

Notes for *The Century of Deception*

Chapter Eight: 'Invisible Agent', pp. 188-212.

Page 188

- 'Invisible Agent' title: *The London Evening Post*, 9-11 January 1772: 'same invisible agent'
- Refuse: 'Now I don't doubt that Anne Robinson was the source of the phenomena, in some way. But the conclusion we are asked to accept is that she necessarily had to be faking the whole thing...In any event, the fact that the activities stopped when Miss Robinson was dismissed does not prove that the phenomena were not genuine.' From https://michaelprescott.typepad.com/michael_prescotts_blog/2019/08/ghost-stories.html [accessed July, 2021]
- 'quite unconcerned the whole time': *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 11 January 1772.

Page 189

- 'not the hundredth part of what happened': *Ibid.*
- Longer version: *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 13 January 1772. It was repeated verbatim in *The Public Advertiser*, on 14 January 1772.
- *An Authentic, Candid, and Circumstantial Narrative, of the Astonishing Transactions at Stockwell: An Authentic, Candid, and Circumstantial Narrative, of the Astonishing Transactions at Stockwell, In the County of Surry, On Monday and Tuesday, the 6th and 7th Days of January, 1772, Containing A Series of the most surprising and unaccountable Events that ever happened, which continued from first to last, upwards of Twenty Hours, and at different places. Published with the Consent and Approbation of the Family and other Parties concerned, to Authenticate which, the original Copy is signed by them.* London: J Marks, 1772.
- Anonymous author: *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 13 January 1772 calls him 'another correspondent.'
- Impressive: *Poltergeist Over England: Three Centuries of Mischievous Ghosts*, Harry Price, London: Country Life, 1945, p. 145: 'But perhaps the outstanding feature of the Stockwell ghost affair is the way in which the case was recorded. The report was drawn up immediately after the cessation of the activities – I almost wrote hostilities – and the report would do credit to a modern investigator. Few accounts of such things published today are so well presented and witnessed.'
- Booksellers: *The Daily Advertiser*, 17 January 1772: 'This Morning at Eleven will be published.'
- 'a young woman, about twenty years old': *Astonishing Transactions*, p. 8.
- 'aged fifteen years, or thereabouts': *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 13 January 1772. There is no record of her true age.

Page 191

- 'no person was in that room': Contrast between the two reports. *Astonishing Transactions*, p. 8. 'On Monday, January the 6th, 1772, about ten o'clock in the forenoon, as Mrs. *Golding* was in her parlour, she heard the china and glasses in the back kitchen tumble down and break; her maid came to her and told her the stone plates were falling from the shelf; Mrs. *Golding* went into the kitchen and saw them broke. Presently after, a row of plates from the next shelf fell down likewise, while she was there, and nobody near them;' *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 13 January 1772: 'At the house of one Mrs. *Goulding*, a single gentlewoman, at Stockwell, in the parish of Lambeth in Surry, about eleven o'clock in the forenoon of Monday last, there being no person except herself and servant (*Anne Robinson*, aged fifteen years, or thereabouts) several earthen plates and one dish of what is called the Queen's-ware, which were placed on a shelf in one of the kitchens, fell down, and all broke except the dish, without any visible cause; in a little time after several candlesticks, and other things, the furniture of a mantle-piece in the back-kitchen, were thrown into the middle of the floor, though no person was in that room;'
- 'As soon as the blood was cold in the bason, it flew out on the floor': *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 11 January 1772.
- 'worth about five pounds': *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 13 January 1772.

Page 192

- 'pot of jelly': *Ibid.*
- 'for fear of being troublesome': *Astonishing Transactions*, p. 8.
- 'dance'; 'and tumble about': *Ibid*, p. 14.

Page 193

- 'nails and strings': *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 13 January 1772.
- 'all the tables, chairs, drawers, &c., were tumbling about': *Astonishing Transactions*, p. 8. There is a typo in the text of 'where' instead of 'were'.
- 'the same things would follow': *Ibid*, p. 20.
- 'no person near it': *Ibid*, p. 22.

