

**Chiliad**[[1]](#footnote-2)**, op. 2**[[2]](#footnote-3)

by

Simon Otius



Day One

1450-1839

being the first book

of

The Vouchsafe Decalogy

no…

To avoid giving the impression, – most particularly here at the very gatehouse of this, for the most part, linear narrating of what is believed a remarkable enough history, one that may, — making its slow but inexorable way to credit, — challenge the very tenets not only of traditional biography, but of the whole Western canon of literature, – that words, – generally believed good-fellows, merry men nearly all, – are already right eager, by building a labyrinth of intricable mystery, to confound the unwary reader at the very onset : it will prove immediately useful if a few, simple, but important facts, concerning the family Troke, and its seat, are first supplied.

With the average age at death but 46 years, and with the 110 marriages covered by this history supplying an average of only three offspring per, – of which males constitute fractionally less than half this number, – it may appear, with the application of only a little thought, that in the course of their final 17 generations, – averaging each almost 30 years, – that Trokes have proven a people neither long-lifed nor overly fertile; indeed, when it is further learned that since 1450, – such as happened before this date. — with occasional exception, — requiring here no rescue by record, – there have occurred, in this devoted, for the most part happy, extraordinarily talented, close-knit family, 38 parricides[[3]](#footnote-4), 12 suicides, 31 deaths by accident, and at the very least 17 assassinations, – these by an enemy, known futurely, — because a defining instance : italicised, — as the *Inimicus*, — which means personal enemy, foe, or opponent, — who periodically sought, perhaps seek still, by thwarting their *quest*, — soon to be explained, — to deny Trokes their purposed passage, – then it may come as something of a surprise to learn that in the 500 years preceding this time that is right here and now, there have lived, in whole, 325 persons, – this includes the 40 persons, legitimately surstyled[[4]](#footnote-5) Troke, now living, – every one of whom, even characters enclitic[[5]](#footnote-6), shall shortly be placed under the optic of words,

of which of their finiteness oh an infinite use will here be made, and of whose government and peace, it is said as true, there should be none end,

– which, it would do well to not forget, suffer, as they see pat[[6]](#footnote-7), from both micropsia[[7]](#footnote-8) and macropsia[[8]](#footnote-9), – for inspection.

But before this history properly commences,

meeting first illustrious Troke forebear Lemuel, then by swiftly enough following his solitary tenuous branch, – for 181 years represented by a succession of single transmitters, – coming to 1770, when with fortune and family numbers at last a little grown, the hitherto landless Trokes, – never before standing upon his own land, but always upon the land of another, or of others, or of nobody, – found relative safety within the stately walls of *Troke Manor*, – wherefrom will then unroll 230 years of comfortable, at times even idyllic, but nevertheless statocratic[[9]](#footnote-10) residency, – and then less hastely unto 1835, when incident will become sufficiently marvellous to deserve, — if with an ever decreasing degree of tellability, — a far closer accounting, – and so on to now,

a few word will now be employed to describe the place wherefrom this narrative has its source, wherein the main thrusts of events are centred, and wherewith lies the mainest matter with which words will have greatly to do : the family quest.

Though Troke Manor, – an excellent example of well-building satisfying the three principal architectural conditions of years agone : convenience, firmness, and delite✓, – may now appear a little untrimmed, unpainted, unpolished, and, if still in very excellent repair, a bit overall of an eye-sorrow, – also so large and hushed, as has no doubt been noted, as to appear utterly unpeopled, – it will be timely to supply a few, – condensed, edited, and, — to relieve the need for a yard of footnote to supply an inch of text, — therefore much edited, – extracts from a diary of antecedent Samuel Mortimer Troke, (fl.[[10]](#footnote-11) 1794-1864), a man to whom Nature,

concerning which it is to the present point to note the following : as there may later come to seem some discrepancy of meaning regarding certain words, – due in part to a lexicographical confusion suffered by the final *Vouchsafe* in 1943, as may or may not be one day far less exactly explained, – the precaution of an occasional clarification, such as this, will surely not be amiss,

believed by many imbued with a sense of consciousness, will, intelligence, awareness, and intent, and in any amount one likes provided consciousness is taken to mean the property necessary to process information, – but here always taken to mean the immense assemblage of beings, various matter,

the properties of which were long ago believed to be : extent, divisibility, impenetrability, figure, and mobility,

infinite combinations, and diversified motions, that man about him beholds, – hath gifted the most shining endowments, but alas, – because, after all, she does not place perfection in her works without some bounds and restrictions, – not absolutely purely, nor completely without alloy; as much in the immensity of existence, as in the far greater of his imagination, Samuel believed that man shined only in speech, and because, as he further believed : to speak truth was the same as to see it, for truth, – so rare as to be always pleasant to come upon, – even in its ugliest mask, could be made far less hideous when properly detained in written words, or by.

Whilst it will soon become evident that this very history suffers faults, probably many,

such as split constructions[[11]](#footnote-12), split infinitives[[12]](#footnote-13), dangling modifiers[[13]](#footnote-14), shifts of tense, person, number, voice, mood, and point of view, a too profuse use of the *not un-* formation, – which Orwell wisheth to see laughed out of existence, – and the disjunctive conjunction : *though*, the too uneven use of the grammatical homonym, *that*, – not as an adjective, a pronoun, or an adverb, but as a parenthetical conjunction, – the…

the faults committed by Samuel were of far broader sweep, particularly when it is learned that in aspiring always for figurative richness, for splendid harmonies, – for all his life, writing as if with both hands, he sought that beautiful style through which, he believed, alone should life,

taken here to mean, — in all its five kingdoms : *monera, protista, fungi, plantae,* and *animalia*, — the total of functions which resist death,

be suffered to find expression, – he was utterly unaware, pumping his inkhorn dry, that he drizzled out sentences full of unnecessary prepositions,

defined as a positioning word, such as at, by, for, into, off, on, out, over, to, under, up, with, &c, – spelt also etc, — but not here, — short for *et cetera*, meaning : and others of the same kind, –

and adverbs,

defined as a word that modifies something other than a noun, such as may, for example, indicate number : *once*, *twice*, *thrice*, or order : *firstly*, *secondly*, *thirdly*, or place or direction : *where*, *whence*, *elsewhere*, or time : *ever*, *immediately*, *now*, or quantity : *much*, *little*, *enough*, or manner or quality : *little*, *enough*, *some*, or doubt : *perhaps*, *possibly*, *peradventure*, or affirmation : *verily*, *yea*, *truly*, or negation : *nay*, *no*, *not*, or interrogation : *how*, *why*, *when*, or comparison : *more*, *most*, *better*, or degree : *very*, *almost*, *nearly*, or manner, such as : *thus*…

and Addisonian terminations[[14]](#footnote-15), Saxon infinitives, adnouns[[15]](#footnote-16), kenning[[16]](#footnote-17), &c.

Were all this all, there were almost no too great hurt in it, for it is thought well for language,

taken here to mean an apparatus of symbols, – believed, ha!, to be the limit, the very restraint, of thought, – for the conveyance of, for the expression of, feeling,

that there be those who, complexionally propense to wild innovation, are very much, even overmuch, disposed unto imagination,

believed a substance of so unknown nature, yet so simple, so indivisible, so deprived of both limit and extent, and so very invisible, – therefore impossible to be discovered by even the greatest minds, – that its parts cannot be separated, even by abstraction of thought,

rather than to the senses, but oh his overuse of elision[[17]](#footnote-18), of prosopopeia[[18]](#footnote-19), and, – too monstrously, – of those symbols once used to represent a restful pause, – but to Samuel meaning : *read on*, – known then as a dog's bollocks[[19]](#footnote-20), as well use annoyingly of !?, to express exasperation, and of !!!, to express emphasis, as well everywhere for brevity avoiding the indefinite[[20]](#footnote-21) and definite[[21]](#footnote-22) article, &c, – or, in other, far calmer words, simpler words : employing overmuch the still instead of the simple pot.

All this caused the diarial writings of Samuel, – which, be it said, if rhapsodic of incoherence, were never insincere, – to appear so hideously uneven, – suffering in one place to be far too arduous[[22]](#footnote-23), in the near next far too lustless[[23]](#footnote-24), – that such a style could not but cause pain to those in the family who firmly believed that not only was English,

coming mainly from two sources : the Saxon, – of nerve, vigour, honesty, manliness, and toil, – through Saxon invaders, and the Latin, – either directly, or through French, supplying vehicles of abstract thought, and science, – through Norman invaders,

the strongest, the richest, the most elegant, of all the languages of the world,

over 600 languages, it is said, with over 100 language families,

but the most susceptible of sublime imagery, for as will soon be seen : *nihil est tam incredibile quod non dicendo fiat probabile*[[24]](#footnote-25).

So, beginning often calmly enough, but soon falling in the way of his creative passions, which, rolling over him in ecstatic waves, caused him, he Samuel, – surging under so full a sail of words, alas leaving his sense fast aground, – to commence capitaling nouns, verbs, and adverbs, then to twist, as well out of his own engine, conceits out of Latin and French,

for whatever need be delicate, gay, amusing, and vacuous, no language is so copious as the French,

then, with his fancy so wildly stirred, commencing to rebelieve oh two very great delusions,

defined as the sustaining of false beliefs despite clear evidence to the contrary,

the first delusion : that by the help alone of language,

the primary function of which, as Hobbes saith, is to help man remember his own experiences,

man could communicate *all* that passed in his mind, the second delusion : that it was outright dangerous to entertain as merely a fanciful suspicion that man has far more affinity to language than to Nature, to reality,

taken not only to mean the quality possessed by something that is real, but by all experiences that determine how things *appear* to be real,

his style was soon such that, giving to his words a loose far more extravagant than to the affairs described, – as if to teach his mother tongue such lusty gambols as to make the gallantest French, Italian, or Spanish to blush for shame, – it became in places like the dreams of a sick man : varied all shapes, mixed all extremes.

In the deeper particulars it surely concerns this history to learn that many of the family, – not only during the 70 long years of his lifetime, but in the eternity of his diaries, and journals, – believed it unnatural, somehow base, even obscenely so, that he who, with pen in hand, failed utterly to make proper connections between words and ideas, was graceful and easy of conversation, fluent and agreeable of delivery, particularly in the lectures of his early years, in his middle years, however, when going before the gathered family to speak his orations,

clearly in his face determined that nothing would escape his mouth but that he had considered of it before deeply whether it would serve the purpose of the matter he treated on, or serve it not,

unless either his spectacle were appropriated, or his mad notes, then his audience, – once of 50 persons, – soon withered to almost nothing.

Despite entertainingly informative in the family circle, in reading aloud ready and natural of utterance, in lecture rarely a plagiary, he delivered, unscripted and aloud, very handsomely his very own sentiments, ah, but he could never, – not even briefly, neither here nor there, not even once a year, no, not for the life of him!, – show a pure simple style in his written compositions!, which, – despite in all matters else of politeness,

taken to mean freedom from all indelicacy, awkwardness, and roughness,

good breeding,

taken to mean a respectful carriage toward others, accompanied with ease and courtesy,

&c, – were publicly announced to the house as soon as he had writ as many pages as his latest wildness of fancy would permit, for never a man threw up his pen under stronger temptations to employ it far longer; ah, such a misuse of words, such a waste!

So, with some very necessary editing with a blue pencil, with excisions indicated by the loud suspension points[[25]](#footnote-26),

whose other duty it is to bring scattered passages into juxtaposition,

and all other faults,

such as came for instance of his delighting to ignore the recency of the virtue that spelling should be uniform,

quietly corrected : coming a none too brief periegesis[[26]](#footnote-27), – a far too rhapsodic celebration of the county, its long eventful history, its climatal reliability, including descriptions various of its scenery, all in such manner as to maketh a man to wonder if anything surpasseth in wearisomeness, – and with numerous asides to fustigate[[27]](#footnote-28) the quality of the roads, the government, the neighbour people, and most particularly the failings of the everso✓ many servants, and continuing with all the affectations of archaic spelling, yet dispensing with all unnecessary capitalising, Samuel at last states :

Although Troke Manor, – because often-own'd & often-nam'd, known locally & ƒimply as Ye Hall, – was rear'd between ye yrs An° 1589 & 1591 by a mā vnrecorded,… it is nevertheleƒs clear yt ye architect, (yet by no means dociled vnder ye phanƒy of their avthority), greatly admir'd ye Smythƒons, Rob. (1536-1614), deƒigner of Longleat jn Wiltƒhire, Woolaton Hall jn ye ƒhire of Nottingham, & Wootton Lodge jn Staffordƒhire, & his son Joh. (1567-1634), deƒigner of eccentric Bolƒover Caƒtle jn Derbyƒhire….

Seventeen pages farther into his Imperial 8vo[[28]](#footnote-29) journal, – and, quite in accordance with current scholarly editorial procedures, dispensing with firstly what nearly was vanished from typography by 1820 : the *ƒ* : the long, or medial, or descending *s*, which to his credit Samuel never used improperly,

such as at the end of a word, before an apostrophe, or after the letter f, nor before b and mostly k, – though it is true : husband was first huƒband, and skin was first ƒkin, – and not to be confused of course, this long s, with *∫* : the integral symbol used in calculus, nor with the glyph called an esh used in the *International Phonetic Alphabet*, – in which it represents the voiceless postalveolar fricative, – nor with the abbreviation used to denote shilling, where *ƒ* evolved into a forward-leaning slash,

and lastly : expanding the brevigraph, – which is a single symbol that represents two or more letters in a word, or an abbreviation comprising a special symbol or mark, — by changing *&* to and, — once used in printing to better facilitate the right-justification of text, – Samuel goes on to say :

Whout appearing castellar, yet by clearly reflecting both ye Jacobean & Artisan Mannerism p:iods[[29]](#footnote-30) of architectvry, almost eagerly anticipating ye works of Inigo Jones, (1573-1652), Troke Manor, approach'd of covrse frō dve east, whence cometh ye svn frō his chambers, immediately prsenting ye eye wth a large, solid & oblongly covntenance, wch looking not too asqvint vpō a stranger, stands as strong, as defensible, as little svbject to concvssion, or combvstion, as might be… by employing a contemplative inspection… 'tis soon clear yt there is a distinct sense of provd yet qvietly classical gravitas[[30]](#footnote-31) jn ye way jn wch ys sizeable astylar[[31]](#footnote-32) three-storey strvctvre stands provd vpō its rvsticated[[32]](#footnote-33) fovndations… Closer still ye feeling of grandevr, particvlarly jn ye scrvtinant light of early 8ber[[33]](#footnote-34), gently svpplant'd by a sense of serenitvde & secvrity, confirms indeed yt he yt bvilds a fair hovse,… bvt vpō an ill seat,… committeth hisself to… prison… Vpō entering ye main hallway, standing for bvt a momt to admire ye elliptically & intricately carv'd panell'd ceiling…, &c.

Dispensing next with the interchangeability of *i* and *j*, and *u* and *v*,

commonly *i* was used for a vowel, *j* for a consonant, *v* at the start of a word, *u* medially, or else to denote the vowel, as *v* denotes a consonant,

Samuel later states :

Its posture[[34]](#footnote-35) goodly, its seat far frō ye foggy noisomeness[[35]](#footnote-36) of fens & marshes, this, or[[36]](#footnote-37) home, neither indigest'd for want of sun, nor unexercis'd for want of wind, is set far frō malign influences, wch wd, vizt[[37]](#footnote-38), give rise to earthquakes, contagions, prodigious births, plagues, swarms of hurtful creatures, scarcity, tempest, inundations, portentive comets,

otherwise of sound grammar, – or the art of rightly expressing, – even a respectable enough punctuist,

here quickly noting that it was almost never in them, – Trokes with themselves, far more rarely with their yearly garden-party guests, – to argue a point of punctuation, for with their constant work-outs with language, to do so with such twerps would be as a scoundrel retreated mewling to his last refuge,

Samuel here commits what is believed the fault of omitting the connective : *and*,

diverse other things, Troke Manor stands furthest frõ both great neighbours & ye unruly barracking of ye volge[[38]](#footnote-39)… overall its design is kindly : all stone is frō ye same quarry, all timber frō ye same forest… every room is spacious & high-roofed, particularly ye library, where one can fatten his muse upon ye rich common of ye ancients…, ye staircases are well belight'd against adventure[[39]](#footnote-40)…, ye windows, which large & many, ye better to welcome ye infant beams of morning before they are of strength to do harm, offer vast, indefinite, & medley views….

Dispensing next with the two methods of abbreviation, – not be confused with acronyms or initialisms[[40]](#footnote-41), –

once used also in printing to better facilitate justifying a too tight line,

the first : contractions, – which, supplied by superscript, indicate the omission of medial letters, – and the last : suspensions, – which, by a tilde or other sign placed above vowels, indicate the omission of say the nasal consonants *m* or *n*; editing next the omission of terminal letters,

as in *-tion* or *-cion* endings, replacing the *i* after *t* or *c*, and in words ending in ‑ment, such as was once spelt *gouernemt*,

these shall be silently corrected[[41]](#footnote-42) : so that, – and all this may seem a hard sentence to hold onto, – with the superscript lowered, the contractions expanded, and the missing letters supplied, together with the fossil thorn replaced by *th*, Samuel, – at last rendered half-readable, of the immediate grounds, writeth on this wise :

Acknowledging of course that description cannot possibly represent such things with the same pleasure and advantage as they are seen upon the place…, despite its artifice giving easy opportunity for retirement and contemplation…, conducing to the obtaining of cheerful tranquillity of mind and to the preservation of a temper of body sufficient to bear up under the crosses and disappointments, the vexations and troubles, which do necessarily attend all conditions of life…, the magic of the bowery garden, – which, with art chiefly engaging admiration, here Nature with all her subtlety steals the whole eye, and there Nature and art contend handfast for applause, – by contriving to elevate menfolk to that agreeable pitch of melancholy so conducive to enhasting hope to an assurance, and in women to that faintishness sufficient to encourage love catch hold of all their inward parts…, cometh all of a delicate balance 'tween naturalness and spontaneity, and whilst richly feeding both the eyes, neither starves taste nor smell, nor hearing nor touch.

