follow the standard form and language for an indictment for witchcraft. Four separate indictments were drawn up, one each for Mercy Lewis, Abigail Williams, Elizabeth Hubbard, and Ann Putnam, all occurring on April 19<sup>th</sup>. The indictment on behalf of Mercy Lewis, which was typical, reads

The Jurors for our Sovereigne Lord & lady the King & Queen  
p'esents that Bridgett Bishop als Olliver the wife of Edward Bishop

of Salem in the County of Essex Sawyer the Nyneteenth Day of April in the fourth Year of the Reigne of our Sovereigne Lord and Lady William and Mary by the Grace of God of England Scotland France & Ireland King & Queen Deffenders of the faith &c and Divers other Dayes & times awell before as after. certaine Detestable Arts called Witchcraft & Sorceries.wickedly.and felloniously hath used Practised & Exercised, at and within the Towneship of Salem in the County of Essex afores'd in upon.and ag't one: Mercy Lewis of Salem Village in the County afors'd singlewoman by which said wicked Arts the said Mercy Lewis -- the s'd Nyneteenth Day of April in the fourth Year aboves'd and divers other Dayes and times as well before as after, was & is hurt Tortured Afflicted Pined, Consumed, wasted: & tormented ag't the Peace of our said Sovereigne Lord And Lady the King & Queen and ag't the forme of the Statute in that Case made & provided. (*SWP* I: 87).

Mercy Lewis was born in 1675 at Falmouth, Maine. Both of her parents were killed in an Indian raid and she went to live for a time with the Reverend George Burroughs, and during the witch outbreak of 1692 was living with the family of Thomas Putnam.

<sup>456</sup> Witch riding, then, was a known concept. Mather's London publisher, John Dunton, in his question-and-answer publication, *The Athenian Mercury*, answered the question, "Whether there's any such thing as a hag, which the common people fancy to

be witch-riding . . .” Dunton, John. The Athenian Mercury 4:8 (Saturday, October 24, 1691). London. (1691-1697).

<sup>457</sup> The presence of a succubus is a common motif in witch narratives.

<sup>458</sup> In *Phaenomena quaedam Apocalyptica* (1697), Samuel Sewall uses Plum Island as part of an extended metaphor for the suitability of the New World as the seat of Christ’s millennial Kingdom: “*Plum-Island* shall faithfully keep the commanded Post; Notwithstanding all the hectoring Words, and hard Blows of the proud and boisterous Ocean” (qtd. in Smolinski, Kingdom 233). Plum Island is a barrier island at the mouth of the Merrimack River near Newbury, MA.

<sup>459</sup> Cut the hamstring tendon or hough on the hind legs, crippling the beast.

<sup>460</sup> In response to Sarah Atkinson’s inquiry as to how Martin had stayed dry “she replyd thatt She scorn’d to have a drabled taylor” See “Sarah Atkinson v. Susannah Martin” (*SWP* 2: 578).

<sup>461</sup> How was implicated by at least four of the confessors. See “Examination of William Barker, Sr. (*SWP* 1: 65), “Examination of Mary Toothaker” (*SWP* 3: 769), “Examination of Mary Lacy, Sr.” (*SWP* 2: 514), and “Examination of Richard Carrier” (*SWP* 2: 529), and Richard Carrier’s confession (*SWP* 198). See also “Examination of Sarah Bridges” (*SWP* 139-40).

<sup>462</sup> The twisted-neck motif is common in witchcraft and apparition narratives, including that of Cotton Mather in his *Memorable Providences* (Boston, 1689: 5). The



motif of the head of the possessed being twisted around has also been used in a film, *The Exorcist* (1973), based on William Peter's Blatty's novel by the same title.

<sup>463</sup> "Gallons" is perhaps an exaggeration, though a nice folk-motif derived from the court records. See "Benjamin Abbott v. Martha Carrier" (*SWP* 189).

<sup>464</sup> Note Mather's narrative flair here at the end of his version of the childrens's account of their mother's witchcraft, which makes his history ring of a fairy-tale, brings out another element of the Witchcraft narratives that was later incorporated into fiction. The moralizing and doctrinal aspect prevalent in the witch and apparition narrative of the type with which Mather begins this discourse, later became the moralizing and philosophic tone of many later works of fiction. See John Neal's Rachel Dyer (1828).

<sup>465</sup> See "Examinations of Ann Foster" (*SWP* 2: 342-344).

<sup>466</sup> "[G]oody Lacey owned that Carrier told her also that She Shold be Queen of hel" (See *SWP* 2: 525 and n. 3 above). The Queen of hell would be an inversion of Mary, the Queen of Heaven.

<sup>467</sup> John Higginson (1616-1708), son of the minister Francis Higginson (bap. 1586/7, d. 1630), was trained for the ministry by Cotton Mather's grandfather, John Cotton, and others. In 1659 he became pastor of Salem Town church. Higginson always seemed uneasy about the court proceedings at Salem and wrote the introduction to John Hale's A Modest Inquiry into the Nature of Witchcraft (1702).

<sup>468</sup> José Acosta (1539-1600), the Spanish Jesuit missionary to the New World relates this history in Book VII, chapter 4 of his Natural and Moral History of the Indes

(London, 1604). Acosta's theory that Satan had led nations of Scythians to the New World became the basis for Joseph Mede's theory that American's indigenous population would become Satan's minions Gog and Magog at the final showdown between God and Satan at the battle of Armegeddon before the Last Judgment (see Reiner Smolinski's introduction to The Kingdom, The Power, and The Glory x-xxvi).

<sup>469</sup> Mather follows the precedent of both Catholic and Protestant clergy before him in perpetuating the myth, probably first created by German Catholics such as Pope Innocent VIII in his Bull of 1484 printed with the Malleus Maleficarum, that the devil, being the antithesis of God, would naturally require a religious service with diabolical sacraments that would be exact inversions of Christian ones. Taking the Christian sacraments as their starting point, they invented what they imagined would be blasphemous versions of holy rituals, exacting confessions of just such practices from those accused of witchcraft.

