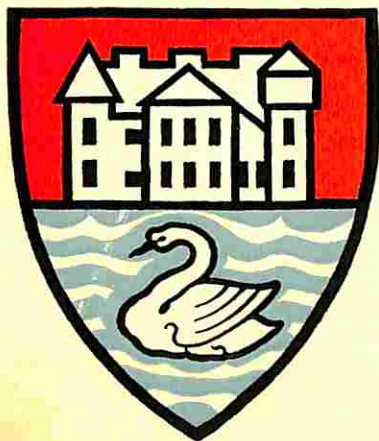


Examination of  
Issobell Gowdie and Braisheid

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DR. GEORGE F. BLACK

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VII. CONFESSIONS of *Iffobell Gowdie, spous to John Gilbert, in Lochloy.*

(1.) ISSOBELL GOWDIES FIRST CONFESSION.

AT AULDERNE,<sup>8</sup> the threttein day of Aprill, 1662 yeiris. IN PRESENCE of MASTER HARIE FORBES, Minister of the Gospell at Alderne; WILLIAM DALLAS of Cantrey, Shereffe deput of the shereffdom of Nairne; THOMAS DUNBAR of Graing; ALEXANDER BRODIE, Y<sup>r</sup> of Leathin; ALEXANDER DUNBAR of Boath; JAMES DUNBAR, appeirant therof; HENRIE HAY of Brightmanney; HEW HAY of Newtowne; WILLIAM DUNBAR of Clune; and DAVID SMITH, and JOHNE WEIR, in Aldern; WITNESSES to THE CONFESSION efter specifeit, spokin furth of the mouth of ISSOBELL GOWDIE, *spous to Johne Gilbert, in Lochloy.*

THE quhilk day, in presence of me, JOHNE INNES, *Notar Publict*, and Witnesfes abownamet, all vnder subfcrywand, the said ISSOBELL GOWDIE, appeiring penetent for hir haynows finnes of Witch-

<sup>1</sup> Another Confessing Witch.

<sup>2</sup> By the way.

<sup>3</sup> Rivulet.

<sup>4</sup> Obliterated—but it looks like 'streyne.'

<sup>5</sup> Baker.

<sup>6</sup> The counterpart of the English *Mathew Hopkins*, the Witch-Finder, whose villainous impostures deprived many poor creatures of their wretched existence.

<sup>7</sup> A long pin, or bodkin, which this fellow used for pricking.

<sup>8</sup> A Parish and Burgh of Barony in the Shire of NAIRN, on the Murray Frith.

*Pitcairn, Trials, v. 3, pp.*

*602-618.*

Issobell Gowdie 1662

(129)

craft, and that tho haid bein ower lang in that service; without ony compulsitouris,<sup>1</sup> proceedit in hir CONFESSIONE, in maner efter following, to wit. As I wes goinge betuix the townes<sup>2</sup> of *Drumdewin* and *the Headis*, I met with THE DIVELL, and ther covenanted, in a maner, with him; and I promeisit to meit him, in the night time, in *the Kirk of Alderne*; quibllk I did. And the first thing I did ther that night, I denyed my baptisme, and did put the on of my handis to the crowne of my head and the vther to the sole of my foot, and then renuncet all betuixt my two handis, ower to *the Divell*. He wes in the Readeris dask, and a blak book in his hand.<sup>3</sup> *Margret Brodie*, in *Aulderne*, held me vp to *the Divell* to be baptisfed be him; and he marked me in the shoulder, and fuked owt my blood at that mark, and spowted it in his hand, and, sprinkling it on my head, said, 'I baptise thé, JANET, in my awin name!' And within a quhill we all remoowed. The nixt tym that I met with him ves in *the New Wardis of Inshoch*, and haid carnall cowpulation and dealling with me. He wes a meikle, blak, roch<sup>4</sup> man, werie cold; and I found his nature als cold within me as spring-wall-water. Somtymes he haid butis and sometymes shoes on his foot;<sup>5</sup> but still his foot ar forked and cloven. He vold be somtymes with ws lyk a dear, or a rae. *Johne Taylor* and *Janet Breadhead*, his vyff,<sup>6</sup> in *Belmakeith*, . . . . *Douglas*, and I my self, met in *the Kirk-yaird of Nairne*, and ve raised a vnchristened child owt of its greaff; and at the end of *Breadleyis* corn-field-land, just opposit to *the Milne of Nairne*, we took the said child, with the naillis<sup>7</sup> of our fingeris and toes, pikles of all fortis of grain, and blaidis of keall,<sup>8</sup> and haked<sup>9</sup> thaim all verie small, mixed altogether; and did put a pairt therof among the muk-heapes<sup>10</sup> of *Breadleyes* landis, and therby took away the fruit of his cornes, &c.; and we partied it among two of our COEVENS.<sup>11</sup> Whan we tak cornes at *Lambes*,<sup>12</sup> we tak bot abowt two sheawes, whan the cornes ar full; or two stokis of keall, or therby, and that giwes ws the fruit of the corn-land, or keall-yaird, whair they grew:<sup>13</sup> And it may be, we will keip yt while *Yewll* or *Pace*,<sup>14</sup> and than devyde it amongst ws. Ther ar threttein perfones in my COVEN.<sup>15</sup>

The last tyme that ovr COVEN met, we, and an vther COVEN, wer dauncing at *the Hill of Earlsfeat*; and befor that, betwixt *Moynes* and *Bowgholl*; and befor that we ves beyond *the Meikle-burne*; and the vther COVEN being at *the Downie-hillis*, we went from beyond *the Meikle-burne*, and went befyd them, to the howffis at *the Wood-end of Inshoch*; and within a qwhyll went hom to our howffis. Befor *Candlmas*, we went be-east *Kinloffe*, and ther we yoaked a plewgh of paddokis.<sup>16</sup> THE DIVELL held the plewgh, and *Johne Yowng* in *Mebestowne*, our Officer, did drywe the plewgh. Paddokis did draw the plewgh, as oxen; qwickens wer sowmes,<sup>17</sup> a riglen's horne wes a cowter,<sup>18</sup> and an piece of an riglen's horne wes an fok. We went two feuerall tymes abowt; and all we of the COEVEN went still wp and downe with the plewgh, prayeing to THE DIVELL for the fruit of that land, and that thistles and brieris might grow ther.

When we goe to any hous,<sup>19</sup> we tak meat and drink; and we fill wp the barrellis with owt oven<sup>20</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Indicating, in the outset, that no TORTURE or compulsion had been resorted to, for the purpose of extorting Confession; but that she came forward, and voluntarily made her Declaration, bewailing her former offences. <sup>2</sup> Farmsteadings.

<sup>3</sup> It is a singular circumstance, that in almost all the CONFESSIONS of Witches, their initiation, and many of their meetings, are said to have taken place within CHURCHES, Churchyards, and consecrated ground; and a certain ritual, in imitation, or mockery, of the forms of the Church, is uniformly said to have been gone through.

<sup>4</sup> Rough; hairy; *hirsute*. <sup>5</sup> Throughout this Confession, *foot* is used for *feet*. <sup>6</sup> See her Confession, which follows this, (No. VIII.) <sup>7</sup> Parings of the nails. In such incantations, the nails and joints, &c. of dead men were commonly made use of. <sup>8</sup> *Kail-blades*; the leaves of colewort. <sup>9</sup> *Hacked*; chopped. <sup>10</sup> Dung-heaps; *middens*.

<sup>11</sup> Companies; Witches' Conventicles. Perhaps from Lat. *convenire*. The word *cove* is still in use (in the Gipsy, flash, or slang Vocabulary) as an associate, *chum*, or companion, &c. <sup>12</sup> Lammas: 1st August.

<sup>13</sup> This symbolical mode of taking the fruit, crop, or produce of land, &c., is frequently alluded to in Witch-Trials. The soil apparently bore only straw and empty ears; but the real produce was, in due season, conveyed to the barns of the enchanter. The milk of a dairy was taken by means of a hair *tether*, rope, or halter, passing under the door, and attached to one of the stalls where the cattle stood, &c. The Witch procured the entire produce by 'milking the tether!' Another method is afterwards recited in this CONFESSION.

<sup>14</sup> Until Christmas or Easter. <sup>15</sup> The number *thirteen* is still proverbially called 'the *Devil's dozen*,' in Scotland. <sup>16</sup> Yoked a plough of frogs. <sup>17</sup> Dog-

grass, or *quich-grass*, served for *sowmes* or *soams*; being the traces, chains, or iron links, by which, of old, the oxen were yoked to the plough. The *sowme* (*soyme*) was fastened by a hook to the *sole* or *sole* (swivel.) <sup>18</sup> The coulter of the plough was formed of the horn of a half-castrated ram, called a *riglen*; q. d. a *ridgel-ram*. <sup>19</sup> Enter by stealth.

<sup>20</sup> *Awin*; *own*.