There then following, in magniloquous[[42]](#footnote-43) style, a description of the chief elevation of the manor : the belvedere, which is a tower or loggia for enjoying view, also called a campanile, or a bell- or clock-tower,

which might well have occasioned opportunity to explain briefly : *ye*, *yt*, *ys*, *yrs*, &c : that in the earliest days of English typesetting, – with the type, even the typesetters, coming from all over Europe where the letter *y* was not yet in their lettercases, – to best address the handwritten manuscripts of the day, the thorn, – *Þ*, and *þ*, — capital and lowercase, — predecessor to the modern digraph, the unvoiced fricative : th, – was used as looking most like,

but alas, having arrived at a semi-diplomatic transcription[[43]](#footnote-44), this for the present shall be quite enough.

Addressing next, regarding the reading of this saga, two possible concerns, which, if not already risen, may soon : that the sentences here are too hard to follow : too multi-layered, and, – perhaps too annoyingly, – too full of subordinate clauses, digressions, and interruptions, &c,

all of which it has been wrongly said nothing affords a clearer demonstration of the incapacity of an author to embody thoughts in intelligible language,

these two brief responses : the first is that such simply must be forborn, for as futile as objection to a cast of facial features,

of which there are supposedly eight : face, eyes, nose, ears, mouth, teeth, chin, and hair,

is objection to the cast of language, and the second concern, the parenthetic-like asides, Words, their brief explanation?

Aye, ignoring the bolded dialogue dash soon upcoming, but regarding very closely these three sizes of parenthetical dashes, – each spaced before and after, and not as Shakespeare used, the horridly named commash, or comma dash, with no spaces between, – with two sorts already come upon, and which are plainly not hyphens, for they connect nothing, rather they interplay, clarify, and sometimes intrusive seem, even interrupt, – it is important, to aid a clear understanding, as well acquire a famiarising, – perhaps even a savouring, – to learn their ranking, their order : now, the most ofted parenthetical dash, not small but the smallest, would be represented, out in the world, by a left round bracket or simple parenthesis, the second parenthetical dash, less used, longer, represents a left square or box bracket, and finally the third and final, a quite long parenthetical dash, rarest used, represents a left curly or brace bracket; so : instead worldly round nesting square nesting curly brackets, here are small, nesting middle, nesting large dashes, simple!, and then of course, out there, the right closing brackets, – for here the mirrored are always unfailingly in paired balance, - firstly, innermost, consummating the left, a right curly brace, then, next, to the left square bracket, in a more distant partnering, answering a right, and lastly, afar parted to the left round bracket, hails a right, but in the Troke world, – where always dashers far outnumbered bracketers, – a small dashes nests a middle dash which nests a large dash, good!

Regarding the second concern : that here is also found that which further renders a work difficult, trying, and therewithall favourless to perseverance, to understanding, even summoning in a too nice nostril a suspicion of mannerism : the use here of archaic, rare, obsolete, provincial, colloquial, slang, cant, foreign, obscene, lately coined words, Latin phrases, even, it may be, hyphenic and gratuitous hippopotomonstrosesquipedalia[[44]](#footnote-45), this response : giving to such words and expressions as so long retired have even been driven from every last corner of literature, from so many a dictionary, it is believed such forgottens have surely the very earnéd right of occupying one last place, one *final* footnoted fastness; that stated, it is never here the intent that *every* common word be supplanted by a rare, every short by a long, every modern by an ancient, every known by an unknown, every useful by a useless, nor every living by a corpse, – or if so : then only each once, – it needs immediately to be clearly understood this : that in the very vital matter of telling a so marvellous tale full out, without it stumble and fall, requires the daringmost logopandocie[[45]](#footnote-46);

listen : whereas an average English word is four letters and a bit over a half in length, – exactly as saith Mark Twain in 1907, – the average is here raised, – or will be so raised in the much using of words unknown, long, ancient, and new, &c, – barely at all : to words under fiveish letters in length.

Next, before wading any further deeper, a note of warning must be given : if a happy and, despite its promised remarkableness, a simple tale is anticipated, then it would be best to begear[[46]](#footnote-47) for disappointment, perhaps even of a most grievous sort, for when an ordinary oblite[[47]](#footnote-48) man, such as Lemuel Troke, – a man who in another, untouched world, with no single action to merit any remembrance, would be destined either for perfect obscurity, or, at best, brief local renown as an example of luckless humanity from which all should beware to take no sad infection, – suddenly, in late life, elevated to an unequalled but secret celebrity, is ordained to firmly set all his hopes[[48]](#footnote-49) upon a long path of sure straight but dangerous route, and of utterly unknown outcome, – certain the way, but unknown to where, – then it cannot witherwise[[49]](#footnote-50) be than certain sure that the journey, as well advancement and fortune, – exampled in the production of at least three family genii[[50]](#footnote-51),

taken to mean, and wrongly : individuals in whom the inheritance of the whole human race is vested,

– will suffer setback and disaster, as will be exampled in the feast of misrule by a Vouchsafe called Ursula, of whom, in all this work, none, – not even that spaz called Malcolm, – will be baselier reported of.

Now, as the commencement of any considerable undertaking, – at least until the road ceases winding, the traces slacken, – can sometimes prove a hectic, wayward, even tiring affair,

for as much as the end, it is said, the beginning of a work is so notoriously difficult to handle successfully, it can make it or break it,

it is asked that eyes and mind exercise that strength of patience for which in man they are occasionally renowned, – particularly should here or there a dull passage be encountered, or one requiring closer than casual scansion[[51]](#footnote-52), – for if judgement will but hold itself in suspense till it has run through some of the rest that ensue, what may seem dark at the first will afterward be found far more plain; also : it is believed that a good gentle reader,

if that kind being still breathes, and is not yet too overtaken by those pathetic matters that so absorb contemporary literary theory : data oriented parsing[[52]](#footnote-53), referential illusion, intertextual production, the equivocal nature of meaning, &c,

will find this *saga*,

though this word is now in an advanced stage of corruption, at least here saga is taken to mean a full tale of adventure and heroic deeds, incorporating all the supposedly seven plot types, – rags to riches, comedy, tragedy, rebirth, quest, voyage and return, and overcoming the monster, – as well probably all the archetypes[[53]](#footnote-54), and even material of interest to a symbologist, to a philosopher, to a poet, &c,

mighty paying for the trouble of the closest possible reading.

Two further points, or rather three : in first place the first : considering long process of time doth utterly obscure the truth of matters done in former times, it is so hard a trouble to come to the perfect knowledge of the truth of ancient things by only monuments and ruins and by the writings of historiographers and historiasters[[54]](#footnote-55); because theory and fiction, – the weapons of reason and imagination, – battle constantly over the faded deeds to the human past, the perfect historian, it is said, – of which human history has produced not an one, – to make up for any shortfall of that vividness, – which, if not presence, then a fuller supply of facts would so easily help to remedy, – must possess an ingenuity sufficiently powerful to ensure the narrative, – introducing nothing superfluous, save that from which a little can be scraped off to relieve dearth, – be affecting, and the actors, – omitting none necessary, – be picturesque; that this qualification in no manner applies to the present history shall prove no impossible claim when it is hereupon avouched, – and upon request can be proven, – that every fact, almost every word, can be authenticated, not alone by abounding testimony, but by evidence ample enough for belief by the highest court, for here, – unlike narrators oldest, who, ashamed to bring in anything below prodigy and miracle, stuffed their farces with gorgons and enchanted islands, – by setting only down things seen as seen, heard as heard, and done as done, shall be found only truth : aye, not that which is *judged* to have happened, but shall be found here only that which *did* happen, and was *seen* very precisely to happen.

In second place the second point : whereas the dramatist, seduced from truth by imagination,

taken to mean that faculty by which, of non-actual possibilities, man acquires knowledge,

gathers up from out his mind,

taken for convenience to mean that which encompasses all aspects of rationality, – such as : understanding, intellect, conception, abstraction, and reasoning, – as well all the cognitive skills of perception and insight, for it is alas still believed that though the vegetative comprises plants, animals, and man, and the sensitive comprises animals and man, the rational comprises only man alone,

such wonders of colour and light as his fancy can throw out, – and for which manifold other fancies delight to fiercely hunger, – the historian, – by handling with unpretending clearness and succinctness, and disposing by skilful selection, only truth, – runs the risk, – should his style be of the utmost affectedness of precision of a gazette, – of producing a monochroic[[55]](#footnote-56) work of unremitting dryness; this aridity to overcome, – because after all the acts or events of true history cannot have *all* that magnitude with which to satisfy the mind of *all* man, – use is made of poesy to feign acts and events, and to paint characters greater, more heroical; however, due to the sensational nature of the Troke material, xerosis[[56]](#footnote-57) cannot possibly be the condition or the fate of the present history.

In third and final place this third and final point : though it was once said by one that went for wise that an honest tale speeds best when plainly told,

without the unnaturalness of big words, fustian phrases, jingling terms, foppish tropes, strong lines, strains of wit, brave heats, braver eulogies, hyperbolical embellishments, effeminate elegancies…

it is believed, by employing patience,

the while anticipating of course that a call may occasionally be made for more punctual narration[[57]](#footnote-58), and then later, perhaps, with even greater volume, for some blesséd commatism[[58]](#footnote-59)!, oh less stain!, less enamel!,

that this history will slowly create the taste by which, – if not long before, then surely by its end, – it is to be relished; aye, it is not impossible to imagine, – nothing is this!, – that should this work, – impossible!, yet somehow, – reach unto the public, unto publication, a not too unfavourable opinion might, in time, slowly, present, not of course by he the common penny-a-line reviewer of fiction used to handing books of the hour as casually as is deserved,

the reading of which, as with any books bringing but a vain and unprofitable pleasure, is justly misliked by wise and grave men, as saith Amyot,

giving only of the plot, the price, the publisher, and nor by he : perhaps in an obscure article of no marvel of learning or penetration, of no brilliancy, but, – as if repaying say an uncongenial intimacy with the author, – rather of malevolence, by seeking corruptions, misinterpreting the text, sticks at no falsehood, no absurdity which in its worse whoredom an angry pen will readily consent to trace upon paper, and nor even by he : perhaps a man once said of promise, of vast energy, of vigorous intelligence, but alas of unripe judgement, therefore of faulty scholarship : in the hope of telling truth, in the belief of talking sense, he tells many falsehoods, talks much nonsense, as Housman complaineth, but rather an opinion by he : *he* : a true lover of words, of literature, – perhaps a renowned scholar possessed not only of a long, just, learnéd perception, and of experience won by deep study of 5,000 books, but also of rare mother wit, – who, – perhaps even in a book-length study, – by strict, piecemeal dissection, by careful analytical evaluation, by employing terms, – deplorably intellectual, perhaps, but believed the crown and summit of literary scholarship, – so necessary in in-depth textual criticism[[59]](#footnote-60), labouring long, even for months, employing uncommon exactness and sobriety, the most arresting ingenuity and penetration, in summation will pronounce fairly,

fairly meaning here : not of appearance, nor neatly, nor respectfully, nor fitly, and not distinctly, not completely, and not passably, but by lawful, legitimate, not by foully, means,

upon what, for all its faults, was certainly an *effort* of merit, that, aye : the writing was therefore overall deserving the exertion of a reading, worthy at least of the time.

Before commencing, one small point regarding grammar,

the laws of which, in the pursuit of a higher objective, are often more honoured in their breach than in their observance, for why alone poets?, why should not writers of prose be also waywardly carried by the sheer intellectual engagement that style can offer,

grammar, syntax, and spelling : whilst in places an error might be construed, but whereafter a superscripted tick denotes it no error, but intention, historical precedence, any errors that *may* seem apparent, whether contradictious of fact or of chronology, or smaller of grammar or of syntax, or even tiny of spelling or definition, – all of which can sometimes arise of that oversight occasioned by urgency, or by the pressure of time, or by creative excitement, or by fatigue, – it would be appreciated if these were immediately brought to notice; a further point : regarding the plus or minus sign, – thus : ±, – which occasionally terminates a word, – and indicating roughly, or more or less, or thereabouts, – is intended to add a little doubt or dilution to not maybe quite a truth outright, or to take from accuracy and precision some unpleasant or annoying sharpness, or to tame the often seemingly too high certitude of Vouchsafedom.

One tiny point more : unless clearly not, of course : by *he* is meant also *she*, by him her, by man woman, by men women, as much the masculine women as for the muscleless men,

and if one dare maketh here protest, let this answer then come : why, why at the dying of an agelong convention that the masculine included the feminine, have words always thwarted man his coining of an epicene[[60]](#footnote-61) pronoun?, such as say the singular : *ou*, as Marshall recorded in 1789;

another further very quick note : it has been said that by its style alone will posterity judge of a work, for with facts, scientific discoveries, indeed with information of its every kind available and seizable by all, – save of course, even vaguely, who and what is he that seizes, – no author, – how writerly soever, – can have anything truly of his own to say : now, however true this may be in the main, – actually, this is almost wholly true, – this cannot be true of the work about to be commenced, for here, – with aid assured of figurative construction[[61]](#footnote-62), – shall be found new truths, new discoveries : information formerly beyond all human handhold.

Two very final advises better here than later, than nowhere : regarding what might soon be viewed as very oddly literary or linguistic affectations, – a subject which occasion may elsewhere present, perhaps at the end, to look into more fully, – such as, very briefly, spelling certain words in a certain way, for examples : fœtus fetus, – for which there is anyway no etymological basis : the origin of the word lays in the Latin *fetus*, – spatial spacial, font fount, spelling trouser in the true singular, and seeming to pluralise the already plural : sheeps and cattles, &c : such is all simply habit, conformation to the in-house style, to family tradition, to the Troke way, for which, with none necessary, no apology is offered; the second advise, and *most* importantly, because hesitantly : regarding *lapses*, or the abrupt silences and therefore discontinuities of manuscript transmission, – the causes whereof will be broached in good time, – which with increasing frequence will, alas, unavoidably occur in the relating of this saga : due to the impossibility of predicting such lapses, – for if the unforeseen could be foreseen, it would not be unforeseen, – rather than offering an apology,

as is practiced with the television, when, the programme suddenly halting, appears a message stating that due to unforeseen difficulties normal services will resume assoon[[62]](#footnote-63), supplying then for the tired eyes a geometry, or a piece of sunset, seascape, landscape pleasantry, for the tired ears music tranquillising,

another, not unrelated, not unconnected, writing,

a very varied selection of which have been laid aside for exactly such eventualities,

will, with brief caveat or none, be substituted, such as an interesting paragraph, or an informative page, from a deeply researched monograph, – which is a treatise on a single object, or class of objects, – by genius Henry, or a remarkable short story by the more remarkable Hilary, or a quote from a journal or diary, &c, the which, it is to be hoped, will not result in that horror of too great unevenness of quality which all art, to maintain itself true and pure, endeavours to preserve itself exempt; very well; questions?, no?, then l*ector, intende: laetaberis*[[63]](#footnote-64).

1450

It would be expected, indeed proper, here at *incipit diem primus*[[64]](#footnote-65) embarking upon this 500 year history, to begin with the midnight vision of Troke forefather Lemuel, aye, but it will be rather his birth and his late marriage which will serve as a brief introduct, a leading in; so : in March 1450,

the year it is awrongly said that a gem-cutter and engraver, one John Gänsfleisch, or Johannes Gensfleisch zur Laden zum Gutenberg, in the German city of Mainz, launched upon the art of printing with movable type,

in a land called England, one Lemuel Troke became *anecius*[[65]](#footnote-66) to the sturdy new wife, Elowen, of a poor shoemaker, in the small quiet settlement of Bicknoller, distanced three miles straight and a half from the village of Watchet, itself situated on the north coast of the pointy, south-west corner of England, which is to say : in the county of what is at this day called Somersetshire, – located between on the east Wiltshire, on the south Dorsetshire, on the west Devonshire, and on the north partly by Gloucestershire, partly by the huge seas of the Bristol Channel, which north-eastward is fed by the river Severn, – and wherefrom on a clear day, to any who raised their eyes from toil, the south coast of *Britannia Secunda*[[66]](#footnote-67) was sometimes aspectable[[67]](#footnote-68).