<sup>470</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>471</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>472</sup> Niels Hemming (Niels Hemmingsen) (1513-1600), Danish theologian relates this autobiographical account in Admonitio de Superstitionibus Magicis vitandis (Copenhagen, 1575) fol. C2 verso.

<sup>473</sup> An exaggeration.

<sup>474</sup> Mather probably has this backwards. Rather, when witchcraft is fully understood, there will not be one witch in the world.

<sup>475</sup> From Virgil's *Eclogues* 3. 104. "And you shall be to me as great Apollo."

<sup>476</sup> Cotton Mather probably means John Higginson, senior minister at Salem Town church.

<sup>477</sup> Lucius Annaeus Seneca (c. 4 B.C.-55 A.D.) Roman philosopher and statesman, implicated in a conspiracy, committed suicide.

<sup>478</sup> Samuel Sewall (1652-1730), judge and diarist, was born in England to a family that had been American colonists. When he was nine, he was brought to Boston. He graduated from Harvard with a BA in 1671 and an MA in 1674. He became a member of the South Church in Boston in 1677. He ran the printing press in Boston from 168-168 and served on the council. He was appointed to the Salem court of Oyer and Terminer in May, 1692. In December, 1692, he was appointed by Governor Phips to the superior court of judicature became chief justice in 1718. Sewall alone of all the Salem judges publicly recanted his part in the Salem trials, standing in the South Church on fast day, January 14, 1697, while the minister read his apology before the congregation.

<sup>479</sup> Giles Corey was born in England about 1612. A well-off farmer, in 1692 he owned about about one hundred acres of land. He was pressed to death to try to force a confession on April 18, 1692. On September 22, 1692, his wife Martha Corey was hanged at Salem.

<sup>480</sup> Zerubabel Endicott (1635-1784) was a physician who lived in Salem. His second wife, Elisabeth, was the daughter of physician and colonial Governor John

Winthrop (1606-1676), the son of John Winthrop, the first governor of Massachusetts Bay.

<sup>481</sup> Sweden experienced a massive witch outbreak at Mora in what is now Dalarna, Sweden in 1669. Eighty-five people were burned for seducing three hundred children into witchcraft. Mather gets this account from a translation from High Dutch into English by Dr. Anthony Horneck (1641-97). An excellent and concise account of the Swedish trials is Bengt Ankarloo, "Sweden: The Mass Burnings (1668-1676)," in Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen, eds., Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries (Oxford, U.K., 1990), 285-317.

<sup>482</sup> Anthony Horneck (1641-1697) Church of England clergyman was born near Bacharach, Germany. He studied in Heidelberg and in 1660 he came to England, was incorporated into Oxford, and obtained an MA. In 1671 Horneck became a preacher at the Savoy. A believer in witchcraft, like most others at the time, his treatise a translation from German to English entitled An Account Of What Happen'd in the Kingdom Of Sweden In The Years 1669-1670 and Upwards. In Relation to Some Persons That Were Accused for Witches; and Tried and Executed by the Kings Command was printed the 1681 and in subsequent editions of Joseph Glanvill's Saducismus Triumphatus and was printed separately in 1682. In 1693 was made chaplin to King William of Orange. He is buried in Westminster Abbey.

<sup>483</sup> Mather's use of black letter to highlight similarities between the Swedish and New English witchcraft cases takes advantage of the association of black letter or gothic

script with Germanic writing, and hence Germanic culture, since the use of black letter was widespread and used to print the first Gutenberg Bible in Mainz, Germany (c. 1455). Even before Mather's time, black letter had associations with the gothic, irrational, and mysterious, that is, the anti-classical; and classical humanists in the Renaissance preferred the so-called roman type, which eventually replaced black letter, except in Germany until Hitler abolished it in 1940.

<sup>484</sup> Blockula or Blåkulla (Blue Hill) was the Scandinavian counterpart to the German Brocken or Blocksberg, a hilltop upon which witches were believed to meet for their Sabbaths, in Germany, especially at the Walpurgis Night celebration, the night before May Day. The Swedish Blåkulla was in the fifteenth century identified with Jungfrun (i.e. young woman or virgin), a lonely, desolate, reddish granite island about one kilometer in diameter in the southern Baltic off the southeast coast of Sweden. later came to mean any hill or mountain upon which witches gathered for their Sabbaths. It is significant that the place commonly associated with Blåkulla was surrounded by water since, as Finnish historian Jari Eilola has described, Blåkulla represented more than just a physical location. A trip to Blåkulla could be compared to a journey out of the ordered world of the midgård of Scandinavian religion, and into the uttgård, or afterlife, in which one had to cross a large sea (3). For more information on the Swedish witch hunts, see Bengt Ankerloo "Sweden: The Mass Burnings (1668-1676)," in Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centers and Peripheries, 285-318, esp. 286-287.

<sup>485</sup> Salem Town and Salem Village observed a day of public fasting for the afflicted on Thursday, March 31, 1692.

<sup>486</sup> May 16, 1692, Governor William Phips was officially read his commission as Governor of Massachusetts. On May 27, 1692 Governor William Phips established a Court of Oyer and Terminer (to hear and to determine). Phips named Lieutenant Governor William Stoughton as chief justice. Judges named to serve under Stoughton included Nathaniel Saltonstall, Samuel Sewall, Bartholomew Gedney, John Hathorne, Jonathan Corwin, Wait Winthrop, Peter Sergeant, and John Richards.

<sup>487</sup> On February 29, the brothers Thomas and Edward Putnam and two others, Joseph Hutchinson and Thomas Preston, swore formal complaints of witchcraft against Sarah Good, Tituba Indian, and Sarah Osborn before magistrates John Hathorne and Jonathan Corwin. The complaint was made on behalf of four afflicted girls, Elizabeth Parris, Abigail Williams (both living at the residence of Rev. Samuel Parris and his wife, Elizabeth), Ann Putnam, Jr. (living with her father and mother Thomas Putnam and Ann Putnam, Sr.), and Elizabeth Hubbard (an orphan, living with her great aunt and uncle, Dr. William Griggs).