Page 194

- 'Her mind was one confused chaos': *Ibid*, p. 12.
- 'not altogether so unconcerned as she appeared to be': *Ibid*, p. 18.
- 'the maid is the suspected person, it is a little extraordinary that by no means were used to detect her': *The Lady's Magazine; Or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex*, Printed for John Wheble, Vol. III, January 1772, p. 31.
- 'small Hint of the Girl' and 'it gives us not the least idea of by what Means such a Scene could be carried into Execution'. *The Westminster Journal: and London Political Miscellany*, 18-25 January, 1772. 'The said Narrative gives indeed some small Hint of the Girl, Mrs *Golding's* Servant being the Cause, but it gives us not the least Idea of by what

Means such a Scene could carried into Execution.’ ‘Methinks, Sir, a Narrative should have continued the Scene; it should have made a minute Enquiry of what could be the Reason, what the Cause that produced such strange Effects.’

- ‘affair may be unravelled’: *Astonishing Transactions*, p. 23.

Page 195

- ‘An impertinent attempt to impose upon the credulity of the public’: *The Critical Review*, January 1772, p. 88 in this one line review of *Astonishing Transactions*.
- ‘a new edition of the Cock-lane Ghost....with additions, but no amendments’: *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, February 1772, p. 84. ‘A new edition of the Cock-lane Ghost, altered from the original of Miss Fanny, with additions, but no amendments’. *The Monthly Review*, January 1772, p. 78 was even more succinct: ‘The resurrection of the Cock-lane Ghost.’
- ‘jumped up, and turned bottom upwards’: *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 16 January 1772. *Craftsman; or Say’s Weekly Journal*, 18 January, 1772, states it was a farmer involved, and that was the profession of Mr Pain.
- ‘calumnies’: *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 1 February 1772; also reported in *The Middlesex Journal: Or, Chronicle of Liberty*, 28-30 January 1772. A couple of days before it was reported that his oath had been refuted, *Ibid*, 30 January 1772. This was now corrected, possibly as now ‘a Noble Earl’ had taken an interest in the affair.
- ‘by an agent unknown to them, and unseen by them’: *The Westminster Journal: and London Political Miscellany*, 25 January-1 February 1772: ‘The account from Stockwell stands much as it was in our last: Some cry out it is a fiction, and yet the people are sensible of the loss of their goods, and that the destruction wrought, was by an agent unknown to them, and unseen by them. This they have affirmed, and this they stand to, and their reputation in life appears to such, as no one has a Right to call in question.’
- ‘the effects of the Hounslow explosion’: *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 14 January 1772.