As his childhood was no more mean, nor more miserable, than was common for the time then present, nor than was expected any more eventful in shaping his dour nature, words need not waste theirself✓ rendering his character otherways than moderately shallow-drawn, for if the strict confines of time and space are not to be breached,

for as this history aims at a complete, but not at an exhaustive, telling, no attention, or none unnecessary, will be given to individual shape, make, and features,

the historian must far overtop the portraitist in rendering, even the very roundest of personalities, somewhat platly[[68]](#footnote-69); to this honest boy soonest working beside his father at their little premises, – for name-son[[69]](#footnote-70) Lemuel of course inherited the art of gentle-craft[[70]](#footnote-71), – brothers and sisters arrived at nearly yearly intervals; in 1478 it fell upon eldest Lemuel the burden of supporting a family comprising at that time his starblind[[71]](#footnote-72) father, – whomto even felth[[72]](#footnote-73) had begun to fail, – his aildy[[73]](#footnote-74) mother, his younger brothers, of which three were then surviving, and his unmarried sisters, three also in number; in 1489 at the age of 39 bachelor Lemuel took upon himself the trouble and cost of the simple funeral of his father, and two years later that of his mother.

This year of gracelessness 1497 was a time newly of great uncertainty for Lemuel, age 47, for he had commenced to be no longer absolutely sure that he would, one day, somehow, father a son, – exactly as Trokes always before, for they must, early or late, it was inevitable, it was the Troke way, part of the plot, – oh that such a foolishness should beset him, the very idea that a Troke could die sonless, the very suggestion that a sole begetter, if he were sterile, would not live forever, nay! : so fear not for Lemuel, he will indeed, he must, he shall, inevitably, one day, – for it has been the way always with Trokes, – even late, death late, be made to know that henceforth, completed, he may die if he wishes, for due to recent action goodly taken, to latest report lieless received, a woman, whether wife or another, will soon enough birth his hale son.

Now it came to pass that this alone but not lonely Lemuel, occasional noctivagator[[74]](#footnote-75), coming by the moonlit wayside upon a weeping perfricate[[75]](#footnote-76) young woman named Ann Mercy Cotterel,

thrust, poor girl, out of door because dishonested by a member of the simplest most primitive trade of life, a shepherd, who, hearing some fellow had got up her belly, was absconded with his flock unseasonably away,

Lemuel kindly offered her the shelter of his cottage in which he now lived alone, and she, – poor and proud : she had nothing, accepted nothing, but nothing having, nothing could lose, – shyly accepted; come a week more, growing more sympathetic toward this honest young woman whom Nature had neglected to use all her skill in forming, understanding that her bastard would be needful soon of a father, offering then to marry her, Ann was too beholden to refuse.

After first glowering at them over his tiny double eyeglasses, – Lemuel standing not at her right side, but Ann at his left, – the minister, of name Hector Gofirst,

whom his anger he called professional zeal, his pride the dignity due to his office, and his passions sins merely of weakness,

of thin spare habits of body,

a man who believed that to even slightly indulge the most basic human appetites was to risk becoming a glutton, a drunkard, and a voluptuary,

and of a raw, vain, uncertain, very wary inclination,

despite without a friend upon earth famed in his sermons as much upon account of the disagreeable manner in which they were delivered, as for allowing often a good word to pass unregarded, and, from the contrary reason, insisting that an indifferent be applauded,

raising his eyen✓ both and his long thin neb[[76]](#footnote-77) to the age-blackened rafters of the old Saxon church, – mainly the better not to see so large a balloon of belly almost up to her mouth, – in mumbling, quite incomprehensible Low Latin, called also Medieval or Middle Latin, hurried his service along; his long white hands, first gowpen[[77]](#footnote-78), as if offering yespen[[78]](#footnote-79) forgiveness, – for pardon, too, is condemnation, – became then dactilion[[79]](#footnote-80), as if this much would far better suffice, – for his eyes had not quite yet administered all the admonition that was in them, – but then, in thinking he could do far worse than again reduce his still too generous offer, laying his hands almost flat to eche✓, he bestowed as if a mere nieveful[[80]](#footnote-81) of forgiving grace.

With a few words more bringing another end, as daily dictated by his god,

whereas the Sun is deserving of capitalising, as well the Moon, be it here at once stated : no apology, no excuse, will ever be offered for absolutely refusing, – save in quotations, – to cyriologically[[81]](#footnote-82) qualify so thingless a word!,

to that abomination, *copula carnalis fornicatoria*[[82]](#footnote-83), with the hedgerow posies limp in their damp hands, and forty farthings the poorer, man & wife walked the two miles slowly silently back to their poor wattle-and-daub cottage.

Now, not even three steps over the threshold, – her sinlessed mind now permitting her body to know it swollen to full term, – suddenly taking faint, waving away all aid, clambering whimpering onto the workbench, laying herself down upon the wet-board[[83]](#footnote-84), hitching up her numerous skirts, with unspeakable groanings, writhing full amid the clutter,

comprising unfinished chawcers[[84]](#footnote-85), bend-leather[[85]](#footnote-86), sparrowbils[[86]](#footnote-87), foot-prods[[87]](#footnote-88), bobbins of lingle[[88]](#footnote-89), pliers, hammers, lasts, elsens[[89]](#footnote-90), &c,

before the horrified very eyes of Lemuel, after much water, gore, and screaming, Ann brought forth a dead child over which she wept most orribly✓; no more dumbstruck, grabbing his ragged wolfskin cloak,

which, festooned with sterns[[90]](#footnote-91), he had inherited from his grandfather who as a youth had taken it of a man whom he had found died of cold in a field,

performing the simplest, the nearest, duty, which is often the best of all things that a simple small-learned soul can do : flee, Lemuel fled away to the poorest of taverns where, gulping many potels[[91]](#footnote-92) of appalling ale, drank himself into a state wherein neither on Earth nor in all the superior globe[[92]](#footnote-93), even when beaten all together, existed so darkened, so stinking, so barely human a little thing; with all his coppers, some of his fear, and most of his horridity drunk away, – and once the clear cold night-air catharised[[93]](#footnote-94) his red face, nearly all his wits also, – so slowly staggered this first hero home; on that his wedding-night, crawling by right into her small bed, after a long sigh turning, raising himself upon an elbow, leaning over the pale, teared face, and opening his mouth, – he wished firstly sincerely to ask after her health,

taken to mean the harmonious, efficient working of the entire person,

and lastly to apologise for the terrible narrowness of his humanity, – he instead copiously vomited, fell into himself, passed, snap!, away into sleep, yet amorwe[[94]](#footnote-95) knew it all not, but forever after knew it very surely, soon his every neighbour too.

When her sturdy health was full returned, formally permitting Lemuel his bedrite[[95]](#footnote-96), his first mounting was as clouterly[[96]](#footnote-97) as her responses algid[[97]](#footnote-98), yet little by little warming as he gently moiled, Ann of her vanished shepherd sweetly inclining her mind, until all of a sudden loudly spending, collapsing limp atop her, immediately commencing upon snoring sleep, her bucolic[[98]](#footnote-99) dream shattered, and in now a hot new fret, Ann pight[[99]](#footnote-100) his small weight away, and standing up, mumbling, dripping, looked sideling[[100]](#footnote-101) down at his weazen[[101]](#footnote-102) form, particularly at his slimpsey[[102]](#footnote-103) duddle[[103]](#footnote-104), for her dear shepherd had never displayed a lobcock[[104]](#footnote-105) in all the days she knew him!,

but Ann knew not of course that from this not altogether diminutive willie, – for in truth she had been a trifle spoilt, — meaning injured in character by excessive indulgence, lenience, or deference, — for Lemuel was not *really* small : small certainly in respect of that which a very few have, but yet of hugely more than he who hath most would be well content to lose, – 226 posteriors[[105]](#footnote-106), the whole Troke linage, would eventually be extraught[[106]](#footnote-107),

and mumbling curst✓ him out of sight with that level and deadly violence of language inherited from her fishwife stepmother : his snores she cursed, his every organ, all of him; with frostwork[[107]](#footnote-108) gaining upon the sole window-pane, there crouching in the grey fireplace lighting a wee-bit fire of punk[[108]](#footnote-109), she clattered together a meagre supper for herself of stale bread made from acorns,

come of two oaks, the pendiculate[[109]](#footnote-110) and the sessile[[110]](#footnote-111),

and warmed up a stew comprising putredinous[[111]](#footnote-112) heels of a sheeps and vinewed[[112]](#footnote-113) barley.

So, as a time went of weeks, then of months, then a year, with the cobbler nervously cobbling between his hunched shoulders, the mother midnight[[113]](#footnote-114) at his back delivered his wife of only a daughter, Mary, and lo!, all was changed, for if a living babe turned Ann, – a mean chapless[[114]](#footnote-115) woman given daily to jobation[[115]](#footnote-116), – into a quiet contented wife and mother, and, aye, newly fond of smockage[[116]](#footnote-117)!, Lemuel was now the tonguepad[[117]](#footnote-118), for as he older grew he remembered again what his father had once said, – his voice all harmony, his words all sense, – as possibly his father his father biforn✓ him similarly, far off in the myriad-marted city of Augusta, alate called London,

then and now a great, high-viced[[118]](#footnote-119), unwieldy, overgrown town of one continued hurry of depravity and pleasure,

in his murky snobber[[119]](#footnote-120) premises a mere hail from what in the eleventh century was called Gropecunt Lane, – to this effect :

**—** We Trokes to misfortune has always been confated[[120]](#footnote-121), – aye!, for although there is but one way into this world, for us there is countless ways out, – and despite our hardiness we be neither long-lived nor immune to the normally uncaring pencil of ill-luck which somehow delighteth to aggest[[121]](#footnote-122) calamity upon the head of anyone with our hard and rare name, for then, with the head away, as good the members all in sunder! But whereas all attempts to dilute our fate, – sometime bringing us to madness, many times near killing us quite out, – causes it to superabound, one only means of hope, one sole spark, lays to us : the production of sons, for as man need not to guard him against blessings, calamities require many hands to avert, for life is not only full of darkness, it flies : aye, no sooner is a pallid dawn singing at the door, than with the morning waning, it is afternoon, then it is evening.

Thus well spake a feeder[[122]](#footnote-123) to his five surviving sons, of which four were now dead : childless Alfred struck by lightning ten years before whilst sheltering beneath a costard[[123]](#footnote-124) he was pruning, childless Cornall, a respected quarryman[[124]](#footnote-125), fourteen years ago died in agony beneath a collapsed lewis[[125]](#footnote-126), and childless Elwin pressed to death[[126]](#footnote-127) in Truro at age 19, in 1471; as a continuing bachelor Lemuel had believed, indeed insisted, that the survival of their line, their name, must and would fall to his sole surviving brother, handsome, lusty, newlywedded Cedric, a man of whom it was said, – if often of a cross, suspicious, inquisitive, murmuring nature, – a luckier, a bolder fisher, a carefuller in peril, did not breathe, but lately learning that this last, undescended brother had drownded✓ after in a storm falling from an otherwise well-favoured fishing boat, Lemuel now knew himself the sole being in existence with the unmistakable Troke blood, for of his three surviving sisters : Tamsyn with her babe perished in first childbed, Lowenna, heavy with a first child, died directly of the overmuch heat of her husbandman[[127]](#footnote-128) husband which put him far wide from temper, and the last, Cryda, five years before, in company with her lovely family of three boys, died of the *English Sweat*[[128]](#footnote-129).

Heartened by one day an order from a local landowner for 13 pairs of dew-beaters[[129]](#footnote-130), all upright shoes[[130]](#footnote-131), – a harvest home[[131]](#footnote-132) gift for his labourers, – and a pair of lovely satin slippers, – a gift for his mistress, the new May-Queen[[132]](#footnote-133), – but with his eyes too much upon the broad buttocks of his wife, and his mind too narrowed upon the need for a son, – for it is natural for a man to wish he beget his own like, – alas, his but[[133]](#footnote-134) suddenly slipping, via a cloven thumb knocking over his glue pot which in its little brazier set the table much ablaze, and before Lemuel could grab a bucket, even before he could properly curse St Crispin[[134]](#footnote-135) for allowing fortune and fate to yet again interleague to be his foes, the thatch catcht afire, and in no time their poor dwelling was burned all to the ground, his few St Hugh's-bones[[135]](#footnote-136), his cherished lapstone[[136]](#footnote-137) inherited from his besayle[[137]](#footnote-138), all were consumed, and worst of all : his every meagre coin of silver and copper, the savings of a whole life,

meaning the ordered manifoldnesses of the proliferation of cells, rather than the incarnation of a preformed soul,

was molt away to a lump of black nothing.

Ann carrying child, Lemuel their few surviving possessions hurriedly faggoted up together, after a day of rainy roage[[138]](#footnote-139) finding at last a ruined hovel at the edge of a gloomy woods, there in one damp, mildewed, but soon kempt little room they dwelt; for want simply of his tools no more able to turn himself to his old craft, Lemuel found work as a journeyman,

meaning then day-labourer,

giving away his raw hands and back to farms anear and far for mere pennies, as well what beet or greens, fearing to be turned off at the gallows, he could toss unobserved into a ditch, which, in deepest night, his dogskin bag on his shoulder,

whether in sleet, or in a rain that went in at the neck and out at the heels, or in snow, or in that freezing fog creating such a pitchy blackness that a man might not see a burning brand stretched forth his arm's length before him,

he cautiously retrieving,

for the truly hungry do not, as do the fatted, look upon a morsel with first a faulting eye,

returned then home to his poor hearth, whereupon, despite exhausture, his passion for an heir male, – which by now was an esurient[[139]](#footnote-140) appetite, and his old genitories[[140]](#footnote-141) eager and full enough, – given immediate vent, alas this availed him not of an heir.

After some workless wet weeks growing passing sickly with debility and scours come of such fare as a mean garden afforded,

such as mallows[[141]](#footnote-142), and nettle and haulm[[142]](#footnote-143) soups, &c, which to an active carnivore are mighty spindling eating, and acreophagists[[143]](#footnote-144), recall Shelley, even ovo-lacto vegetarians[[144]](#footnote-145), are oh such fools : Nature simply cannot provide the best table to those who have forsworn all meat, and will eat nothing that once a face possessed, – yet they little know, less can believe, that even a grain of rice has a face, looked at right, – such fools as wander from the ancient way of truth, from the open path of wholesome understanding, and full fall into diverse blindnesses of the mind, foolish sensuality, and unlawful and immoral delectations of the body;

on the very day he at last, since a child, snared his first cony, or rabbit, holding it high racing proud pale dancing home, he was met at the door by his weeping wife who told him their long-sickly daughter Mary had just that hour died, aye, her little life took end ere herself could well look over and discern it; as Lemuel stretched the cunin[[145]](#footnote-146) on the chestnut frame for later tannage in gallnuts[[146]](#footnote-147), then over the front door, next to a wreath[[147]](#footnote-148) he had found, nailed the fud[[148]](#footnote-149),

as a testimonial to his hunting prowess, and as a symbol apotropaic[[149]](#footnote-150), – which was a wasted gesture, for misfortune could hardly be mollified by an autocoprophage[[150]](#footnote-151), – as well because it was pretty,

the hulked[[151]](#footnote-152) carcass went quartered into the old stew pot for at least a decent noonmeat[[152]](#footnote-153), eating which, lugent[[153]](#footnote-154) over their beechwood bowls, they quietly eagerly agreed that such goodly food, as tough as it was, – for the rabbit was an old urinous male, – was sorry blessing indeed after so much defailance[[154]](#footnote-155) and infortune; as they sorrowfully chewed with all the teeth remaining to them, – 16 in total, – to keep their hearts alive they forced into employment further words, aye, they agreed, rat, fox, and other chanced upon morkin[[155]](#footnote-156) of the countryside, were simply not to be compared with a good cony!; by their bereavement then Lemuel & Ann grew a little placent[[156]](#footnote-157), so that by now, neither a shrow[[157]](#footnote-158), both listeth[[158]](#footnote-159) much to reconjoin[[159]](#footnote-160), and Ann grew again birthful.

1500-1710

This saga now tells, as the new year approached, how one acold[[160]](#footnote-161) night, – at a time that had not yet attained tomorrow, yet had not lost all yesterday, – in what he believed to be sometime in mid-winter of the year one thousand four hundred ninety and nine, Troke eldfather[[161]](#footnote-162) Lemuel, aged now nearly 50, awoke from black sleep to behold a vision, – (in even more intriguing detail to be studied later), – a wondrous image, if not at once of intelligibility, certainly of most resplendent brightness!, and squinting old eyesight permitting, as if perhaps of an angel; with only the preamble of a pause sufficient exactly for fear to much abate, the vision demanded the institution of a wondrous quest,

(to which nearly every Troke for full five centuries, knowingly or otherwise, would dedicate him or herself, indeed this was a crusade of such import as to ensure Trokes, in numbers growing by succession, instead of perhaps dying out in one brood, – for such, if not by a Troke conceivable, was by the world of daily expectancy, – would become who, where, and precisely what they are today);

without waking his snoring, gaenggang[[162]](#footnote-163) wife, Lemuel commenced learning, by repetition, the 100 words, – of which of the half he comprehended, he scarce believed the quarter, – which his vision, near two hours later, succeeding in lodging in his thick ears; finally, briefly, and clearly let to know that as writing has the far longer continuance,

therefore that far greater certainty of assurance by how much that which stands on record has in pre-eminence above that which passes from those that have no pens but their tongues, no books but their ears,

he, Lemuel, must, his 100 words, soonest decant to paper, and with their nodding, the vision vanished.

