Something Wicked This Way Comes: Margaret Cooper's Encounter with the Devil as Evidence for a Reformed Popular English Religious Culture

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In 1584 at Dichet, in the county of Somersetshire, a young woman by the name of Margaret Cooper had returned from visiting a small farm in the village of Rockhampton only to experience a number of strange and dark phenomena over the course of the following days. It is within this paper that I analyze Cooper’s encounter with the Devil as evidence of two important aspects of a popular English religious culture—a Christ who could no longer be invoked via superstitious practices as the result of Elizabethan Church reform, in contrast to a Devil who had remained ever-present and untouched by religious change.

In 1584 at Dichet, in the county of Somersetshire, a great company of friends and family members had gathered themselves in the bedchamber of a young woman by the name of Margaret Cooper. The young Margaret, it seems, had been acting rather strangely since her husband, Stephen,
who had fallen ill, had sent her “upon the nineth daie of Maie last past into Gloster-Shire, to take order concerning a farme which he hath in a Villedge called Rockhampton.”\(^1\) It was upon her return that she “began to use very muche idle talke...as it were one that had been bewitched or hastened with some evill Spirite.”\(^2\) Those closest to her attempted to lead her in the Lord’s Prayer as a means to stave off the evil spirit, however, they would do so to no avail, for her possession would worsen to the point that she would have to be held down in her bed as “she fo[a] med at the mouth, and was shake[n] with suche force that the Bedd and Chamber did shake and move in the most straunge sorte.”\(^3\) It was during one of these fits that Margaret began to recount that she had seen a “Beare which followed her...which to her thinking had no hed,” upon her return from the farm.\(^4\) But those present—refusing to give credence to such ramblings—believed her to be imagining things and nothing more was said on the matter.

It was upon one evening during the following week, as all was quiet, that the present company heard the strangest noise in the street below. No sooner had they heard the noise, though, than did Stephen cry out as he noticed an “image come to the bedd much like unto a Beare, but it had no head nor no taile.”\(^5\) The great beast pulled Margaret from the bed and rolled her out of the room and down the stairs as those present continued to pray to God for His divine mercy. However, the monster


\(^{2}\) Ibid., 6.

\(^{3}\) Ibid., 7.

\(^{4}\) Ibid., 8.

\(^{5}\) Ibid., 9-10.
seems to have vanished as quickly as it had come, for Stephen would bring her back to her bed in a matter of minutes. It was at this moment that the window at the head of her resting place came suddenly open and that an unseen force pulled her out of the bed, into the air, and toward the window, as those around her “sawe a great fire as it seemed [to] them at her feete.” The Devil, it seems, had come to torment the young Margaret Cooper and to drag her soul into Hell...

While this frightening account from the county of Somersetshire does indeed provide its readers with a thrilling narrative, it is much more than the story of one girl’s horrific encounter with the Devil. Should we follow the tradition of Peter Burke’s studies on popular culture, this account becomes suggestive of a popular sixteenth century English religious culture that is devoid of superstition as the result of Elizabethan reform. Here, we will be focusing on two aspects of this reformed religious culture in England. First, we will look at how Margaret Cooper’s experience in Somersetshire is representative of the idea of an ever-present Devil that the majority of English Christians held (an idea that was not much changed from that of the one held in the late Middle Ages), and that had been presented to them by the Church both before and after the Reformation. Next, we will look at how Cooper’s account is representative of the way in which Elizabethan reforms affected these Christians’ abilities to protect themselves from a Devil who had remained thoroughly unreformed and unchanged.

Modern readers would most likely peruse a record similar to that of Cooper’s encounter with the Devil without experiencing much in