<sup>488</sup> John Hale writes,

“Soon after this, [the affliction of Elizabeth Parris and Abigail Williams] there were two or three private fasts at the Ministers House [the Rev. Samuel Parris], one of which was kept by sundry Neighbour Ministers, and after this, another in Publick at the Village, and several days

afterwards of publick Humiliation, during these molestations, not only there, but in other congregations for them. And one General Fast by Order of the General Court, observed throughout the Colony to seek the Lord that he would rebuke Satan, and be a light unto his people in this day of darkness. (qtd. in Burr, Narratives 414)

This general fast was celebrated on May 26, 1692.

<sup>489</sup> *Loyeta* was a Swedish colloquial term for devil, much like *Old Nick* or *Old Clootie*. In each case the devil comforts the victim with promises long life, money, and material wealth and happiness, which turn out to be false promises. Often, this devil also threatens, punishes, or afflicts his victims. At the examination of Sarah Close and Elizabeth Proctor “at a court held in Salem” on the 11<sup>th</sup> of April, 1692, the mouth of Mary Lewis was stopped, Ann Putnam could not speak, and Abigail William’s “hand was thrust in her own mouth” (*SWP* 3: 659-660).

<sup>490</sup> On April 1, 1692 Mercy Lewis

saw in her fitt a White man and was with him in a glorious Place, which had no Candles nor Sun yet was full of Light and Brightness; where was a great Multitude in White glittering Robes, and they Sung the Song in the fifth of Revelation the Ninth verse, and the 110 Psalm and the 149 Psalm; and said with her self, “How long shall I stay here? Let me be along with you”: She was loth to leave this place, and grieved that she could tarry no longer. This Whiteman hat appeared several times to some of them, and

given them notice how long it should be before they had another Fit,  
 which was sometimes a day, or a day and a half, or more of less: it hath  
 fallen out accordingly. (Deodat Lawson “A Brief and True Narrative,” qtd.  
 in Burr Narratives 161)

On April 11 Mercy Walcott saw a “white man” who, when he came “made all the  
 witches to tremble.” Abigail Williams “confirmed the same, and that they had such a  
 sight at Deacon Ingersoll's” (*SWP* 3: 659).

<sup>491</sup> The words “came in unto” and “went in unto” frequently have a sexual  
 connotation in the King James Bible. In Genesis 6.4 the “Sons of God came in unto the  
 daughters of men.”

<sup>492</sup> Älvdalen is about 25 miles northwest of Mora. An analogue between the  
 minister at Elfsdale and the minister at Salem is found in the confession of William  
 Barker, Sr., who states that

he was at a metting of the witches at Salem Village where he Judges there  
 was about a hundred of them that the meeting was upon a green peice of  
 ground Near the Ministers house he Says they Meet their to destroy that  
 place by reason of the peoples being devided & their differing w'th there  
 Ministers -- Satans desire was to Sett up his own worship, abolish all the  
 Churches in the land to fall next upon Salem & Soe goe through the  
 Country . . . . (*SWP* 1: 67)



William Barker, Sr., also confessed from a Salem prison that “[T]he design was to Destroy Salem Village, and to begin at the Ministers House, and to destroy the Church of God, and to set up Satans Kingdom, and then all will be well” (*SWP* 1: 69).

<sup>493</sup> In all, fifty-one people confessed to witchcraft during the Salem trials.

<sup>494</sup> Elizabeth Proctor, John Proctor’s wife, escaped execution by claiming to be pregnant. John Proctor was executed.

<sup>495</sup> This is an errata page not numbered in the original text.

<sup>496</sup> 2 Cor. 2.11.

<sup>497</sup> See Matthew 4.3 and 1 Thess. 3.5.

<sup>498</sup> See 1 John 2.16.

<sup>499</sup> High places were elevated locations designated for religious rites. They are traditionally associated with small states surrounding Israel. High places were especially characteristic of Canaanite fertility religion and the worship of Baal. Though the Israelites originally adopted forms of Canaanite worship at the high places, they were later torn down and condemned. Rites practiced on the high places included ritual prostitution (1 Kings 14.23-24; Ezek. 16.20) and child sacrifice (Jer. 7.31; 19.5; 32.35; Ezek. 16.20), both reminiscent of practices believed to occur at a witches’ Sabbath. Mather sees the heathen worship at the high places as an Old Testament type of Satan worship now taking place in Salem.

<sup>500</sup> See 2 Kings 21.6, Matt. 12.45, and Luke 11.26.

<sup>501</sup> See Mark. 5.9, 5.15; Luke 8.30.

<sup>502</sup> See Gen. 3.1, 2, 4, 13, 14.

<sup>503</sup> See Eph 6.11, 1 John 2.13-14, 3.12, 5.18.

<sup>504</sup> See Ps. 23.3

<sup>505</sup> See Ecc.8.8.

<sup>506</sup> Mather refers both to the first Adam in the Garden of Eden and to Jesus, the second Adam.

<sup>507</sup> The OED defines “breastwork” as “A fieldwork (usually rough and temporary) thrown up a few feet in height for defence against an enemy; a parapet.” Mather may be calling to mind defenses built against the Indians, who were seen by many in Salem as allies and minions of the devil. For a full documentation of the possible influence of Indian attacks on the Salem trials, see Mary Beth Norton, In the Devil’s Snare.

<sup>508</sup> 1 Cor. 5.1-13; 2 Cor. 2.5-11. Mather assumes that the man the Apostle Paul mentions in 1 Cor. who commits incest with his mother in law and should be turned over to Satan is the same man whom Paul mentions in 2 Cor. who has now repented and should be forgiven and re-admitted.

<sup>509</sup> See 2 Cor 2.11.

<sup>510</sup> See 2 Cor. 2.11.