When we tak away any cowes milk, we pull the tow, and twyn it and plaitt it in the wrong way, in the *Divellis* name; and we draw the tedder (sua maid) in betuixt the cowes hinder foot,<sup>1</sup> and owt betuixt the cowes forder foot, in the *Divellis* name; and therby tak with ws the kowes milk. We tak sheips milk ewin so. The way to tak or giev bak the milk again, is to cut that tedder. Whan we tak away the strench of anie persones eall,<sup>2</sup> and gieves it to an vther, we tak a litle qwantitie owt of each barrell or stand of eall, and puts it in a stowp, in the *Divellis* nam; and, in his nam, with owr awin handis, puttis it amongst an vtheris eall, and gieves her the strench and substance and heall of hir neighbouris eall. And to keip the eall from ws, that we haue no power of it, is to sanctifie it veill. We gett all this power from the *Divell*; and when ve seik it from him, ve call him 'owr LORD!'

*Johne Taylor* and *Janet Breadhead*, his wyff, in Bellnakeith, *Bessie Wilson*, in Alderne, and *Margret Wilson*, spows to *Donald Callam* in Alderne, and I, maid an pictur of clay, to distroy the *Laird of Parkis* meall<sup>3</sup> children. *Johne Taylor* browght hom the clay, in his plaid newk;<sup>4</sup> his wyff brak it verie small, lyk meall,<sup>5</sup> and sifted it with a siew,<sup>6</sup> and powred in water among it, in the *Divellis* nam, and vrought it werie sore, lyk rye-bowt;<sup>7</sup> and maid of it a pictur of the *Lairdis* sones. It haid all the partis and merkis of a child, such as heid, eyes, nose, handis, foot, mowth, and litle lippes. It wanted no mark of a child; and the handis of it folded down by its fydes. It was lyk a pow,<sup>8</sup> or a flain gryce.<sup>9</sup> We laid the face of it to the fyre, till it strakned;<sup>10</sup> and a cleir fyre round about it, till it ves read lyk a cole.<sup>11</sup> After that, we wold rost it now and then; each other day<sup>12</sup> ther wold be an piece of it weill rosten. The *Laird of Parkis* heall maill children by it ar to suffer, if it be not gotten and brokin, als weill as thes that ar borne and dead already. It ves still putt in and taken out of the fyre, in the *Divellis* name. It wes hung wp wpon an knag. It is yet in *Johne Taylor's* hows, and it hes a cradle of clay about it. Onlie *Johne Taylor* and his wyff, *Janet Breadhead*, *Bessie* and *Margret Wilsons* in Alderne, and *Margret Brodie*, thair, and I, wer onlie at the making of it. All the multitud of our number of WITCHES, of all the COEVENS, kent<sup>15</sup> all of it, at owr nixt meitting after it was maid. And the *Witches* yet that ar vntaken, haw thair awin poweris, and owr poweris quihilk we haid befor we wer takin, both.<sup>14</sup> Bot now I haw no power at all.

*Margret Kyllie*, in . . . . ., is on of the vther COVEN, *Messie Hirdall*, spows to *Alexander Ross*, in Lonheid, is on of thaim; hir skin is fyrie. *Iffobell Nicoll*, in Lochley, is on of my COEVEN. *Alexander Elder*, in Earleseat, and *Janet Finlay*, his spows, ar of my COEVENS. *Margret Hasbein*, in Moynes, is on; *Margrat Brodie*, in Alderne, *Bessie* and *Margrat Wilsons*, thair, and *Jean Marten*, ther, and *Elspet Nishie*, spows to *Johne Mathow*, ther, ar of my COVEN. The said *Jean Mairten* is MAIDEN<sup>15</sup> of owr COVEN. *Johne Young*, in Mebestowne, is OFFICER to owt COEVEN.

*Elspet Chisholme* and *Iffobell More*, in Alderne, *Magie Brodie*, . . . . ., and I, went in to *Alexander Cumings* litt-hows,<sup>16</sup> in Alderne. I went in, in the likenes of a kea,<sup>17</sup> the said *Elspet Chisholme* wes in the shape of a catt. *Iffobell Mor* wes a hair, and *Magie Brodie* a catt, and . . . . .<sup>18</sup> We took a threid of each cullor of yairne that wes in the said *Alexander Cumings* litt-fatt,<sup>19</sup> and did cast thrie knots on each threid, in the *Divellis* name; and did put the thriedis in the fatt, wither-sones<sup>20</sup> abowt in the fatt, in the *Divellis* name; and thairby took the heall strench of the fatt away,

<sup>1</sup> Feet.<sup>2</sup> Strong ale.<sup>3</sup> Male.<sup>4</sup> In the nook, or corner, of his plaid.<sup>5</sup> Pounded, or powderedit, like meal. <sup>6</sup> To make the plaster fine, and free from earthy particles. <sup>7</sup> Probably a sort of stir-about, or hasty-pudding, made of rye-flour.<sup>8</sup> In another Deposition it is thus expressed, 'lyk a pow or scadge.' A scadge was a sort of scone, or roll, of a pretty large size. Perhaps this term signifies, as large as the quantity of dough or paste necessary for making this kind of bread. <sup>9</sup> A flayed sucking pig, after being scalded and scraped. <sup>10</sup> Shrivelled with the heat.<sup>11</sup> Red like a coal. <sup>12</sup> Each alternate day. <sup>13</sup> Knew. <sup>14</sup> This is something newin Witch stories, and lets in additional light on these charms. <sup>15</sup> Each Coven appears to have had an OFFICER for the men, and a MAIDEN for the women; but whether the province of these personages was to preside over them, or to act as messengers, to call them together, does not seem so certain.<sup>16</sup> This and the preceding spaces are left blank in the Deposition. <sup>17</sup> Dye-house. <sup>18</sup> Jackdaw.<sup>19</sup> Dying-vat. <sup>20</sup> *Widdershins*, contrary

to the direction and ordinary course of the sun.

that it could litt nothing bot onlie blak, according to the color of *the Divell*, in quhoes nam we took away the strenth of the rycht colouris that wes in the fatt!

ALL quhilkis of the premisses, swa spokin and willinglie Confest and declairit furth of the mowth of the said *Iffobell*, in all and be all thingis as is abow sett downe, I, the said *Johne Innes*, Notar Publict, haw writtine thir presentis; and with the saidis Witnesfes abow namet, in farder testimonie and witnessing of the premisses to be of weritie, We haw subscrywit the famen with our handis, day, yeir, and place aboue specifeit.

MR HARY FORBES, Minister at Auld Earn, Attestis.  
A. BRODIE, witness to the said Confetionie.

HEW HAY of Newtown, Attestes.  
W. SUTHERLAND of Kinsterie, Attestis these Confessionis.

JOANNES INNES, Notarius Publicus.<sup>1</sup>  
W. DOLLAS of Cantray, Shereff-deput, Attestis.  
HEN. ROSE, Minister at Nairne, Attestis the forsaid Declaratione, as to the principal substantialis.  
GEORGE PHINNIE, in Kirkmichael, Attestis.  
Jo. WEIR, in Alderne, Attestis.

(2.) ISSOBELL GOWDIES SECOND CONFESSION.

ATT ALDERNE, the third day of May, 1662 yeiris, abowt the howris of two or thrie in the efternoone, or therby: IN presence of MASTER HARIE FORBES, &c.<sup>2</sup>  
THE quhilk day, in presence of me, Johne Innes, Notar Publict, and Witnesfes, all vnder-subscrywand, the said ISSOBELL GOWDIE, professing repentance, &c.<sup>3</sup> Efter that tym ther vold meit bot fomytmes a COVEN, fomytmes mor, fomytmes les; bot a Grand Meitting vold be about the end of ilk Quarter. Ther is threttein perfonas<sup>4</sup> in ilk Coeven; and ilk on of vs has an SPRIT to wait wpon ws, quhan ve pleas to call wpon him. I remember not all the Spritis names; bot thair is on called 'SWEIN,' quhilk waitis wpon the said Margret Wilfon in Alderne; he is still<sup>5</sup> clothed in grafs-grein; and the said Margret Wilfon hes an nikanam called, 'PIKLE NEIREST THE WIND.' The nixt Sprit is called 'RORIE,' who waitis wpon Bessie Wilfone, in Alderne; he is still clothed in yallow; and hir nikaname is 'THROW THE CORNE YAIRD,' [. . . . .].<sup>6</sup> The third Sprit is called 'THE RORING LYON,' who waitis wpon Iffobell Nicoll, in Lochlow; and [he is still clothed] in sea-grein; her nikanam is 'BESSIE RULE.' The fowrth Sprit is called 'MAK HECTOR,' qwho [waitis wpon Jean] Martein, dawghter to the said Marget Wilfon; he is a yowng-lyk Devill, clothed still in grafs-green. Jean Martein is] MAIDEN to the Coven that I am of; and hir nikaname is 'OVER THE DYKE WITH IT,' becaws THE DIVILL [always takis the] Maiden in his hand nix him, quhan ve danche Gillatrypes;<sup>7</sup> and quhan he vold lowp from . . . . . he and she will say, 'Ower the dyk with it!' The nam of the fyft Sprit is 'ROBERT THE [RULE,' and he is still clothed in] sadd-dun, and seimis to be a Comander of the rest of the Spritis; and he waitis wpon Margret Brodie, in Alderne. [The name of the saxt Sprit] is called 'THEIEFF OF HELL WAIT WPON HIR SELFE,' and he waitis also on the said Bessie Wilfon. The name of the sevinth [Sprit is called] 'THE READ REIVER;' and he is my owin Sprit, that waitis on my selfe, and is still clothed in blak. The aucht Sprit [is called] 'ROBERT THE JACKIS,' still clothed in dune, and seimes to be aiged. He is ane glaiked gowked Sprit! The woman's [nikname] that he waitis on, is 'ABLE AND STOWT!'<sup>8</sup> The nynth Sprit is called 'LAING;' and the woman's nikaname that he waitis wpon is 'BESSIE BAULD.'<sup>9</sup> The tenth Sprit is named 'THOMAS A FEARIE,' &c.<sup>10</sup>—Ther wilbe many vther Divellis, waiting wpon [our] MAISTER DIVELL; bot he is bigger and mor awfull than the rest of the Divellis, and they all reverence him. I will ken them all, on by on, from vtheris, quhan they appeir lyk a man.