Page 196

- ‘About the time the explosion was felt at London, some families at Stockwell were terrified with the rattling and breaking of their china’: *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, January 1772, p. 41. It carried on by stating ‘which they attributed to a preternatural cause’.
- Reporting of the damage: The excessive detail of the household items in *Astonishing Transactions* was pointed out in ‘Broken China and Flying Teapots: The Stockwell Ghost and the Spectacle of Fear’, Paweł Rutkowski, Uniwersytet Warszawski in *From Queen Anne to Queen Victoria. Readings in 18th and 19th century British Literature and Culture*, vol. 5, 2016, Edited by Emma Harris, Grażyna Bystydzieńska, p. 383: ‘Devastation of domestic possessions was certainly a central theme in the pamphlet, which in many places reads not like a ghost story at all but rather like a catalogue or inventory of tangible objects kept (and lost) in Stockwell houses.’
- Two: First reports varied between one and three mills being blown up. *The Daily Advertiser*, 8 January 1772: ‘It was one of the Powder-Mills at Hounslow which blew up.’ *Caledonian Mercury*, 11 January, 1772: ‘there never was an instance known of three mills blowing up so regularly in succession after each other.’
- Of nine: *Journals of the House of Commons. From November the 13th, 1770 to November the 17th*, Reprinted by Order of the House of Commons, 1804, p. 755, 13 May 1772. ‘Mr Hill is Owner of Seven Pestle Mills now at work upon the Gunpowder Business’. ‘That what is left of the Two Mills lately blown up, is not now worth more than £5.’
- Nearby warehouses: *The London Evening-Post*, January 4-7 1772.
- Separate explosions: *The Daily Advertiser*, 8 January 1772: ‘there were seven distinct Explosions.’
- From three: *The Kentish Gazette*, 7 January 1772: ‘Three shocks were felt on Monday morning during the explosion...’
- ‘in so gradual manner’: *Ibid*.
- At breakfast, *The London Evening Post*, January 4 - 7, 1772. The same reports are often repeated in sundry newspapers. I have cited the first time I’ve found the relevant reference
- Three were wounded. *The Daily Advertiser*, 8 January 1772. Another report stated that ‘that none of the workmen received the least injury’, *Caledonian Mercury*, 18 January 1772.
- Buried in the ruins: *The Kentish Gazette*, 7 January 1772. ‘The Husband and Wife were much bruised also, but escaped with Life.’
- Run over by his plough: *Ibid*.
- Five thousand pounds: *The Kentish Gazette*, 11 January 1772.
- George III ordered £200: *Bingley’s London Journal*, 4-11 January 1772.
- Lifted up three times: *The Kentish Gazette*, 7 January 1772.
- Mr Thomas: *Middlesex Journal: Or, Chronicle of Liberty*, 7-9 January, 1772.

Page 197

- Storage compartment: *The Public Advertiser*, 9 January, 1772.
- Miscarried: *Jackson’s Oxford Journal*, 11 January 1772.
- Parlour window: *The Caledonian Mercury*, 15 January 1772.
- Painted glass: *Jackson’s Oxford Journal*, 11 January 1772. Repeated in *The Reading Mercury, and Oxford Gazette*, 13 January 1772 and *The Caledonian Mercury*, 15 January 1772.
- Three letters: *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole’s Correspondence*, Edited by W S Lewis, Yale University Press: <http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/> [hereafter known as *Walpole*, accessed July 2021], Vol. 32, pp. 73-8, Lady Ossory, 6-8 January 1772; Vol. 39, pp. 152-3, Conway, 7 January 1772; and Vol. 23, pp. 363-6, Mann, Tuesday 14 January 1772.
- ‘came from the northwest, the China Closet was not touched, nor a cup fell down’: *Walpole*, 7 January 1772, Vol. 39, pp. 152-3.
- ‘massacred’: *Ibid*, p. 153.

- Richmond: *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 11 January 1772.
- 'when the concussion of the earth was felt'. *The Kentish Gazette*, 7 January 1772 and *Caledonian Mercury*, 13 January, 1772.
- 'much alarmed': *The Daily Advertiser*, 8 January, 1772.
- Brentford: *Bingley's Journal*, January 4-11 1772.
- Greenwich: *The Reading Mercury, and Oxford Gazette*, 13 January, 1772.
- Houses themselves: *The Northampton Mercury*, 13 January, 1772.
- China thrown down: *The Reading Mercury, and Oxford Gazette*, 13 January, 1772.
- Hype Park Corner: *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 11 January 1772.
- Sydenham: *The Reading Mercury, and Oxford Gazette*, 13 January, 1772.