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6 Ibid., 11.
7 Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1994), xxiv., Here Burke defines popular culture as “values and symbols, wherever these are to be found, in the everyday life of ordinary people.”
the way of fear, but the same cannot be said of most late medieval and
sixteenth century Christians who saw their world as one in which “the
Devil and his fallen angels were held to be the source of all evils which
afflicted humanity.”8 Thus, Cooper’s account in Somersetshire is one that
is representative of the popular idea that the Devil could, and would,
appear to tempt and torment human beings at his discretion. But such
ideas regarding the Devil did not originate during this time. In fact, they
did not even originate in England. The earliest Christians in Rome would
ardently hold to a belief in demons as “angels who had turned against
their creator and turned wholly evil.”9 Therefore, the belief in an inherent
evil that stood in opposition to God is evident at the very beginning
of early Christian practice. It would not be until sometime later that
Christians would come to adopt the belief that one of these demons was
actually lord over all the others—Satan. And indeed this idea of Satan is
the same one which seems to have been so prevalent in both Margaret
Cooper’s record, as well as in many other records from the sixteenth
century in England. But historians Dan Burton and David Grandy suggest
that “originally, the term Satan meant ‘adversary.’”10 In fact, Burton
and Grandy also make special mention of the fact that “Satan is only
mentioned twice [within the Bible] with certainty” and that even then he
does not present himself as an ever-present force trying to dethrone God.11
Cooper and her fellow sixteenth century English Christians, however,
would hold to a very different idea of Satan; God’s darkest foe—“[the]
Devil,” “Lucifer,” or “Satan” were one in the same. It seems that these

10  Dan Burton and David Grandy, Magic, Mystery, and Science: the Occult in Western
Civilization (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 120.
11  Ibid.
sixteenth century Christians would hold to the idea of the Devil that had been recorded in the first century in the *Pseudepigrapha*. Here, the Devil is an evil force who is antagonistic toward both God and his human creations, for when God asks Satan to “worship the image of the Lord God [humans]…Satan balked.” It was for such insolence that Satan, as well as his fellows who had also balked at the idea of worshipping God’s human creations, was cast down to earth. Sixteenth century English Christians, then, would feel well founded in believing that since Satan had indeed been cast down to earth, it would make sense that such a powerful being could be present whenever and however he wanted.

It is important to note that Cooper’s account is not an isolated incident, for this view of the Devil as an ever-present force is evident in many other fantastic accounts of dark phenomena in other areas of England. For example, in one medieval commonplace book, it is recorded that there were a company of knight-thieves who lived in one county and chose to rob any travelers who just so happened to find themselves on the road that ran adjacent to their castle. The story goes: the knight-thieves continually robbed many an unfortunate soul until one day a few among the group found that they were robbing a Christian monk. The monk, incidentally, seemed to be all too happy to be robbed, save he be granted one request—he wanted an audience with their leader. At that, the monk would find himself readily standing in front of the knight in due time. It seems that he had important news for the leader of the knight-thieves, for he immediately began by addressing to the young master that he was in terrible danger since one member of the knight-thief’s household was “no real man but a demon in human guise, who for fourteen years had served the knight by special order of the Devil”

12 Ibid., 122.
in order to “kill the knight and to drag his wicked soul to perdition.” In another account, an unsuspecting cleric became the subject of the Devil’s threatening presence when he appeared to him “in the form of a beautiful woman” even though the cleric thought himself to be quite alone in a small garden. And in yet another account, a woman by the name of Agnes Waterhouse invoked Satan in the form of a cat to “destroy many of her neighbor’s cattle and also that he should kill a man.” Such stories did present those who heard or read them with the idea that Satan and his dark henchmen were ever-lurking in the shadows, biding their time until they could pounce upon any unsuspecting person. However, these records also suggest that the Devil could assault the medieval and sixteenth century Christian in a variety of forms. Therefore, when he appeared to Margaret Cooper in the form of a headless bear on her way back from Rockhampton in 1584, relatively all English Christians—not just those in the county of Somersetshire—could have understood that she had had an encounter with a Devil who was quite active in the world, for he had already appeared to others in the form of a knight, a beautiful woman, and a cat, elsewhere. As popular belief would have it, the Devil would not allow himself to be ignored—not just in Somersetshire, but in the whole of England.

Certainly, then, it evident that the Devil was quite present in the daily lives of most English Christians, but they were not as helpless as may at first seem to be the case. Because the Devil and his fallen angels were believed to be running rampant, the people of late medieval England