<sup>1</sup> His Latin *docquet*, with his motto, '*Amor meus cruci fixus*. 1661,' are affixed. It is unnecessary to preserve this, as it is in common form. <sup>2</sup> As in preceding Deposition. <sup>3</sup> The same preamble is repeated, with the account of her baptism and carnal dealing, &c., in similar terms as in her preceding Confession. <sup>4</sup> The DEIL's dozen. <sup>5</sup> Ever; always. <sup>6</sup> This paper is unluckily very much mutilated at the ends of the lines; which mutilation commences here; Where the sense can be made out, the words are conjecturally supplied, within brackets; if not, a small blank is left in this transcript. <sup>7</sup> Probably a dance then popular among the vulgar. <sup>8</sup> Viz. Bessie Hay. <sup>9</sup> Viz. Elspet Nishie. <sup>10</sup> Issobell, as usual, appears to have been stopped short here by her interrogators, when she touched on such matters.

Quhen we reafe the wind, we tak a rag of cloth, and weitts<sup>1</sup> it in water; and we tak a beetle<sup>2</sup> and knokis the rage<sup>3</sup> on a stone, and we fay thryfe ower,

‘ I KNOK this ragg wpon this stane,  
To raife the wind, in THE DIVELLIS name;  
It fall not lye<sup>4</sup> vntill I please againe!’

[Whan] we wold lay the wind, we dry the ragg, and fay (thryfe ower,)

‘ WE lay the wind in THE DIVELLIS name,  
[It fall not] ryse quhill we (or I) lyk to reafe it again!’

And if the wind will not lye instantlie [after we fay this,] we call wpon our Spirit, and fay to him,

‘ THIEFFE! THIEFFE! conjure the wind, and caws it to [lye . . . . .].’

We haw no power of rain, bot ve will reafe the wind quhan ve pleas.—He maid vs beliew [. . . . .] that ther wes no GOD befyd him.

As for Elf-arrow-heidis, THE DIVELL shapes them with his awin hand, [and fyne deliueris thame] to Elf-boyes, who whyttis and dightis<sup>5</sup> them with a sharp thing lyk a paking neidle; bot [quhan I wes in Elf-land?] I saw them whytting and dighting them. Quhan I wes in the Elfes howffis, they will haw werie . . . . . them whytting and dighting; and THE DIVELL giwes them to ws, each of ws so many, quhen . . . . . Thes that dightis thaim ar litle ones, hollow, and bofs-baked!<sup>6</sup> They speak gowftie<sup>7</sup> lyk. Quhen THE DIVELL giwes them to ws, he fayes,

‘ SHOOT thes in my name,  
And they fall not goe heall hame!’

And quhan ve shoot these arrowes (we fay)—

‘ I SHOOT yon<sup>8</sup> man in THE DIVELLIS name,  
He fall nott win heall hame!  
And this falbe alswa trw;  
Thair fall not be an bitt of him on lieiw!’<sup>9</sup>

We haw no bow to shoot with, but spang<sup>10</sup> them from of the naillis of our thowmbes. Som tymes we will misse; bot if thay twitch,<sup>11</sup> be it beaft, or man, or woman, it will kill, tho’ they haid an jack<sup>12</sup> wpon them. Qwhen we goe in the shape of an haire, we fay thryfe owr:

‘ I SALL goe intill ane haire,  
With forrow, and fych, and meikle caire;  
And I fall goe in THE DIVELLIS nam,  
Ay whill I com hom [again!].’

And instantlie we start in an hair. And when we wold be owt of that shape, we vill fay:

‘ HAIRE, [haire, God fend thé caire!]  
I am in an hairis liknes just now,

Bot I falbe in a womanis liknes ewin [now.]’

When we vold goe in the liknes of an cat, we fay thryfe ower,

‘ I SALL goe [in till ane catt,]  
[With forrow, and fych, and a blak] [hot!  
And I fall goe in THE DIVELLIS nam,  
Ay quhill I com hom again!’

<sup>1</sup> Wet. <sup>2</sup> A piece of flatted wood, somewhat resembling a cricket-bat, which washerwomen use for knocking clothes, in cleansing them. <sup>3</sup> Rag. <sup>4</sup> Be allayed. <sup>5</sup> Shapes and trims them as a carpenter, with edged-tools. <sup>6</sup> Boss also signifies hollow, or empty. Perhaps this expresses that these Elves were diminutive and *hump-backed* creatures resembling the *trovs* or *trolls* of FAIRY SUPERSTITION; whose propensities are uniformly described as being malignant, and hostile to mankind. <sup>7</sup> Roughly; crossly; gruffly. <sup>8</sup> Yonder. The preceding and following rhymes are probably *unique*, even in the history of Trials for WITCHCRAFT, and show, in a very forcible manner, the criminality of the bigoted, though learned and well-intentioned, individuals who dragged forward such wretches to public trial and an ignominious death. <sup>9</sup> On life; *alive*. <sup>10</sup> Jerk. <sup>11</sup> Touch. <sup>12</sup> A coat of mail; defensive armour.

And if ve [wold goe in ane craw, then] we fay thryse ower :

' I SALL goe intill a craw,  
With forrow, and fych, and a blak [thraw !  
And I fall goe in the Divellis nam,]  
Ay quhill I com home again !'

And quhen ve vould be owt of thes shapes, we fay :

' CATT, catt, (or craw, craw,) [God] fend thé a blak fhott ! (or blak thraw !)  
I wes a catt (or craw) just now,  
Bot I falbe [in a woman's liknes evin now.]

Catt, catt, (or craw, craw,) God fend the a blak shot ! (or a blak thraw !)

Giff we, in the [shape of an catt, an craw, an] haire, or ony vther liknes, &c., go to any of our neighbouris howflis, being Witches, we will [fay,]

[' I (or we) CONJURE ] thé Goe with ws (or me) !'

And presentlie they becom as we ar, either cats, hearis, crowes, &c., and goe [with ws whither we wold. Quhan] we wold ryd,<sup>1</sup> we tak windle-frawes, or been-flakes,<sup>2</sup> and put them betwixt owr foot,<sup>5</sup> and fay thryse,

' [HORSE] and hattok, horfe and goe,  
Horfe and pellattis, ho ! ho !'<sup>4</sup>

And immediatlie we flie away whair [euir we wold] ; and leaft our husbandis fould mis vs owt of owr beddis, we put in a boofom, or a thrie [leggitt stoole beyde thame,] and fay thryse ower,

' I LAY down this boofom (or stooll,) In THE DIVELLIS name,  
Let it not steir . . . . . [Quhill I] com again !'

And immediatlie it feimis a voman, beyd owr husbandis.

Ve can not turn in the lik[nes<sup>5</sup> of . . . . .] Quhen my husband fold beeff, I vfed to put a fwellowes feather in the hyd of the beaft, and [fay thryse,]

' [I] PUTT owt this beeff in THE DIVELLIS nam,  
That meikle silver and good pryce com hame !'

I did ewin fo [quheneuir I putt] furth either horfe, noat,<sup>6</sup> vebs,<sup>7</sup> or any vther thing to be fold, and fill<sup>8</sup> put in this feather, and said the [famin wordis thryse] ower, to caws the comodities sell weil, &c. . . . . thryse ower,

Owr Lord to hunting he [is gone]  
. . . . . marble stone,

He sent vord to Saint Knitt . . . . .<sup>9</sup>

[Quhan we vould heall ony for, or brokin limb, we fay thryse ower,]

He pat the blood to the blood, Till all vp flood ;

The lith to the lith, Till all took with ;

Owr Ladie charmed hir deirlie Sone, With hir tooth and hir townge,  
And hir ten fingeris—

In the name of THE FATHER, THE SON, and THE HALIE GAIST !<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ride.

