

the  
**Kingdom**  
of  
**Darkness**

OR

*the history of demons, spectres, witches, apparitions, possessions,  
disturbances, and other wonderful and supernatural  
delusions, mischievous feats, and malicious impostures of the Devil*



written by R.B.  
published in 1688

*transcribed for the modern tongue by*

**G O D W I N**

M M X X I I I

## LIX.

**I**n August of 1649, one Elizabeth Graham was apprehended because she had, in a state of drunkenness, directed threatening words to John Runkin's wife at Kilwinning in Scotland. This poor victim fell sick ten days later and died.

Elizabeth Graham was then suspected of witchcraft and imprisoned for thirteen weeks. During that time, I tried to speak with her but found her very impertinent. In all her discourse she was so subtle that I could not get any advantage from her words. Sometimes I even thought she was an innocent woman and grieved the harsh conditions of the prison. I secretly wished that she had never been bothered.

In fact, I would have been glad if she had made her escape. I feared that we didn't have enough evidence against her to bring her to trial. If she were tried, I doubted the jury would not condemn her unless I advised them to do so. We knew nothing except that she had a bad report, and I was hesitant to get any more involved. If I had not and she had gained her liberty, I would have been blamed for not advising them to condemn her.

At that time, one Alexander Bogs, who was considered very skilful in discovering marks of the Devil, was sent to come to her. He found the mark upon her backbone, and when he did, he thrust a large brass pin into the mark. She didn't seem to feel it, and no blood followed when it was pulled out.

I judged this a small piece of evidence in respect of what I afterward found. This evidence, however, was big enough to the judges that they sent her case to Edinburgh, where, with some difficulty, permission was granted to try her.

My biggest fears were realised, however, when the chief man of the parish refused to appear and testify against her; he thought that all the evidence against her was nothing more than idle stories—and some of the judges held the same opinion.

I, on the other hand, could not help but find her guilty. I found even more evidence to support my belief.

On November 28, I went to exhort her to a confession. Alexander

Symson, the church officer, and my servant were both present. After I had used all of my arguments against her in vain, we decided to leave her.

Coming to the head of the stairs, I decided to see what she would say when she was all alone. It wasn't long until she started to talk as though someone were with her. Her voice was so quiet that I couldn't understand what she was saying, but I did hear her explaining that I had accused her and she had denied my accusations.

Soon after, I heard another voice whispering back to her, which I concluded to be Satan. This conversation continued for a long time—she speaking and the other voice answering in a tongue which none of us could understand. Sometimes he responded before she had finished speaking; we heard two voices at once.

At this, Alexander Symson was so scared that he cried out. I exhorted him not to fear, and we all came down the stairs. We were satisfied that the business was now more clear.

There are several other remarkable passages concerning Elizabeth Graham that prove that she was guilty of witchcraft—even though she died obstinate and impenitent.

On November 13 she seemed inclined to confess and promised William Watts that she would tell me everything that was in her heart the next day. When I came to her, only Watts and I were present. She repented of her wasting so much time. She especially apologised for her malice towards me, which she affirmed the Devil had tempted her to hold.

All during this time, she spoke with a very quiet voice so that we could barely hear her. We wanted her to speak loudly and clearly. When we asked her why she was speaking so softly, she replied that when she tried to say anything that would be good for her soul, she was barely able to utter it. But if she desired to scold and rail as she used to do, the Devil would give her strength to speak as loud as ever.

I eventually demanded to know whether she was guilty of witchcraft or not. At this, she looked around the room, and I truly believe she saw the Devil. Immediately after, she began to rail at me even though she had just confessed that her malice towards me was a chief cause of

her guilt. But still she railed against me, her voice becoming stronger and louder, until she at last screamed louder than ever before.

The next Monday I visited her again, and she was very bitter and malicious in her language towards me. I asked her how confident she was that her soul would end up in a good place. She replied that she had no confidence yet because she had been a very wicked woman and had not yet repented. But she hoped she could get repentance, and enter heaven, and see a change take place in her. Even though she was only going to live a little while longer—which she was sure of—she believed I would see this miracle take place in her.

