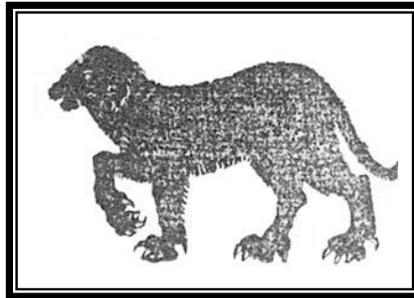


## A strange

*and terrible Wunder wrought  
very late in the parish Church  
of Bongay, a town of no great di-  
stance from the cite of Norwich, name-  
ly the fourth of this August, in the yeere of  
our Lord 1577, in a great tempest of vi-  
olent raine, lightening, and thunder, the  
like whereof hath been sel-  
dom seene.*

With the appearance of an horrible sha-  
ped thing, sensibly perceived of the  
people then and there  
assembled.

Drawen into plain method ac-  
cording to the written copye.  
by Abraham Fleming.



### **The Preface to the Reader**

Among men it is  
growen in custome,  
to haue forwarni[n]gs  
of afterclaps, as  
beacons built vpon hilles, which  
then are set on fier when daun-  
ger is imminent and at hand:  
Alarum belles serving to the  
same purpose, and other inuen-  
tions of men proceedi[n]g & pro-  
uided of policie, to preuent or  
else to prepare agaynst that  
which is perillouse. Euery man  
canne arme himself, when ha-  
zard is at hand to saue him and  
his as he is able: for the pre-

seruing of temporall thinges,  
lesus how painefull and venteu-  
rous wee bee: and no sooner  
shall a premonition bee gi-  
uen, but wee are furnished I  
warrant you prooffe.

God warneth us by signs fro[m]  
heaven, by fierie apparaunces  
in the aire moste terrible, by  
wonders, wrought on earthe,  
Strauge & unusiall, by exinun-  
dations of waters beyond their  
appointed limits, by the remo-  
ving of senselesse trees from the  
naturall place where they were  
planted, by the great power  
which the Prince of darknesse  
through Gods permission and  
sufferaunce hath recovered by  
many late moste misserable  
murthers not be named, much  
lesse to be committed among  
Christians, by insurrections  
full of daunger and detestable  
treason on this side the seas, by  
tumults and uprores between  
Princes of forreigne nations,  
and what should I say more? by  
the trump of his sweet and hea-  
venly Gospell, sounded unto us  
out of the mouths of his messen-  
gers. But wee will not be war-  
ned, wee will tumble still upon  
the bedde of wantonesse, and  
drink ourselves drunck with  
the wine of sensualitie, that  
whle wee lye wallowing in the  
sinck of our Sodomitical sinne wee  
may bee consumed with a  
Sodomitical or a Babylonicall destruction

God open the eyes of our har-  
tes, that wee may see in what  
Wildernesse, among what  
wilde Beastes and devouring  
Serpentes wee doo wander: and  
give us mindes mollified and  
made soft, that at his woorkes  
we may feare and bee astonish-  
ed

The occasion that I have  
wrote this warning (which I  
would to God I had the grace  
to follow) was a wonder late-  
ly wrought in Norfolke, and  
So lately wrought, that the ter-

rour of the same is this instant freshe in memorie. A spectacle no doubt of Gods judgement, which as the fire of our iniquities hath kindled, so by none other meanes then by the teares of repentance it may bee quenched. The order of the thing as I received the same I have committed to paper, for the present viewe and perusing of those that are disposed. It is grounded uppon trueth, and therefore not only worthie the writing and publishing but also the hearing and considering

### **The reporte of a Straunge and wonderful Spectacle**

Sunday being the fourth of this August in the year of our Lord 1577. to the amasing and singular astonishment of the present beholders and absent hearers at a certain towne called Bongay, not past tenne miles distant from the citie of Norwich, there fell from heaven an exceeding great and terrible tempest sodein violent between nine of the clock in the morning and tenne of the day aforesaid this tempest took beginning with a rain, which fel with a wonderful force and with no lesse violence then abundance, which made the storme so much the more extreme and terrible

This tempest was not simply of raine but also of lightening and thunder the flashing of the one whereof was so rare and vehement and the roaring noise of the other so forceable and violent that it made not onely people perplexed in minde and at their wits end but ministered such straunge and unaccustomed cause of fear to be conceived that dumb creatures with the horror of that which fortun'd, were exceedingly disquieted and senselesse things void of all life and feeling shook and trembled

There were assembled at the same season, to hear divine service and common prayer, according to order, in the parish Church of the said towne of Bon-

gay, the people thereabouts inhabiting, who were witnesses of the straungenesse the rarenesse and sodenesse of the storm, consisting of raine violently falling, fearful dashes of lightening, and terrible cracks of thunder, which came with such unwonted force and power, that to the perceiving of the people, at the time and in the place above named assembled, the Church did as it were quake and stagger, which struck into the harts of those that were present such a sore and sodain feare that they were in a manner robbed of their right wits

Immediately heervpo[n] there appeared in a moste horrible similitude and likeness to the congregation then there present a dog as they might discern it, of a black colour: at the sight whereof, together with the fearful flashes of fire which then were seene moved such admiration in the minds of the assemblie that they thought doomes day was already come.