<sup>2</sup> Bean-stalks.

<sup>3</sup> For feet.

<sup>4</sup> See Note to 'Horse and hattock,' p. 604.

<sup>5</sup> There is a tradition in MORAYSHIRE, that Witches could not appear in the shape of a dove or a lamb ; the one being emblematical of THE HOLY SPIRIT, the other being the emblem of the AGNUS DEI. Perhaps the hiatus might not improperly have been so supplied.

<sup>6</sup> Nolt, cattle.

<sup>7</sup> Webs of cloth.

<sup>8</sup> Uniformly ; constantly ; always.

<sup>9</sup> After this

fragment, a considerable portion of the MS. is unfortunately torn off. It is probable that the two first lines of the next Charm are mutilated.

<sup>10</sup> It has been often remarked by the Editor, in the course of the numerous WITCH TRIALS which occur in this Collection, that a great proportion of the charms, in use to be repeated by these unhappy women, were actually paraphrases of portions of the Mass-Book—and in some cases, such as in the Case of ANNIE SAMSON, there appears to have been used doggrel versions of THE CREED, &c. ! Others were taken from ancient popular rhymes and songs, such as the above fragment, 'Owr Lord to hunting he is gone,' &c., which, unfortunately, is mutilated.

And this we say thryse over, straiking<sup>1</sup> the for, and it becomes heall. <sup>2</sup>di, For the BEAN-SHAW,<sup>2</sup> or pain in the heance,<sup>3</sup>—WEE ar heir thrie *Maidens* charming for the bean-straw; pe man of the Middle-earth, blew beaver, land-feaver, maneris of ftooris, the Lord fleigged<sup>4</sup> the Feind with his holy candles and yeird foot stone!—Thair she fittis, and heir she is gon!—Let hir nevir com heir again!—<sup>3</sup>di, For the FEAVERIS, we say thryse over, 'I FORBID the qwaking-feavers, the fea-feaveris, the land-feaveris, and all the feaveris that ewir God ordained, owt of the head, owt of the heart, owt of the bak, owt of the fydis, owt of the kneysis, owt of the thieghes, fra the pointis of the fingeris to the nebes<sup>5</sup> of the toes; owt fall the feaveris goe, [som] to the hill, som to the hap, som to the stone, some to the stok. In Saint Peiteris nam, Saint Paullis nam, and all the Saintis of Hevin: In the nam of THE FATHER, THE SONE, and of THE HALIE GOST!<sup>6</sup>—AND when we took the frwit of the fishes from [the] fisheris, we went to the shore, befor the boat wold com to it; and we wold say, on the shorefyd, thrie feuerall tymes ower,

' THE fisheris ar gon to the sea,  
And they vill bring hom fishe to me ;  
They will bring them hom intill the boat,  
Bot they fall get of thaim bot the smaller fort !'

So we either steall a fish, or buy a fish, or get a fish from them [for nowght,] an or ma.<sup>7</sup> And with that we haw all the fruit of the heall<sup>8</sup> fishes in the boat; and the fishes that the fishermen tham selues will haw, will be bot froath, &c.

The first woyag that ewer I went with the rest of owr COVENS wes [to] Plewghlandis; and thair we shot an man betuixt the plewgh-filtis, and he presentlie fell to the ground, wpon his neise<sup>9</sup> and his mowth; and than THE DIVELL gaw me an arrow, and cawfed me shoot an voman in that feildis; quhilk I did, and she fell down dead.<sup>10</sup> In Winter 1660, quhen Mr Harie Forbes, Minister at Aulderne, wes feik, we maid an bagg of the gallis, flesh, and guttis of toadis, pickles of bear,<sup>11</sup> pairingis of the naillis of fingeris and toes, the liewer of ane hair, and bittis of clowtis. We steipit this all together, all night among watter, all haked<sup>12</sup> throw vther. And whan we did put it among the water, SATAN wes with ws, and learned ws the wordis following, to say thryse ower. They ar thus,

' HE is lying in his bed,—he is lyeing feik and fair;  
Let him lye intill his bed two monethis and [thrie] dayes mair !  
<sup>2</sup>di, Let him lye intill his bed,—let him lye intill it feik and fore;  
Let him lyne untill his bed monthis two [and] thrie dayes mor !  
<sup>3</sup>di, He fall lye intill his bed, he fall lye in it feik and fore;  
He fall lye intill his bed [two monethis and] thrie dayes mor !'

Quhan we haid learned all thes wordis from THE DIVELL, as said is, we fell all down [wpon owr] kneis, with owr hear down ower owr showlderis and eyes, and owr handis lifted wp, and owr eyes

<sup>1</sup> Stroking; gently rubbing.

<sup>2</sup> The *boneshave* or *boneshaw*, signifies the SCIATICA. From an amusing, published specimen of THE EXMOOR DIALECT, Devonshire, it appears, that the term is also known in England. The peasantry of that district use a singular *Charm* for its cure. 'The patient must lie upon his back, on the bank of the river or brook of water, with a straight staff by his side, between him and the water; and must have the following words repeated over him, viz.

" Boneshave right—Boneshave straight—  
As the water runs by the stave—Good for Boneshave !"

They are not to be persuaded but that this ridiculous form of words seldom fails to give them a perfect cure.' *Exmoor Scolding*. P. 8. *Note*. <sup>3</sup> Haunch. <sup>4</sup> Affrighted; terrified. <sup>5</sup> Nibs; extremities. <sup>6</sup> It appears very singular to us who live in the Nineteenth Century, that SATAN should have taught his servants to invoke THE SAINTS, and even THE HOLY TRINITY. The charms recited by his disciples are usually fragments of ancient Monkish rhymes; and most of them were such as many good Roman Catholics of the lower orders, even in these times, would not scruple to use, for the supposed cure of their bodily ailments. <sup>7</sup> One or more. <sup>8</sup> Whole. <sup>9</sup> Nose. <sup>10</sup> Isobell previously explained, that these poaching excursions took place, when the Witches were careering in mid-air, mounted on windle-straws and bean-stalks, &c. The DEVIL usually made them pick up such of the Elf-arrows as fell short of or missed their mark. <sup>11</sup> Grains of barley, or bear. <sup>12</sup> Hacked; minced into small pieces.

[stedfastlie fixed wpon] THE DIVELL; and said the forsaids wordis thryse ower to THE DIVELL, striktilie, against Maister Harie Forbes [his recovering from the said seiknes.] In the night tym we cam in to Mr Harie Forbes chalmer, quhair he lay, with ovr handis all smeared [ . . . . . ] of the bagg to swing it wpon Mr Harie, quhair he wes seik in his bed; and in the day tyme [ . . . . . ] ane of ovr] nwmber, quho wes most familiar and intimat with him, to wring or swing the bagg [wpon the said Mr Harie, as we could] not prevaill in the night tym against him; quhilk wes accordinglie done. Any of [ . . . . . ] comes in to your howffes, or ar set to doo yow evill, they will look vncowth lyk, thrawn [ . . . . . ] hurlie lyk, and thair clothes standing owt. The Maiden of ovr Coven, Jean Mairten, wes [ . . . . . ] We] doe no great mater without ovr Maiden.

And if a child be forsoken,<sup>1</sup> we tak the cradle [ . . . . . ] throw it thryse,<sup>2</sup> and than a dowg<sup>3</sup> throw it; and then shakis the belt abow the fyre [ . . . . . ] and then cast it] downe on the ground, till a dowg or catt goe ower it, that the seiknes may com [ . . . . . ] wpon the dowg or] catt.

ALL quhilkis wer swa spokin furth of the mouth of the said ISSOBELL GOWDIE, &c.<sup>4</sup> [Indorsed] ED<sup>R</sup>, 10 July, 1662. Considered and found relevant be THE JUSTICE DEPUTE. Tak cair of this peaper. See the Justice deputis judgement of it. Show this to the Commissioneris. HAVEING read and considered THE CONFESSIONS of ISOBEL GOWDIE, within contened, as particularie SATHAN, Renunciation of Baptism, with diverse malefices, I find that a Commission may be verie justlie pass, for hir last Tryall. (Sic subscribiter) A. COLUILLE, (Justice-depute.)

(3.) ISSOBELL GOWDIES THIRD CONFESSION.

AT AULDERNE, the syftein day of May, 1662 yeiris, IN presence of Maister HARIE FORBES, Minister of the Gospell at Alderne, Mr HEW ROSSE, Minister at Nairn; JOHNE INNES of Edingeith; HEW HAY of Newtown; Mr ALEX DUNBAR, Schoolmaster and Session Clerk of Alderne; GEORGE PHINNEY, in Kirkmichaell; and Johne Weir, and Androw Easie in Alderne; and many vtheris, WITNESSIS to THE CONFESSION efter sett down, spoken furth of the mouth of ISSOBELL GOWDIE, spous to Johne Gilbert in Lochloy.

