

# Appendix

**Abstract:** *This lists all the texts of the Perks story discussed, provides a full version of one text and summarizes the key variants between the texts, with a web address for an edition of all the texts.*

**Keywords:** textual transmission

Barry, Jonathan. *Raising Spirits: How a Conjuror's Tale Was Transmitted across the Enlightenment*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. DOI: 10.1057/9781137378941.



A transcribed edition of the ‘Temple’ version of Bedford’s letter is given below, with added lineation, followed by a commentary on the main variations. All the texts are available online at the University of Exeter at <http://centres.exeter.ac.uk/medhist/projects/Early%20modern%20world/index.shtml>.

I have identified the following transcriptions of the Bedford letter, given in rough chronological order of when they were produced. In this book they are referred to by the single word given below, with italics for printed versions.

‘Temple’: Bristol Record Office, P/Temple/Le/7

‘Shute’: British Library Additional MSS 32096, fos. 54–7

*Bonny*: *A Copy of a Letter sent to the Right Reverend Father in God, Edward, Lord Bishop of Gloucester, from a Clergy-man of the Church of England, living in Bristol, giving an Account of one Thomas Perks of Mangorsfield near the same City, and the Conversation he had with Familiar Spirits* (Bristol, printed by W. Bonny in Cornstreet, 1704) (ESTC t017168; only known copy, B.L. 3504.aaa.40(8))

*Hills*: *A Copy of a LETTER sent to the Right Reverend Father in God, Edward Lord Bishop of Gloucester, from a Clergy-man of the Church of England, living in Bristol, giving an Account of one Tho. Perks of Mangorsfield near the same City, and of his Conversation with Familiar Spirits* (London Printed by H.Hills in Blackfryars near the Waterside, 1704) (ESTC t193925: only known copy in Bodleian John Johnson Collection, ‘Supernatural Box 1’)

*Beaumont*: John Beaumont, *An Historical, Physiological and Theological Treatise of Spirits, Apparitions, Witchcraft and Other Magical Practices* (London, 1705), pp. 296–300

‘Cruttenden’: John Doddridge Humphreys (ed.), *The Correspondence and Diary of Philip Doddridge*, vol. IV (London, 1830), pp. 552–61

*Chronicle*: *St James’s Chronicle* issue 17, 18 April 1761, reprinted in *Read’s Weekly Journal*, no 5, 25 April 1761 and in *The Yearly Chronicle for MDCCLXI or a Collection of the Most Interesting and Striking Essays, Letters etc which appeared in the St James’s Chronicle for that Year* (London, 1762), pp. 51–5

*Durbin*: *A Narrative of Some Extraordinary Things that Happened to Mr Richard Giles’s Children, at the Lamb without Lawford’s Gate, Bristol: Supposed to be the Effect of Witchcraft. By the Late Mr. Henry Durbin,*

*chymist, who was an eye and ear witness of the principal facts herein related. (Never before published.) To which is added, a Letter from the Rev. Mr Bedford, late Vicar of Temple, to the Bishop of Gloucester, relative to one Thomas Perks of Mangotsfield, who had dealings with familiar spirits* (Bristol, 1800), pp. 56–60

‘Sharp’: Gloucestershire Record Office, D3549 13/1/B17 – two copies, the second a neat later copy of the first

‘Catcott’: Bristol Central Library, Bristol Collection 10364, ‘George Catcott, February 1779’

*Jones*: [Edmund Jones], *A Relation of Apparitions of Spirits, in the Principality of Wales* ([Trevecca], 1780), pp. 124–30

‘Bristol’: Bristol Central Library, Bristol Collection 396, a MS copy of the same text as *Jones*, including ‘Remarks’

‘Vowell’: Bodleian Library, MS Montagu d. 11, fos. 145–6, a MS copy of the same text as *Jones* but with ‘Remarks’ annotated as ‘by Rev<sup>d</sup> George Vowell’

‘Evans’: British Library, Additional MSS 15085, fos 20–9, a MS copy (in handwriting of Rev. Evan Evans) of *Jones*

*Arminian*: *Arminian Magazine for the Year 1782*, vol. 5, August 1782, pp. 425–9