I thought she had told me this in her rage, but in the afternoon some came and told me that she had fallen to prayers and was saying many good words about her own vileness and her hopes of God's mercy. She continued in this way until night.

When I came to visit her again, I found her lamenting her guilt and declaring her hopes of salvation. She desired to die and used such pithy and beautiful expressions from the scriptures that I began to wonder. I had found her altogether ignorant in matters of religion both before and after her imprisonment. I wondered whether she was suffering from delusions.

I once again questioned her very harshly on whether or not she was a witch. She freely confessed to all the evidence that did not definitively prove her to be a witch. All the other details she denied, including the crime of witchcraft itself.

She knew that she was going to die, and she didn't want to live anyways. She also wanted us to be clear from her blood before God. She was soon after executed and died without any acknowledgement of her guilt.

## LX.

**T**he following relation was published in a sermon preached by an eminent minister of Scotland.

In February of 1578, a company of drunkards—whose names were Adam Gibbons, George Keeple, John Keyssel, Peter Horsedroft, John Warner, Simon Heamkers, Jacob Hermons, and Hermon Frow—decided to get drunk on Sunday, even though this would be in contempt of their religion.

When they came to the house of Anthony Hodge, an honest and civil man, they asked for burnt wine, sack, claret, and more. The good man refused to give them any of this and advised them to go to church and hear the word of God. But all of them except for Adam Gibbons refused and said that they loathed and hated church.

When the master of the house had left and gone to church, these men began to curse and swear. They wished that he would break his neck, and they further wished that the Devil would break their own necks if they went to the church before they had some wine.



At this, the Devil appeared to them in the likeness of a young man. He carried a pitcher of wine in his hand and drank from it. He called

out to them, *“Come good fellows, and be merry. You will have enough wine. You seem to be passionate lads, and I hope you will pay me well.”*

They replied that they would either pay him or wring their necks instead. And so these wicked wretches continued drinking and roaring for so long that they could hardly see one another.

At last the Devil, their landlord, told them they must now pay for it all, at which their hearts grew cold. The Devil, however, told them to be of good cheer: now they must drink fire and brimstone with him in the pits of hell forever.

After declaring this, he broke all their necks and left their bodies. This was the way these miserable drunkards ended their lives.

This instance informs us that God can make the Devil His executioner when he pleases to show His vengeance on notorious sinners.

## LXI.

**A**round the same time, several witches were found in Scotland. One of them was a notorious woman by the name of Agnes Symson. The proceedings of the case against her remain in that kingdom for future ages.

She pretended to have the skills of a physician, and she promised that she could take the pains of the sick party on herself for a time. She would then transfer the pain to a third person.

She used long scriptural prayers and psalms—containing the chief points of Christianity—to convince others that she was not only a white witch but a devout Christian woman.

But in truth she was nothing more than a witch, which she confessed. She also answered any questions asked of her through the assistance of the Devil. When she needed him to tell her something, he would appear to her in the shape of a dog. When she would dismiss him, she used these words: “I charge you to depart by the law you live on.”

She once used this trick to inquire about Lady Edmiston’s illness. She raised the Devil by saying, “Elva, come and speak to me.” He then instantly appeared in the shape of a dog.

She once sailed in a boat toward a ship with her gossiping friends and fellow witches. As they floated, the Devil caused her and the rest to drink wine and beer freely. The sailors of the ship didn’t see her, and she didn’t see them.

When the ship departed to sea, this malicious spirit raised a wind that cast the ship away.

She and her accomplices once baptised a cat and used other cursed ceremonies to hinder a nobleman from coming to Scotland. She once raised a spirit that helped her conjure a wax figurine of Mr John Moscrope, which she used to destroy him.

After her apprehension, she confessed to a person of nobility that the Devil met her in the fields near her house in the likeness of a man. He commanded her to be at North Berwick church the next night. She

went at eleven that night to that place with her godson, John Cooper, riding on the horse with her.



They danced around the churchyard and played music on a cursed harp. John Fein, being strong, led the dance. Soon over a hundred wizards and witches came to join this wicked crew in the courtyard. Six were men; the rest, women.