THE quhilk day, in presence of me, JOHNE INNES, Notar Publict, and Witnesses all vnder subscriwand, the said ISSOBELL GOWDIE, appeiring to be most penitent for hir abominable finnes of Witchcraft, most ingenwoslie procedit in hir CONFESSION therof, in maner efter following; to witt. First, as I wes going betwixt the townis of *Drumdewin* and *the Headis*, THE DIVELL met with me, and thair I covenanted with him, and promiseit to meit him, in the night tym, in *the Kirk of Alderne*; quhilk I did. He stood in the Readeris dask, and an blak book in his hand; quhair I cam besor him, and renuncet JESUS CHRIST and my baptisme; and all betuixt the soale of my foot and the crown of my head, I gaw frielie wp and ower to THE DIVELL. *Margaret Brodie*, in Alderne, held me wp to THE DIVELL, untill he re-baptised me, and marked me in the shoulder, and with his mouth sucked out my blood at that place, and spowted it in his hand, and sprinkling it wpon my head and face, he said, 'I baptise ye, JANET, to my self, in my own nam!' Within a whyll thereafter we all removed. And within few dayes he cam to me, in *the New Wardis of Inshoch*, and ther haid carnall cowpulation with me. He wes a verie meikle blak roch man. He will lye als hewie wpon ws, quhan he hes carnall dealling with ws, lyk an malt-secke. His memberis ar exceeding great and long; no mans memberis ar so long and bigg as they ar. He wold be amongst ws lyk a weath horse amongst mears. He wold lye with ws in presence of all the multitud; neither haid we nor he any kynd of shame; bot

<sup>1</sup> Bewitched.      <sup>2</sup> This seems to allude to passing the child, &c., through an enchanted hoop, ring, or belt, a very common popular charm in those days.      <sup>3</sup> Dog.      <sup>4</sup> The same form and subscriptions as in the preceding Confession, with the Notarial Attestation, &c. of JOHN INNES.

especiallie he hes no shame with him at all. He wold lye and have carnall dealling with all, at euerie tym, as he pleafed. He wold haw carnall dealling with ws in the shape of a deir or any vther shap that he wold be in. We wold never refuse him. He wold com to my hows-top in the shape of a crow, or lyk a deir, or in any vther shap, now and then. I wold ken his voice, at the first heiring of it, and wold goe furth to him and haw carnall cowpulation with him. The youngeft and lwtieft women will haw verie great pleafour in their carnall cowpulation with him, yea much mor than with their awin husbandis; and they will haw a exceiding great desir of it with him, als much as he can haw to them, and mor; and never think shame of it. He is abler for ws that way than any man can be (Alace! that I fould compair him to ane man!) onlie he ves heavie lyk a malt-feck; a hudge nature, verie cold, as yce.

He wold fend me now and then to *Aulderne* som earandis to my neightbouris, in the shape of ane hair. I wes on morning, abowt the break of day, going to *Aulderne* in the shap of ane hair, and *Patrik Papleyis* serwandis, in *Killhill*, being goeing to ther labouring, his houndis being with them, ran efter me, being in the shape of ane haire. I ran verie long, bot wes forcet, being wearie, at laft to take my own hous. The dore being left open, I ran in behind ane chift, and the houndis followed in; bot they went to the vther syd of the chift; and I was forcet to run furth agane, and wan into an vther hows, and thair took leafour to fay,

‘ HAIR, hair, God fend thé cair!  
I am in a hearis liknes now,  
Bot I fall be ane voman ewin now!  
Hair, hair, God fend thé cair!’

And fo I returned to my owin shap, as I am at this instant, again. The dowgis will som tymes get som byttis<sup>1</sup> of vs, quhan ve ar in hairis,<sup>2</sup> bot will not get ws killed. Quhan ve turn owt of a hairis liknes to owr awin shap, we will haw the byttis, and rywis, and scrattis<sup>3</sup> in owr bodies. Quhan we vould be in the shap of cattis, we did nothing but cry and wraw,<sup>4</sup> and rywing, and as it ver, wirrieing on an vther; and quhan ve com to owr awin shapes again, ve will find the scrattis and rywes on our skins, verie for. Quhan on of vs or mor ar in the shap of catis, and meitt with ony vtheris owr neightbouris, we will fay,

‘ DIVELL SPEID THÉ—GOE THOW WITH ME!’

And immediatlie they will turne in the shape of ane catt, and goe with ws. Quhen we wilbe in the shap of crows, we will be larger than ordinar crows, and will sitt wpon brenches of treis. We went in the shape of rewkis<sup>5</sup> to *Mr Robert Donaldsones* hows, *THE DIVELL*, and *Johne Taylor*, and his wyff, went in at the kitchen chimney, and went down wpon the crowk.<sup>6</sup> It wes about *Lambes*,<sup>7</sup> in anno 1659; they opened an vindow, and (we) went all in to the hows, and gott beiffe and drink thair; bot did no more harme.—We went in to *the Downie-hillis*; the hill opened, and we cam to ane fair and lairge brow rowme, in the day tym. Thair ar great bullis rowtting and skoylling ther, at the entrie, quhilk feared me.<sup>8</sup>

Bot that quhich troubles my conscience most, is the killing of severall perfones, with the arrowes quhich I gott from *THE DIVELL*. The first woman that I killed wes at *the Pleugh-landis*; also I killed an<sup>9</sup> in the East of *Murrey*, at *Candmas*<sup>10</sup> laft. At that tyme *Bessie Wilson*, in *Alderne*, killed on thair; and *Margaret Wilson*, ther, killed an vther; I killed also *James Dick* in *Canniecavill*: Bot the death that I am most of all forrie for, is the killing of *William Bower*, in *the Miltoune of Moynes*; *Margaret Brodie* killed an voman, washing, at *the Burne of Tarres*; *Bessie Wilson* killed ane man at *the Bushe of Strutheris*; *Bessie Hay* in *Aulderne* killed ane prettie man called *Dunbar*, at the Eist

<sup>1</sup> Bites.

<sup>2</sup> In the shape of hares.

<sup>3</sup> Tears and scratches.

<sup>4</sup> *Caterwaul*, like cats.

<sup>5</sup> Rooks.

<sup>6</sup> The *crook*, on which the ‘kail-pot’ hangs, over the fire.

<sup>7</sup> *Lammis*, the 1st day of August.

<sup>8</sup> Alarmed.

blessed Virgin Mary, Feb. 2d.

<sup>9</sup> Ane; one.

<sup>10</sup> The purification of the

end of the Towne of Forres, as he wes coming owt at an gaitt; *Margaret Brodie* in Alderne killed on *David Blak*, in Darnvay. *Janet Breadhead*, spows to *Johne Taylor*, told me, a litle befor she wes apprehendit, that *Margaret Wilfone* in Alderne shot *Alexander Huchcon*, in Alderne; *Janet Breadheid* shot *Johne Falconer*, in the Park. The most of ws all wer ther, at that tyme. *Bessie Wilfone* killed on *William Man*, at Burgie; *Margaret Wilfone* killed on *Johne Lee*, and *Janet Breadheid* killed a fuyn<sup>1</sup> at Burgie; *Bessie Wilfone* in Alderne, on an first Monday of the Reath, took a bagg maid of hairis lieweris,<sup>2</sup> the flesh, guttis and gallis of toadis, naillis of fingeris and toes, and swung it on an young man called *Thomas Reid*, and he died. *Bessie* and *Margaret Wilfones* in Alderne, *Johne Taylor* and his wyff, *Margrat Brodie* and I, and THE DIVELL, wer together, and *Mr Harie Forbes*, Minister at Alderne, goeing to *Moynes*. THE DIVELL gaw *Margret Brodie* an arrow to shoot at him, quhilk she did; bot it cam short; and *the Divell* cawld tak it wp again. We defiret to shoot again, bot *the Divell* said, 'No; we wold not gett his lyff at that tyme!' *The Divell* cawld me to shoot at *the Laird of Park*,<sup>3</sup> as he wes croceing *the Burne of the Boath*; bot I missed him. We wold goe to feuerall howffis, in the night tym. We wer at *Candlmas* last in *Graingehill*,<sup>4</sup> quhair we got meat and drink anewgh. THE DIVELL sat at the heid of the table, and all the COVEN about. That night he defiret *Alexander Elder*, in Earlseat, to fay the grace befor meat, quhilk he did; and is thus:

' WE eat this meat in THE DIVELLIS nam,  
With forrow, and fych,<sup>5</sup> and meikle shame;  
We fall destroy hows and hald;  
Both sheip and noat in till the fald.  
Litle good fall come to the fore  
Of all the rest of the litle store!'

And than ve began to eatt. And quhan ve haid endit eating, we looked steadfastlie to THE DIVELL, and bowing owrfelwes to him, we said to *the Divell*,

' WE thank thé owr Lord for this!' &c.