Page 198

- Deptford in Kent: *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 25 January 1772.
- Stanmore: *The London Evening-Post*, January 4-7 1772.
- Alton, Godalming and Haslemere: *The Derby Mercury*, 17 January 1772.
- Interior parts of Essex. *Middlesex Journal: Or, Chronicle of Liberty*, 7-9 January 1772.
- 'the Noise was heard very distinctly ten Miles below Bristol': *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 18 January 1772. This made London news in *The Westminster Journal: And London Political Miscellany*, 11-18 January 1772.
- Close by: *The London Evening-Post*, January 4-7 1772. 'The explosion was so great as to shake the houses in different parts of London, and it was supposed to be an earthquake, and the people thought they felt four shocks'.
- Dartford: *The Caledonian Mercury*, 15 January 1772: 'At Dartford, in Kent, it was taken for the shock of an earthquake.'
- Guildford: *The Derby Mercury*, 17 January 1772. *Extract from a Letter from Guildford, Jan 8* 'The inhabitants of this Town were yesterday Morning greatly alarmed with two or three Tremblings of the Earth, which were very great, and shook several Houses, and was imagined by some People to be an Earthquake.'
- 'as plainly as if a gun had been discharged near them': *The London Evening-Post*, 4-7 January 1772.
- 'that the blowing up of the mills near Hounslow was occasioned by an earthquake': *Oxford Journal*, 25 January 1772.
- 'three mills blowing up so regularly in succession after each other': *The Caledonian Mercury*, 11 January 1772.
- More serious: *The Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 30 January 1772: 'I believe I am as free from Superstition as any Man living; but I cannot help lamenting the Blindness of Mankind who deceive themselves by attributing *that* to Accident, which too surely was the Effect of something much more serious.'
- 'was done by such villains as set Portsmouth dock-yard on fire': *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 9 January 1772. First reported in *The Kentish Gazette*, 7 January 1772.
- Thirty war vessels: *The Gentleman's Magazine*, July 1770, p. 343

Page 199

- Many limbs broken": *Ibid.* 'Mr. Eddowes's house keeper died of the fright.'
- Three thousand men: *The Middlesex Journal: Or, Chronicle of Liberty*, 28-31 July, 1770 under the heading 'Extract of a Letter from Portsmouth, July 29'.
- Burning four days later: *The Middlesex Journal: Or, Chronicle of Liberty*, 31 July-2 August 1770, under the heading of 'Extract of a Letter from Portsmouth, Aug. 1': 'The fire in the Dock-yard is at last happily extinguished by the help of three chain pumps.'
- £130,000: *The Public Advertiser*, 3 August 1770.
- Thousands of rope makers: *The Middlesex Journal: Or, Chronicle of Liberty*, 28-31 July 1770. It seemed to have succeeded in this respect. *The General Evening Post*, 28-31 July 1770 reported that orders had been given 'to take into pay an extraordinary number of sail-makers, riggers, rope-makers, &c. for the more speedy and effectual repair of the damages'.
- Suspects: *The General Evening Post*, 28-31 July 1770: 'wilfully set on fire by some of our foreign enemies.'
- 'two wan, long-nosed, slim fellows with bag-wigs and swords': *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 2 August, 1770. Also in *The Public Advertiser*, 1 August 1770.
- 'a certain foreigner of rank': *The General Evening Post*, 2-4 August 1770.
- Joshua Dudley confessed: *The Whisperer*, no. 44, 30 November 1771, pp. 592-6.
- Invented the story: *The Middlesex Journal: Or, Chronicle of Liberty*, 3-5 December 1771: 'We are well assured that Dudley, now in the King's Bench Prison...declares that he knows nothing whatsoever of that memorable conflagration.'
- Prison: *Craftsman; or Say's Weekly Journal*, 11 July 1772: 'I had no other intent but to extricate myself from the distresses of a Spunging-house, where I was at the time I first wrote to the Earl of Rochford.'
- prosecuted for wilful perjury: *The London Evening-Post*, 10 December 1771. His claim to be 'at Portsmouth on July the 14th and 24th, in 1770, the contrary of which was fully proved by some reputable gentlemen at that place'.
- Pleaded guilty: *The London Evening Post*, 22-25 February 1772: 'he immediately pleaded Guilty, and begged for transportation.'
- Transportation: *The Middlesex Journal: Or, Chronicle of Liberty*, 7-9 July 1772. 'Dudley...was shipped amongst the other felons.'
- *The Public Advertiser: The Public Advertiser*, 14 January 1772. 'We hear that two or three People have been sent for to London from the Dock-yard here, relative to the Fire of the Dock.' *The Middlesex Journal: Or, Chronicle of Liberty*, 18-21 January, 1772 reported that the men were 'the boat-builder and purveyor of Portsmouth-yard'.
- 'curious Account from Stockwell'; 'Fire at Portsmouth, and the late Explosion at Hounslow' and 'occasioned by the same invisible Agent': *The Public Advertiser*, 14 January 1772: 'We can assure the Public from the very best Authority,