In darkness dressing, murmuring over and over the 100 words, Lemuel half-walked half-ran through coldest rain for to seek a scribe, nowhere to be found but at the monastery six miles far, and whilst hastening hearing but not seeing somewhere wolves, he…

… Yes, it may also be of some interest to learn the following: in the twelfth century, this abbey that was called Cleeve, (today, despite half-destroyed, thanks to *English Heritage*[[163]](#footnote-164), still standing), was quietly renowned, particularly in Rome, for the marvellous quality of its anthropodermic bibliopegy[[164]](#footnote-165), for the human skin, largest organ of the body, – and weighing about 20 percent of body weight when wet, about six pounds when tanned, – is very usefully of 20 square feet area; anyway, when the then prior, whose name, – believed one of those matters many, which, unwritten of and lying so far deep hidden in the dark ages of antiquity, the mortal tracing of it out is a thing impossible, – was Ean de Reixach, lay upon his death-bed in 1226, requesting and receiving honorance of his final wish : that his favourite prayers, hymns, and madrigals in himself be bound, so was the seven-volume work created, (now in the Troke library) : volumes one and two his arms, volumes three and four his legs, volumes five and six his torso, and volume seven, – with his face beautifully centring the cover, – his head.

Now, at a little before the second hour Lemuel at last roused the young circator[[165]](#footnote-166), one Brother Adolphus, – birthname Matthew Trevorrow, – from an ebrient[[166]](#footnote-167) brown study[[167]](#footnote-168), for only that evening, partly in whispers, partly in senyes[[168]](#footnote-169), the shave-crowned monk learned covertly this of a bright scullery boy, who from hiding had overheard the chatter of two visiting novices, who had been told by an Abbot, – or rather by his secretary and favourite bardash[[169]](#footnote-170), of name Supersax, – lately returned from Rheims, where he had heard same from the mouth of a bishop of his old acquaintance who from memory was quoting from a second copy of a letter written from London by Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus to his sister : *to love is the same with*✓ *to hate oneself*, which, on merely the face of it, greatly confounded the monk, particularly as he had always half believed that he who loveth chasteneth, and half that love was simply consciousness in search of itself.

Whilst it is not requisite to know why Brother Adolphus delayed so in answering the hammering at the stout door, – true : the pounding was muted by storm and distance, true also : he hoped another would rouse, for, despite his duty of nightwatching, he who is the sole awake truly is no more the doorward[[170]](#footnote-171) than he who is awoken, – it may nevertheless be of interest to learn why his mind was wholly taken up by what the scullery boy had said, and whereas indulgence in so mere a detail cannot be expected to often recur, – for there is so far yet to go, – let this be made an opportunity to treat of this matter at once, so as to have it well behind what *far* more importantly will follow.

Was he to believe what the scullery boy said, what the novices said, what the secretary said, what the Abbot said, what the Bishop said Erasmus said?, aye, was he not perhaps a fool to trust for its length so stretched a chain of unsubstantiated reportage : what the scullery boy said he overheard, what he said the novices said, what they said the secretary was told by the Abbot, what the Abbot recalled the Bishop recall of what Erasmus wrote in a twice-copied letter?, for after all : even if what the scullery boy said the novices said the secretary said the Abbot said the Bishop said Erasmus said, Erasmus actually said, this may not have been exactly what Erasmus intended to say, nor even what he meant, or intended and meant, but only to his sister, the context was unestablished, – and what the Bishop read, – a man growing purblind, so it was said, – from a copy of a copy of the original letter, then later recalled to memory, may not have been what Erasmus, nor either copyist, may have written.

Further : what the Bishop recalled to memory and quoted may not necessarily have been misread, but rather misrecalled, therefore misquoted, first by he the Abbot to his secretary, then by all those who came after, for what if the Abbot, – for was he not after all a little deaf?, – misheard the Bishop, or what if, even leaning in closely, hearing perfectly every word of the Bishop, the Abbot, – for was he also not a little old?, – by remembering imperfectly, alas reported imperfectly to his bent-over catamite[[171]](#footnote-172), and what if this secretary, – if not out of simple human error, such as mishearing, then out or hearing perfectly, but in redressing his sternmost pain, – vengefully misreported, and what if, even if heard perfectly by both novices, these in turn, conferring, agreeing, reported imperfectly, – for in matters of truth, of scholarship, were they not renowned deceitfully rivalrous?, – so that what the old Bishop said the old Abbot heard the secretary heard the novices heard the scullery boy heard Brother Adolphus heard, bore not anywhere of truth a grain, for what proof did he, brother Adolphus, possess that his own hearing was entirely perfect, his own memory?, for clearly, surely : in the matter of reading, of saying, of hearing, of overhearing, even of understanding, – as with believing, – there is dangerously always room for misreading, missaying, mishearing, misoverhearing, and most particularly misunderstanding; say, what *is* that clamour, is ours a hammering place for every beggar in the county?

Quickly: regarding the fragile matter of seeking proofs : with Erasmus in far Paris, the Bishop long on road to Colchester, the Abbot, with his secretary, undisturbably in his apartment[[172]](#footnote-173), – rumoured sumptuous, – with the novices last morn gone on with their pilgrimage, and with only the scullery boy, – a bright but illiterate, and often a mischievous, grubby, sneaking creature, – remaining whom to ask to say again what he from hiding had heard, even if he repeated exactly what he four hours before whispered and signed, would this ease his mind, would it not rather rue it more by inviting only further doubt and disquiet?; ah, thought Brother Adolphus, in this age so rare of literacy, without pen and ink memory immediately to bind, all reportage was prone to the vicissitudes of enlargement and diminution, addition and subtraction, particularly when, between each of these so many links, – letter, copy, copy, reading, recalling, quoting, hearing, telling, hearing, telling, overhearing, telling, hearing, and now recalling, – there was not alone many steps of spaces, but inevitable many reaches of times, sufficient either or both to permit a subtle altering at each iteration, for even nine words, in one iteration, can suffer decay, or amendment, or both, and yet! : in the matter of believing, not believing, particularly privately, most secretly, truly one could believe what one listeth, especially that which made very comforting good sense!; here note : very remarkably there was no misreading, nor missaying, nor mishearing, nor misoverhearing, nor even anywhere, – at least up to now, – misunderstanding.

… Thankyou; arriving cheerlessly at the wicket[[173]](#footnote-174) wherefrom cometh the unremitting clamour, and there giving to the small Judas hole[[174]](#footnote-175) first an eye then an ear, and the frate[[175]](#footnote-176) soon learning that the frantic was direly requiring the payable services of a man who knew how to mark paper, so, in his warm cell, as Lemuel his chant repeated, ten lines each of ten words, Adolphus, his quill fleeting, – and most remarkably, — both of them : he reciting, he recording, — with a total absence of those little errors and mistakes which even the most superior understanding is apt to fall into, – despite inevitably pauses to quietly smile at what dripping Lemuel had learned of his supposed perhaps angelophany[[176]](#footnote-177), – the monk, accuracy achieved, raising open hands halting Lemuel a further manic performance, went to his *bargueño* desk[[177]](#footnote-178), and more candles lighting, with new quill carefully selected, slowly and with care transcribed same to a small sheet of stiff old parchment, – which is sheepskin or goatskin, in this case the former, – first in English,

called by scholars the language of the street, not of scholarship,

common to that time and place,

and without stretching this comment to a yard, – which, nothing simpler, yet nothing less necessary, – suffice it understood that all this was at a time when, – with ideas, life-furniture, whole workings, and ways very different for men to work out their life-wrestle, – spoken English stretcheth no farther than this island, nay, not even there over all, and written English reacheth barely beyond cloister and palace,

then beneath this into a Latin which frequent flogging had made him wise enough to learn both and retain, and so come one day to love; seeing as he had so enjoyed the sport of it, and thereafter would enjoy praying for forgiveness for the pleasure he always derived from the fooleries of his fellow-man, – all of which, because as why✓ his eyes were still so wide, his mind still so narrowed, Lemuel did not discern, – the monk charged only ten farthings for his work.

Hesitantly asked of a further much larger favour the monk would have simply refused, outright, flatly, without a smile, and shown him the door, – for monastery life was of a lazy, delicate sort, in which, by reason of their safe solitude, some were not of very sound brain, and some were of so little, they were unafraid they would soon lose it all, – but suddenly realising in his desray[[178]](#footnote-179) what was now the date, he instead straight sat up, thought a spell,

and if it is true there be three parts to a man : king, warrior, and farmer, then every thought, by anyone anywhere thunk, is always one third warrior-thought,

leaned forth, looked very anew upon the sodden figure crouching over the little brazier : seemingly a now sane enough man simply shivering with cold, – but not only with cold : as well with the deserved exhaustion come of knowing he had reliably carried out the order of his supposed vision, perhaps a satanophany[[179]](#footnote-180), – here was clearly a man of simplicity, but no longer wholly hopelessly an utter[[180]](#footnote-181) man, – such as are members of that sometimes even innocentest folk who see in their actions little or no cause for commentary, discussion, or reflection, and who, quietly indifferent to the suffering of others, are very prepared to humiliate for personal delight, or even do hurt for personal benefit, – a man ever unable to fully obey the laws of Nature,

for the laws of Nature *are* the laws of god, so it is said,

for he was no drunkard, no fighter, and no manufactor vastly of childs, – or to use an eccentric plural : children, – and because so halely for 50, certainly not a man of men usually vigorous till 25 or 30, yet at 40 sometimes even 50 dead, – so, perhaps, for all that, in his way, this poor Lemuel was a simple good man enough, – for is not the opposite of simplicity falseness?, – in short : Lemuel was a man deserving of mercy.

By experiencing so sudden a not resurgence, – neither of compassion, which is specific, which has respect, the spirit in it, nor of pity, which is abstract yet measuring, which has contempt, superiority, self-satisfaction, the body in it, – but far rather a revival very of spirits, – come simply of suddenly recalling a day in his studentry when in their library he learned of the excellencies once widely promulgated throughout their order, particularly by those who had survived the misfortunes of their wickedness and ignorance, – such as generosity, such as clemency, and such as humanity, excellences alas so rarely opportunous of practice to a people so idly encloistered, – brother Adolphus agreed, yes : he would teach, or try to, Lemuel the alphabet, numbers too, even unto stretching his brain in the showing out of Euclid a few simple mechanical performances; however, for the far greater difficulties expected from the nature of such an undertaking, the monk, – one of those who, — for the good of man separated from the world in its eternal cycle of peace-plenty-pride-quarrel-war-spoil-poverty-patience-peace, — believe their order, for all the good they intended, had a right to be furnished with the necessaries, conveniences, and moderate enjoyments of life, – asked he be compensated by that which brought upon him a very pleasant accidie[[181]](#footnote-182), – the which, by suggesting sloth, was considered by monks one of only the lesser seven deadly sins, – a barrel, of 24 gallons capacity, of metheglin[[182]](#footnote-183), – for after all : is not every man in constant debt for his being?, – an agreement which would of course be kept strictly between theirselves.

That same afternoon, with the date right properly January the first 1500, (not then correctly the first day of the year, for this was 25 March), – the very year, — as six years before the semicolon, — Albert Manutius released Venetian letters[[183]](#footnote-184) upon the world, – after a brief sleep and *sobrietate perfecta*[[184]](#footnote-185), with a diligence not altogether wanting, putting a piece of local chalk, picked up from a path, to an old piece of slate, lately fallen from the roof, the monk began to teach sleepless Lemuel, – almost stank[[185]](#footnote-186) from dragging on an oaken sled the 300 pound barrel seven miles, – that *a is for apple, b is for barrel*; as the monk committed his evening to meditation,

this time upon a statement reputed also made by Erasmus, that marriage should be regarded as a *remedium peccati*[[186]](#footnote-187), as a hospital for the sick,

Lemuel hurried home holding before his panting chest his slate whereon, facing outward, were the five strange marks he had that day half-learned.

The next day, with barely sleep enough, his feet bleeding into his clogs, Lemuel returned to the monk,

confounded now by a statement, later to be misascribed to Blake, that one portion of being was the prolific, the other the devouring,

who in the intervals between matins[[187]](#footnote-188), lauds[[188]](#footnote-189), prime[[189]](#footnote-190), tierce[[190]](#footnote-191), sext[[191]](#footnote-192), nones[[192]](#footnote-193), vespers[[193]](#footnote-194), and compline[[194]](#footnote-195), as well two masses at dinner and supper, Lemuel, left alone before a bright fire of pine-cones he had gathered, counted aloud on his fingers, — *this is one, and this is twey*, the while writing the figures on his slate; when returned to his side, the monk, patiently nodding, making sometimes correction, was looking forward to the evening when, – nearly but not quite in the full knowledge that a distinction without a difference cannot sustain itself, – he would commit himself to once again deeply pondering the beautiful and fine distinctions made by St Athanasius, – and as confusedly as Peter Lombard!, – between father, son, and holy ghost, in that the first was neither made nor begotten, the second not made but begotten, and the last neither made nor begotten, but proceeding.

After every day working, also every night for these few months attending his schooling, – the monk sipping, smiling, nodding, occasionally correcting his student when faltering in his reciting, by only the light of an odorous slush lamp, this prayer and that hymn, – in time, then, Lemuel learned to write, and more slowly to read,

thereafter at his home from an incomplete ragged old hymnal antwhile[[195]](#footnote-196) translated from the Medieval Latin, which the monk sold to him for the kind price of a silver shilling and a second barrel of wondrous ambrosia;

the monk,

(who, so helpful to the quest, therefore deserving of a few words more : much later in life, – after becoming manciple[[196]](#footnote-197), hordarian[[197]](#footnote-198), cartulary[[198]](#footnote-199), and rising to archimandrite[[199]](#footnote-200), – the monastery in 1537 disestablishing, but remaining in his stark cell, two years later ended his days, in the light of a smoky absconce[[200]](#footnote-201), fallen across a writing which was a very clear laying up of grounds and a storing up of arguments for the antichrist against he comes),

privately considered and deliberated well of many learnéd strong matters,

such as : how all-powerful is a god who cannot make it so that what was ill-done did not happen?,

and even, to his credit, pondered long what Heraclitus was reputed to have said, that religion was a disease, but a noble disease.

Late in this year of 1500 when a son was at last to Lemuel yborn[[201]](#footnote-202), ynempned[[202]](#footnote-203) John, though considered then by many a man shot in years, it seemed as if our hero was made again young, for after tripping triumphant to the tavern to celebrate, but from which, modestly thinking himself something of a scholar, – here meaning learning, not learned, – he departed not long after, joyly but sober, for he had thought it eminently sensible to become a something of a naphalist[[203]](#footnote-204); whilst sitting in the chimney-corner as the baby suckled at the nearly three pints of milk which the breasts of his smiling wife daily produced, murmuring his well-remembered lessons, he smiled too, for was he not at last as the vision demanded, a literate, productive ancestor?; placing in John his little hand the chalk, and with a patience, yet an impatience, but a gentle impatiency, – for transferring the quest to his sole son must needs be a slow steady business, – urging the boy be as soon as possible as newly learnéd as was he, came one day a day when John could write his first name if not yet his last, could count stares[[204]](#footnote-205) if not yet stars, and so, the years passing, the fine bright boy quickly youthed.

Now John had a friend, a girl of his own age named Blisse, whomwith one day playing, their hands further exploring, their eyes growing large, their breathing urgent, so in the perfumy hay of summer, ceasing as children, in gentle wonder learnt they from either other what properly was a plum-tree[[205]](#footnote-206), what a flap-doodle[[206]](#footnote-207); long since again an able respected cordiner[[207]](#footnote-208), – but wheezing, ailing of the chest, suffering much from time which daily shrunk him, bowed his body over, ever more down, – one midnight it was, hearing the portentous hooting of a winged cat[[208]](#footnote-209), then the ganning[[209]](#footnote-210) of a fox, looking up from his sole book Lemuel wondered now aloud where his son could be; an hour later coming the son hurt home bloodied of a fight with the outraged brother of the girl, growing soon feverish, despite cataplasm[[210]](#footnote-211), despite a physic to draw the humour to itself, – so that when it was all gathered together, it would carry the aflunter[[211]](#footnote-212) away, – despite even witchery, alas late on St Gregory's Day[[212]](#footnote-213), – old enough to consent to marriage, choose his guardian, make a will, – John at 14 was dead, with but a small cut over his eye for cause.

Following the raging, the smashing of much furniture,

for everything is unfair, except death,

almost broke by this disaster, this surely enormity, – which means abnormality, irregularity, extravagance, eccentricity, – and less for the crushing weight fully of the entire future of a family lying upon him, than for being an old man deficient of all collateral issue, poor Lemuel, in the twilight of his troubled fancy, taking to his bed, set himself to die,

for it is natural for the body to die, which if no man kill it, must yet needs die,

and thereby mitigate the grief,

defined as the complex emotional, mental, social, and physical response to the death of a loved one,

by which he far more but not alone was so transport, his good noble wife coaxed him, cooed, then, on the fifth attempt on the fifth day, laboured gently above him until full surreined[[213]](#footnote-214) he spat out his seed as much from simple exhaustion, sorrow, and pity, as from his newly great disdain at very existence; gently cupping and lifting herself, rolling onto her back, placing the dusty cradle made from an old runlet[[214]](#footnote-215) beneath her broad podex[[215]](#footnote-216) to keep the operose[[216]](#footnote-217) seed deep and safe, wondrous soon Ann was full again of child, and once again Lemuel was made again new, or as newly hale as his age, aye!, even the whole universe!, could not prevent him being, and lo!, came again a son; but despite every effort of the skilled midwife, in spite of all the odd favours that earth and heaven could scramble together to shower down, came this son at the cost of his dear wife Ann who somehow burst inwith-side : in a moment she was all bloodless and dead at 41, the old straw bed a red swamp quite.