<sup>511</sup> The phrase is from Virgil’s Aeneid 7.338. Latin: “A thousand harmful arts.” The passage from which this phrase is taken involves Juno, who is charging Alecto, one the furies whom she has summoned up from hell, with a task:

"O virgin daughter of eternal Night,  
 Give me this once thy labor, to sustain  
 My right, and execute my just disdain.  
 Let not the Trojans, with a feign'd pretense  
 Of proffer'd peace, delude the Latian prince.  
 Expel from Italy that odious name,  
 And let not Juno suffer in her fame.  
 'T is thine to ruin realms, o'erturn a state,  
 Betwixt the dearest friends to raise debate,  
 And kindle kindred blood to mutual hate.  
 Thy hand o'er towns the fun'ral torch displays,  
 And forms a thousand ills ten thousand ways.  
 Now shake, out thy fruitful breast, the seeds  
 Of envy, discord, and of cruel deeds:  
 Confound the peace establish'd, and prepare  
 Their souls to hatred, and their hands to war."

It is perhaps significant that just twelve lines above this passage the following couplet is found: " A second Paris, diff'ring but in name, / Shall fire his country with a second flame."

<sup>512</sup> Conflation of Heb. 2.18 and Isa. 14.10.

<sup>513</sup> Matt. 4.1-11 describes Jesus's temptation by the devil in the wilderness.

Mather's italicized phrase is taken from Prov. 30.19.

<sup>514</sup> Matt. 4.3.

<sup>515</sup> Agur, son of Jakeh, claims to be the author of one of the collections of wise sayings beginning in Proverbs 30.1.

<sup>516</sup> See Prov. 30. and Ex. 5.2.

<sup>517</sup> See Prov. 30.9.

<sup>518</sup> "To bark or howl as a dog, to give mouth or tongue as an animal" (OED).

<sup>519</sup> See Matt. 4.3-4.

<sup>520</sup> Mather conflates Deut. 28.56 and 57.

<sup>521</sup> Acts 4.30 contains that phrase that Mather italicizes, but in the context of doing signs and wonders in the name of Jesus, not the devil, as Mather contextualizes it: "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus" (Acts 4.29-30).

<sup>522</sup> See Gen. 25.32.

<sup>523</sup> In Exodus 32, when Moses stayed on Mount Sinai for forty days and forty nights acquiring the Ten Commandments, the Israelites grew impatient and chose Moses' brother, Aaron, for their leader. Aaron asked the people for gold earrings to fashion a golden bull for worship.

<sup>524</sup> Mather alludes to rebellion against the Lord as a form of witchcraft. In 1 Sam. 15 the Lord commands Saul through the prophet Samuel, “Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.” Saul allows the Kennites dwelling among the Amalekites to leave. He then destroys all the Amalekites from Havilah unto Shur; however, he spares Agag, king of the Amalekites, and the best of the sheep, oxen, fatlings, and lambs, disobeying the Lord’s command. Saul reasons that by sparing the animals, the people can make a sacrifice unto the Lord, but Samuel rebukes Saul for his disobedience and asks asks Saul, “Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord?” (22). Samuel then tells Saul, “For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry” (1 Sam. 15.23).

<sup>525</sup> Sabbath, to many New England Puritans, began on the Saturday evening before Sunday.

<sup>526</sup> See Isa. 1.14 and Ps. 11.5.

<sup>527</sup> See Luke 10.42.

<sup>528</sup> Unnecessary things.

<sup>529</sup> See Job 30.15.

<sup>530</sup> The struggle between the haves and have-nots, between the farming faction of Salem Village and the merchant faction of Salem Town, is thought to be a major cause of the witchcraft outbreak in Salem. See Boyer and Nissenbaum Salem Possessed.

<sup>531</sup> See Gen 3.1-13, especially 3.4-5; 2 Cor. 11.3.

<sup>532</sup> Latin: “under the false name of friendship.” The line is from a sermon “The Lord’s Prayer” by ejected minister from Yorkshire, Thomas Watson (d. 1686), from his magnum opus, *A Body of Practical Divinity* (London, 1692). Watson’s writing frequently contained passages of meditative and mystical portent, something that would have appealed to Cotton Mather. The latin verse, “Tuta frequensque via est, per amici fallere nomen” (“All too frequently the way is by the false name of friendship”), from which Watson’s phrase may have been originally taken, is from Ovid’s Art of Love 1. 585.

<sup>533</sup> Joab, commander of David’s army, took Abner, Saul’s former army commander, aside privately before the gates of Hebron as if to speak with him and then stabbed him. Joab’s motives were to revenge the death of Asahel and to eliminate a rival for commander-in-chief of David’s army.

<sup>534</sup> Peter spoke these words to Jesus after he had revealed to his disciples the persecution and death he would suffer in Jerusalem. Jesus tells Peter, “Get thee behind me, Satan,” for Peter interpreted events as man sees them, not as God sees them and was attempting, therefore, to interfere with God’s will for man’s salvation. See Matt. 16. 21-23.

<sup>535</sup> See Ps. 22.11.

<sup>536</sup> Prov. 26.25.

<sup>537</sup> See Matt. 14.15-22; Matt. 15.32-37; Luke 9.13-17; John 6.4-14; mark 6.36-45.

<sup>538</sup> “Something which stops, stays, or checks . . .” (*OED*). Legally a supersedes is  
 “A writ commanding the stay of legal proceedings which ought otherwise to have  
 proceeded, or suspending the powers of an officer . . .” (*OED*).

<sup>539</sup> Both dancing and promiscuity were thought to take place at witches’ Sabbaths.

<sup>540</sup> See Gen. 47.15.

<sup>541</sup> See 2 Sam. 7.23; Mark 10.35-36.

<sup>542</sup> Mather italicizes his own passage to make it appear scripture-like.

<sup>543</sup> Ps. 37.3.

<sup>544</sup> The devil would say the opposite of what Jesus says. See Matt. 6.25, 31.

<sup>545</sup> Matt. 4.6; Matt. 27.40.

<sup>546</sup> Mather probably uses “shrewd” here in its obsolete sense of “poor” or  
 “unsatisfactory.” (*OED*) “shrewd, *a.*” 3.c. *def.*

<sup>547</sup> Mather’s makes a negative inference based on the idea that those whom God  
 loves he chastens. See Heb. 5-7.

<sup>548</sup> See Exod. 17.8-16.

<sup>549</sup> Job 4.5-7;

<sup>550</sup> See 1 Peter 4.19.

<sup>551</sup> This clause appears in Matthew 3.17 and Matthew 17.5.