that the above curious Account from Stockwell is not only literally true, but that the Ministry have discovered that the Fire at Portsmouth, and the late Explosion at Hounslow, were both occasioned by the same invisible Agent.'

Page 200

- The *Gazetteer: The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 14 January 1772.
- 'the Spoils of Stockwell Witchcraft': *The Derby Mercury*, 24 January 1772.
- *The Night Side of Nature: The Night Side of Nature; Or, Ghosts and Ghost Seers*, Catherine Crowe, In Two Volumes, Vol. II, London: T. C. Newby, 1848, p. 238.
- 'ghost haunts; a Poltergeist infests': *Poltergeist Over England*, p. 1.
- 'they throw things, or cause things to be thrown': *Ibid*, p. 19.
- 'would unhesitatingly single out the case': *Ibid*, p. 145.

Page 201

- *Astonishing Transactions*: The pamphlet is reproduced in *The Night Side of Nature*, pp. 240-256. As was pointed out by Charles Dickens in his review of the book in *The Examiner*, 26 February 1848, p. 131, Crowe fails to note the later confession of Ann Robinson as reported in *The Every-Day Book Or, The Guide to the Year*, William Hone, London: Printed for William Hone, 1825, p. 34-5.
- Drummer of Tedworth: *A Blow at Modern Sadducism In Some Philosophical Considerations about Witchcraft*, Jos. Glanvill, London, E. Cotes, 1668.
- 1 December 1716: Much of this account is based on John Wesley's own write up in *The Arminian Magazine, for the Year 1784*, Volume VII, London, J. Paramore, pp. 548-550, 606-8 and 654-6.
- 'the gobbling of a turkey-cock': *Ibid*, p. 548.

Page 202

- 'it seemed as if a very large coal was violently thrown upon the floor and dashed all in pieces': *Ibid*, p. 655.
- 'Jeffrey is coming: it is time to go to sleep': *Ibid*, p. 655.
- More intermittent: *Original Letters By The Rev. John Wesley, And His Friends*, Joseph Priestley, Birmingham: Thomas Pearson, 1791, 'My Sister Emily's account to Jack', p. 157.
- 'might have done it for her, and saved her the trouble': *The Arminian Magazine*, p. 654.
- Rat or dog be the cause: *Original Letters*, 'Letter from Mr. S. Wesley to his Mother', Letter III, 19 January 1717, p. 123.
- 'the truth will be still more manifest and undeniable, if it is grounded on the testimony of two senses': *Ibid*, 'Mr. S. Wesley to his Mother', Letter VII, 12 February 1717, p. 132.
- Wrote to his father: *Ibid*, 'Mr S Wesley to his Father', Letter VIII, 12 February 1717, pp. 132-3.
- 'we are now all quiet': *Ibid*, 'From old Mr. Wesley to his Son Samuel', Letter X, 11 February 1717, p. 134
- 'No: let the devil flee from me: I will never flee from the devil.': *The Arminian Magazine*, p. 656.