Knowing the babe would soon be a burdalone[[217]](#footnote-218), – but from whom, in tract of time accumulating, multiplying, an empire must, — nay, would!, — form itself, – by pitching gain against loss Lemuel begged the midwife take the infant, – sole bud on a tree stubbed, disleaved, worm-eaten, full of millipedes, but alive, – to her own, for he was now but a widower, a knurned[[218]](#footnote-219) old man, and no milk had he, nor any more real gentleness, nor any much skill left to his ruined old hands,

**—** Please, he said, **—** do not let the little mite die and my vision come to noght✓!;

the midwife, one Josephine Land, a lonely yeld[[219]](#footnote-220) widow,

actually to one Gerhard Pfefferkorn, from Poppelsdorf, a man once in the service of the Bishop of Gurk, but perhaps this is too far by the way,

knowing the Trokes a queer, unlucky, yet in their way not an entirely unblessed pair, without giving her excitement utterance, agreed to take the child, whereupon Lemuel, weeping his gratitude, firmly entreated her to be sure John learnt writing, reading, and numbers, to which Josephine nodded her honest word; with the slate, the hymnal, and of course the valuable document, – sewn into a hardy goatskin wallet, (all still surviving), – and with a new face, – which customarily sedate and elderish, was now elate, – with new life warm in her arms, Josephine went her way swiftly home north-west six miles to Williton.

With her sheeps and geat[[220]](#footnote-221) providing more milk than enough, with her ever-reviviscent[[221]](#footnote-222) love and guidance imparting so firm a gentleness this allowed the boy no untoward waywardness, a soon sturdiness with an often smile came to the again-named John; not far, in an old farmhouse, from a patient beldam[[222]](#footnote-223) named Mary Manypenny,

for beating a little knowledge into weary brains, every child a farthing and a log every day, and possibly a jug of ale now and again, – meaning : from time to time, once in a while : sometimes, – and some grain once the harvest was inned, and mayhappen some good store of ashwood firing, or firewood, for the winter to isolate, aye, and at the end even a little gratitude,

John received schooling the most summary, particularly of saying over his four-and-twenty letters[[223]](#footnote-224), for he was a good boy : everyone said so; in time John Troke came to love and respect that stranger his mother, for had she not paid the ultimate price for his existence?, and to esteem too that other stranger his father, in 1517 found in a wood three days dead with the years heavily on his back 67.

When he was 12 Josephine Land offered John Troke her surname if he should want it, but this he respectfully declined, as he also her vague beliefs in both a Christian and a pagan god, but he nothing declined a lean, dropped-eared, long-stray dog he called Spike, later a wheen-cat[[224]](#footnote-225) he called Box, and these with other gifts in the run of years he cherished; as Josephine Land was one of the most respected midwives in that small corner of rustic Somerset, as well, like her mother and grandmother before her, modestly owning to a reputation as a skilled herbalist, she was therefore, in a small way, a woman of means, sufficient not only for necessity, conveniency, and decentness, but for occasional delight and pleasure, even possibly to superfluity; knowing well all the cuntré✓ lanes, all the fields bordered by trees, by hedges, in stretches of miles, in all seasons, springtime, summer, fall of the leaf, and winter,

for the Sun, – it had been carefully explained to him, – in compass a little overthwart, and making an oblique circle, it was this variety of approaching and departing that preserveth all things and keepeth the world in good temperature,

gathering this thing or that, – sufficient to bring ease to suffering, sleep to weariness, and when pressed by need or reason or coin enough, even pain, to another, even healthlessness, and, aye, very well, even death, – and so it was in the very first of his youth to hardily accompany his foster-mother in combing for goodness the heaths, woods, meadows, bogs and moors, in sunshine, in rain, and in snow.

This next was not expected to need stating so soon, but listen : it is everywhere believed that words, – words, simple words, all words, – be not able to speak for themselves, not even a single word, – and anyway is it not scholarly said by the greatest possible many that language, that great mystery, despite wonderful and all, is not so wonderful and all as all that to be an actual living thing, for words have no real life of their own : wrong, words are alive, more precisely : Words *is* alive±, not living as man knows it, – for that to claim would exploit the convenience which untruth far too often delights to supply, – and not everywhere of course, but only in this place, – neither male nor female, nor either an it, – alive!; now, as has become too soon too clear, – surely, how could it not?, – that considerable editorial assistance has so far been given, and despite it clearly stated in the agreement, the contract, – in the fifteenth article, – that when necessary help will be given to ensure a full enough telling of the Troke saga, the clausal qualifier *when necessary* needs a little more unclearly to be defined : zealousness is an admirable quality, – few Trokes, few blooded Trokes, have ever possessed it not, – but, please, Words, beware overzealousness, agreed?

Come, Words, do not sulk, tell briefly of what herbs John Troke and Josephine Land went in search, and thereby prove, magnificently show the whole world, that Words liveth :

yes, agreed, thank you; whilst John learned what was wild poppy, called thereabouts *chasse*, elsewhere *copper-rose*, *cuprose*, *cusk*, *head-ache*, *bledewort*, and much else, he learned also to recognise what was dog's fennel called *mawth*, what was monkshood called *turk's cap*, *soldier's caps*, *pope's ode*, what was the herb sauce-alone or *Jack-by-the-hedge* so pleasant in salads, also what was wild pellitory called *sneezewort* and what was goosetongue, an excellent snuff, also heihow known as *alehoof*, and louse-wort known as *red-rattle*, ratsbane known as *resalgar*, good for ridding rats, dog's mercury a fine poison for anyone deserving of it, also the pot-herb robert also called *stork's-bill* with the leaves good cookt✓ or raw, and smerewort called also *all-good*, *evenlesten*, and *Good-King-Henry*, coltsfoot, called also *coughwort*, *foal's-foot*, *horse-hoof*, and *bull's-foot*, which when applied to the tuell[[225]](#footnote-226) doth heal the cleft thereof.

Good, now whilst Trokes have ever been godless, – but not to the degree of those who, so antigod, so perfectly godproofed, foolishly believe that the springs and movements of an old watch are put together with far more artful niceness than those of the mere universe, – a few, over the generations, have condescended to accede that the practice of religion,

which not many enough in the world have called illusion in hopeless pursuit of substance, of knowledge, and as diverse wise judges have prescribed and cautioned : a mere commixture of a few notions that occur at hand, and ever a wandering and indigested thing, which unlike reason is ever far out of square,

sometimes permitted not alone a perspicience[[226]](#footnote-227) into abstract truths,

some not by all means, – nay, many not by any means, – to be believed, of course, for there is nothing in religion but that fiction full-trusted to render every unevidenced conclusion a doubtful,

but a respecting, even a high honouring, of tradition, as well an appreciation of the intrinsic excellence of virginity, a deep contemplation upon the miraculous, its possibility, also one or two of the motives underlying sainthood, the idea of sanctity, and its heights, the avails[[227]](#footnote-228) of penance and mortification &c.

Without exception, Trokes, – in name and blood both : blood Trokes, called henceforth *bloods*, – were atheists ever, (or in modern parlance : were missing, – rather not missing, nor wanting, nor in need, despite even in the sixteenth century costing not unseldom a life, — what has been, rather fancifully, as well inaccurately, called, the god gene, – as well, by the way, the call them genes alcoholic, homosexual, political, violent, &c, which might cause one to consider a Troke oh a very incomplete creature), – for, really, they reasoned, what earthly chance has that which, looked at straight, was but a practice founded entirely upon an implausible nonsense which insisted that the maker of existence, the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible, was eternal, without body, without parts, – as stated in the Augsberg Confession[[228]](#footnote-229), – of infinite power, wisdom, goodness, and goodlyhood, (concerning which baloney, – which closes so many avenues to the exercise of physical and cerebral distinction, – more later will be stated).

So, despite his heart utterly unattracted by a god of any sort, but simply for the love of singing, sole living Troke John diligently attended the Medieval Norman church in West Quantoxhead, two miles west of Williton, as a most courteous sidesman[[229]](#footnote-230), then, coming his later youth, – whilst conducting a fine seven-voice quire✓ comprising the children of rough farmers, – he was made precentor[[230]](#footnote-231) by the succentor[[231]](#footnote-232) minister, then, so very young, some said, yet because so big and strong, made ostiary[[232]](#footnote-233), he was next made, after a sort, church warden[[233]](#footnote-234); the while John came to befriend a sweet girl named Anne Marsh,

who, despite her wind-burned face, enormous bonnet, – called then a fascinator, bequeathed to her by her grandmother, – and even when dressed in the enormous untanned leggings and boots discarded by her grandfather, was acknowledged a remarkably pretty girl, (for the homely Trokes have ever been loved by attractive women);

after the Sunday service, upon a seat in the church porch out of the bitter winter wind, without guile John and Anne spoke freely, happily, of the world as they knew it, – for the world produces in man both the very thoughts that judge it, and the feeble voice that attempts to tell its story, – and of their narrow futures.

In the appropriate seasons they assisted farmers gather neet[[234]](#footnote-235) to the evening fold, at the haysel[[235]](#footnote-236) thrashed grain and wingled[[236]](#footnote-237), – Anne always at his side, for she yloved John without question, – and at Christmas, at Easter, on the celebration of their birth days they exchanged simple gifts made with their own honest hands, together with the reaffirmed promises that one day they would be wed; yet a little while more and John became beadle[[237]](#footnote-238) of the tiny church, and when occasion required both a latiner[[238]](#footnote-239) and an hermeneut[[239]](#footnote-240), and for all these services, which included upkeep of the dazzling church-garden,

planted with *des fleurs de cure*[[240]](#footnote-241) : lilies, rose-mallows, immortelles, and rose-pinks,

also the trim graveyard, the grounds of the thacked[[241]](#footnote-242) cottage of the minister, John received as remuneration, nothing, (in modern parlance, the better to emphasise the ingratitude : zippo, zilch, nada, squat!), but only the blessing of a god in the existence of which, – even taken to mean destiny, or necessity somehow personified, – if it were in the least possible, he would have been delighted to find some honest reason to believe, or to surmise as a possibility to opine upon, or to tolerate, or to reject, aye, openly, rather than silently and painfully, secretly; with a congregation at best of 25, and at worst, with the snow closing all tracks, – whereat no marvel, – none at all save the clergyman, and John himself never failing to appear, – thank✓ to snow-shoon[[242]](#footnote-243) of his own invention, – one sung lustily with tother, then tother praught[[243]](#footnote-244) lustily to the one;

the cleric, of name Bules Crider, – of very little vain pride, and of a mind pure, but ardently run into heavenly objects, – refused to allow unanswered any fault found in his beliefs, any doubt in his own revelations, – which he all much fearing to hold, — lest they come of the illusions of that which no proof thereof is proof thereof : the devil, — turned him, said his small flock, into the diligentest preacher in all the realm, – so were often elicited, in the cold gloom, the wind, the rain, the snow, from these two alone men, some very intense, but never too unpleasant dialogues.

When Anne and John thought themselves old enough, to the great satisfaction of everyone in the vicinage[[244]](#footnote-245), they wedding, the little cottage, – gifted to them by Josephine Land, – bedecked with golden mell-sylvester[[245]](#footnote-246) forbidding much the too warm Sun his entry, seemed a dream come to life; within the year, – then every year for nine years after, which surprised and delighted all who knew or ever saw her, for she was but 55 inches tall, – Anne was delivered of a healthy, ample babe she named Arthur, but alas, though the mother cared for him with all a mother's care : before his little soul, all fresh from the making, could make itself to home, he suddenly ailing died, then came another Arthur, who, in his first year, after turning white, died suddenly, alone, in his cradle, in the night, then came a girl Cora, who at the beginning of her second year of life, on her very first attempt at walking, – in front of a lovely warm fire, with at both sides a kneeling, smiling parent to support her, briefly first one, then the other, to give her confidence letting softly go her tiny hands, the giggling child, dribbling, shrieking with joy, taking one step, then another, – alas fell flop down gruf[[246]](#footnote-247), stone dead; came then another Arthur,

for they held dear that royal name for an extraordinary reason, which of itself, in its way, a story of extraordinary telling, will not here be told, for one is enough : one story at a time,

but he also died, one stormy night, rigid and purple,

rather mauve, for whilst purple, particularly when deep, is a colour almost a sound, an emotion, mauve is a more moderate, quieter, a lighter bluish-purple;

came also another girl Cora, who lived to be all of 12, – old enough to consent to marriage, – but then, meeting with luck, died of a fall from an apple tree; came also Elsie, who died on her ninth birthday of the chickingpox✓, with just beyond the not to be crossed doorway all her friends, their rustic presents ungiven.

Came then in January 1542 Bethany who, with Josephine, the old woman she took to be her grandmother, teaching her all she knew, – such as : anger is seated in the heart, lust in the liver, so herewith their herbal remedies, – became a respected midwife, and no doubt some interest could be kindled regarding this Bethany, for at 19 bright and forward, after meeting and marrying a gentle blacksmith Aisling Treague, between them begetting first dead girl twins, then a man-child who lived only long enough to be named John after his grandfather, then another John who living almost into barnhed[[247]](#footnote-248) was taken by flood following a storm, then coming three stillbirths, came finally of her heart the sudden death of Bethany at age 57; but for reasons shortly to be made out clear, – with exceptions, to be sure, – it is contrary to the aim of this history to too closely pursue any female branch of the Troke tree.

In 1543 and 1544 there came to John Troke and hardy Anne Marsh their eighth and ninth children : Richard and Curteis, the first, alas a sickly child pale and meagry, grew into a sickly, forever restless young man, roaming often for days the countryside in which, accosted by footpad[[248]](#footnote-249), whipt✓ for his empty scrip[[249]](#footnote-250), his rotten boots, and by squire, by gamewatcher[[250]](#footnote-251), – than their victims far more inclined to rogue and malice✓, – beaten and cursed for walking where it illy betokened a sensible man to walk if he looked to the continued safekeeping of his unperforated hinderparts, yet on, on he walked, staying away a day, a week, a month, living upon fruit such as he might get, upon berries, or whatever he could beg or feebly work for, and by enduring many sharp showers that ever ran wild, haking[[251]](#footnote-252) from place to place, his mother believed surely he wandered but to balm the pains that are said to be suffered in a place called hell,

the only swear-word, – neither sexual, despite of four letters, nor scatological, nor bearing an one of those so apparently very satisfying plosives : a, b, c, d, p, or t, nor fricatives : f, s, or sh, – that is believed that location where the everywhere fire is said to be hot, the terror great, the pain extreme, and the duration everlasting;

though he possessed a nature much turned in upon itself, poor at school, but knowing his letters, Richard placed great faith in the family quest, where in his deeps, – in which he so much dwelled, but as in a land poor of soil, fickle of weathers, – he felt far more dearly the responsibility than his younger brother Curteis, a boy of a far lighter heart; as one of only two remaining of his precarious line, he knew a wife would need to be not only far more than hale in health, breath, and temper, to accept such sickliness as was his for husband, but also to possess a *furor uterinus*[[252]](#footnote-253).

Then one day in the year a thousand five hundred sixty and four, outside the stout gates of Bristol gaol, where before the gallowses gathered a croud✓ to watch a large family of arsonites suddenly checked in their career by means of a certain quality inherent in preparement of hemp, – an activity which it was clear all but he were very pleased to like, – in espying a buxom, coming wench, and mistaking so easily plumpness for health, as well, naturally, for it often follows, fertility, Richard commenced courting Jenny Norton; for smallest silver tutoring the sons of the more welfaring[[253]](#footnote-254) tradesmen and merchants with his fine English what little Latin, what less Greek he knew, with near three pounds current money of England saved, now a year older, short tale to make, married they were, Richard to his plump fancy, yet Jenny proved a stay-child[[254]](#footnote-255), but knowing it not, blaming Richard, one day ran away to be elsewither, some said everywhither, barren, until, broken her heart and spirit by ill-using, ill-conduct, ill-usage, in four years returning to him mighty sorry, but also mighty full of that which, – for even in the chief time of virtues, vice layeth await, – had for a time not long enough feared her from the ways of vice : the pox, the following month died in his bed at age 23.

Now 26 taking again to highway and byway, after many an adventure and calamity, Richard coming by chance to the helping out of a carriage from a mire, meeting muddied its occupants, one Mistress Ickle, and her daughter Alicia, who in this year of 1570 was one-and-twenty, and at this first meeting,

despite the terrible, indeed almost forever withering, – for she could hardly imagine a worse!, – embarrassment of first dropping the bourdaloue[[255]](#footnote-256) of which she was about to make use, then to cover her shame, – for which she had liked to have died, – needing badly to go backward[[256]](#footnote-257), making a thorough cough[[257]](#footnote-258),

allowing again his eye to guide his heart, – and it may seem for the world difficult to determine by what particular avenue this sublimity reached this organ, – committing the error of too quickly exalting hope into passion, within a week solemnly engaging his faith to her, within a month more became she his wife; though she was as plain and skinny as he, – yet she sometimes cast a faint lustre, as he a sort of sprightly glare, – within nine months nighly to their wedding-night, after much fainting, sickness, longings for all that was out of season and reason, with much spewing, five minute pissings, five second fartings, and any amount of indiscriminate s—tting, she begat Jonah who in the village of Wiveliscombe, in the county still of Somersetshire, grew to be a mute morose boy who, when he was ten years old, gulping in the village an offered ale, and suddenly laughing as never before, – for Trokes were ever gleemen, dancers too, – stepping with such elegance, grandeur, and delicacy as to cause a little crowd to gather and follow, suddenly dived head first to death down the village well.