<sup>552</sup> Exod. 5.2.

<sup>553</sup> See Gen. 3.1.

<sup>554</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>555</sup> Mather refers to those like materialist and skeptical philosophers like Francis Bacon, Thomas Hobbes, and Benedict Spinoza, who failed to see the hand of Providence in every occurrence but attributed earthly events to the working of scientific principles.

<sup>556</sup> See, for instance, Heb. 13.2.

<sup>557</sup> Matt. 4.5.

<sup>558</sup> See Gen. 10.9.

<sup>559</sup> Latin: "Lightning strikes the highest mountain tops." The passage is from Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblems* (Leyden, 1586) no. 140.

<sup>560</sup> Adapted from 1 Cor. 10.12.

<sup>561</sup> Goliath was a giant Philistine warrior whom the shepherd David slew with a sling. Goliath himself is called a champion. See 1 Sam. 17.

<sup>562</sup> The saying, "killing many birds with one stone" is proverbial.

<sup>563</sup> Crippled (*OED*).

<sup>564</sup> Compare Ps. 91.12 and Matt. 4.6.

<sup>565</sup> The importance of the first chapter of John to Quaker theology derives in part from Quaker Robert Barclay's exegesis in the Sixth Proposition of his Apology (1678):

First . . . John 1:9: "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." This place doth so clearly favour us, that, by some, it is called "the Quakers' text"; for it doth evidently demonstrate our assertion; so that it scarce needs either consequence or deduction, seeing itself is a consequence of two propositions asserted in the former verses, from which it followeth, as a conclusion in the very terms



of our faith. The first of these propositions is, "The life that is in him is the Light of men"; the second, "The Light shineth in the darkness," and from these two, he infers, and "He is the true Light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

(<http://www.qhpress.org/texts/barclay/apology/props5-6.html>)

<sup>566</sup> Neh. 9.17.

<sup>567</sup> Even though David was guilty of murder and adultery (see 2 Samuel chapter 11), and was subsequently punished, he was still the Lord's anointed, so the Lord eventually forgave him and made his seed the savior of the world. Mather points out that people have used the story of David's transgression and God's forgiveness to excuse themselves for wrongdoing, assuming that since they were also of David's seed the Lord would forgive them. Many people, says Mather, have used the Lord's forgiveness as an excuse to sin.

<sup>568</sup> That is, the devil would keep men from doing that which was good for them, like making proper sacrifice. The portion of the offering retained by the priest would bless and sustain not only the priest but those who made the offering. Lev. 7.21. "For the wave breast and the heave shoulder have I taken of the children of Israel from off the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and have given them unto Aaron the priest and unto his sons by a statute for ever from among the children of Israel."

<sup>569</sup> Prov. 15.8.

<sup>570</sup> 1 Cor. 11.29.

<sup>571</sup> Rom. 15.4.

<sup>572</sup> Adapted from Rom. 14.23.

<sup>573</sup> Adapted from Rev. 21.8.

<sup>574</sup> That which pulls one to commit an act.

<sup>575</sup> Suicide can be a somewhat thorny issue in the Bible. Elijah wanted to die (1 Kings 19.1-18); Job also wishes for death (Job 3.11-26). Seven suicides occur in the Bible, those of Abimelech (Judg. 9.52-54); Sampson (Judg. 16.25-30); Saul (1 Sam. 31.4); Saul's armor bearer (1 Sam. 31.5); Ahithophel (2 Sam. 17.23); Zimri (1 Kings 16.15-20), and Judas (Matthew 27.3-5). The Bible never explicitly says that suicide is a sin. That it is, however, can be inferred from the following verses: Deut. 5.17; Exod. 20.13; Ps. 39.4; Ps. 139.15-16; 1 Cor. 3.16-17, and 1 Cor 6.19-20. Seven suicides occur in the Bible, those of Abimelech (Judg. 9.52-54), Sampson (Judg. 16.25-30), Saul (1 Sam. 31.4), Saul's armor bearer (1 Sam. 31.5), Ahithophel (2 Sam. 17.23), Zimri (1 Kings 16.15-20), and Judas (Matthew 27.3-5).

<sup>576</sup> In John 8.44. Jesus says of the Devil, "He was a murder from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father of it."

<sup>577</sup> When Paul and Silas were jailed in Phillipi for preaching the word of God and casting the spirit of divination out of a slave girl. When her owners perceived that she was free of the demon, they dragged Paul and Silas before the rulers who bent to the will of the mob and jailed them. God caused an earthquake to wrench open the doors of the jail so Paul and Silas were free to leave. The Philippian jailer, awakening to the tumult,

perceiving that the prison doors were ajar, and assuming the prisoners had escaped, drew his sword and was about to kill himself when Paul cried out to the jailer not to harm himself. The prisoner, overwhelmed with fear, asked Paul, “What must I do to be saved?” Paul answered, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” That night the jailer and his family were baptized. The next morning some sergeants came from the magistrates with word that they were to let Paul and Silas go. God saved not only Paul and Silas but the life of the Philippian jailer and the souls of the jailer and his family.

<sup>578</sup> Job 7.15.

<sup>579</sup> All were suicides. Abimeleck was the son of Gideon and a Canaanite concubine. He wanted to make himself king, so he persuaded his mother’s kinsmen to help him and accepted 70 pieces of silver from the temple treasury. With the money he hired worthless and reckless men to go with him and together they killed 70 of his father’s sons, his “brothers,” other sons of Gideon at the temple in Shechem; Abimeleck’s skull was crushed by a millstone flung from the city wall at him by a woman of Thebez. Rather than be slain by a woman, Abimelick, dying, asked his armor-bearer to kill him with a sword (Judges 9.50-57); Achitophel conspired with Absalom to try to overthrow David. When he was betrayed by David’s secret ally Hushai, their plot failed, and Achitophel hanged himself. Judas sold Jesus for 30 pieces of silver and hanged himself as well.

<sup>580</sup> Having control of one’s mind. Being in one’s right mind.

<sup>581</sup> Lat:in: “That which Ulysses wills.” From Virgil’s *Aeneid* 2.104.