This black dog, or the divel in such a likeness (God hee knoweth al who worketh all) runing all along the body of the Church with great swiftnesse, and incredible haste, among the people, in a visible fourm and shape, passed between two persons, as they were kneeling upon their knees, and occupied in prayer as it seemed, wrung the necks of them bothe at one instant clene backwards in somuch that even at a moment where they kneeled they straungely dyed.

This is a wonderful example of Gods wrath, no dout to terifie us, that we might feare him for his justice, or pulling back our footsteps from the pathes of sinne, to love him for his mercy

To our matter again. There was at the same time another wonder wrought: for the same black dog, stil continuing and remaining in one and the self same shape, passing by an other man of the congregation in the Church, gave him such a gripe on the back, that therewith all he was presently drawen together and shrunk up, as it were a peece of leather scorched in a hot fire: or as the mouth of a purse or bag, drawen together with a string. The man, albeit hee was in so straunge a taking, dyed not, but as it is thought is yet alive: whiche

thing is marvelous in the eyes of men,  
and offereth much matter of amasing  
the mind

Morover, and beside, the Clark  
of the said Church beeing occupied in  
cleansing the gutter of the Church  
with a violent clap of thunder was  
smitten down, and beside his fall had  
no further harme: unto whom beeing  
all amased this straunge shape, whereof  
we have before spoken, appeared, how-  
beit he escaped without daunger: which  
might peradventure seem to sound a-  
gainst trueth, and to be a thing incredi-  
ble: but, let us leave thus or thus to  
iudge, and cry out with the Prophet  
O Domine! O Lord, how won-  
derful art thou in thy works!

At the time that these things in this or-  
der happened, the Rector, or Curate of  
the Church, being partaker of the peo-  
ples perplexitie, seeing what was seen,  
and done, comforted the people, and ex-  
horted them to prayer, whole counsell  
in such extreme distresse they folowed,  
and prayed to God as they were assem-  
led together

Now for the verifying of this report  
(which to some wil seem absurd, although  
the sensiblenesse of the thing it self con-  
firmeth it to be a trueth) as testimonies  
and witnesses of the force which rested  
in this strange shaped thing there are  
remaining in the stones of the Church  
and likewise in the Church dore which  
are marvelously rent and tone, the marks  
as it were of his clawes or talans. Be-  
side that all the wires, the wheeles, and  
other things belonging to the Clock,  
were wrung in sunder and broken in peces.

And (which I should have tolde you  
in the begining of this report, if I had  
regarded the observing of order) at the  
time that this tempest lasted, and while  
these stormes endured, the whole church was  
so darkened Yea with such a palpa-  
ble darknesse, that one persone could not  
perceive another, neither yet might dis-  
cern any light at all, though it were les-  
ser then the least, but onely when the great  
flashing of fire and lightening appeared.

These things are not lightly with vio-  
lence to be over passed, but precisely and  
thoroughly to be considered

On the selfsame day, in like maner,  
into the parish church of anothe town

called Blibery not above seven miles distant from Bongay above said, the like thing entred, in the same shape and similitude, where placing him self upon a maine balke or beam, whereon sometime the Rood did stand, sodainely he gave a swinge downe through the Church, and there also, as before, slew two men and a lad, and burned the hand of another person that was there among the rest of the company, of who divers were blasted.

This mischief thus wrought he flew with wonderful force to not little feare of the assembly, out of the church in a hideous and hellish likenes.

These things are reported to be true yea by the mouthes of them that were eye witnesses of the same, and therefore dare with so much the more boldnesse verifie what soever is reported

Let us pray unto GOD, as it is the dutie of Christians, to work all things to the best; to turne our flintie harts into fleshie hartes, that we may feele the fire of Gods mercy, and flee from the scourge of his justice

\* \*

\*

### **A necessary Prayer**

O GOD which hast promised to be a shield to such as flee to thee for succoure in their necessities, & with thy wings to ouer shadow thee that they feele not the scorching heat of afflictions & miseries: we beseech thee, that although we, through the infinite and vnmeasurable sinnes which we commit, provoke thee to smite vs with the Iron rod of thy wrath and iudgement: yet that it would please thee to remember that we are but fraile flesh, subiect to sinne, and to too prone to offend: that it would please thee to cast thy gracious countenance vppon vs, that beeing restored into thy fauoure, from which

our offences haue separated vs. we may shrowd our safeguarde against all manner of annoyances whatsoever through Christ Iesus our onely sauior & redeemer, in whose name, as hee hath taught vs, we say and pray. *Ab omni malo libera nos Domine:* Deliuer vs from all euil, good Lord. Amen.  
*Tibi laus honor & gloria in aeuum.*  
*Amen.*

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