Page 203

- Samuel's preaching: *Original Letters*, 'Miss Emily Wesley to her brother Samuel', Letter XI, nd, p. 138: 'I believe it to witchcraft, for these reasons. About a year since, there was a disturbance at a town near us, that was undoubtedly witches; and if so near, why may they not reach us? Then my father had for several Sundays before its coming, preached warmly against consulting those that are called cunning men, which our people are given to; and it had a particular spight at my father.'
- 'a badger, only without any head that was discernible' and 'like a white rabbit, which seems likely to be some witch'. *Ibid*.
- References to the supernatural: An example is given in his relating of a story about a woman who communicated with the spirits of the dead in *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley*. In Ten Volumes, Volume III, New York, J. & J. Harper, 1827, pp. 246-253.
- Satanic manifestations: See 'Methodism, the Clergy, and the Popular Belief in Witchcraft and Magic', Owen Davies, *History*, vol. 82, no. 266, April, 1997, p. 252-265 and 'Witches, Demoniacs and Ghosts: John Wesley's Methodism in Defence of Real Christianity', Paweł Rutkowski, *From Queen Anne to Queen Victoria. Readings in 18th and 19th century British Literature and Culture*, Edited by Emma Harris and Grażyna Bystydzieńska, vol. 1, 2009, pp. 387-396. Both have plenty of citations of cases that Wesley quoted about examples of witchcraft.
- 'giving up witchcraft, is, in effect, giving up the Bible': *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley*, p. 245.
- 'punctually true': *Ibid*, p. 246.
- Preternatural appearances: *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 17 February 1772.
- Mere 25,000: 'Methodism, the Clergy, and the Popular Belief in Witchcraft and Magic', p. 259. By 1830 numbers had reached 286,000.

Page 204

- Witchcraft Act of 1736: Sometimes dated 1735.
- Anglican Church: *Witchcraft, Magic and Culture 1736-1951*, Owen Davies, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999, p. 1.
- 'she is pinching me to death': *Lloyd's Evening Post*, 12-15 March, 1773. The story was also reported in local newspapers such as *The Reading Mercury*, and *Oxford Gazette*; *Leeds Intelligencer* and the *Stamford Mercury*. The incident took place at the village of Seend in Wiltshire.
- case until the mid-nineteenth century: 'Methodism, the Clergy, and the Popular Belief in Witchcraft and Magic', p. 260: 'Popular belief in witchcraft was so widespread during the 18th and early 19th centuries, that it would have been difficult to raise the belief any higher.'

- Blame the Methodists: *Witchcraft, Magic and Culture 1736-1951*, p. 15. One indication of their success is illustrated by James Boswell who relates, in *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson*, James Boswell, London, 1785, p. 449, Diary entry Monday 25 Oct, 1773 that when ‘I made some remark that seemed to imply a belief in *second sight*. The duchess [of Hamilton] said, “I fancy you will be a *Methodist*”.’
- Embrace witchcraft: *Witchcraft and Its Transformations, c. 1650 - c. 1750*, Ian Bostridge, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997, pp. 158-9.
- ‘reputable situations and good circumstances’: *Astonishing Transactions*, p. 6.