‘Newspaper’: Bodleian Library, Gough Additions Gloucestershire B4 volume b item 898 (unidentified newspaper article appearing in George Catcott’s scrapbook)

*Sibly*: *A New and Complete Illustration of the Occult Sciences... in Four Parts* (London, 1784–8, and numerous later editions), pp. 1121–5

*Tatler*: [Leigh Hunt], *The Tatler: A Daily Journal of Literature and the Stage*, no. 45, 26 October 1830, pp. 177–8

*Raphael*: Raphael [Robert Cross Smith], *The Familiar Astrologer* (London, 1831/2), pp. 694–700 (and print opposite page 212)

*Ottway*: T. Ottway, *The Spectre: or News from the Invisible World* (London, 1836), pp. 242–8, reissued several times as *News from the Invisible World*, including Halifax (1860) where story is on pp. 201–6

*Ashburner*: *Spiritual Magazine*, volume 1 (1860), pp. 157–60

*Lee*: Frederick George Lee, *Glimpses in the Twilight* (London, 1885), pp. 249–57 and 349–52

## Text of 'Temple' (Bristol Record Office, P/Temple/Le/7)

- 1 Extract of a Letter from the Rev<sup>d</sup> M<sup>r</sup> Arthur Bedford
- 2 to the Bishop of Gloucester
- 3 My Lord Bristol 2 August 1703
- 4 Being informed by M<sup>r</sup> Shute of your Lordships Desire that I should  
comm=
- 5 unicate to you what I had known concerning a certain person who  
was acquainted with
- 6 Spiritts to his own Destruction I have made bold to Give you the  
trouble of this Letter
- 7 and I have my Desire to Gratify your Lordship in every particular  
which may be an
- 8 Apology for the length hereof. I had formerly Given an Acc<sup>t</sup> to the  
Late Bishop of
- 9 Hereford in which there are probably somethings contained which I  
do not now remem
- 10 =ber and which if your Lordship would procure from his Lady who  
lives at Gloucester
- 11 would be more Authentick. About thirteen Years Ago whilst I was  
Curate to D<sup>r</sup> Read
- 12 Rector of St Nicholas in this City I began to be acquainted with one  
Tho<sup>s</sup> Perks a Man
- 13 about Twenty Years of Age who lived with his Father at Mangesfield  
by trade a Black
- 14 Smith and I contracted an intimacy with him he being not only a  
very Good tempered
- 15 Man but extremely well Skil'd in the Mathematicall Studies which was  
his Constant
- 16 Delight (viz) Arithmetick, Geometry, Guaging, Surveying, Astronomy  
& Algebra. He had
- 17 a Notion of a perpetual Motion much like that Wheel in Archimedes  
his Mathematical
- 18 Magick to which he had made some improvement and as he said was  
Demonstrable
- 19 from Mathematicall principles tho' I could never believe it accord-  
ingly I have seen
- 20 an Iron Wheel to which he intended to Add severall things of his  
Own Invention in order

- 21 to finish the same but think it of no use & being otherwise unfortunately engaged it
- 22 was never perfected he Gave himself so much to Astronomy that he could not only Calculate
- 23 the motions of the Planetts but an Eclips also and Demonstrate every problem in
- 24 Sphericall Trigonometry from Mathematicall principles in which he would Discover
- 25 a clear force of reason, tho' he very frequently would mistake in the quantity of
- 26 Syllables. When one Mr Bayly Minister of St James's in this City endeavoured to
- 27 Set up a Mathematicall School I Advised him to this Tho<sup>s</sup> Perks for an Acquaintance
- 28 in whom (as he told me) he found a far Greater proficiency in those Studies than he
- 29 expected or could have imagined. After he Applied himself to Astronomy & would
- 30 Sometimes Calculate Nativities & resolve Horary Questions which he told me often=
- 31 times proved very true but he was not Satisfied with it because there was nothing
- 32 in it that tended to a Mathematicall Demonstration. When by the Providence
- 33 of God I was settled in Temple Parish I having not seen him for sometime he came to me
- 34 (and being in private) Ask'd my Opinion very seriously concerning the lawfulness of Conversing
- 35 with Spirits & after I had Given my thoughts in the Negative and Confirm'd it with the
- 36 best reasons I could he told me he had Considered all these Arguments & believed they
- 37 only related to Conjuraton but there was an innocent Society with them which a Man
- 38 might use if he made no Contract with them did no Harm by their means nor was
- 39 not Curious in prying into Hidden things and that he himself had Discoursed with them