14 Ibid., 3.
would turn to the Church, to Christ, as a means of finding the necessary protection that could help them keep evil at bay. This protection was offered in the form of prayers that bordered on magic spells, the act of pilgrimage to sacred locations, and the possession or presence of certain holy images, all of which were endorsed by the Church. Because prayer was obviously an important act in Margaret Cooper’s encounter with the Devil—recall the way in which those present prayed to God for divine intervention on a number of occasions—we will limit our focus to that of the prayer-spells that the Church offered late medieval Englanders as a means of protection. The validity of such prayer-spells was be found in all types of spiritual literature that was endorsed by the Church on the eve of the Reformation. For example, in the very same commonplace book that contained the story of the knight-thieves that I mentioned earlier, the reader also learns that the only way that their leader had escaped the horrible fate of being carried away to Hell was due to the fact that he “maintained his pious daily prayers to the Blessed Virgin.”16 As for the monk who encountered the Devil when he found himself alone in a garden, his recitation of the first words of the Gospel of John would see to it that “the devil disappeared in the manner of his kind.”17 However, it must be assumed that the farmer who had fallen victim to Agnes Waterhouse had not been pious enough to recite his prayers or use any of the other means provided by the Church to protect himself since, after all, he suffered an untimely death. It would seem, then, that the English Church had given the people these prayer-spells as a means of invoking divine protection for the Devil and his minions who:

Makyth tempestys in the see, and drownyth schyppes

16  Dickens, 1.
17  Ibid., 3.
and men, thay makythe debate bytwyx neghtburs and manslaght therwyth; thay tendyth fyres, and brennen howses and townes; thay reryth wyndys and blowyth don howsys, stepuls, and tres; thay make wymen to ouerlaye hor children; thay makyth men to sle homsolfe, to hong homsolfe othyr drowne hom in wanhope, and such mony othyr curset dedys.\(^{18}\)

Following the scholarship of Professor Richard Kieckhefer, I suggest that the prayer-spells themselves were believed to provide protection because they invoked the names of angels, of the cross, and of the sacred names of God, all of which are three of Kieckhefer’s nine categories of invocation.\(^{19}\)

For example, a recitation of the ‘Deus Propicius Esto’ prayer asks “Holy Michael, Holy Gabriel, Holy Raphael, all holy angels and archangels of God, hasten to help me. I beseech you, all you heavenly Virtures, that by the power of the most high God you give me your aid, so that no enemy may be able to condemn or oppress me, neither in my house nor out of it, neither sleeping or waking.”\(^{20}\) Certainly, this prayer suggests that its orator believed that God allowed his angels to serve people when invoked, as if they were divine servants for all humanity. But the belief in the purpose of this spell, as well as others like it, seems to have been just as important as the prayer itself. In the *Horae Reatae Mariae* the reader or hearer is presented with the assurance that anyone who says it, hears it, or possesses it “schall not perische in fyer nor in wother nother batyll or in iudgement.”\(^{21}\) The fact that this prayer assures believers of their protection


\(^{20}\) Duffy, 270; excerpt taken from the *Horae Eboracenses: the Prymer or Hours of the Blessed Virgin Mary according to the use of the Illustrious Church of York*, ed. C. Wordsworth, Surtees Society, CXXXII, 1920, 125.

\(^{21}\) Ibid., 272; an excerpt taken from *Hore bealt[issime] marie virginis ad usum Sarum*, [Antwerp], Christopher Endoviensis for Francis Byrckman [London], 1525. RSTC 15939: Hoskins 67.
from an array of such maladies—and further assures them that when “thy soul schall deperte from thy body yt schall not entre hell,” suggests that orators undoubtedly believed themselves to be protected from the Devil.

Other prayers would invoke the sign of the cross as a means of protection in which words and actions would combine in order to drive away evil forces. For example, the ‘Crux Christi’ assured believers that one “who that bereth thys blessyn upon hym and says ut ones of a day…schall not peryshe wyrt soden deeth.”22 But assurance of protection via spoken word is not the only mystical quality that this prayer invokes. It reads:

Cross + of Christ be with me. Cross + of Christ is what I ever adore. Cross + of Christ is true health…May the Cross + of Christ banish all evil. Cross + of Christ…be Ever over me, and before me, and behind me, because The ancient enemy flees wherever he sees you…Flee from me, a servant of God, o devil, by the sign of the holy Cross + behold the Cross of the Lord + begone you enemies, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has conquered.23

The sign and symbol of the cross were quite powerful tools for the late medieval Christians since the image itself seems to have been able to make any environment a safe one—an environment that the Devil and his minions could never hope to overtake. This protection was further reinforced when one would physically recreate the sign of the cross with each mention of the holy symbol which is represented by the [+] that follows. Thus, when the orator of the ‘Crux Christi,’ states “Flee from me, a servant of God, o devil, by the sign of the holy cross,” he or she is to sign in a way that seems to create a protective barrier so as to evade Satanic influence.