The woman first kneeled and offered their obedience to their master, the Devil. Then the men did likewise and turned nine times about. The woman turned around six times.

John Fein blew open the church doors and then blew in the lights, which were like great black candles sticking around the pulpit. The Devil then mounted the pulpit in the appearance of a tall, dark man. He called over the names of his dismal tribe, to which the named persons responded, "Here! Here!"



He then asked if they had kept their promise, and been good servants, and done enough mischief since the last time they had met.

Once they had obeyed this command, they opened three graves—two inside the church and one outside the church. They cut off the fingers, toes, and noses of the dead corpses. He took these and parted them amongst the tribe. Agnes Symson received a burial shroud and two joints as her share.

The Devil ordered them to keep the joints until they were dry. They would then beat them to a powder to be used for malicious purposes. He finished by reordering them to obey his orders and to do all the evil and villainy they could.

Before they were dismissed, they were all obliged to kiss his hands. He was clothed with a black gown and coat.

Some of the members of the assembly stood while others sat. John Fein was always at the Devil's left elbow. A man named Graymail always stood by the door.

John Fein later confessed that when the Devil appeared to him, it was not in black but in white. And yet he proposed a hellish covenant to him that was as black as could be done.



With the Devil's assistance, John later swam in the sea like a cork. He also raised a wind with the intention of drowning several royal people. He did this by throwing a cat into the sea, which the Devil had given to him and his cursed confederates. He taught them to cry "*Holla*" when they first cast it in.

He later raised a mist by the same instructions. The fog that arose at this command was so thick that the ship was in great danger of being cast upon the rocks.

These and many other wicked practices were proved both by witnesses and the confessions of the accused. And so Agnes Symson, John Fein, and several more of this black society were arraigned, convicted, and executed according to the severity of their wickedness.

## LXII.

**S**ome authors who have written about witchcraft acknowledge that witches use different ceremonies to raise winds and storms. These often seem to follow their ceremonies. But some argue that these would have happened even without the witches' interventions. I cannot say whether there is a concrete connection between these ceremonies and the ensuing tempests, but I do assert that they are supernatural. They seem to proceed from the power of the Devil, who has his kingdom in the air.

He also enables his vassals to perform these sorts of ceremonies on occasion—of which there are several proven instances.

One example is of a witch who was set free to prove what skill she had to raise storms. This was done to satisfy the curiosity of those who had power to punish her. When she was let go, she went to a place that was full of trees, dug a hole with her hands, filled it with her urine, and stirred it around for as long as it took for a thick, dark cloud to rise and form over their heads. It was charged with thunder and lightning.

This terrified the spectators who had come to watch her power. She told them to be brave, however, because she could command the cloud to discharge on whatever place she decided. She made good on this promise in the presence of all the audience.

## LXIII.

**A**nother accident of the same kind happened in a part of Bavaria. A countryman was walking over his ground to examine his corn during a dry season. His little daughter was with him, and he wished that it might rain a good shower.

When the little girl heard her father say this, she told him that she could make it happen—out of her childish simplicity. The father, wondering what she meant, asked her how she could do such a feat.

“Oh,” she said, “I learned this trick from my mother.” She added that she could cause it to not only rain but hail. She went on to explain that she could raise a large stor and that her mother was taught by a master who came to her privately. Whatever she desired of him was done right away, but she was strictly forbidden from telling anyone.

The father, terrified at this talk, asked the girl if she had ever seen this master.

The girl replied that she had seen many come in and go out of her mother’s chambers. Her mother called these “masters” and “loving landlords.”

Her father requested her to raise a shower or storm that very instant. She replied, “Aye, if I have just a little bit of water.”

So he brought her to the river, where she called upon this master. It instantly began to rain on her father’s fields only—and not his neighbour’s, as he had commanded her. He then asked her to make it hail only on the fields that he showed her, which she did easily.

When he was fully convinced that his wife was a witch, he brought her before a magistrate, who examined her and became convinced of her crime. She was burnt for it.

The daughter was brought up in a pious and religious lifestyle, so she was thereafter delivered from the power and temptation of the Devil.