In 1572, meanwhile, to Richard & Alicia coming a son whom they named Cuthbert, a sweet if rather poorly boy, travelling to a distant fair which for five years his father promised they would together one day go to see, taking a feverous shudder aboard their faithful old horse, the lights of the fair not distant, the boy Cuthbert died right there on the saddle-blanket; lastly in 1573 came Leonard, a strong child considering his by now tired, prematurely ageing father, but alas a fool too, for when plied with drink, his hand adjusting his moth-eaten codpiece, he to great laughter would boast a high degree of intimacy with people with whom not one would ever speak twice to him in their lives; one day causing a shindy[[258]](#footnote-259) at a shindy[[259]](#footnote-260), punched and pushed, knocking his head on a milestone, made bedaft, after a further six-month, – for these were roughling times, – in a far back lane,

where lately happening from the north a fearful tempest of thunder and flashing lightning withal, and rain, and being full of ditches, and hollow places, and leftwards meadows straight all drowned over and filled, and rightward many running streams overthwarting neighbouring fields,

beaten, stripped, thrown into a flooded ditch,

this which : if only some person had chance come up, not everyone, not a many, not anyone, but someone!, this drowning may have been prevented,

he was found naked and dead at 14, (the assailant, from far futurely, was found to be one Ruf Gausman, a man of shipwreck wits, starving, and himself counter-assailed to death the following year); the following year, 1588, Richard Troke died of lithiasis[[260]](#footnote-261) at age 45, then of a broken heart his wife Alicia at only 40, and so died this short branch.

This saga now preposterous[[261]](#footnote-262) tells of the last child of John & little Anne, born in 1544, named Curteis, another strangely quiet child who kept to himself, stared often at the sky, and spoke only to ask questions which afearing every ear and eye, none dared answer; pressed first by his mother, then by his father, both from their death-beds in 1560, to swear to the quest his allegiance,

which as it cannot be forfeited, cancelled, or altered, by any change of time, place, motive, means, person, deed, or manner, is but rather than asked taken from all Trokes immediately upon their birth,

Curteis so swore, but declining to give this matter his meagre faith, by failing to keep it safe in the belly of his mind, it soon escaped him, – for there is nothing, absolutely nothing, that a man cannot forget, except his unalterable character; in 1593 when he was 50, Curteis, – the latest sole last of the Troke line, a celibate chaste man devoted to his teaching in a small school in the town of Bath, once called Cair Bledud, called Caerbadon, – awaking to his loins in evenlight[[262]](#footnote-263), married his young, quiet, reserved housemaid Emily Rance, who at the altar, with the service safely over, turning to the small congregation, announced, **—** I am Mistress Troke now, and gentry, so there!, and if not at that instant then at a slightly later one, as the slow realisation crept like a cold worm through all his brain, Curteis quoke[[263]](#footnote-264) : he had made himself undone by marrying the fifteenth daughter of a decayed tripemonger.

Growing daily more haughty, soon a fine madam[[264]](#footnote-265), quickly becomed✓ a barge-arse[[265]](#footnote-266), and with that too eager ungraceful pliancy of peoples new to cultivation, dressing far above herself, – which might have been excusable if she was not also a dawks[[266]](#footnote-267), – without realising that the aim of wit is to throw light,

for its province is words and ideas, its method surprise, its audience the intelligent,

this woman Rance proved very fond of saying facetely[[267]](#footnote-268) what to everyone else was coarse, asinary, or callous; next, becoming unwittingly of malapropisms[[268]](#footnote-269) an enamourite, – oh the errors and obscurity, the mistakes, the confusion, the annoyance!, that was suffered by Curteis in her ill use of words, – with her new voice, – alas retaining too many vestiges of its old, which at its heat, truth to say, was that of the nethermost[[269]](#footnote-270) gutter-slush[[270]](#footnote-271), – she removed as much colour from the face of her husband, as was given to those of their ever more rare visitors and hosts; on every seventh night, at exactly nine of the clock, far more out of duty than desire, entering knockless her black-dark bedchamber, seeking and finding her centre with his own, plunging until he roared, at nine-twenty Curteis departed for his own bed; then one day in 1601, – in the forty-third year of the reign of sovereign Lady Elizabeth, Queen of England, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith &c, – Emily admitted, with a forced blush, that she was in a special condition.

Following 41 hours of labour came out a son, whom they called Matthew, who, if owning to the nose of his father, by owning too to the common waywardness of his mother, was at age ten run away to London, – called by Bede : *Lundonia*, – to see new motions, but wherefrom too he was soon gone : via a court, via that finisher of the law the carnifex[[271]](#footnote-272), then via a gallus[[272]](#footnote-273) ending his life dancing upon nothing[[273]](#footnote-274), was thrown into the unmarked earth of a potter's field[[274]](#footnote-275), all for stealing two stale buns; but back when this Matthew was but two years old, in 1603, came the news, – so unexpected because the loins of Curteis did all but again sloom[[275]](#footnote-276), – Emily was again gone with child, and their second son Mark, born with but an hour of struggle, far from exhausting the mother so properly consumed the father, with an affliction the physics obscurely called then *corpus debile*[[276]](#footnote-277) permitting him, tucking his loins safely away into everlasting desuetude[[277]](#footnote-278), to go no more again out into the world, he retired permanently to his bedchamber well preparate his heart for a not uncomfortable strae-death[[278]](#footnote-279), (which occurred in his sixtieth year in 1604); one early evening, as this decaying husband lay abed writing morbid iambic[[279]](#footnote-280) poetry,

lame always in the hinder leg, in monotonous common meter[[280]](#footnote-281), of constant catalectic foot[[281]](#footnote-282), – for Curteis gave to certain words, and from certain other words took away, a meaning not there intended, not there to spare, – pertaining either to his welcome demise or to a brief and final rescue by his Muse, every page of which, (now rescued, in the archive), like himself, would within the year go all to the Earth,

this sloy[[282]](#footnote-283) of a wife, with almost their every valuable, suddenly and wordlessly took herself away to far Cardiff, where with urgence and not a modicum of reserve freely gave herself away, – to many men some said, for she was alas of a sudden nympholeptic[[283]](#footnote-284), – yet she received nothing in return, neither coin nor child, rarely even thankings.

Upon the abrupt flight of the mother, the young, distraught, inexperienced maid, Mary, conjuring[[284]](#footnote-285) her own mother to come from home to help care for the two deserted children, – explaining that this be Matthew Troke, and this be Mark Troke, – and when her mother with palpitating heart ponderously squatted between the children, and as baby Mark sweetly smiled at her, two year-old Matthew said, *Be you our new mama?*, the woman wept; the name of this worthy good woman, – trembling with both fear and excitement at the belief that mothering may after all be no longer far behind her, – at this time of 48 summers, – whereof for the last three she had ceased to be after the manner of women[[285]](#footnote-286), – was Vesta Yorn, a poor costermonger, a long-lonely widow who found the two young children a godsend, a joyance in the placid emptiness of her cottage life; for nearly seven years her large bright vegetable-garden resounded with the playful painful yells of her adoptees, until, as stated, Matthew one day ran away, whereupon Mark aged nearly nine first cried with the very greatest hostility, left off his food, and moped long in silence, but when the bruises given him by his vicious brother were defaded almost to nothing, he smiled, for *in futuro*[[286]](#footnote-287) he considered himself unigenital[[287]](#footnote-288).

As nouri[[288]](#footnote-289) Mark helped pull the old cart of his foster-mother, in village after village with soprano voice yelling abroad of their fresh, colourful provender, so wearing the days into years, one day a kempt[[289]](#footnote-290) roadster[[290]](#footnote-291) it was that stood patiently between the shafts of a now gaily painted covered wagon; as Vesta served her customers, listened to gossip, to scandals of a humorous or dangerous turn, Mark, now a big strong man of full barytone✓ voice, after attending all day to their large vegetable-garden, in the evenings gave himself up to his few books,

which, as not absolutely dead things, – (as Milton would one soon day claim), – have been called cold but sure friends, prompt, steady, and faithfast,

and, as always before his sleep, to pondering the Lemuel Document, notably the mysterious reference to something called a fochesafe or vouchsafe, as well the prediction that Trokes would have no easy way of it,

(the which prophecy, despite already proven above, when real and intended persecution and vehement trouble one far day came upon them, would be seen tragically verified in the murderous actions of their enemyful Inimicus, as well, far lesser, in the troublous person of their tyrant-murderess Ursula, as well as in the Troke son Malcolm, such an arrant fool-monger as could liveth not again).

One day, when Mark was 20, saying he had a young lady for her to meet, and with her blessing would like be wed, when with that surplus of pleasure over pain Vesta had wept sufficiently for his happiness, she went to the garden to meet Marjory, at 18 the sole child of one Isaac Jenkins, occasional weaver of fine cloth, member of the Guild,

aye, and lately well-to-do, for this reason : one night, beholding a dream of fire, come morningtide, when time hath wound up the wheels of his day-watch, he providently sold off a property which later unsuspiciously burned down;

at first gently, Marjory urged her father to expede[[291]](#footnote-292) the pressing matter of her marriage, but, due to additional pressures of business, deep in his correspondence, half-listening to her dissembling pleading, he postponed day upon day, until she chantpleure[[292]](#footnote-293) confessed she was with child, whereupon with an exclaim of dismay, turning as pale as pearl, right there in his smoky cramped paper-strewn office on Market Place in the town of Wells, listening now to silence with all his ears, Isaac set a date anon-rightes[[293]](#footnote-294).

With the winter of 1623 a bitter winter, by reason believed of wetting her legs crossing a too warped foot-brig[[294]](#footnote-295), Marjory catching a chill of the chest,

with rheumatic head spoiling stomach with distillations, with distempered stomach filling head with raw vapours,

following the interpretation of her urines, one of the doctors, – boasting that his judgement in piss commeth little behind the skilfullest in that profession, – shaking his head, as the other, – overcrowing that he hath recovered sundry out of far more desperate forlorn extremities, – nodding, yet Marjory disbelieving both,

for her intuition inferred to her that if such men had been set up and promoted with great zeal in times past, in these coming ages of far more light, far more knowledge, such enervative methods as bleeding, blistering, and starving, – proving long of doubtful efficacy even to the healthy frame, yet outright dangerous to persons of even slightly inferior vitality, – must be disclaimed and thrown out,

sending the fools away, giving herself to Nature, who best knoweth how to work, by gathering herself up because of the child growing in her, Marjory, soon no more sadly bad[[295]](#footnote-296), was well enough to be at her sewing, and, narrowly eyeing the calendar, smiling at the kicks and the nevils[[296]](#footnote-297) in her belly.

With but a week remaining to the wedding, the clergyman suddenly took bad with an ague, so as not to disappoint this old friend of the family by finding another, poor Marjory was forced to wait a week, then two weeks, then with her water not distant far from breaking, the still unwell man of god, manually forced to it, solemnly but hurriedly, – yet properly, – gave sanction to the union of Mark & Marjory; as the minister by his curate was hasted✓ back to his warm bed at fireside, – where waited his devoted housemaid Choad with blankets and a flagon of flip[[297]](#footnote-298), – father Isaac and husband John by galloping carriage rushed Marjory home, where with the aid of two waiting doctors was delivered of a female child which seeming at first vigorous, in a few days pining to nothing, died; on the top floor of her family house, whereto the young couple had removed, four more births followed, two of full term, two of living babes, and two of them males, but with her milk so thin, even from so robustuous a bosom, what with the air from the street so unfresh, and with the times generally still so mortal, no gitt[[298]](#footnote-299) lived more than a few short months; then in 1629 poor Marjory herself was taken at age 24, by, of all things, the infection of a prolapsed[[299]](#footnote-300) uterus.

With the death earlier that same year of his *socer*[[300]](#footnote-301) Isaac, newly a moderately well-to-do widower, young Mark Troke, – a man of mind of firmness, of depth, but heart-broke, dearn[[301]](#footnote-302), therefore far too trusting, – was all at once set upon by old colleagues of his father-in-law, pleading for loans, or demanding retribution[[302]](#footnote-303) of unevidenced debts, or calling twice for their money, &c, in short : um-be-set[[303]](#footnote-304), um-be-lapped[[304]](#footnote-305), gypped, soon fleeced of scarce less than the house he lived in, John grew of a sudden closed of heart, answered not his own door, and in deepest night pensively wandered the far by-lanes; one night, walking until cold dawn, finding himself deep in a different countryside, come a month more was far away, for given reason enough Trokes were ever pelasgic[[305]](#footnote-306); dressed now in sorry drab, but with eyes, now a little flinted, now a little lifted from the ground, soon he was actively seeking that experience which would give him spirit just enough to invigorate a nature which had so shrunk his wealth and station : one day at a public fête in Plymouth, accosted by a young lady, who, because of his travel-worn appearance, his sad brown eyes, offering him a fresh half loaf of bread and a flagon of thick milk, still warm from the oven, the cow, would have been shyly off to offer her charity to the next poor wretch, were it not for his gentle surprised manner, his offer of a silver shilling, and at her refusal his smiling malacophonous[[306]](#footnote-307) gratitude; thus speaking a little more he telling her his name, she told him hers, which was Leonora Wells, (destined to become the first Vouchsafe), whereupon bowing to her he, she to him smiling curtseying, – for they were a well-bred gentleman and lady, – her mother appearing, Mark invited Leonora, – with her mother to chaperone of course, – to visit him at his house in Wells so closed up desolate, and after a full week of conferring they accepted of his invitement.

Not to linger, Mark and Leonora in this year of 1630 wedding, upon her own clever young head applying herself wholesomely to their accounts, doing the sums that Mark had not, learning what was the law, what the differences between legitimate creditor and debtor, – the former, when the grieve[[307]](#footnote-308) called, thenceforth settling, or going to the rogue-house[[308]](#footnote-309), or vanishing, with the letter promptly settling, – soon no arrearage[[309]](#footnote-310) remained; by these acts teaching her husband new wits and the strong use of them, in time, – by also advising he buy up this small business, sell that small holding, – they were soon far more hale in wealth than ever a Troke before; the while children came, of course, for they must, with first the twins, Ann and David in 1631, for Trokes were ever gemelliparous[[310]](#footnote-311),

yet always dizygotic[[311]](#footnote-312) : identical twins, – here noting what is lately said, that 50% of identical twins, and 15% of fraternal, are to some degree schizophrenic, – result from one fertilised ova splitting into two separate embryos, fraternal twins from the fertilization of multiple ova,

then in the following year a laughing son Paul, then in 1634 another son, a gifted, Emil who at first a crink[[312]](#footnote-313), was soon no more so : four of the healthiest, happiest Troke offspring seen for many generations; ah!, but one day, in 1646, in Taunton, on the river Tone, wherebesides was their new house, proud and resplendent, they were flung all from their little sailing boat by a sudden violent squall, and, – the water deep, the little ones knowing not the motion of swimming, – all but the parents were carried away adronque[[313]](#footnote-314); when grief had run some its course, and they again to their loins turned, came their second twins Victor & Samuel, whom cosseted were, keeped✓ well out of storms, and far from water, that universal solvent.

When Victor, – who was quiet, dark-eyed, – and Samuel, – who was fair, laughing, ferly[[314]](#footnote-315), but in manywise beautiful, – were nine years old, and in the safe keeping of a cook and nurse, the parents, twinners[[315]](#footnote-316) on the outskirts of Canterbury, – not on a pilgrimage, of course, but simply to *see* the cathedral, – contracting a mysterious wasting disease of perhaps tropical origin, (utterly unidentifiable, even at this day), Mark & Leonora were laid up feverous in a comfortable herberwe[[316]](#footnote-317), but alas without even the strength to go tabid[[317]](#footnote-318) to the window to look at least once upon that most magnifical example then extant of religious architecture at its most carnivorous; after a week, when Mark succumbed to that promise life must always keep, and when two months later the sale of her last possessions could no longer defray the cost of her keeping, placed in the care of the church, – for as the couple were carrying no sufficiently personal papers, despite exhaustive inquiries, neither their full identity nor the whereabouts of any relations could ever be established, – in a state of perpetual weakness and amnesia, widow Leonora remained alive for 43 years; (in 1689, the year son Victor aged 41 married Jane Young, Leonora at 84 promptly passed away,

this would have been at 11:37 on Wednesday the nineteenth of October 1689, when Leonora Troke, born Wells, had lived 84 years, seven months, three days, reigning as the first Vouchsafe 58 years, and five or so months,

for it was her Vouchsafe gift alone which had kept her alive, so that it could be passed on to her successor).

