

GOTHIC BOURNES

**THE APPARITION OF EDWARD AVON, TO HIS
SON IN LAW THOMAS GODDARD
(1685)**

TRANSCRIPTION BY
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RELATION XIV

The Apparition of *Edward Avon*, to his Son in Law *Thomas Goddard*.

Thomas Goddard of Marleburgh *in the County of Wilts, Weaver; on the ninth of November 1674 going to Ogburn, at a Style on the Highway about nine in the morning, met the Apparition of his Father in Law, one Edward Avon of this Town Glover, who dyed in May last, having on to appearance, the same Cloaths, Hat, Stockings, and Shoes he did actually wear when he was living, standing by, and leaning over that Style. Which when he came near, the Apparition spake to him with an audible voice, these words, Are you afraid? To which he answered, I am, thinking on one who is dead and burried [sic] whom you are like. To which the Apparition replied [sic] with the like voice. I am he you were thinking on, I am Edward Avon your Father in Law, come near to me, I will do you no harm. To which Goddard answered, I trust in him that bought my Soul with his precious blood, you shal [sic] do me [103] no harm. Then the Apparition¹ said, How stand Cases at home? Goddard askt [sic] what Cases? Then it askt him, how do William and Mary, meaning as he conceived his Son William Avon, a Shoe-Maker here, and Mary his Daughter, the said Goddards [sic] wife. Then it said, What? Taylor is dead, meaning as he thought one Taylor of London, who married his Daughter Sarah, which Taylor dyed about Michaelmas² last. Then the Apparition held out his hand, and in it as Goddard conceived, 20. or 30. shillings in Silver, and then spake [sic] with a loud voice. Tale this money and send it to Sarah for I shut up my Bowels of Compassion toward her in my life*

¹ This is one of the few instances where the word "Apparition" is italicized (page 103, line 1)

² September 29.

time [sic], and now here is somewhat for her. *And then said Mary (meaning the said Goddard's Wife, as he conceived) is troubled for me, but tell her God hath shewed me Mercy contrary to my deserts. But the said Goddard answered in the name of Jesus I refuse all such money. Then the Apparition said I perceive you are afraid, I will meet with you some other time. And immediately it went up the Lane to his appearance. So he went over the same Style, but saw it no more that day.*

He saith [sic], the next night about 7. of the Clock, it came & opened his Shop windows and stood [104] in the like Cloaths, looking him in the face but said nothing to him. And the next Night after, as Goddard went forth into his Back-side with a Candle light in his hand, it appeared to him again in the same shape, but he being in fear, ran into his house, and saw it no more then.

But he saith,³ that on Thursday the 12. instant as he came from Chilton, riding down the Hill between the Mannor-house and Axfoord-Farm-Field, he saw some what like a hare crosing [sic] his way, at which his Horse frighted, threw him into the Dirt, and as soon as he could recover on his Feet, the same Apparition there met him again in the same habit, and there standing about eight foot directly before him in the way, spake again to him with a loud voice: Source (a word he commonly used when living) you have stayed long, and then said to him, Thomas, bid William Avon take the Sword that he had of me, which is now in his House, and carry it to the Wood, as we go to Alton, to the upper end of the Wood, by the way side, for with that Sword I did wrong thirty years ago, and he never prosper'd since he had that sword. And bid William Avon give his sister Sa[105]rah twenty shilling of the money which he had of me. And do you talk with Edward Laurence, for I borrowed twenty shillings of him several years ago, and did say

³ The speaker is Goddard.

I had payed him, but I did not pay it him; and I would desire you to pay him twenty shillings out of the Money which you had from *James Elliot*, at two payments. *Which money the said Goddard now saith was five pounds, which James Elliot a Baker here owed the said Avon on Bond, and which he the said Goddard had received from the said Elliot since Michaelmas at two payments, viz. 35. shillings at one, and 3 pound 5 shillings at another payment. And it further said to him, tell Margaret (meaning his own Wife as he conceived) that I would desire her to deliver up the little money which I gave to little Sarah Taylor the Child, or any one she will trust for it. But if she will not, speak to Edward Laurence to perswade [sic] her. But if she will not then, tell that I will see her very suddenly. And see that this be done within a twelve moneth [sic], and a day after my decease, and peace be with you. And so it went away over the Rails into the Wood there in the like manner, as any man [106] would go over a Style to his apprehension, and so he saw it no more at that time. And he saith, that he paid the twentie [sic] shillings to Edward Laurence of this town, who being present, now doth remember, he lent the said Avon twentie shillings about twentie years ago, which none knew but himself and his Wife and Avon and his wife, and was never paid it, again before now by this Goddard.*

And this Goddard further says, that this verie day by Mr. Majors order, he with his Brother in Law William Avon went with the Sword, and about Nine a Clock this Morning, they laid down the Sword in the Copse near the place the Apparition had appointed Goddard to carry it: and then coming away thence, Goddard looking back, saw the same Apparition again in the like habit as before. Whereupon he called to his Brother in Law, and said, Here is the Apparition of our Father, who said, I see nothing. Then Goddard fell on his knees, and said, LORD open his eyes that he may see it, if it be thy blessed Will. And the Apparition to Goddards appearance, beckned [sic] with his hand to come to it. And then Goddard said, In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, what would

you have me to do? [107] *Then the Apparition said to him, Thomas take up the sword and follow me. To which he said, should both of us come, or but one of us? To which, it answered, Thomas, do you take up the Sword. And so he took up the sword and followed the Apparition about ten Poles in length further into the Copse, and then turning back, he stood still about a Pole and a half from it, his Brother in Law staying behind at the Place where they first laid down the Sword. Then Goddard laying down the Sword upon the ground saw something stand by the Apparition like a Mastiff-Dog of a Brown Colour. Then the Apparition coming towards Goddard, he stept [sic] back about two steps. And the Apparition said to him, I have a permission to you, and a Commission not to touch you: And then it took up the Sword, and went back to the place, at which before it stood, with a Mastiff-Dog by it as before, and pointed the top of the Sword into the Ground, and said, In this place lies buried the Bodie [sic] of him, whom I murdered in the year 1635. Which is now rotten and turned to Dust. Whereupon Goddard said, I do adjure you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy [108] Ghost, when did you commit this Murder. And it said, I took Money from the Man, and he contended with me, and so I murdered him. Then Goddard askt him, who was Confederate with him in the said Murder? And he said, None but my self [sic] was accessory thereto. Then Goddard said, What would you have me to do in this thing? And the Apparition said, This is, that the World may know that I murdered a Man, and buried him in this place in the year 1635.*

Then the Apparition laid down the Sword, on the bare ground there, whereon grew nothing but seemed to Goddard to be as a Grave sunk in. And then the Apparition rushing further into the Copse, vanished, and saw it no more. Whereupon Goddard his Brother in Law Avon, leaving the Sword there, and coming away together, Avon told Goddard he heard his voice, and understood what he said, and heard other words distinct from his, but could not understand a word of it, nor saw any Apparition at all. Which he now also

present affirmeth, and all which the said Goddard then attested under his hand, and affirmed, he will depone the same, when he shall be thereto required.