Finally, there were various prayers that invoked protection

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22  Ibid., 273; an excerpt, taken again from Hoskins 67.
23  Ibid., Hoskins 67.
through the very mention of the many names of God. Essentially a prayer of exorcism, the ‘Omnipotens + Dominus + Christus’ would employ the names of God to remove the Devil and his minions from a person or place, as it reads:

Omnipotens + Dominus + Christus + Messias + Sother + Emmanuel + Sabaoth + Adonay + Unigenitus + Via + Vita + Manus + Homo + Ousion+ Salvator + Alpha + et Oo + Fons + Origo + Spes + Fides + Charitas + Oza + Agnus + Ovis + Vitulus + Serpens + Aries + Leo + Vermis + Primus + Novissimus + Rex + Pater + Filius + Spiritus Sanctus + Ego sum + Qui sum + Creator + Eternus + Redemptor + Trinitas + Unitas + Clemens + Caput + Otheotocos + Tetragrammaton + May these names protect and defend me from all disaster, and from infirmity of body and soul, may they wholly set me free and come to my help.24

It seems, then, that late medieval English Christians believed that the very mention of God’s name, regardless of the form, had the power to save the body and the soul from any harm that might seemingly befall them. Here, each mention of the holy name was to provide an extra layer of protection. However, I would like to point out that it also seems as if these late medieval Christians placed their faith in numbers, as well. Here, God’s name is mentioned and accompanied by the sign of the cross in forty-seven different forms. This could be taken as forty and seven, in which case forty is the number of days that the divine Christ fasted in the wilderness, avoiding temptation, as well as the number of days which God caused it to rain upon the earth, destroying all evil in Creation. Both options seem relevant in terms of significance, but the number itself could in fact be a reference to Psalm 47, which is a psalm that declares God’s victory over all the earth, and which also mentions one of His desires, which includes “putting [the] enemies [of His followers] beneath our [their] feet.”25 Perhaps,

24 Ibid., 274; an excerpt taken from Hor. Ebor., 126.
25 Psalm 47:3 (New Living Translation).
then, late medieval Christians could be seen as referring to this Psalm as a means of invoking Christ to allot them victory over their enemies, namely Satan. Thus, it would seem that these late medieval Christians had many Church endorsed prayer-spells that could be used to keep the Devil at bay.

One will notice, however, that such prayer-spells are mysteriously absent from the account of Margaret Cooper’s encounter with the Devil in Somersetshire in the latter part of the sixteenth century. At no point in the record do any of those present in her bedchamber utter anything close to resembling the ‘Crux Christi’ or the ‘Omnipotens + Dominus + Christus.’ In fact, there is no mention of any superstitious or magical phrases whatsoever, for it seems that Stephen and company rely solely on prayer to God as a means of protecting Margaret, as well as themselves. Thus, it is within this account that we find evidence for the fact that Protestant oriented changes, specifically those that were imposed upon prayer through Elizabethan reform, had seemingly taken hold by the late sixteenth century. Under Elizabeth the generous use of prayer-spells would be removed. And indeed, Margaret Cooper’s account is solid evidence for this, but why did Elizabethan reform seem to gain the kind of acceptance that her record suggests, in a world where the Devil was so readily present? Perhaps the answer lies somewhere in the young queen’s mentality toward religion, as well as her imposition of a newly revised Book of Common Prayer upon the people of England.

Elizabeth, it seems, had loathed superstition long before her reign. And for her, nowhere was superstition more evident that in the many practices of the late medieval Catholic Church. Her loathing of superstition is evident in the way in which she “declined to attend
Mass at court, declaring that she could not do so while she remained a Protestant.”26 In 1565 she would even inscribe this poem upon the last leaf of her French psalter, which would leave her subjects with no doubt as to how she felt about the mystical and superstitious aspects of late medieval Christianity, when she wrote:

No crooked leg, no blearèd eye,
No part deformed out of kind,
Nor yet so ugly half can be
As the inward, suspicious mind.27