The wordis which we spak, quhan we maid the pictur, for distroyeing of *the Laird of Parkis* meall-children, wer thus:

' IN THE DIVELLIS nam, we powr in this water among this mowld (meall),<sup>7</sup>  
For lang duyning and ill heall;  
We putt it into the fyre,  
That it may be brunt both stik and stowre.  
It falbe brunt, with owr will,  
As any stikle<sup>8</sup> wpon a kill.'

THE DIVELL taught ws the wordis; and quhan ve haid learned them, we all fell downe wpon owr bare kneysis, and owr hair about owr eyes, and owr handis lifted wp, looking steadfast wpon THE DIVELL, fill faying the wordis thryfe ower, till it wes maid. And then, in THE DIVELLIS nam, we did put it in, in the midft of the fyre. Efter it had skrukned<sup>9</sup> a litle befor the fyre, and quhan it wes read lyk a coale, we took it owt in THE DIVELLIS nam. Till it be broken, it will be the deathe of all the meall children that *the Laird of Park* will ewer get. Cast it ower an Kirk, it will not brak quhill<sup>10</sup> it be broken with an aix, or fom such lyk thing, be a man's handis. If it be not broken, it will last an hundreth yeir. It hes ane cradle about it of clay, to preferue it from skaith;<sup>11</sup> and it wes rosten each vther day, at the fyr; fom tymes on pairt of it, fom tymes an vther pairt of it; it vould be a litle wat with water, and then rosten. The bairn vould be brunt and rosten, ewin as it wes by ws. It wanted

<sup>1</sup> Sow.      <sup>2</sup> Hares' livers.      <sup>3</sup> John Hay of Park.      <sup>4</sup> Belonged to Brodie of Lethin.  
lamentation.      <sup>5</sup> The rest was probably omitted in writing down the Confession, as being blasphemous.      <sup>6</sup> Sighing;  
is writtin meall in the other Confession; and the metre (such as it is) requires this liberty.      <sup>7</sup> It  
'earth' or 'dust.'      <sup>8</sup> Stubble.      <sup>9</sup> Parched; shrivelled.      <sup>10</sup> Until.      <sup>11</sup> Harm; injury.      <sup>12</sup> Mowld signifies



deidis, especiallie killing of men, &c. I deserw to be reinw upon iron harrowes, and worse, if it could be devyfit!

And quhan we tak away the fruit of cornis, at *Lambes*,<sup>1</sup> we tak an wooll-sheer, and cuttis or clips onlie thrie stakis<sup>2</sup> of it, and plaitis vther thrie rudis together, and sayes,

' WE cutt this corne in our Lord THE DIVELLIS nam,  
And we fall haw the fruit of it ham!'

And this thryse ower; and so we haw the fruit of that field. Ewin so, quhan we tak keall or the lyk, &c. And we lay all vp till *Yewll*, *Pace*, or *Halie* dayes; and pairtis it among vs, and feastis on that together.

W<sup>P</sup>ON the quhillis all and fundrie of the premisses, swa spokin and willinglie Confest be the said *Issobell Gowdie*, I, the said *Johne Innes*, Notar publict, haw wretten thir presentis, and with the Witnesse abow and vnder namet, haw subseryuit the samen with our handis, day, moneth, place, and yeir abow sett down.

JOANNES INNES, Notarius Publicus.<sup>5</sup>

MR HARY FORBES, Minister of Auld Earn, Attestis.

HEN. ROSE, Minister at Nairne, Attestis the foirsaid Declaratioun, as to the principal substantialis.

HEW HAY of Newtown, Attestes.

Jo. WEIR, in Auldearne, Attestis.

GEORGE PHINNEY, in Kirkmichael, Attestis.

#### (4.) ISSOBELL GOWDIE'S FOURTH CONFESSION.

AT AULDERNE, the tuantie sevint day of May, 1662 yeiris. In presence of MASTER HARRY FORBES, Minister at Aldererne; PATRIK CAMPBELL of Boath; MR ALLEX<sup>R</sup> DUMBAR, Schoolmaster and Clerk of the Session of Aldererne; GEORGE PHINNEY, in Kirkmichaell; HEW HAY of Newtowne; and JOHN WEIR, in Aldererne; WITNESSES TO THE CONFESSION OF ISSOBELL GOWDIE, spows to John Gilbert, in Lochloy.

THE said day, the said ISSOBELL, professing repentance for hir former finnes of Witchcraft, and that she had bein ower long in THE DIVELLIS service; without any compulsitouris, proceidit in hir CONFESSION, in maner efter following: That is to say. I acknowledg, to my great grieff and tham, that my bodie and fowll to THE DIVELL; he standing in the Readeris Dask of *Aulderne*; and gaw over in his hand: *Margret Brodie*, in *Aulderne*, held me wp to THE DIVELL, quhill<sup>4</sup> I did this, and quhill he marked me one the shoulder, and sowked out my blood thairat, and spitted it in his hand, and sprinkled it on my head, and baptised me 'JANET,' in his owin nam. Efter that, he had carnall cowpulation with me, in the *New Wardis of Inshoch*; and still thairefter, fra tym to tym, at ower pleafour.

The names of THE COEVEN ar thes.<sup>5</sup> *Bessie Wilstone*, in *Aulderne*; *Janet Burnet*, ther; *Elypet Nishie*, ther; *Margret Brodie*, ther; *Margret Vilstone*, ther; *Bessie Hay*, ther; *Johne Taylor*, in *Belmakeith*; *Janet Breadhead*, his spous; *Barbara Ronald*, *Issobell Nicoll*, in *Lochloy*; my self, with *Jean Mairten*, our MAIDEN; and *Johne Young*, in *Mebestoun*, ower OFFICER. THE NAMES OF OWR DIVELLIS, that waited upon vs, ar thes. First, ROBERT, the *Jakis*; SANDERIS, the *Reaver*; THOMAS, the *Fearie*; SWEIN, the *roaring Lion*; THIEFFE OF HELL, *Wait upon hir self*; MAKHECTOUR; ROBERT, the *Rule*; HENDRIE LAING; and RORIE. We wold ken them all, on by

<sup>1</sup> *Lammas*, 1st August; *Festum S. Petri ad Vincula*.

motto, before referred to, are annexed.

<sup>4</sup> Until.

<sup>2</sup> Stalks; stems.

<sup>5</sup> The principal purpose of this renewed Examination seems to have been to get a more detailed account of the persons composing her COEVEN, &c., besides getting a solemn Confirmation of her former Declarations; so that the rest of that unhappy Society might in due time be brought to Trial and punishment.

<sup>3</sup> The long Latin *docquet* and Examination

on, from vtheris. Som of thaim apeirit in fadd-dun, som in grassie-grein, som in sea-grein, and som in yellow. THE NIK-NAMES that THE DIVELL gaw wnto ws wer, PIKELL NEIREST THE VIND, this wes *Margret Wilsones* niknam; *Bessie Wilsones* niknam ves THROW THE CORN-YAIRD; *Elspet Nishies* niknam ves BESSIE BALD; *Jean Mairtenis* niknam, quho ves MAIDEN, is OWER THE DYK WITH IT; *Bessie Hayes* nickname is ABLE AND STOUT.

I haw sein the Elf-arrowes maid. The *Divell* dights<sup>1</sup> them, and the *Elf-boyes* qubytes<sup>2</sup> them. We got ewerie on (of) ws so many of thaim from the *Divell*, to shoot at men.<sup>3</sup> I my self killed on *William Bower*, at Miltoun of Moynes. This griewis me mor than any thing that I ewer did. *Margret Brody* killed an woman, washing, at the *Burn of Tarras*. *Bessie Wilson* killed an man, at the *Bush of Strutheris*. *Bessie Hay* killed on . . . . *Dunbar*, at the East end of the town of *Forres*, coming owt at a gait. *Margret Brodie* shot at on *David Blak*. *Margret Wilson* killed on *Alexr Hucheon*, in Auldern. *Janet Breadhead*, now in prison, killed *Johne Falconer*, in Park. Ther were thrie killed East the cowntrie, at *Candlmas* last: I killed on, *Margret Brodie* on, and *Bessie Wilson* on. I shot on *James Dih*, in Connicavell; *Margret Brodie* killed on *Wm Cruikshank*; *Margret Wilson* killed on *Johne Ley*; *Janet Breadhead* killed a fuyn,<sup>4</sup> also she killed an vther man at *Burgie*; and *Bessie Wilson* killed on thair, namet *Wm Man*. We killed an ox, and brought it to *Bessie Hayes* hows, in Aulderne; and we did eat him thair. I shot at the *Laird of Park*, as he ves crossing the *Burn*<sup>5</sup> of *Boath*; bot, thankis to God now, that he preferwit him. *Bessie Hay* gaw me a great cusse,<sup>6</sup> becaus I missed him.