Page 205

- ‘for which providence was determined to pursue her on this side the grave’: *Ibid*, pp. 20-21.
- ‘a lady of an independent fortune’: *Ibid*, p. 6.
- Samuel Johnson: *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides, with Samuel Johnson*, James Boswell, Sixth Edition, London: T. Cadell, 1813, Entry for 16 August 1773, pp. 33-4. ‘No, sir, witchcraft had ceased; and therefore an act of parliament was passed to prevent persecution for what was not witchcraft. Why it ceased, we cannot tell, as we cannot tell the reason of many other things.’
- ‘her conscience was quite clear’: *Astonishing Transactions*, p. 21.
- ‘invisible agent’: The term is first used in the initial report in *The London Evening Post*, 9-11 January 1772. But it is repeated several times in subsequent newspaper articles.
- ‘no witchcraft in the matter’: *The Lady’s Magazine; Or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex*, Vol. III, January 1772, p. 31: ‘And all we can infer from the story, is that though there be no witchcraft in the matter, it is likely there is a great imposture.’
- The newspapers: One example was in the *Newcastle Courant*, 1 February 1772: ‘Mr. F. Being asked what he thought of the necromantic affair at Stockwell, replied, he had heard of French dancers and Italian dancers, morris dancers, dancing monkies, and dancing bears; but as for dancing plates, cups and saucers, they were entirely of the growth of Stockwell.’
- ‘The superstitious belief the vulgar entertain of the witchcraft at Stockwell’: *The General Evening Post*, 30 January-1 February 1772.
- ‘animated furniture’: *The London Evening-Post*, 28-30 January 1772.
- *Harlequin Skeleton*: The *Harlequin Skeleton* was not new, having made its first appearance in December 1746. Its predecessor was *The Royal Chace; or, Merlin’s Cave* which first appeared on 23 January, 1736 at the Covent Garden theatre: *The London Stage, 1660-1800, Part 3: 1729-1747*, Volume 1, Edited with a Critical Introduction by Arthur H. Scouten, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1961, p. 546. On 26 December, 1746, it was called *The Royal Chace; or, Harlequin Skeleton: The London Stage, 1660-1800, Part 3, Volume 2*, p. 1274. From then on it was either called by this title or simply just *Harlequin Skeleton*: for instance *The London Stage, 1660-1800, A Calendar of Plays etc., Part 4: 1747-1776*, Volume 1, Edited by George Winchester Stone, Jr, Illinois: Southern Illinois Press, 1962, 22 December, 1753, p. 399.
- ‘the wonderful and surprizing feats lately performed at Stockwell’: *The Theatrical Review; Or, New Companion to the Play-House*, In Two Volumes. Vol. II, London: S. Crowder, 1772, p. 85.
- 31 January 1772: *The London Stage, 1660-1800, A Calendar of Plays etc., Part 4: 1747-1776*, Volume 3, Edited by George Winchester Stone, Jr, Illinois: Southern Illinois Press, 1962, 31 January 1772, p. 1604.
- *The Busy Body*: Described by one critic in the *Theatrical Review*, Vol. 1, pp. 196-7 as having ‘some pretensions to Originality, though several hints are borrowed from the Comedy of the *Devil’s an Ass* by Ben. Jonson. It cannot be considered as a first rate Performance, either with respect to Plot, Incident, Sentiment, or Language.’

Page 206

- Cracked into pieces: *The General Evening Post*, 30 January-1 February 1772.
- Columbine: *The Manchester Mercury*, 18 February 1772.
- ‘was received with the greatest applause’: *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 1 February 1772.
- Female ballad singer: *The Theatrical Review*, Vol. 2, p. 93.
- ‘occasioned much Laughter’ and ‘a universal Encore’. *The Public Advertiser*, 8 February 1772
- ‘A sweet girl was the cause, and girls wonders are rich-in / For we all know sweet girls – are extremely bewitching’. *The General Evening Post*, February 22-25, 1772.
- ‘From such Poetry, Heaven deliver us!’: *The Theatrical Review*, Vol. 2, p. 93 after reproducing the ballad.
- ‘Stockwell Scenes’: First mention, as the Stockwell Scene, was in *The Public Advertiser* as a puff notice on 29 May and 1 June, 1772: ‘The Theatre Royal in Covent-Garden will close the Season this Evening, with the Tragedy of Macbeth; To which will be added (by particular Desire) the Pantomime of Harlequin Dr. Faustus, in which will be introduced the Stockwell Scene.’ *The Public Advertiser*, 21 October and 2 November 1772 advertised *Mother Shipton. With The Stockwell Scenes*. Later adverts from the same paper, 30 November, 1 & 4 December 1772, advertised it as: *The Royal Chace; Or, Harlequin Skeleton. With the Stockwell Scenes*.
- *All up at Stockwell; or, The Ghost no Conjuror: The London Stage, 1660-1800, A Calendar of Plays etc., Part 4: 1747-1776*, Edited by George Winchester Stone, Jr., Volume 3, Illinois: Southern Illinois Press, 1962, 21 April, 1772, p. 1626. Also see *The Public Advertiser*, 20 April 1772. I have found no evidence that this title was reprised
- ‘the late wonderful transactions at Stockwell’: *The Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 12 March, 1772. *Harlequin at Stockwell* was mentioned again in the same paper on 23 April 1772 and 17 September 1772. This Theatre Royal is not the present Theatre Royal in Bath, which was built in 1805; but an older one.
- Dress up his family: *The General Evening Post*, 1-4 February 1772 and *The Public Advertiser*, 5 February, 1772, where the nobleman was referred to as a ‘Genius of Fashion’.

