

***GOTHIC BOURNES***

**THE STORY OF DAVID HUNTER  
(1681)**

TRANSCRIPTION BY  
Natalia García-Casarrubios de la Peña

**EDITING GOTHIC TEXTS  
TENTH SERIES, 2023  
Nº 6**

*Saducismus Triumphatus:*

OR,

Full and Plain EVIDENCE

Concerning

**WITCHES**

AND

**APPARITIONS**

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**IN TWO PARTS.**

The First treating of their

**POSSIBILITY,**

The Second of their Real

**EXISTENCE.**

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By *Joseph Glanvil* late Chaplain in Ordinary to  
his Majesty, and Fellow of the Royal Society.

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With a Letter of Dr. HENRY MORE on the same Subject.

And an Authentick, but wonderful story of certain *Swedish* Witches; done  
into English by *Anth. Horneck*.

Preacher at the *Savoy*.

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*London*: Printed for *J. Collins* at his Shop under the *Temple-Church*, and *S. Lownds* at  
his Shop by the *Savoy-gate*, 1681.

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*The Story of David Hunter Neat-herd<sup>1</sup> to the Bishop of Down and Connor<sup>2</sup>, at Portmore in Ireland, 1663. from the same hand.<sup>3</sup>*

David Hunter Neat-herd at the Bishop's House at *Portmore*, there appeared to him one night, carrying a Log of Wood into the Dairie,<sup>4</sup> an Old Woman, which amazed him, for he knew her not: but the fright made him throw away his Log of Wood and run into the house. The next night she appeared again to him, and he could not chuse<sup>5</sup> but follow her all night; and so almost every night for near three quarters of a Year. Whenever she came, he must go with her through the Woods at a good round rate;<sup>6</sup> and the poor fellow lookt as if he was bewicht and travelled off his legs. And when in bed with his Wife, if she appeared, he must rise and go. And because his Wife could not hold him in his bed, she would go too, and walk after him till day, though she see nothing: But his little Dog was so well acquainted with the Apparition, that he would follow her as well as his [286] Master. If a Tree stood in her walk, he observed her always to go through it. In all this while she spake not.

But one day the said *David* going over a Hedge into the High-way, she came just against him, and he cried out, *Lord bleß me, would I was dead; shall I never be delivered from this misery? At which, And the Lord bleß me too, says she: It was very happy you spake first, for till then I had no power to speak, though I have followed you so long. My Name, says she, is Margaret — I lived here before the War,<sup>7</sup> and had one Son by my Husband. When he died I married a Souldier,<sup>8</sup> by whom I had several Children, which that former Son maintained, else we must have all starved. He lives beyond the Baun-water;<sup>9</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Cowherd.

<sup>2</sup> Episcopal title. The Bishop of Down and Connor in the year 1663 was theologian and writer Jeremy Taylor. He was appointed in 1660, to facilitate the Restoration process in Ireland. [Britannica, 2022].

<sup>3</sup> The hand of Thomas Alcock, the bishop's secretary.

<sup>4</sup> Alternative spelling of "dairy".

<sup>5</sup> Alternative spelling of "choose".

<sup>6</sup> Rapidly.

<sup>7</sup> Based on the year, this most likely refers to the Eleven Years' War (1641-1652). For more information see Editor's note V.

<sup>8</sup> Alternative spelling of "soldier".

<sup>9</sup> This is most likely a misprint ("Bann" instead of "Baun"), as this seems to reference the Bann River in the province of Ulster, Ireland: Jeremy Taylor's Portmore residence was located there, on the Eastern shore of Lough Beg (also known as Portmore Lake), into which the Bann River flows [Drumberg Community Association].

*pray go to him and bid him dig under such a Harth,<sup>10</sup> and then he shall find 28 s.<sup>11</sup> Let him pay what I owe in such a place, and the rest to the charge unpayed at my Funeral; and go to my son that lives here, which I had by my latter Husband, and tell him that he lives a wicked and a dissolute life, and is very unnatural and ungrateful to his Brother that maintained him; and if he does not mend his life, God Almighty will destroy him.*