*Margaret Brodie* shot at *Mr Harie Forbes*, at the Standing-stanes, bot she missed; and speirit, 'If she fould shoot again?' And the *DIVELL* said 'Not!—For we wold nocht get his lysf at that tym.' We intentit<sup>7</sup> feuerall tymes for him, quhan he ves seik. *Bessie Hay*, *Jean Mairten*, the Maiden, *Bessie Wilson*, *Margret Brodie*, *Elspet Nishie*, spows to *Johne Mathow*, and I myself met in *Bessie Wilsones* hows, and maid an bag against him. The bag wes maid of the flesh, guttis, and gallis of toadis, the hiewer of a hear,<sup>8</sup> pikles of corn, and pairingis of naillis of fingeris and toes; we steipit all night among water. The *Devell* learned ws to fay thes wordis following, at the making of the bag:—

'He is lying in his bed—and he is seik and fair,  
Let him ly in till that bedd monthes two and dayes thrie mair!  
He sal ly in till his bed, he salbe seik and fair—  
He fall lye in till his bedd monethes two and dayes thrie mair!'

And quhan we haid said thes wordis, we wer all on our kneysis, our hair abowt ovr showlderis and eyes, holding wp our handis to THE *DIVELL*, that it<sup>9</sup> might destroy the said *Mr Harie*. It ves intentit that ve, coming in to his chalmer, in the night tym, we fould swing it on him. And becaus we prethaid vailed not at that tym, *Bessie Hay* vndertook and cam in to his chalmer to wifit him, being werie intimat with him; and she brought in of the bag in hir handis, full of the oyll thairof, to haw swowng and casten dropis of it on him; bot ther wer som vther worthie persons with him at that tym, by the qulich God prevented *Bessie Hay*, that she got no harm don to him, bot swang a litl of it on the clothes of the bed quhair he lay.

*Johne Taylor* and his wyff, *Bessie* and *Margret Wilsones*, and I, maid a pictur for the *Laird of Parkis* maill children.<sup>10</sup> *Johne Taylor* brought hom the clay in his plaid newk; his wyff sifted it; we powred in vater in a cowg<sup>11</sup> amongst it, and wrought it for,<sup>12</sup> and maid a pictor of it, lyk a child, als big as a pow. It wanted no mark of the imag of a bairn, eyes, nose, mouth, litle lippies, and the hands of it folded down by its sydis. The vordis that we said, quhan we maid it, ver thes:—

<sup>1</sup> Dresses.      <sup>2</sup> Blocks them out.      <sup>3</sup> See the CONFESSION of Apr. 13, 1662, where Issobell tells us they were licensed to sport, in this manner, when riding on straws through the air; and that they had power to kill all who did not sanctify themselves, &c.      <sup>4</sup> A sow.      <sup>5</sup> On good authority, *Issobell* and her master ought to have known, that the Laird was out of their power while crossing a running stream.      <sup>6</sup> A smart slap, or blow.      <sup>7</sup> Tried; essayed.      <sup>8</sup> A hare's liver.      <sup>9</sup> Viz. Their charmed bag.      <sup>10</sup> See the former CONFESSIONS.      <sup>11</sup> A sort of wooden dish.      <sup>12</sup> Sore; extremely.

‘ WE put this water among this meall,  
 For long dwyning<sup>1</sup> and ill heall;  
 We put it in intill the fyr,  
 To burn them vp both stik and flour,  
 That be brunt with our will,  
 As any stikill<sup>2</sup> on an kill !’

THE DIVELL sitton on an blak kist. Ve wer al on our kneysis, and ovr hair about our eyes, looking on THE DIVELL stedfastlie, and ovr handis listet vp to him, saying the vordes ower. And by this the bairnis died, &c. All this, with a great many mor terrible thingis, the saidis Witnesfes and Notar hard the said *Iffobell* CONFES, and most willinglie and penentently speak furth of hir ovin mouth. IN witnes quhairof, WE haw subferyuit thir presenttis, with ovr handis, day, yeir, and place, abow fett down-

*ITA EST Joannes Innes, Notarius Publicus, in fidem premissorum, rogatus et requisitus, subscribo.*

JOANNES INNES, No<sup>rius</sup> Publicus.  
 MR HARY FORBES, Minister of the Gospel, at Old Earn, Attests.  
 W. SUTHERLAND of Kinsterrrie, Attestis. HEW HAY of Newtounne, Attestes.  
 ALL DUNBAR, Schoolmaster and Clerk to the Session of Oldearne, Attests.  
 GEORGE PHINNIE, in Kirkmichel, Attests. Jo. WEIR, in Auldearne, Attestes.

### VIII. CONFESSION of Janet Breadheid, spouse of John Taylor, in Belmakeith.

AT INSHOCH, the fowrteenth day of Aprill, 1662 yeiris. IN presence of PATRIK DUNBAR of Benaferrie,<sup>3</sup> Shereff principall of the Shereffidome of Elgin and Forres; HEW HAY of Newtounne; ARCHEBALD DUNBAR, in Meikle Penick; ARCHEBALD DUNBAR, in Lochloy; WALTER CHALMER, in Balnaferrie; JAMES COWPER, in Inshoche; JOHNE WEIR, in Aulderne; and ane great multitud of all sortis of vther perfonas; WITNESSES to THE CONFESSIONS and DECLARATIONUN efter fett downe, spokin furth of the mowthe of JANET BREADHEID, spous to Johne Taylor, in Belmakeith.

THE quhilk day, in presence of me, JOHNE INNES, Notar Publict, and Witnesfes abownamet, vnder subferyuand, <sup>4</sup>[the said] JANET BREADHEID, professing repentance for hir former finnes of Witchcraft, and that she haid bein over long in the [samin] service; without any pressuris,<sup>5</sup> proceedit as followis, to witt. FIRST, I knew nothing of Witchcraft wntill I wes mari[et with] my husband, Johne Taylor; andsit wes he, and Elspet Nisihie, his mother, that entysed me to that craft. And the first [thing] that we did wes, we maid some drowgries,<sup>6</sup> of dowgs flesh and sheipis flesh, against Johne Hay, in the Mure; and therby took away his cornes, and killed his horse, noat,<sup>7</sup> theip, and vther guidis;<sup>8</sup> and layed it abowt his hows, to tak away his awin lyffe; and therefter, he shorthlie died. Onlie my mother-in-law and my husband did this, to learne me; and this wes my first [lesson] from them, &c.<sup>9</sup> When they gott me to consent to this craft; first, they haid me to the Kirk of Nairne, in the nycht [tyme;] and THE DIVELL wes in the Readeris dask, and an book in his hand. And at that meitting, Bessie Wilstone, in Auld[erne;] Margret Wilstone, spows to Donald Callam, thair; Margret Brodie, thair; Barbara Friece, ther; Helen Inglis, spows to William [. . . .] thair; Janet Burnet, thair; Elspet Makbeith, thair; Elspet Nisihie, spows to Johne Mathew, in Aulderne; Mariore Taylor, [spous] to Robert Barrie, ther; Bessie Hay, ther; Archibald Man, ther; Mariorie

<sup>1</sup> Pining; lingering sickness; gradual wasting away.  
<sup>2</sup> Stubble.  
<sup>3</sup> The Dunbars of Balnaferrie and Westfield were heritable SHERIFFS of Murray.  
<sup>4</sup> A considerable part of this paper having been destroyed by mice, the Editor has supplied the blanks from conjecture, after a careful comparison with other similar Examinations.  
<sup>5</sup> Without the application of TORTURE, or other 'legal compulsionis'; voluntarily.  
<sup>6</sup> Drugs; enchanted charms.  
<sup>7</sup> Nolt, cattle.  
<sup>8</sup> Farm stock; 'bestial.'  
<sup>9</sup> A

Man, his daughter, ther; Elspet Makhomie, relict [of] wmq<sup>ll</sup> Allexander Huchefon, ther; Bessie Friece, spous to Johne Gilbert, ther; Issobell Friece, spows to Androw Miller, ther; Agnes Torrie, spows to William Yowng, ther; Elspet Chifolme, spows to vmq<sup>ll</sup> . . . . Makhomie, ther; Allexander Elder, in Earlseat; Janet Finlay, his spows; Elspet Laird, in Miltoun of Moynes; Johne Robertson, in Leathin; Grifall Sinklar, his spows; Allexander Sheipheard, in Miltoun of Moynes; Janet Man, his spous; Mariorie Dunbar, in Brightmanney; . . . . Kyllie, in Vester Kinstray; Allexander Ledy, ther; Elspet Gilbert, in Leathinbar; Agnes Brodie, in Leathin; Janet Smith, spows to Robert Frafer, in Arry; Bessy Peterkin, in Torrich; Allexander Bell, in Drumdewin, a charmer; Issobell Nicoll, in Lochloy; Bessie Young, ther; Elspet Falconer, spows to James Inglis, in Penick; Bessie and Margret Hucheons, ther; Walter Ledy, ther; wer all ther that night. Johne Taylor, my husband, wes then Officer; bot Johne Yowng, in Mebestoune, is now Officer to my COE[VEN.] Quhan I cam first ther, THE DIVELL called tham all be thair names, on the book; and my husband, than [OFFICER,]<sup>1</sup> called thame at the dore. And when that was done, Bessie Wilfon, in Alderne, sat down nixt THE DIVELL;<sup>2</sup> [Bessie] Hay, thair, sat nixt him, on the vther sid; Janet Burnet sat nixt hir; and Elspet Nisbie, spows to the said Johne [Mathew,] sat nixt Bessie Wilfon, hir mother. She wes THE MAIDEN to hir motheris Coeven. All the rest sat downe [as] they to cam.<sup>5</sup>