Page 207

- 'meet with encouragement' and 'prevent that mysterious affair making improper impressions on the minds of the Ignorant and Superstitious'. *The Theatrical Review*, Vol. 2, p. 85.
- 'more than one person's contrivance': *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 17 February 1772.
- *Every-Day Book or, The Guide to the Year: The Every-Day Book Or, The Guide to the Year*, William Hone, London: Printed for William Hone, pp. 31-5.
- 'the whole to witchcraft' and 'the animation of the inanimate crockery and furniture': *Ibid*, p. 34.

Page 208

- 'quick in her motions' and 'terrors at the time, and their subsequent conversations magnified many of the circumstances beyond the facts': *Ibid*, p. 35.
- 'sheer invention, and there is no evidence to support it': *Poltergeist Over England*, p. 153
- 'the greatest conjurer living could not produce the Stockwell effects by means of wires, etc'; 'the look-out for tricks' and 'I know what can, and cannot, be done in this way': *Ibid*, p. 153.

Page 210

- 'there was a love story connected with the case': *The Every-Day Book Or, The Guide to the Year*, p. 35
- 'to have a clear house, to carry on an intrigue with her lover': *Memoirs of Extraordinary Popular Delusions And The Madness of Crowds*, Charles Mackay, Vol. II, London: Office of the National Illustrated Library, 1852, p. 235.
- 'beyond her original purpose for mere amusement' and 'from one thing to another': *The Every-Day Book Or, The Guide to the Year*, p. 35.
- 'the only magic in the thing was, her dexterity and the people's simplicity': *Ibid*.

Page 211

- Where was she now: *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 17 February 1772. Also similar questions were asked in *The Westminster Journal: And London Political Miscellany*, 18-25 January 1772: 'This Narrative Writer [of *Astonishing Transactions*] should moreover have made Enquiry, (as the Girl is the only Person supposed to have any Hand in the Mischief) from whence she came, and to what Place she is gone;'
- 'the clerk of Louisham parish': *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 14 January 1772.
- No trace of Mr Robinson: My thanks to Sally Eaton, Archivist at the London Borough of Lewisham, for investigating this on my behalf. There is no record of a Mr Robinson being a parish clerk in this period.
- 'the dancing furniture sold at very extravagant prices': *The Environs of London: Being an Historical Account of the Towns, Villages, and Hamlets, Within Twelve Miles of that Capital*, Rev. Daniel Lysons, Volume the First, London: A. Strahan, 1792, p. 329.
- 'partly a fraud' and 'not a fraud, and in reality a Poltergeist': *Poltergeist over England*, p. 192. A distinction between the Stockwell and Cock-Lane ghost was made in a letter in *The Westminster Journal: And London Political Miscellany*, 18-25 January 1772.
- Ghosts and poltergeists: *Four Modern Ghosts*, Eric J. Dingwall and Trevor H. Hall, London: Gerald Duckworth, 1958, p. 11: 'Among all the queer phenomena which engage the attention of psychical researchers, ghosts and poltergeists are some of the most troublesome.'
- 'absolutely helpless in the matter': *Poltergeist Over England*, p. 145.

Page 212

- Book: *This House Is Haunted: An Investigation of the Enfield Poltergeist*, Guy Lyon Playfair, London: Souvenir Press, 1980.
- Television series: Sky Living, *The Enfield Haunting*, which was broadcast from 4–17 May 2015.
- BBC Radio 4: *The Reunion*, BBC Radio 4. First broadcast on 8 April 2018.