<sup>582</sup> Latin: “Our young servant must be of the highest piety and filled with fear and trembling.”

<sup>583</sup> Matther probably refers to several Psalms of David in which the Psalmist laments the exposure of his bones to various types of torments because of his sins and iniquity. These include Psalms 6, 22, 31, 32, 38, 42, 51, and 102.

<sup>584</sup> One of the “afflicted” girls, Mercy Lewis testified using very similar language as that found in the Bible verse, incorporating the familiar folk motif of the devil with a pitchfork:

this 9<sup>th</sup> may mr Burroughs caried me up to an exceeding high mountain and shewed me all the kingdoms of the earth and tould me that he would give them all to me if I would writ in his book and if I would not he would thro me down and brake my neck: but I tould him they ware non of his to give and I would not writ if he throde me down on 100 pichforks . . . (*SWP* 1:169).

<sup>585</sup> Proverbs 14.3.

<sup>586</sup> Eccles. 11.9: “Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.”

<sup>587</sup> Mather refers to Hebrews 11.25.

<sup>588</sup> 2 Kings 4.40.

<sup>589</sup> A mountebank was originally a charlatan who sold worthless medical remedies. His speech full of promises would attract crowds, but his words were empty.

<sup>590</sup> “To deposit eggs in (meat, etc.); hence, to corrupt secretly, taint.” (*OED*)

<sup>591</sup> The devil will be “busy, stirring, or energetic” (*OED*)

<sup>592</sup> Eph. 6.11,13.

<sup>593</sup> Eccles. 4.10: “For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.”

<sup>594</sup> Matt. 4.10.

<sup>595</sup> Deut. 8.3; 6.16; 6.13

<sup>596</sup> Dan 5. 5-7. Mather refers to the mysterious fingers writing on the wall at the Babylonian King Belshazzar’s feast. Belshazzar is fearful and distressed because he cannot interpret the writing. The Chaldeans and soothsayers and wise men of Babylon could not interpret it for him, so he called in Daniel who did interpret the message. Belshazzar died the same night.

<sup>597</sup> Another metaphorical use of “Tygre.”

<sup>598</sup> Hebrews 2.18. “For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”

<sup>599</sup> Increase Mather tells this story of Ann Cole of Hartford in his Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences (1684) 135-39. The rock, of course, is Christ.

## Appendix 1

### Emendations

The page and line numbers are those of this edition.

311.8 {FSTLB}

323.18 {STLE}

346.20 emended *four* to *five* following Errata sheet.

360.15. extra . deleted after *Pitt*.

361.2. inverted ! changed to !

381.1. “m” changed to “w” in first w of *swallow*.

381.12 {STLB}

382.8. inserted missing first t in *that*.

385.9. “be” to “these be” following Errata page.

389.15. “whereas” to “whereof” following Errata page.

396.13 {STLE}

398.12. “severally” to “severely” following Errata page.

407.1 {STLB}

408.8 “cover” to “over” following Errata page.

421.7. inserted comma after *conjurer* located at bottom of p. 95 but not at the top of p.

96.

427.17. deleted one *it* after *it*.

427.22. changed *Emiuent* to *Eminent*.

434.15. changed *shalll* to shall.

434.17. inverted p changed to p in *jumped*.`

438.4. emended inverted apostrophe in don't.

448.21 emended n to u in *but*.

450.2. emended backwards comma at bottom to ‘

450.17. emendation ‘ to , in *testify'd*..

451.18. period inserted after *Martin*.

470.4 {FSTLE}

“THE DEVIL DISCOVERED” PAGING BEGINS OVER WITH PAGE 1

477.2. removed extra comma after *spared*

479.21. [9] misnumbered as 17.

480.21. [10] misnumbered as 18.

481.21. [11] misnumbered as 19.

483.2. [12] misnumbered as 20.

484.1. [13] misnumbered as 21.

485.2. [14] misnumbered as 22.

486.3. [15] misnumbered as 23.

487.3. [16] misnumbered as 24.

488.5 [17] misnumbered as 25.

489.5. [18] misnumbered as 26.

490.7. [19] misnumbered as 27.

491.8. [20] misnumbered as 28.

491.18. emended *Rejoyec* to *Rejoice*.

492.10. [21] misnumbered as 29.

493.12. [22] misnumbered as 30.

494.16. [23] n.p.

495.14. [24] n.p.



## Appendix 2

## Title Pages to the Seventeenth-Century Editions of Cotton Mather's

Wonders of the Invisible World

*The Wonders of the Invisible World.*

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**OBSERVATIONS**  
 As well *Historical* as *Theological*, upon the NATURE, the  
 NUMBER, and the OPERATIONS of the  
**DEVILS**

Accompany'd with,

- I. Some Accounts of the Grievous Molestations, by DÆMONS and WITCHCRAFTS, which have lately annoy'd the Countrey; and the Trials of some eminent *Malefactors* Executed upon occasion thereof: with several Remarkable *Curiosities* therein occurring.
- II. Some Counsils, Directing a due Improvement of the terrible things, lately done, by the Unusual & Amazing Range of EVIL SPIRITS, in Our Neighbourhood: & the methods to prevent the *Wrongs* which those *Evil Angels* may intend against all sorts of people among us; especially in Accusations of the Innocent.
- III. Some Conjectures upon the great EVENTS, likely to befall, the WORLD in General, and NEW ENGLAND in Particular; as also upon the Advances of the TIME, when we shall see BETTER DAYES.
- IV. A short Narrative of a late Outrage committed by a knot of WITCHES in *Swedeland*, very much Resembling, and so far Explaining, *That* under which our parts of *America* have laboured!
- V. THE DEVIL DISCOVERED: In a Brief Discourse upon those TEMPTATIONS, which are the more Ordinary *Devises* of the Wicked One.