40 and he heard them Sing to his Satisfaction he gave an offer to me one  
time & Mr Bayly  
41 that if we would Go with him one Night to Kingswood we should see  
them & hear them Sing  
42 & talk with them what ever we had a mind to & we should return  
very Safe but neither of us  
43 had the Courage to Venture. I told him the Subtlety of the Devil to  
Delude Mankind & could  
44 Transform himself even into an Angell of Light. But he could not  
believe it was the Devill.  
45 I had severall Conferences of the Subject, but could never Convince  
him, in all which  
46 never observed the least Disorder of mind his Discourse was very  
rationall & I proposed  
47 (to try him) a question in Astronomy relating to the projection of the  
Sphere which he  
48 projected & resolved & afterwards Did so Demonstrate from the  
Mathematicks as to shew  
49 at the same time that his Brains was free from the least Tincture of  
Madness & Distraction  
50 having this opportunity I ask'd him severall particulars Concerning  
the methods he used  
51 & the Discourse he had with them he told me he had a Book whose  
Directions he follow'd  
52 and accordingly in the Dead time of the night he went out to a Cross  
way with a Lanthorn  
53 & Candle which was Consecrated for this purpose with severall  
incantations he had also  
54 Consecrated Chalk consisting of severall mixtures & with this he  
used to make a  
55 circle at what Distance he thought fitt within which no Spirit had  
power to enter  
56 after this he evoked the Spirit by using severall forms of words some  
of which  
57 he told me was taken out of the Holy Scriptures & therefore he  
thought Lawfull  
58 without Considering how they might be rested to his Destruction.  
Accordingly the

59 Spirits appear'd to him which he call'd for in the Shape of Little  
 Maidens about  
 60 a foot & half high & play'd about the Circle at first he was somewhat  
 Affrighted, but  
 61 after some small Acquaintance this Antipathy in Nature wore off &  
 he became  
 62 pleased with their Company he told me they speak with a very Shrill  
 Voice like  
 63 an Antient Woman he asking them if there was a God they told him  
 there was  
 64 he Ask'd them if there was a Heaven or a Hell they said there was. he  
 ask'd  
 65 them what place heaven was which they Described as a place of Great  
 Glory & Happiness  
 66 & he Ask'd what place Hell was & they bid him ask no Questions of  
 that Nature for it was  
 67 a Dreadfull thing to relate the Devills Believe & Tremble he Ask'd  
 then what sort of  
 68 Method or order they had among themselves they told him that they  
 were Divided  
 69 between Three orders that they had a Chief whose residence was in  
 the Air that he had  
 70 several Councillors which where placed by him in the form of a  
 Globe & he in the Center  
 71 which was the Chiefest order. another order there was employ'd in  
 Going to & fro the  
 72 earth to Carry intelligence from these lower Spirits & a Third upon  
 the earth according  
 73 to the Directions they should receive from those in the Air the  
 Description was very  
 74 Surprizing but being Contrary to the Acc<sup>t</sup> we have in the Scriptures  
 of the Hierarchy  
 75 of the Blessed Angells made me Conclude they were Devills but could  
 not Convince him  
 76 of it he told me he bade them sing & they went to some Distance  
 behind a Bush  
 77 from whence he could hear a perfect Consert but of such Musick he  
 never heard the