*David Hunter* told her he never knew her. *No*, says she, *I died Seven years before you came into the Countrey:<sup>12</sup>* But for all that, if he would do her Message, she would never hurt him. But he deferred doing as the Apparition bid [287] him, and she appeared the night after as he lay in bed, and struck him on the shoulder very hard; at which he cried out, and askt her if she did not promise she would not hurt him? She said, that was if he did her Message; if not, she would kill him. He told her he could not go now by reason the Waters were out.<sup>13</sup> She said she was content he should stay till they were abated; but charged him afterwards not to fail her. So he did her errand, and afterwards she appeared and gave him thanks. *For now*, said she, *I shall be at rest, therefore pray<sup>14</sup> you lift me up from the ground, and I will trouble you no more.* So *David Hunter* lifted her up from the ground, and, as he said, she felt just like a bag of Feathers in his arms. So she vanisht, and he heard most delicate Musick<sup>15</sup> as she went off, over his head; and he never was more troubled.

This account the poor fellow gave us every day as the Apparition spake to him, and my Lady *Conway<sup>16</sup>* came to *Portmore*, where she askt the fellow the same questions and many more. This I know to be true, being all the while with my Lord of *Down*, and the fellow a poor Neat-herd there.

*Thomas Alcock.*

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<sup>10</sup> Alternative spelling of "hearth".

<sup>11</sup> 28 shillings.

<sup>12</sup> Alternative spelling for "country".

<sup>13</sup> Jeremy Taylor's residence was located on a marshy area, surrounded by water (see footnote 9), therefore it makes sense that the rise and fall of the tides would affect his ability to move and visit the Ghost's son across the river.

<sup>14</sup> Please.

<sup>15</sup> Alternative spelling of "music".

<sup>16</sup> Anne Conway, English philosopher who was a pupil of Henry More. For more information see Editor's note VI.

[288] ADVERTISEMENT.<sup>17</sup>

It is no small confirmation to my self [sic] of the truth of these two last Stories, in both which my Lady *Conway* is mentioned, in that I received two Letters from that incomparable Lady out of *Ireland* touching them both. The former is dated, *Lisburne*, March 3. 1662. wherein she writes thus: *I have spoken lately with two simple Country-people who have been much perplexed with two several persons who have died lately. The stories are too long to relate; but the circumstances are such, as I know not how to misbelieve the stories. The persons cannot be suspected to have any design, and were altogether unacquainted in the Families of those that appeared, and wholly ignorant of those things in them that they now relate, and have charge to sollicite<sup>18</sup> the amendment of some miscarriages by some persons intrusted, which they could never hear of, as is supposed, by any other means. There are many other probabilities, but all evaded<sup>19</sup> by several persons here.* And to give you a taste of their goodly Evasions,<sup>20</sup> I will transcribe a passage out of the other Letter of the said excellent Lady, dated, *Lisburne*, April 29. 1663. wherein she writes thus: *The relation I sent you of two in this Country is certainly liable to as little exception (there was mention of the Drummer of Tedworth before) as any one shall [289] meet with; As may appear by the diligent search some have made for a flaw and Objection against the parties, who, after all, they confesse, must needs appear perfectly uninterested [sic], and impossible to have had from any concerned what they have delivered. But they believe that either Drunkenness or desperate Melancholy<sup>21</sup> did by chance enable them to light upon greater truths than themselves thought of.<sup>22</sup> Thus far that excellent person.<sup>23</sup> And it was enough for this noble Lady onely<sup>24</sup> to recite their solution of the Phænomenon<sup>25</sup> into *Melancholy* and *Drunkenness*, it being so trifling and silly, that it wanted no further refutation than the mere recital.*

That Drink may discover the *secrets* of him that is *drunk*, as the Poet observes, is reasonable enough: but that a man by being *drunk* is better capacitated to understand

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<sup>17</sup> In this segment, Glanvill addresses the reader directly and comments on the story of David Hunter and on that which precedes it: *The Apparition of James Haddock to Francis Taverner near Drum bridge in Ireland*. Both stories were related by Thomas Alcock in a letter to Dr. H(enry) Moore. However in this advertisement the author focuses on the letters written to him by Lady Conway, and through them explains why both stories are rooted in truth, against what some people may say. This aligns with the main purpose of the book, *Saducismus Triumphatus*, which was to combat the growing scepticism of the time by proving the existence of an afterlife and the divine.

<sup>18</sup> Alternative spelling for “solicit”.

<sup>19</sup> In this context, the meaning of the verb is closer to “rejected” than to “avoided”.

<sup>20</sup> Refutations.

<sup>21</sup> Melancholy was considered to be an illness caused by an excess of “black bile”. Its symptoms included, not only a depressed mood, but also hallucinations or delusions.