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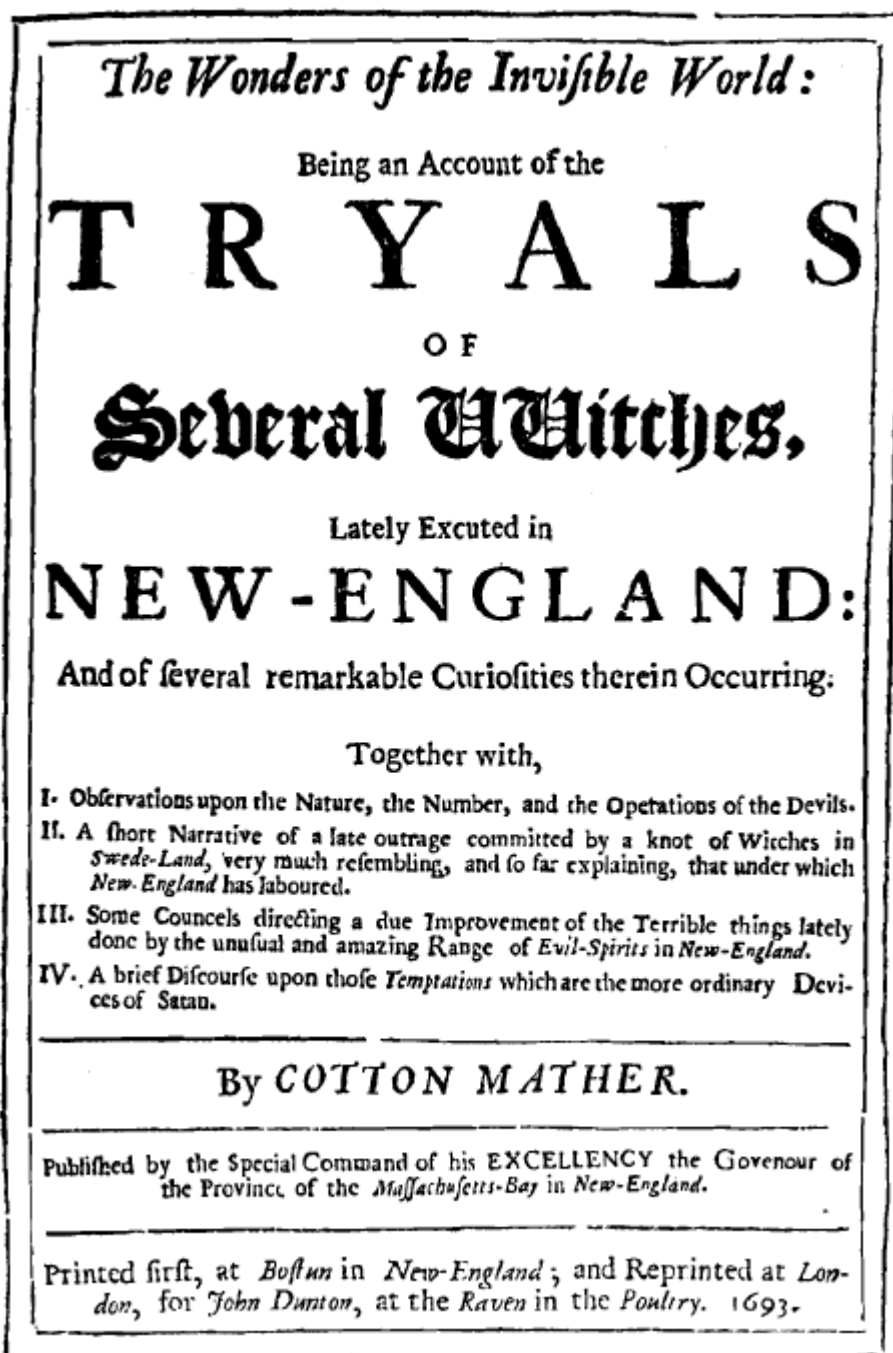
By Cotton Mather.

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Boston Printed by Benj. Harris for Sam. Phillips. 1693.

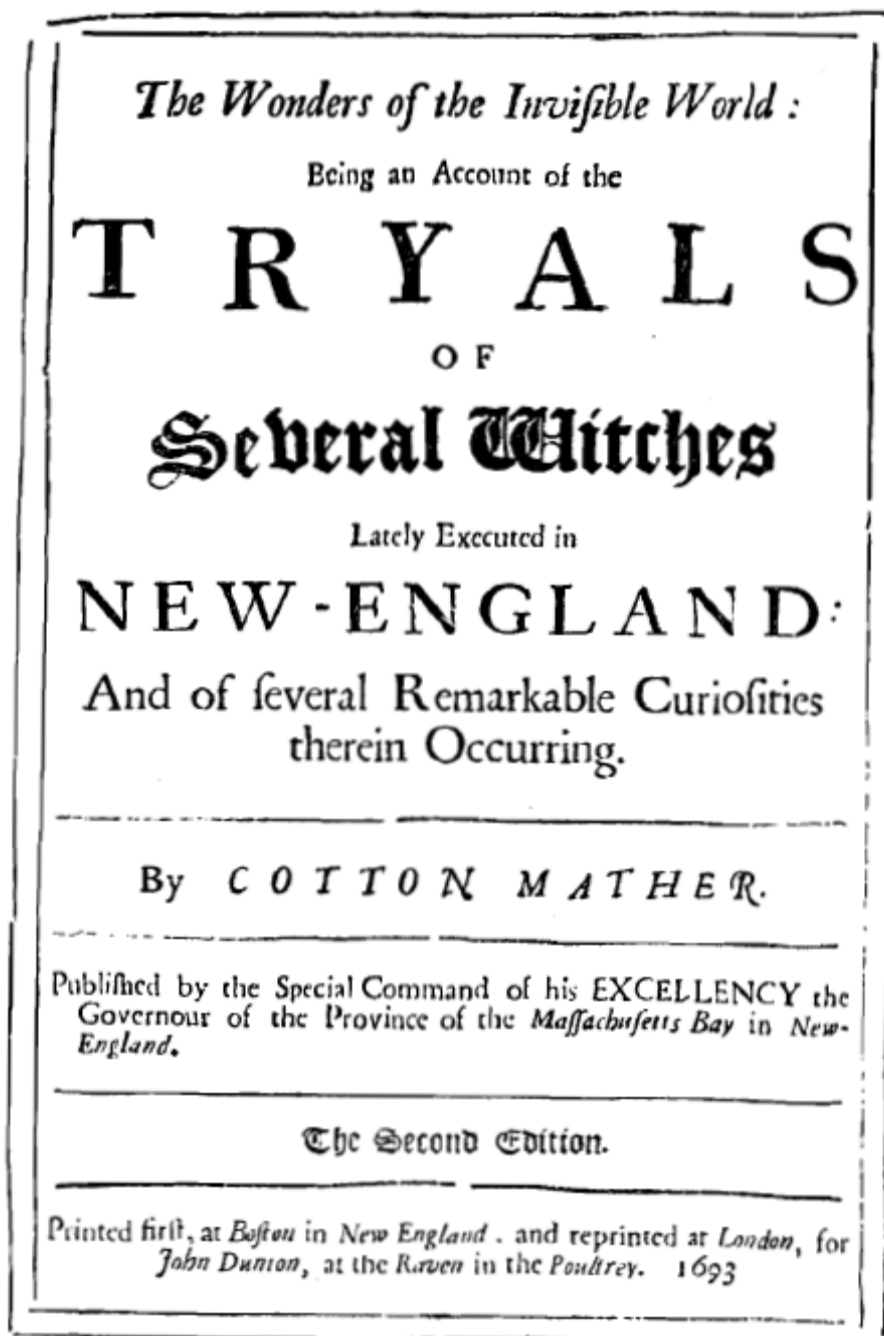
Title Page to the first Boston edition, T. J. Holmes, Cotton Mather: A