78 like & in the upper part he could hear something very Harsh & Shrill  
like a Read  
79 when it was Managed did Give a particular Grace to the Rest. but a  
quarter of a  
80 Year after he came again to me he wish'd he had taken my Advice for  
he thought he  
81 had Done that which would Cost him his Life & which he Did heart-  
ily Repent of &  
82 indeed his Eyes & Countenance did Show a Great Alteration. I ask'd  
him what he  
83 had Done he told me that being Bewitch'd to his acquaintance he  
resolved to  
84 proceed further in this Art & to have some familiar Spiritt at his  
Command  
85 according to the Directions of his Book which was a Book of what he  
Called Virgins  
86 parchment & Consecrated with Severall incantations as also a  
particular  
87 Inkhorn Ink & Pen for this purpose. with those he went to Go out (as  
usuall)  
88 to a Cross way & Called up a Spiritt ask'd him his Name which he was  
to put in  
89 the first page of his Book & this was his familliar thus he was to Do  
by as  
90 many as he pleased writing their Names in Distinct pages only one  
in a  
91 Leaf & then when ever he took the Book & open'd it the Spirit whose  
Name  
92 Appeared also appear'd when he Did thus The Familliar Spirit was  
called Malchi  
93 (a Word in Hebrew of an outward Signification) after this they  
Appear'd faster  
94 than he Desired and in most Dismall Shapes Like Serpents & Lyons  
95 Bears &c & Hissing at him or Attempting to Throw Spears or Balls  
of fire  
96 at him this Did very much Affright him and that more he found it  
not  
97 in his power to Lay them in so much that his Hair as he told me  
stood



98 upright he expected every moment to be torn in pieces this was in  
 Decem<sup>r</sup>  
 99 about Midnight where he Continued till Break of Day when they  
 |Left him  
 100 & from that Time he was never well as long as he lived in this sick-  
 ness he  
 101 came frequently to this City to Consult with M<sup>r</sup> Jacobs an Apothecary  
 in  
 102 Broad Street Concerning his Cure but I know not whether he told  
 him the  
 103 Originall or no he also came to me at the same time & own'd every  
 matter  
 104 of Fact untill the last & insisted when he Did anything of this Nature  
 he  
 105 was Deluded in his Conscience to think it Lawfull but he was since  
 Convinc'd  
 106 to the Contrary he still own'd he made no Contract with any of  
 those Spiritts he  
 107 never Did any harm by their means he never pried into the future  
 fortune  
 108 of himself or others & expressed an hearty Repentance & Detestation  
 of his Sin  
 109 so that tho' those Methods Cost him his Life in this world yet I have  
 Great reason  
 110 to Believe him happy in the other I am not certain whether he Gave  
 this  
 111 Acc<sup>t</sup> to any other but myself tho' he communicated something of it  
 to Bayly  
 112 the Minister of St James's in this City perhaps your Lordship may be  
 113 further Informed from his relations & Neighbours in Mangesfield  
 who  
 114 lives in Gloucestershire not above a Mile out of the Road from this  
 City  
 115 to Bath I have frequently told the Story but never mention'd this  
 Name  
 116 before & therefore if your Lordship have any Desire of printing such  
 117 an Acc<sup>t</sup> as this I Desire it may be with Such a Tenderness to his  
 118 Memory so as it may not be in the Least prejudicious to his  
 relations

119 who have the Repute to be of Honest & sober people However I  
 120 never heard anything to the Contrary  
 121 I am  
 122 Your Lordships most Dutifull Son  
 123 & Servant  
 124 Arthur Bedford

## Commentary on texts

It is impossible to establish either a single ‘authentic’ text, or exactly how each subsequent edition depended on its predecessors. Neither the early printed editions nor any single manuscript version became the established text from which later editions derived (no later version, for example, repeats the ‘Jerps’ misreading of Perks found in *Beaumont*, nor the abridgements found in *Hills*, which one might have expected to have wider circulation than one printed in Bristol). Many alterations might be simple transcribing errors/decisions, but there are three key variants with substantive implications where more fundamental alternatives are presented. All the manuscript versions of *Jones* (‘Bristol’, ‘Vowell’ and ‘Evans’) and *Ottway/Lee* are identical to *Jones* on all but minor details and so are not discussed separately below, just as *Raphael* copies *Sibly* and *Ashburner* ‘Temple’ unless noted.