The nixt thing, efter quhat wes done that night, THE DIVELL lay with them all abowt. And then . . . . . for me, my husband presented me, and he and Margrat Wilfon, in Alderne, held me vp to THE [DIVELL to] be baptised: And efter I haid put my on hand to the foallis of my foot, and the vthir hand to the [crown of] my head, and renunced my baptisme, and all betuixt my two handis to the Divell, the Divell [marked me] in the shoulder, and fuked out my blood with his mowth, at that place; he spowted it in his hand, and [sprinkled it] on my head. He baptised me thairvith, in his awin nam, 'CHRISTIAN.' And than immediatlie thairefter, [they all returned] each to ther awin howffis. Within fyw dayes thairefter, he cam to me to my hows, quhan my hub[and] was furth,] in the morning, at the plewgh, to sie the mark quhich he gaw me; and he did lye with me in the naked [bed,] and haid carnall cowpulation with me; and gaw me ane piece of money, lyk a testain. He was a meikle, roch, blak man, cloven footed, verie cold; and I fand his nature within me als cold as spring-well-water. He promiseit to sie me again, within eight dayes, quhilk he did, and haid carnall cowpulation with me again, and gaw me an vthir piece of money, lyk the first; bot they both turned read,<sup>4</sup> and I got nothing for thaim. He cam again within twantie dayes, and fill<sup>5</sup> once in the twantie dayes, and lay with me at each tym continually.

[We] met in the place of Darnvay<sup>6</sup> nixt that, and thair we did eat and drink, &c. Efter that, we wold still meit [euerie] ten, twelve, or twantie dayes continwally.

Whan we haid Great Meittingis, Walter Ledy, in Penick, my [hus]band, and Allexander Elder, nixt to THE DIVELL, wer Ruleris; and quhan ther wold be but fewar, I my self, the deceassit Jean Suthirland, Bessie Hay, Bessie Wilfone, and Janet Burnet wold rule thaim. The first thing that we did, except the taking of meat, wes taking of the cornis of Drumdewan, and [then] pairted that amongst ws. 2dly, We shoat noat<sup>7</sup> in plewghes. 3dly, Agnes Grant, who wes brunt on the . . . . amongst ws. 8 gott hyre from Elspet Monro, to destroy the Lairdis of Park and Lochloy, and thair hill of . . . .<sup>8</sup> gott hyre from Elspet Monro, to destroy the Lairdis of Park and Lochloy, and thair [posteritie.] And then I and my husband, Elspet Nisbie, and Bessie and Margret Wilfones, in Alderne, con[veened] our selwes with THE DIVELL, in Elspet Nisbies hows; and then touk dowgis flesh, and sheipis flesh, and [haked] it verie small with an aix, and seithed it an haill fornoon in a pot, among water: And than I took it owt; and THE DIVELL, with his awin hand, did put it in a sheipis

<sup>1</sup> See *Issobell Gowdie's CONFESSIONS*; where it is stated that this worthy was OFFICER to a *Coven*. being MAIDEN to the *Coven*. <sup>2</sup> As they happened to come in; promiscuously. <sup>3</sup> Red. <sup>4</sup> She

constantly. <sup>5</sup> The seat of THE EARLS OF MORAY. See *Issobell Gowdie's CONFESSIONS*. <sup>6</sup> Uniformly; <sup>7</sup> Shot nolt, or <sup>8</sup> Left blank, in the original.

bagg, and he steiring it still<sup>1</sup> abowt with his handis. We wer wpon our kneyes, owr hair about owr eyes, and owr handis lifted up, and ve looking stedfastlie wpon THE DIVELL, praying to him, repeating the vordis quhich he learned vs, that it fould kill and destroy the Lairdis of Park and Lochloy, and thair meall-children and posteritie. And then we cam to Inshoch, in the night tym, and skatered it wpon, and down, abow, and about the gait, and vther places quhair the Lairdis and thair fones wold most haunt; and then ve, in the lyknes of crowes and rewkis stood abow the gait, and in the treis oposit to the gait. It wes apointed so, that if any of them fould twitch<sup>2</sup> or tramp wpon any of it, als veill as it or any of it to fall on thaim, it fould strik thaim with byllis,<sup>3</sup> &c. and kill them: Quhilk it did; and they shorthlie died. We did it to mak that hows airles.<sup>4</sup> It wold wrong non els bot they. And it wes Keathren Sowter, that wes brunt,<sup>5</sup> that [shot] William Hay, the last Laird of Parkis brother, for<sup>6</sup> on Gilbert Kinley. It wes only that bagg that wes the death of both the last Lairdis of Park.

Alfo, four yeir since, I and my husband, Iffobell Gowdie, spows to Johne Gilbert, in Lochloy, and Bessie and Margret Wilfones, in Alderne, maid [a pictur] of clay, lyk the Laird of Parkis eldest sone. My husband brought hom the clay in his plaid [newk. It] ves maid in my hows; and THE DIVELL him self with ws. We brak the clay werie small, lyk meil, [and] sifted it with a siew, and powred in vater amongst it, with wordis that THE DIVELL learned vs, [in the DI]VELLIS nam. I brought hom the water, in a pig,<sup>7</sup> out of the Rud-wall.<sup>8</sup> We wer all wpon owr [kneyes,] and our hair about owr eyes, and owr handis lifted vp to THE DIVELL, and owr eyes stedfast looking [vpon him,] children, and to mak his hows airles. It wes werie fore wrowght, lyk rye-bowt. It was about the bignes of a seadge or pow. It was juft maid lyk the bairne; it vanted no mark of any maill child, such as heid, face, eyes, nose, mowth, lippes, &c., and the handis of it folded downe by its fydis. It ves putt to the fyre, first till it scrunked,<sup>10</sup> and than a cleir fyre about it, till it ves hard. And then we took it owt of the fyre, in THE DIVELLIS nam; and we laid a clowt abowt it, and did lay [it] vp on a knag, and sometimes vnder a chift. Each day we vold water it, and then rost and bek<sup>11</sup> it; and turn it at the fyre each other day, whill<sup>12</sup> that bairne died; and then layed it vp, and steired<sup>13</sup> it not wntill the nixt bairne wes borne: And then, within half an yeir efter that bairn wes borne, [we] took it owt again out of the cradle and clowt, and vold dip it now and than among water, and beck [it] and rost it at the fyre, each other day once, as ve did against the vther that ves dead, wntill that bairn [died] also. ALL quhilkis of the premiffes, swa spokin and willinglie Confessit and declarit furth of the mouth of the said JANET BRED[HEID,] in all and be all thingis as is abow sett downe, I, the said JOHNE INNES, Notar Publict, haw writtine thir presentis, and with THE WITNESSES abownamet, in farder testimonie and witnessing of the premiffes to be of veritie, We haw subscryuit the samen with our handis, [day, month,] yeir, and place abow specifeit.

JOANNES INNES, *Notarius Publicus*.<sup>14</sup>

HEW ROSE, Minister at Nairne, Attestis thir premiffes, confessed in my presence, Aprile 15, 1662.

MR HARY FORBES, Minister of the Gospel at Old Earn, Attestis.

ARCHIBALD DUNBAR, witness, Attestis. W. SUTHERLAND off Kinsterie, Attestis the premiffes.

[JOHNE WE]IR, in Alderne, Attestis; Confessed in my presence, Apryll 15, 1662.

J. COUPER, Attestes. W. CHALMER, witness to the premiffes, confest in my presentis, 15 of Apryll.

HEW HAY Attestes the premiffes, Confest 15 Apryll, 1662.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ever; constantly.

<sup>2</sup> Touch.

<sup>3</sup> Boils.

<sup>4</sup> Heirless.

<sup>5</sup> For Witchcraft.

<sup>6</sup> At the

instigation of. <sup>7</sup> Earthen jug, or jar. <sup>8</sup> The Roon, or HOLY-CROSS, well. <sup>9</sup> The present Laird's

male children. The last two Lairds are stated to have been destroyed by the charmed bag. <sup>10</sup> Got parched, or

shrivelled; *shrunk*. <sup>11</sup> Bake. <sup>12</sup> Every alternate day, until that child died. <sup>13</sup> Stirred. <sup>14</sup> The

long Latin docquet is annexed. <sup>15</sup> Some farther marking had at one time been on the margin; but only a few

of the letters at the end of each line now remain. It appears to have been the Judgment of the Justice-depute, from a fragment of a Memorandum on the back of the CONFESSION; so that it is probable she had been tried at one of the

'JUSTICE-AIRS'—and of course would, on her own Confession, be condemned to be burnt.