Indeed, for Elizabeth there was nothing that was more suspicious than the superstitious practices of the late medieval Catholic Church (one must assume that these suspicious practices were just one of the many things that Elizabeth saw as superstitious and utterly abominable before God). The young queen had systematically began to remove the mystical aspects from the Church long before its composition, though, for at the outset of her reign “she had made skillful and complete plans,” in which she would attack all manner of practices that she believed to be utterly superstitious.28 It would be a time in which Elizabeth would seem to impose upon the people what some scholars have referred to as the ‘doctrine of divine providence,’ in which “there were no random instances [and] that all events reflected the design of God’s purpose, even if this was unknown, and that in the long run virtue was rewarded and vice punished.”29 Essentially, the new doctrine stated that there was indeed a horribly dark and powerful evil in the world (i.e.—Satan) who sought

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to harm both men and women, but that there was nothing they could do about this. Thus, if God wanted them to be protected He would be the one to offer this protection; it could not be invoked through the use of superstitious prayer-spells. And as Margaret Cooper’s account would have it, perhaps the new ‘doctrine of divine providence,’ which Elizabeth seemed so inclined to endorse, was one that stuck.

To further understand the acceptance of Elizabethan reform under such hopeless circumstances—as it is evidenced by the Cooper record—one must first understand the new prayer culture that would replace that of the superstitious prayer-spells that had previously been used. To see to it that this superstitious prayer culture was indeed removed, Elizabeth would impose upon sixteenth century Christians a newly revised Book of Common Prayer in order to be certain that the prayer-spells that had permeated the majority of the late medieval *Horae*, as well as primers and other books of devotion, were removed and replaced with a standardized liturgy that was based solely upon Scripture. Endorsed jointly, under both the Supremacy Bill and the Act of Uniformity, it would be, as historian W.H. Frere asserted, “the service book, which at this epoch, as at the Edwardine epoch, symbolized a real doctrinal change.”30 And as this doctrinal change would begin to take full effect, no longer would the sixteenth century English Christian have the superstitious and mystical prayer-spells as a means to invoke divine protection. The preface of the prayer-book itself would readily present the reader or hearer of its text with the idea that the prayer-spells, as well as other superstitious practices, were “untrue...uncertain...vain and superstitious,” and that nothing else could be read or recited aloud “but the very pure word of God, the Holy Scriptures, or that which is [was] evidently grounded

30 Frere, 25.
upon the same, and that in such a language and order as is most easy and plain for understanding, both of the readers and hearers.”31 Of course, it is most likely the case that Elizabeth did indeed hope to stave off the use of prayer-spells through the simple act of pointing out that, fundamentally, they were false invocations for God’s protection. It can also be safely assumed that since the majority of the superstitious prayer-spells were in Latin, or at the very least, somewhat vague, that Elizabeth believed that an English liturgy that was “in such a language and order as is most easy and plain for understanding” would entice her parishioners to put their superstitious ways behind them and adopt the new scripturally derived Book of Common Prayer. On another level, Elizabeth and her clerics would seek to turn the superstitious late medieval Catholic doctrine against itself, in which case it would claim that all of the prayer-spells that the people lifted up to the angels, as well as to the cross and God’s many names, were originally of a “decent order” that the ancient fathers had knowingly advocated for use. At some point, however, these prayers had “been so altered, broken, and neglected by planting in [them] uncertain stories, legends, responds, verses, vain repetitions, commemorations, and synodals” that they were now only profane remnants of what they had been intended.32 However, if such verbal defamation of the prayer-spells proved to be ineffectual, the prayer-book would see to it that their practice was completely removed through “imprisonment by the space of six months without bail or mainprise,” for the laymen caught using anything other than the new Book of Common Prayer. Clerics, on the other hand, would “lose and forfeit to the Queen’s Highness, her heirs and successors, for his first offence and the profit of all his spiritual benefices or promotion

32 Ibid., 14.
coming or arising the year next after this conviction.” Thus, it seems evident that Elizabeth desired to remove the use of prayer-spells and other superstitious practices from all social spheres, both lay and elite.