In 1658, – at about the time coffee was introducing into England, coffee-houses set up, – well, the dear knows[[318]](#footnote-319)!, from seeming neverwhere, – dressed improbably in a tight lake[[319]](#footnote-320) gown with a very low *encolure*[[320]](#footnote-321) beset by a giant purple breast-knot[[321]](#footnote-322), – a woman appeared at the home of the orphan twins Samuel & Victor aged ten, claiming to be their grandmother Emily Rance, – by now a wily, lately disprisoned, fubsy[[322]](#footnote-323) baggage of 83, – and with her voluble cacology[[323]](#footnote-324), a dog-eared paper or two, thus as sole relative of the grandsons proving to all the law her exclusive right if not quite yet of inheritance then of occupancy of the residence, before an astonished populace this horrid woman proceeded almost at once to allow the lovely house people itself with a numerous company of low-lived ne'er-do-wells of the vulgar and criminal class, some lately dwelling in Alsatia[[324]](#footnote-325),

such as a natty-lad[[325]](#footnote-326), a swell-mobsman[[326]](#footnote-327), a drawlatch[[327]](#footnote-328), a common fingerer[[328]](#footnote-329), a bid-stand[[329]](#footnote-330), a cadator[[330]](#footnote-331), a bayn[[331]](#footnote-332), and a scape-gallows[[332]](#footnote-333),

as well smugglers, and all manner of demented, depraved ruffians, so that the handsome dwelling quickly acquired the reputation of a flash-house[[333]](#footnote-334), and oh, if they were all not yet gallows-ripe, these panderly[[334]](#footnote-335), sixpenny rascals, then once certain[[335]](#footnote-336) it is : they were deserving, every last one of them, of rods in piss[[336]](#footnote-337)!

What with first their guardian, then their housekeeper, then in the night their aged tutor, fleeing, the neglected twins, despite the constant revel-coyle[[337]](#footnote-338), managing one way or other to shift for themselves, after three months were awoken one night in their bedchamber by a withered figure in stature of the highest size of men, a lately excommunicated cleric who, – because diverse doctrines through ways contrarious doth many minds, — especially if their manners unstable are and frail, — distract and sore encumber, – by clamberscull[[338]](#footnote-339) hard-taken, wielding an immense mahogany marlin-spike, in a resonant bass voice, booming,

**—** *Domandum est corpus!*[[339]](#footnote-340), the two boys leaping shrieking nightgowned up, first one was pursued through the house, and loudly questioned, **—** *Loquerisne linguam Latinam?*[[340]](#footnote-341), then the other, **—** *none Latine loquitur?*[[341]](#footnote-342), then again the first, **—** *vos operor non narro Latin?*[[342]](#footnote-343), &c,

– all this before any amount of laughing from the comrogues[[343]](#footnote-344), – then out the open front door down the street ran the two terrified boys, in their ears the near whistle of his weapon, one glance whereof would have let out their harnes[[344]](#footnote-345); aye!, three silent but panting figures fleeing elseward through the sleeping town *pari pasu*[[345]](#footnote-346), until the mad cleric, – of name Jame Lucid, – eventually slowed, stopped, collapsed prone, and gasped,

**—** *Estoy in mis trece*![[346]](#footnote-347), *deus, volo non valeo!*[[347]](#footnote-348), then rising to his kneen✓ wept with exceeding sore weeping, **—** *O deus, non sum qualis eram*[[348]](#footnote-349)*!*

As small as was then the town, the brothers soon became lost from each other, Samuel the more so because his dyscrasia[[349]](#footnote-350) enjoyed to deny him the last two of those five wits[[350]](#footnote-351) thought sufficient for survival; despite seeming half the time a one deficient in sense, Samuel was nevertheless a beautiful child, not only to the eyes but indeed to the heart, which like the liver, – lately usurped from the seat of violent or romancical feelings, – is now reputed naught but an essential organ; though it is said a strong man must labour, – for no man strong or mighty from labour should be idle, – a valiant man fight, a wise man show himself : because a fair and beautiful person seemingly doth all with ease, helplessly, Samuel, without any painstaking, learning to live by such wits as he had, or the half rather, – for at best his head never did contain any great amount of brains, – wheretoever he wandered, whilst men soon smiled, some hiddenly cranking their temples with horizontal index, older women smiling gave him alms, whilst jill[[351]](#footnote-352) and younghede[[352]](#footnote-353) lough[[353]](#footnote-354) and gave coin for his clever if somewhat ribald quatrains, and children ran about to see him, wondering at him, smiling, viewing him 'round; when he was more grown it astonied[[354]](#footnote-355) everyone to learn that because of a certain pintulary[[355]](#footnote-356) disformity,

actually his paraphimotic[[356]](#footnote-357), almost mucronated[[357]](#footnote-358) sexual member was said to be, – indeed, in truth, near was!, – in bigness in like to that of a German sausage of largest sort, but despite his wondersly✓ maim, his tarriwags[[358]](#footnote-359) were of very average size,

there awakened even in the most fastidious of women, – unwelcomely occasionally in some men too, – the haptic urge[[359]](#footnote-360).

Wishing to tarry no longer✓ space, particularly with a Troke male who furthered the quest nothing, following intimacies unseemly, scandalous, almost fatal,

yet truly : Samuel was not so giant that in an occasional women he could not find a comfortable, even commodious, cellarage, for in literature, as much as in life, it seemeth ever the unfair case that the large man purchaseth to himself envy, the large woman not, and yet as there is no man who would not have a woman smaller, so is there barely a woman who would not have a man larger,

beside abortments, called then castlings, there came also births, but as if to despite his own beauty, only one of his babes was beautiful, aye, one child only was not an unformed stillbirth, or born at six months an hispidulous[[360]](#footnote-361) monster, all wretched twisted of organ and blood, or at nine months an angel all smiles and virtue on its two faces, its taloned hands imploring, its little hooves kicking, (and letting this not withal be taken for common examples, there was ever the monster in Trokes, producing up to this time such abnormalities as dwarfism, triple dentition, double uvula, – which is that ovopyriform[[361]](#footnote-362) ball hanging in the throat, – and a short fleshy or bony tail appended to the coccygeal[[362]](#footnote-363) region).

Then in 1677 it one day came to pass that Samuel 29, – in Exeter this was, he giddy, certainly, beautiful still, ever foolhappy[[363]](#footnote-364), and not an inch less hugeous, – a very new feeling coming over him very strong, climbing into an estate a high wall, laying him down in a beautiful garden-bed given wholly to the fig-marigold, and midday arriving : opening all the flowers, – which are wrongly said to know nothing of the blights, the distortions, which beset the human being, – he sighed, and, very quietly, very calmly, short while after, died; for leagues or hours around, when after flew the words that Silly Sam was found dead and buried naked[[364]](#footnote-365), his ingenuous smile, his peculiarities also, – a subject which, given chance, mirth would be pleased to linger longer upon, – of course his beauty, and everywhere his wonderfully allantoid[[365]](#footnote-366) member, all were lost : these be heavy news.

His sole surviving offspring, – a strange one enough as might be expected, – was a girl called Rachel; now because so much, for want of language, plain namelessness, cannot be made to re-enter this mortal reality, many events, for want simply of the words, must be overpassed in this narrative, – not alone of irrelevance but moments of magic, of pathos, of other things, – the end of this lass need not be, even be she doubly disqualified from inclusion in this history : not only a female, but born out of wedlock, a bastardess, for as one of the ten lines of the Lemuel Document states :

Troke bloud shall naught be impure of offspring wedlocke out;

but it must be upon the clearest understanding that if this history now indulges itself in the remembrance of so lovely a girl fated to so tragic an end, such cannot become a habit?, very well.

Now as much for her person as for her parts Rachel was all comely, all sweet, her radiant skin was of olivaster[[366]](#footnote-367), her looks feline, her hair yellowest, in nature she was lovely, but alas given to daydreamt visions, which caused her own rustic people simply out of fear to shun her; one day at harvest-time, during fourings[[367]](#footnote-368), standing up in her long smock, with no clouds for full a many league round, without wily beguiles or hysteria, slowly, painfully slowly to witness, raising her slender brown arm, with muddied finger, she pointed exactly skyward, for she saw there a vision remarkable at least for its utterly incomprehensibility, (but in a far future day, such as these, – believed by many the after ages of the world, – unworthy even of a glance), calling it a silver chariot from the stars; first she was mocked, as was usual, then, standing there still pointing, admonished, asked to recant, yet still pointing, she was jostled, slapped, then chased angrily from the field.

Following a wittenage-mote[[368]](#footnote-369) held that evening in which she was formally expelled the village, Rachel departing, sleeping the night in a far ruined barn with only an ailing goat for company, in the days to come eating berries, grass, leaves, sleeping sometimes in a wanwood[[369]](#footnote-370), or a hedge, or a ditch, none of which offered truly overmuch in shelter, yet sometimes, when she was lucky, burrowing deep into the warm snug of a haystack, research has since shown that her thoughtless wanders were as remarkable for their strangely pattern as for their thoroughness, for she successively crossed every single morgen[[370]](#footnote-371) of a quintant[[371]](#footnote-372), every point thereof was her home, to which she dearly longed to return; but at each of her five approaches, – bearing a gift of a bunch of wild flowers and of five-leaf clovers she was always finding, – sighted, villagers gathering, cruel words and gestures hurled, a warning arrow, stones thrown, turnips, even copper coins, so each kept this lonely, innocent, beautiful, yet too feared young girl at a distance in his or her own fashion.

Thereupon, her forlornness acknowledged unanswerable, setting a straight course to nowhere in particular but eastward, with winter so toward coming then a sudden bad turn of weather, with bitter cold, days whole of sleet and gale, near to freezing utterly lost in country far away, in a deep wood, – itself part of a forest, which in these times meaned✓ an area of unenclosed countryside consisting of a variable mixture of lands : woodland, heathland, scrub, and agricultural, – Rachel came through the mists upon a wall, then a gates to building, a minchery[[372]](#footnote-373),

whereat, (still, even to this day, though the wood is gone), hale, bright, yet the foolishest of all womenkind, praying almost round the clock, hide away from many features of their species, the better to commit that heresy of allowing a too new mind deny their ancient biology its wise rightful voice, thus making them enemies to their own happiness, their own species;

at these stout gate, her strength so feebled waxing passing faint, after calling and knocking long, – exactly as Lemuel near two centuries before, – she pleaded with a sky, – which at times seemed exclusively her own to answerably look upon, – to let her not die, not yet, but none coming to her aid until a brief hiatus in the wind and thunder, at last heard, coming the diverse women, – some stately, others hurrying, others again standing fearful, others yet again tearful, – taking in the perished[[373]](#footnote-374) girl, stripping her of her frozen rags, embathing her in a large wooden tub, bundling her up in soft chalons[[374]](#footnote-375) wove by their own clever hands, giving her rich soup in an *écuelle*[[375]](#footnote-376), and continuing to press food upon her from their impressive board[[376]](#footnote-377), they placed her in a warm bed in a vacant dortor[[377]](#footnote-378).

With her health springing forth speedily, by patiently heeding all directives, both docile and clamorous, hardy Rachel proved not only a boon to the garden, but an example to all if not exactly of piousness then of perfect obedience, and though she believed only with her eyes, – great eyes of blue depths, blue, darkly, deeply, beautifully blue, – she was now wise enough to say nothing of what she occasionally observed in the sky,

the manner of which, – or *how* she saw, – there was nothing sufficiently uncommon in it, not worth the setting down, the details of which, – *what* she saw, – inexpressibly uninteresting in this age, shall be for all time omitted;

but when spring was standing conqueror, with winter at her feet, childed seemed she, but impossibly, for the plain indisputable fact was that she had never formed a criminal, – nor come to that even a tender, – connection with any man, for when by a ragamuff accosted on the by-ways, or in the small lazar house[[378]](#footnote-379) adjoining their retreat, with merely a look of her remarkable eyes, a shake of her head, or if necessary with bloodied nails and bruises, she always fleetest away, for the sum is this : Rachel remained to the end of her days intact; wind she called it, later water, yet powerful purgatives, – called then a *flagellum medicorum*[[379]](#footnote-380), – flayed but purged her not.

Those who believed her innocent whispered that her condition was surely come by one of the barns or haystacks wherein she had told them she had slept, wherein, or so they had heard, resided still fresh and warm that seed of famed resilience : by the lonely sons of farmers manually spilt, quickly, often, and copiously, others, remembering the sickly goat, wondered if this animal had known her in her sleep, for if so then it was surely a creature of incomparable delicacy, gentleness, not to say precision; meanwhile, as others fancied more darkly, – some so fantastically that, cooling toward her, whispering turned away at her approach, when before they turned toward, the better to welcome and smile, – so did a malice, – born of those usual ingredients : fear, — which is nearly always good thoughts warping reality, not bad thoughts making real, — envy, and ignorance, – grow daily stronger; recalling vaguely a passage read to her long ago from the bible book,

the very useful purpose of which, she was told, was to give shelter and rest to such terrors and horrors as keep in check that multitude of man which is ever fickle, full of lawless desires, unreasoning angers, violent passions,

thinking that her condition, by coming of some magical origin, had rendered her divinely parthenoparous[[380]](#footnote-381), she found herself not alone with this thought, for one day summoned before the never met hegumene[[381]](#footnote-382), a very elderly abbess, in the accusatory converse, – because there was not anything in these allegations, a longer disputation about so plain a case shall not need, – the devil,

said at that day, in a thousand several shapes, after diverse fashions, with several engines, illusions, and by many names, in numerous places and countries, was sent abroad to bull[[382]](#footnote-383) the habitators[[383]](#footnote-384) of the Earth,

did not long remain unmentioned.

There now enters this sad story a sadistic ecclesiastic,

Nathanial Crawshay the name of this hilding[[384]](#footnote-385), and because a fanatical believer in the measures adopted by the inquisitor Thomas de Torquemada, then a century dead, and so troublous overall to his church, an anathema was preparing against him[[385]](#footnote-386), but which, because of his mobility was not yet presented into his hands,

who, by developing his skills in recognising witches from *Malleus Maleficarum* by Jacob Sprenger, dead then two centuries, as well from the copious and detailed writings of Matthew Hopkins, – called *Witchfinder General*, – dead near a half, after looking wrothful close at the hands of the girl, then, successively, into her bluest eyes, into her mouth filled with whitest teeth, her tiny ears, then stripping off her coarse habit, and after careful, inchmeal examination, finding upon her ilium[[386]](#footnote-387) precisely what he was looking for : a supernumerary nipple, – which five percent of all women can own to, – and finally with bloodied fingers gleefully announcing her parthenos[[387]](#footnote-388), he announced aloud that this too was fully in keeping with her diabolic seeding.

After fastidiously washing his hands in three waters, – with manifest satisfaction drying them, then with repugnance straight throwing the towel from him out the window, – he promised the elderly abbess that what the girl brought forth would not be human, nay!, but would bear in all probability horns, a tail, and powers diabolic to their sweet world; in an arthrology[[388]](#footnote-389) of his own invention demanding then to✓ his surdimutist[[389]](#footnote-390) adjuvant[[390]](#footnote-391),

a hunchback of name Hobbet, who, ringing a brass hand-bell to announce his outgrossing passage, like so many deformed persons was bold and extreme sharp, for he could read and write Latin, Greek, French, German, and Spanish,

that he prepare a stake with faggots; ignoring the now outraged pleadings of the abbess that such was fell, – which means cruel, – illegal, even evil, the cleric went mindful to the window to take in of his god, – beside whom in heaven his chair would now be less afar, – an air which would shortly be far less impure and tainted.

Here a brief but important note on the above word *evil*, which because for a superlative of *bad* no other quite suffices, this conveniable word will often appear in this saga, very well, but this needs also to be clearest stated : evilty comes not from outside, – for it has never been there, simply cannot exist there, – but is exclusively anthropogenic[[391]](#footnote-392), it come only from man, and solely from man goes out, spreadingly, of mighty contagiousity, as easily infecting and making evilful he who is willing, sometimes rejoicingly victimated, as he who otherwise would never, nor could ever.

Following all this came further twists and turns to the brief tableau that was the sad end of the short life of sweet Rachel Troke, – for instance : an attempted rescue, an imperfect poisoning of the mad ecclesiastic, &c, – but these shall not be elaborated upon, forasmuch as all this, – however interesting, and however it all might prove even further to be, – is, as stated, immateriate to a saga which, containing something startling on every page, both in language and in story, needs no such artifices; mention will only be made of the decease of both victim and felon, firstly she : following disfiguring torture, soon confessing to any and every crime or evil, tied broken to a stake, (like an hundred thousand others during the three centuries to 1750), to be burnt whilst alive, the anemophilous[[392]](#footnote-393) girl upturned her angelic face to a sky where final perfect visions awaited to console and embrace her, whereas of other vitality showed she almost none; as the flames engulfed her, it was first to the annoyance of the ecclesiastic that she cried not out like all that at the stake have the fire set to them, then to his extreme miscomfort, his too slight discredit, – for his fee of 20 shillings was now in his pocket, – that he and many saw through the flames a flawless male child burst forth from her belly, tumble into the conflagration of faggots, and there, screaming, writhing, blackening, and then like its mother, *convicta et combusta*[[393]](#footnote-394), hissing, crackling, at last became quiet : all very horrible, no doubt, but as this was the world then and how it goeth, no more need be said.

Lastly the fate of he the felon : in two years and three innocent deaths more he was taken by the King's men, imprisoned, and, begging for a mercy which he believed his god,

fancied the supreme disposer of all, against whose inscrutable counsels, – sanctioning banishment, torture, drowning, stoning, hanging, burning, strangling, and detruncation[[394]](#footnote-395) of the head, – he believed it was vain as well as impious to murmur,

did not permit him to receive,

not from some unworthiness in his person, neither some inordinateness in his desire, nor some unfitness or unseasonableness in the thing desired, nor for a defect of love, nor something or other not right on his part, no, but simply from that inattention common to the inexistent,

surrounded by ghosts with purple collars, ghosts with robes of fire, he died screaming without even time or thought enough to say yours sincerely goodbye to Assumption, Lent, and Epiphany.