<sup>22</sup> Those that try to find flaws in the stories do admit that the witnesses seem to be unbiased, and that there is no possible explanation as to how they knew about the things the ghosts told them, except drunkenness or melancholy. This explanation was valid to them because hallucinations were natural occurrences created by the minds of the individuals having them, not supernatural events, which they did not believe in.

<sup>23</sup> Meaning: “This is all Lady Conway says”.

<sup>24</sup> Alternative spelling for “only”.

<sup>25</sup> Alternative spelling of “phenomenon”.

the *secrets* of another man, or of his Family, is so wild a Paradox, that no *sober* man can admit it. And what is *Melancholy* but a *natural Drunkenneß* when it ferments? And moreover, it being but by chance that *Melancholy* or *Drunkenneß* enables them to light upon such things, why may not *Sanguine*<sup>26</sup> and *Sobriety* chance as well to do the same, and not rather better, if there be any betterness<sup>27</sup> in things by chance? But if there be any advantage in *fermenting Melancholy* or *Strong Drink*, it is because the Soul is more excited, and made more ready to discover its own more inward furniture,<sup>28</sup> as [290] men in drink reveal their own Secrets. But the Soul has no innate Idea's [sic] of *particular* things, and therefore the greatest effervescency of Drink or Melancholy will not a jot better dispose her to the knowledge of *Particulars*, but indispose her for the reception of them from without. So blindly do these Witlings<sup>29</sup> Philosophize touching things of this nature.

And yet, I dare say, this was the very best of their Evasions: Which being no better against these two Stories and the Stories so sifted and examined (to say nothing of others) by a person of so quick a Wit, impartial Judgement and Sagacity, as I know that excellent Lady to have been, I must confess, that to me it is a confirmation as strong as I can desire for the main strokes of the Stories, of which I retain some memory, having heard a more particular account of them from her Lady-ship presently upon her return from *Ireland* some sixteen years ago. Nor do doubt but Mr. *Alcock* has approved himself a faithful Reciter of them as to the main;<sup>30</sup> nor can there any one rightly be deemed more fit and able, he being present at the Examination of *Taverner*, and dwelling at *Portmore* with the Bishop of *Down*, whose Servant *Hunter* was.

## EDITOR'S NOTES

- I. The use of capital letters and italic text respects the way in which it appears in the original printed text.
- II. One thing that has not been signalled in the footnotes is the appearance of the several alternative spellings for verbs in the past form. These are: "lookt" for "looked" (page 285, line 13); "bewitcht" for "bewitched" (page 285, line 13); "spake" for "spoke" (page 286, line 3); "unpayed" for "unpaid" (page 286, line 20); "askt" for "asked" (page 287, line 3 and then again in line 23); "vanisht" for "vanished" (page 287, line 17).
- III. Another thing that has not been noted is the use of the letter 'ß' in the words "*bleß*" (page 286, line 6 and then again in line 9); "*confeß*" (page 289, line 3); and "*Drunkenneß*" (page 289, lines 7, 12, 22 and 24). Though it is now uncommon, the letter 'ß' was used in the place of 'ss' in italic text.

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<sup>26</sup> The opposite temperament to melancholy. Alternative way of saying "optimism".

<sup>27</sup> Improvement.

<sup>28</sup> Their inner self.

<sup>29</sup> People of little sense, knowledge or intellect.

<sup>30</sup> The author confirms that Alcock's account matches that given by Lady Conway to him years before.

- IV. There seem to be two cases of misprint, apart from the one signalled in footnote 9: one is the spelling of “uninterested” as “uninteressed” (page 289, line 4); and the spelling of “ideas” as “idea’s”(Page 290, line 2).
- V. Regarding the context of the Eleven Years’ War: The conflict began with an uprising by Irish Catholics against British Protestants and ultimately resulted in the defeat of the Irish forces and the imposition of English rule over Ireland. Many Irish people were massacred, and most Catholic landowners were dispossessed of their lands [Dorney, 2014]. Perhaps this is why Margaret emphasises that she lived in that land before the War.
- VI. Regarding Anne Conway and Henry More: Both were part of the so called ‘Cambridge Platonists’ who defended, among other things, the existence of realities beyond perception. The author of the book, Joseph Glanvill, was also a Cambridge Platonist. [Goldie, 2005].

### Works cited

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