As for the text of the Book of Common Prayer itself, it would rely solely upon scripture to request God’s protection—however, only if that protection were to fall into accordance with His divine will. For example, one would expect the litany that was to be used “In the Time of Death and Famine,” which was included in the new prayer-book, to include all manner of superstitious elements so as to assure one of his or her life or of a good harvest. But this is not the case. Instead, the text reads:

O GOD, merciful Father, which in the time of Heliscus the prophet didst suddenly turn into Samaria great scarcity and death into plenty and cheapness, and extreme famine into abundance of victual: Have pity upon us, that now be punished for our sins with like adversity; increase the fruits of the earth by the heavenly benediction; and grant, that we, receiving thy bountiful liberality, may use the same to thy glory, our comfort, and relief of our needy neighbors, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Here, there is no mention of the angels. There is no call for the reader to physically sign his or herself, nor is there mention of God under any other names than those of Father or Lord. It is also important to note that this prayer offers its reader or orator with no assurance that the problem or crisis (in this case, famine) will be avoided, as was provided with the use of the prayer-spells. Thus, when this new prayer-book became legalized in 1559, believers who had been so used to assurance and protection would find themselves simply at the mercy of God’s will.

With such evidence in tow, then, the reader becomes acutely aware that prayer-spells or any other manner of superstitious practices are absent

33 Ibid., 7.
34 Ibid., 75.
from Cooper’s account. At the outset of Margaret’s troubles, Stephen simply displays the mindset of a sixteenth century Christian who has accepted the reforms that have been imposed by the Elizabethan prayer-book. This is evident in the way in which, being troubled by Margaret’s vain speech, “he persuadeth her to call uppon God, and that being the creature of God she should not forget to call upon her Creator in the daie of trouble: wherefore he counselled her to praie with him, and to saie the Lordes Praye after him.”35 However, ‘vain speech’ would not seem to be reason enough to worry much. Thus, perhaps the reader should not expect there to be much in the way of superstitious practice to be yet evident. And so, Stephen continued to pray, “but the more he praied and persuaded her to Praier, the more she seemed to bee as it were troubled with some evil Spirite.”36 It is at this point that Margaret’s fits seem to be at their worst. They are so bad, in fact, that as I recorded earlier, Stephen had to call on Margaret’s sister as well as their neighbors and friends for help. Certainly, it would seem that if Elizabeth’s prayer-reforms had not been accepted, one among those present would have invoked protection for Margaret through the use of a prayer-spell. Instead, however, “her husband and friends persuaded her to saie the Lordes Praye with them.”37 And when Margaret exclaimed with such fright that she could indeed see the Devil, “they desired her to remember God and to call for grace” and that “her faith might bee only fixed uppon him to be vanquishing of the Devill, and his assaults.”38 Even when Margaret was on the verge of being drug into hell, the company that had gathered in her bedchamber would “charge the Devill in the name of the Father, the Sonne, and the

35 Kingston, 6.
36 Ibid., 7.
37 Ibid., 8.
38 Ibid., 9.
holy Ghost, to departe from her and to trouble her no more.”39 Therefore, it seems appropriate to suggest that this account is indicative of a sixteenth century English religious culture that had accepted Elizabethan reforms and that believed themselves to be utterly unprotected in the face of an ever-present Devil. And if this record does not suggest that this is the case for Christians in the whole of England, at the very least perhaps it suggests that this might hold true for the county of Somersetshire.

Despite tormenting Margaret Cooper so forcibly, the Devil was in fact unable to drag her soul to hell. Those who had gathered in her bedchamber believed that, because they had “cried to the Lorde to helpe them in that their greate nedde,” they were able to pull her out of the fire that had sprung up at her feet.40 Here, not only have Elizabethan reforms taken hold in print, but in practice as well. Therefore, this case study serves as an invaluable piece of evidence for two important aspects of popular sixteenth religious culture in England. First, we can see that the Devil was just as present as he had ever been and was now, in fact, more harmful than he had previously been. Second, the document strongly suggests that Elizabethan reforms had taken hold in Somersetshire, if not in the whole of England. However, I must point out that the record ends with a child. As those present glanced out of the bedroom window—the flames of hell that had appeared at Margaret’s feet having disappeared—“they espied a thing like unto a childe with a very bright shining countenance, casting a greate light in the Chamber.”41 Perhaps those gathered in Cooper’s room had seen the countenance of Christ, whom they believed to have delivered Margaret from the clutches of Satan. We will never know. But let us not forget that, while the Devil was

39 Ibid., 12.
40 Ibid., 11.
41 Ibid., 12.
indeed believed to be an ever-present force in sixteenth century England, maybe the child of God, the divine Christ, was just a present—regardless of whether He had been invoked through prayer—as well.