The first variant is whether the trade of Perks or his father was that of gunsmith or blacksmith. Up to and including the 1761 *Chronicle* and in ‘Catcott’, the trade is given as blacksmith; the only text which may be earlier and includes ‘gunsmith’ is ‘Sharp’. From 1763 onwards, all other versions have ‘gunsmith’: this may derive from the new information about the Perks family available to *Durbin* (and later to *Raphael*) but it is unclear how this would have reached either ‘Sharp’ (if this is post-1763) or the suppliers of the stories used by *Jones*, *Arminian*, ‘*Newspaper*’ or *Sibly*. As for whether the trade was that of Perks or his father, which is left ambiguous in the phrasing of ‘Temple’ and ‘Shute’ (and *Durbin*, *Arminian*, ‘*Newspaper*’ and *Sibly*); *Bonny* (and *Chronicle*, which leaves out the father altogether) resolve the ambiguity (probably wrongly) by presenting it as Perks’s own trade, and so does ‘Cruttenden’, which thoroughly confuses matters by making it Bedford, not Perks, who lived with Perks’s father. Other accounts, including ‘Sharp’, ‘Catcott’ and *Jones* put in an ‘and’ (‘and by trade ...’) implying that the trade was Perks’s, not

his father's, without definitely committing themselves: these may reflect their own uncertainty as to how to resolve the unclear formulation.

Second, there is the discussion of the 'orders of angels.' Here again, 'Temple', 'Shute' and *Bonny/Hills* from 1703–4 are all essentially the same in describing three orders. But the second and third orders are merged in *Beaumont*, 'Sharp', 'Catcott' and *Chronicle* (but not in 'Cruttenden'), although only *Chronicle* omits the initial reference to 'three' orders to reflect the (presumably incorrectly copied) details which follow. Yet three of these four versions have 'blacksmith' while 'Sharp' has gunsmith, so they cannot all be copying the same original text, a text which would itself have had to commit an error of omission in transcribing a text properly describing the second/third orders.

Finally, there is the discussion of the name and 'signification' of the familiar spirit (as given by Bedford – see Chapter 2 for consideration of what Perks himself may have meant). Here 'Temple' and *Chronicle* have Malchi, 'Sharp' Malchie, 'Shute' Maleki and *Bonny/Hills* Malki. All the other texts opt for Malchi except *Jones*, who offers the biblical 'Malachi' (*Ashburner* misreads 'Temple' as Mulchi). Almost every version (except *Durbin* and *Arminian*) then describes this as a 'word in Hebrew' (sometimes expanded as 'in the Hebrew language'), but they vary in whether they offer an explanation of its meaning and add a phrase about its 'signification.' An explanation that it means 'my king' appears in 'Sharp', 'Catcott', *Durbin* (but not *Arminian*), *Jones*, '*Newspaper*' and *Sibly* (but not *Raphael*). 'Temple' states it is a word in Hebrew 'of an outward signification': this seems a transcription error. 'Shute' and *Bonny/Hills* adopt the alternative 'untoward signification', which remains puzzling but seems a possible reading, and is followed by 'Cruttenden', *Chronicle* and 'Catcott'. 'Sharp' offers the more straightforward 'unknown signification', followed by '*Newspaper*' and *Sibly*, while the others omit the phrase altogether, either because it did not appear in the version they were copying, or given its uncertain meaning it seemed simplest to omit it.

The reader would lose patience if I discussed other variations, such as in describing Perks's mathematical and astrological skills, or the precise ordering of the consecrated objects he used to make his circles or prepare his magic book. But anyone wanting to use a particular version of this story to explore what Perks may actually have done (or believed he had done) should note that there are numerous minor variants. Were the creatures he saw in his early conjurations 'maids' 'maidens' or 'girls'? Was he attacked during his attempted final conjuration by lions, serpents

and bears throwing 'spheres and balls of fire', 'spears and balls of fire' or simply 'balls of fire'? Since no version can claim precedence even in representing Bedford's understanding of what occurred (let alone Perks's), it would be unwise to place reliance on any exact phraseology which is not recurrent throughout most versions, and certainly unwise to rely on printed versions such as *Jones* or *Sibly* (from which most modern retellings are drawn) without comparing them with the others.

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