Bibliography, 3.1235.



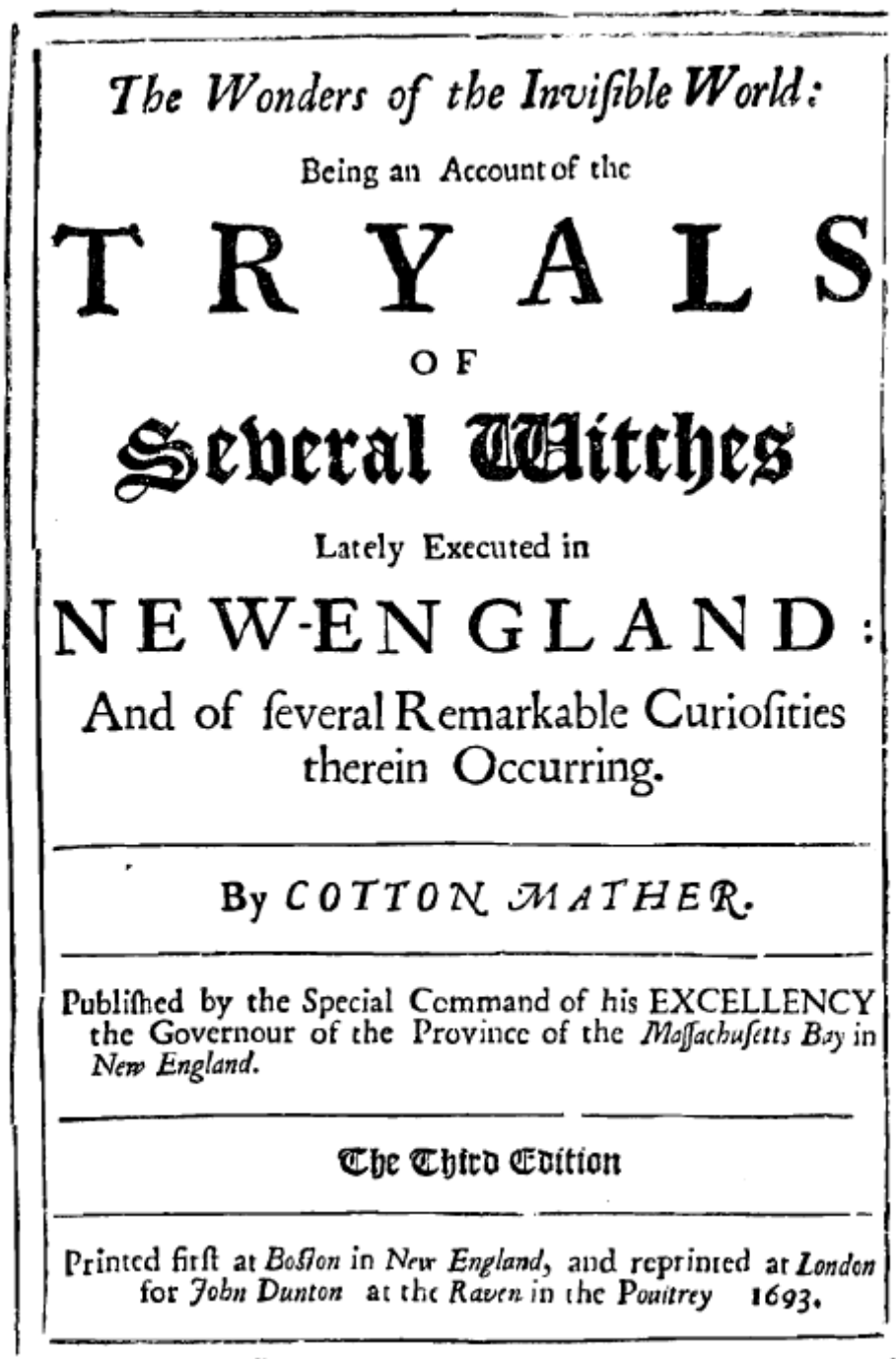
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Title page to the second London edition, T. J. Holmes, Cotton Mather: A

Bibliography, 3.1240.



Title Page to the third London edition, T. J. Holmes, Cotton Mather: A Bibliography, 3.1242.

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### Abbreviations

EAL Early American Literature

HCBD The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary

NEHGR The New England Historical and Genealogical Register

NEQ The New England Quarterly

OED The Oxford English Dictionary

SWP The Salem Witchcraft Papers

SVW Salem Village Witchcraft

WIW Wonders of the Invisible World

WMQ William and Mary Quarterly

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