Meanwhile Victor, twin brother to Samuel : wandering far and wide, after numerous adventures finding himself one day in full manhood in the far wild mountains tolerably high of snowy Wales where dwelt with incredible uncouthness that jealously guarded ignorance of the montigenous[[395]](#footnote-396), he was employed as a shepherd by a family called Hardimore, and from morn to eve with his crummock[[396]](#footnote-397) tended their fleecy properties,

which he quickly found so insufferably stupid he called them, – as did Aristotle, — a keeper of slaves, — and please pardon the ancient expression, – f—king sheeps, for so it clearly seemed to this man, whom no one would ever have considered a s—t-fire[[397]](#footnote-398), that these two words, – which to Victor answered to each other well enough etymologically, – would be forever melded into that excerebrose[[398]](#footnote-399) singleton[[399]](#footnote-400) : sheeps;

fled from a famined Ireland toward hope, survivors of the family Hardimore had found it surely, hope, for, prospering well, came there eight healthy children, one of whom was named Elizabeth; after objection and approval, travail and encouragement, – for the large family was divided over the worthiness of the outlander, – she and Victor were permitted to wed in the small village of Y Graig, (now vanished), whereafter in 1681 they brought to this Earth three healthy boys with but ten months between, their names : Thomas, Seamus, and Glynn, who, brazed[[400]](#footnote-401) by that neglect come of placing survival of sheeps above nurturing and instruction, and commerce above simple love, these three brothers, much given to wildness, were soon the same to hardness, then to cruelness; when caught at wrongdoing their modicum of remorse immediately faded to nothing when the punishment, often quite severe, – which of course left them corseder[[401]](#footnote-402), – was concluded.

One day, out of no more than simple boredom, after pouring upon a sleeping vagrom[[402]](#footnote-403), a jugful of tallow, – stolen for the very purpose, – then setting fire on him, after mowing[[403]](#footnote-404) and laughing as he ran screaming aflame, falling, rolling, moaning, smouldering, begging and groaning, suddenly no more amusing, what little life remained in him kicked they with all their six heavy boots out, – hard to believe them be Trokes!, – whereupon they decided to go fishing; lounging on the bank of a rushing stream, the hooks of their light tender fishing rods of hazel baited with dew-worms[[404]](#footnote-405), they leuch[[405]](#footnote-406) as they endlessly mimicked their poor victim, – for they that horrid joy enjoyed which made all others mourn, – then after roasting and eating two fair fish went home to their supper; their poor mother, sensing new mischief, rated[[406]](#footnote-407), then with an oven pyle[[407]](#footnote-408) beat her worthless sons until with if not pride then with what she thought far worse, indifference, they confessing to killing a mere nobody, poor Elizabeth, who had simply had enough, fleeing to her bed, died a few months later at age 30 of what was then called softening of the brain[[408]](#footnote-409); directly after of his wife the funeral whereat he was almost sole mourner, for the shame of it all, the grief, the guilt of producing only monster sons, – with no map in his head of the good ways and the bad, nor of the safe passes and the dangerous, &c, – the distraught Victor, first walking, then running, forthfared far away.

With the disappearance of their father, Thomas, Seamus, and Glynn were passed from home to home until, desperate glad to be rid of them, they were sent in 1695 aged 14, 13, and 12, to a sort of orphanage in Cardiff, whereupon came almost immediately the triple violation of one Sarah Trepanier, a teacher of English, who, – if a fallen woman, was certainly a repentant, and if not high-born then a very decent lady overall,

as an unfortunate consequence of acknowledging only once her priapic[[409]](#footnote-410) heat, conceiving, then in imperfect privacy begetting a daughter who as well as withered was soon blesséd dead, so in contrition of her sole shame to this far land in mitigation came, and almost straight to her second and last calamity at the hands of three young brutes;

unable now to face any life at all, she wrote,

at length too, for she was afraid that by withholding even the very smallest detail of her triple ravishment, she would not sufficiently mitigate her guilt to earn that refrigerium[[410]](#footnote-411), – of which Origen speaketh, – which ensured her burning in hell would not be forever,

of her two violations,

(and truly in so effigurative[[411]](#footnote-412) a style, – though never in one strain for two paragraphs together, yet without any unnecessary ornament, tricks, or displays of lighting, – this offensive, but not vulgar because true, immensely crafted document, as a wondrous celebrated example of *facetiae*[[412]](#footnote-413), – before its retrieval to the Troke archive, – in 1863 found a choice place in one of the more private wings of the Vatican library),

whereupon she took poison; upon hearing of her death and confession, the three brothers, pursued by an incensed mob, to save themselves harmless, ran in three directions clean away with all the haste they could make.

Thomas, adventuring the next year to sea, died with✓ a snakebite in Rabat in Morocco at age 19, directly after raping a young Arab girl, Seamus, becoming first a sort of Abraham Man[[413]](#footnote-414), then a pilliard[[414]](#footnote-415), died at age 26 in 1708 of his heart in a fresh-scythed field in Burgundy, and Glynn, – despite in Tunis, for stealing an antique solleret[[415]](#footnote-416), surviving apellous[[416]](#footnote-417) 1000 lashes, administered *seriatim*[[417]](#footnote-418) with a pizzle[[418]](#footnote-419), – contracted lung sickness[[419]](#footnote-420), and utterly alone on the porch of a pretty cottage in the downs of Yorkshire, in a chestnut rocker made with his own hands, in late May of 1709, as the day wore to evening staring in godless wonder at a sunset, – the light disporting in ever mingling dyes of screaming colour, – after a short life, but of so many perilous hurts, with a gulp and a cough of blood, took to the sky at age 26.

As these three brothers were denied one living descendant, legitimate or otherwise, the Troke line might again have died out were it not that their father Victor, one day ceasing running from the shame of his murderous sons, near the town of Whitland,

medievally called Ty Gwyn ar Daf, called then Hendy-gwyn, or Old White House, or Hendy-gwyn ar Daf, or Old White House on the River Taf,

where it chanced him to make a journey into, in Carmarthenshire, still in Wales, finding and reading fascinated *A Booke of Sundry Draughtes* by Walter Gedde published in 1613, after patiently serving his time becoming a verrer[[420]](#footnote-421), at age 41 in 1689, met and soon married a rather quiet letterless woman of 31, Jane Reading Young, who, upon the very day of their wedding began to suffer strange, not to say supraliminal[[421]](#footnote-422), experiences, for she as little knew, as her husband similarly, – despite cryptic mention made in the Lemuel Document, in its wallet, around his neck, – that she was now a Vouchsafe, the second.

During the seven years of their marriage, for Victor died in 1696 of his stomach, – on 19th January 1693/4, to relate precisely, – Jane bore him only one son Harold, after which, suffering the constancy of increasingly strange vague assaults upon all her senses, her health by the anguishing of it all soon ruined out, – for the stirrings in her mind, — great because never brought out to the distinct consciousness either of written or spoken words, therefore never investigated, — because unacknowledged, unaddressed, undermined and rotted her system, – Jane lived on as an invalid until 1718; due then to his mother too sam-hale[[422]](#footnote-423) to raise him, placed in the keeping of his sole relations, his Welsh grandparents, thus Harold, as each day packed its load of strength into his frame, grew up healthily in the snow-capped mountains of Wales amid sheeps and sheepsdogs, within hail of wild deers, within sight of wild pigs, and within sound of an occasional last bear.

When Victor was 15, and with the adopted daughter of a scholarly shepherd, – with whom whilst discussing matters philosophical, he nightly played chess, – having his first intimacy with a girl of sweet forward nature, and of sweet name, which was Gwendoline Longton, (who at 25, when Jane the second Vouchsafe died at age 60, would become the third Vouchsafe), – though she was barely 12, – only that very month experiencing her menarche[[423]](#footnote-424), – she became at 13 first a child-wife, – small, boyish, prone to occasional lowerings[[424]](#footnote-425), – then, more healthy than seemed possible, a child-mother of a daughter, which crying at the first much, became soon bonny and beautiful, whom they named Gwyneth, – which in Welsh means happiness, – and then, two years later in September, – once, the seventh month, – came a son Anthony, then shortly thereafter fist evidence of a third child; but one day whilst in the far treeline chopping firewood, Harold, aged then 19, cut his ancle✓ so very deep, ere reaching his home, a crude but comfortable stone farmhouse halfway up a mountain, he walked, stopped, walked, hopped, stopped, sat, lay back, fainted, awoke, stood, fainted, and bled to death; during his funeral, daughter Gwyneth, left in the safe care of her grandmother, died when their beloved cat, whom they called Pig, silently smothered her during an afternoon nap.

Because her husband, showing her the original document, had carefully explained the Troke quest in all its wondrous details, – because, after all, a quest, particularly evolutionary, structures very thought, very character, humanity itself, – now realising that the future of a great family could hardly be built from the savage living and easy misfortune which come solely of sheeps : with her sole son Anthony, – already unusually quickly forward for a child not out two years' time✓, – Gwendoline journeyed with their spartan luggage to Cardigan where was bought passage to Portsmouth; on May fourth aboard *Sea Lady*, – with its sails hoised looking a seaworthy vessel enough, yet thought by mariners of good watermanship an unwholesome ship : drawing too little water, and too long, – and manned by a motley crew not too greatly practiced to the sea, in the face very of flaws[[425]](#footnote-426) set parlous[[426]](#footnote-427) sail.

In sudden winds which had the power, working so high, so great, to move even the Earth, in waters so contrary, with so violent a send, such drave the vessel into even rougher seas, to meet there ever more difficult blastments, then, winds turning them about, blown up the coast, cliffs above them and rocks beside, by not skill but somehow escaping, becoming then so sanded[[427]](#footnote-428) as to capsize, pitching out sheeps and other freight to lighten the boat which otherwise was impossible to live in so infuriate a sea which every minute of every hour was almost upon casting them all away, and despite every remaining sailor doing the best they could that the sea eat them not up, so was *Sea Lady* by now so shroudly shaken and so altogether run and folden in, that all hope, despite occasionally to a little mount, did commence only to plummet.

Was then a rock split upon by this ship?, were they cast all away and splitted to fitters[[428]](#footnote-429)?, nay : on May tenth of the year 1710, after escaping the further troubles with cross-tacks, and veerings, cloudless calm suddenly ensuing, with splinted mast, patched sail, and winds turning agreeably about to give a passing good blow of wind in the poop, turning not back but setting themselves again to forward their voyage southward, so was the sea traversed, so was the ragged vessel spotted and towed safe into Portsmouth, and so disembarked seven months teem[[429]](#footnote-430) Gwendoline, with her son Anthony, the fifth generation since Lemuel, and, (until the birth of his brother Thomas), sole heir-male to the Troke line.

There!, if these first few pages have displayed a work of clarity, simplicity, elegance, vigour, and variety, then what will follow, continuing to be neither overfine, nor yet over-careless, will surely comprise only as good writing, – after all a relative matter, – in which nothing will be either too unclear or too complicated, nor inelegant, nor lacklustre, nor, Words behaving, too monotonous.

1. pronounced as if with a k, meaning 1000, or reign of 1000 years [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. believed to be the second completed work of a projected three [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. murders of near relatives [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. surnamed [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. not important, but performing a structural function [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. suited to the occasion [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. affection of the eye in which objects appear less than their real size [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. affection of the eye in which objects appear very large [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. government by the enemy [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. *floruit*: he flourished [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. needless separation of verbs from the subjects of a sentence, or their complements [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. an infinitive verb form with an element, usually an adverb, interposed between *to* and the verb form, as in: to boldly go [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. phrases or clauses that either modify no words in the sentence, or refer to the wrong words [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. constructions which close sentences with prepositions [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. adjectives used as nouns, such as the lame, the halt [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. device in which a common noun is replaced by a more colourful compound, such as *jewel of the heavens* for sun [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. cutting off of a vowel or syllable for the sake of euphony, as o'er for over [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. figure of speech whereby inanimate things, deceased or absent persons, are introduced as speaking [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. :— [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. a or an [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. the [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. possessed of ardour [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. possessed of indifference [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. there is nothing so incredible that it may not by the power of language be made probable [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. dots indicating words have been deleted [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. description of a place or region [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. criticise severely [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. eleven inches by seven and a half [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. periods [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. weight, seriousness, dignity, importance [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. without columns [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. comprising massive blocks, sometimes with roughened surfaces, and separated by deeply cut joints [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. October [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. situation [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
35. unhealthiness [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
36. our [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
37. for example [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
38. mob [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
39. accident [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
40. abbreviations with unpronounceable combinations of letters, such as IBM [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
41. without a note, usually of punctuation or spelling [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
42. pompous or lofty language [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
43. made in the interests of clarity and readability [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
44. the use of very long words [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
45. readiness to admit words of all kinds [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
46. prepare [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
47. indistinct; obscure [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
48. heirs [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
49. otherwise [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
50. plural genius [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
51. the act of scanning; reading with care [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
52. or DOP: the assumption that language comprehension and production works with representations of concrete past language experiences, rather than with abstract grammatical rules [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
53. deepest structures; recurrent patterns of ancient thought which echoing throughout human history provide guidelines to life [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
54. petty or contemptible historians [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
55. one colour [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
56. abnormal dryness of body parts [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
57. minuter points of detail [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
58. conciseness in writing [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
59. the science and art of bringing to light errors in texts [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
60. belonging to both sexes [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
61. the departing from speech in its common practice to utilise expressions and construction different, but resembling [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
62. as soon as might be [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
63. attend, reader, and you will find delight [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
64. beginning of day one [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
65. first-born [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
66. Wales [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
67. visible [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
68. flatly; plainly [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
69. son bearing the same name as the father [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
70. shoemaking [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
71. blind without perceptible ocular injury [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
72. power of feeling in the fingers [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
73. ailing [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
74. one who walks by night [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
75. shivering with cold [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
76. nose [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
77. placed together so as to form a bowl [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
78. as much as can be taken up in both hands joined [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
79. union of fingers with each [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
80. as much as a closed hand will contain [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
81. pertaining to capital letters [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
82. sexual congress with a harlot [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
83. cutting-out board of a shoemaker [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
84. shoes [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
85. sole-leather [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
86. small, headless nails [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
87. large nails fixed to the bottoms of shoes to prevent slipping [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
88. shoemaker's thread [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
89. awls [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
90. wolf-tails [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
91. two quarts [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
92. heavens [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
93. purified [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
94. in the morning [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
95. privilege of the marriage bed [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
96. clumsy [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
97. cold [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
98. pastoral, rustic [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
99. pitched [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
100. obliquely, sidelong [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
101. wizened [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
102. hanging limp or drooping [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
103. penis of a child [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
104. relaxed penis [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
105. those following in time [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
106. extracted [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
107. pattern of frost on windows [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
108. dry, decayed wood [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
109. with a seed bearing an elongated stalk [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
110. with a seed not bearing an elongated stalk [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
111. stinking [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
112. mouldy [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
113. midwife [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
114. having little flesh around the mouth [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
115. tedious scolding [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
116. sexual intercourse [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
117. scold [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
118. enormously wicked [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
119. shoemaker [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
120. fated together [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
121. heap up [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
122. father [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
123. apple tree [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
124. stonecutter [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
125. small contrivance for raising stones [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
126. killed by being forced into naval service [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
127. farmer [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
128. unidentified illness, resembling influenza, scarlet fever, and plague, in which the victim, perspiring profusely from head to foot, suffers pain generally [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
129. coarse oiled shoes that resist the dew [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
130. of the same shape for either foot [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
131. song of reapers accompanying last load [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
132. Queen of the May [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
133. knife of a shoemaker [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
134. patron saint of shoemakers [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
135. tools of a shoemaker [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
136. stone held in the lap of a cobbler [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
137. great-grandfather [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
138. wander, tramp [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
139. hungry, greedy [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
140. male sexual parts [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
141. coarse greens [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
142. stalks and stems of cultivated cereals, beans, peas, &c [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
143. those who abstain from eating flesh and fleshmeats [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
144. those who eat dairy but no meat [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
145. rabbit skin [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
146. small tumours on oak trees produced by the gallfly [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
147. tail of a boar [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
148. tail of a hare or rabbit [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
149. resisting ill-luck [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
150. an animal which habitually eats its freshly passed faeces [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
151. disembowelled [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
152. midday meal [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
153. weeping; mourning [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
154. failure [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
155. wild beasts dead through sickness or mischance [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
156. pleasing, agreeable [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
157. shrew [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
158. inclined [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
159. to join anew [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
160. very cold [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
161. ancestor [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
162. pregnant [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
163. officially : the *Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England*, an executive non-departmental public body of the British Government, sponsored by the *Department for Culture, Media and Sport* (DCMS) [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
164. the binding of books in human skin [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
165. one whose duty is to tour the monastery and its buildings each night with a bright lamp to ensure all was well [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
166. drunken [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
167. deep reverie [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
168. signs, a system monks used to talk with their fingers [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
169. boy kept for improper purposes [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
170. door-keeper [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
171. boy kept for unnatural purposes [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
172. suite of rooms [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
173. small door within a larger [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
174. small trap or peephole in a door [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
175. monk [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
176. the appearance of an angel to man [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
177. resembling the top half of a fall front desk, but plain, undecorated [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
178. confusion [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
179. the appearing, or visible manifestation, of satan [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
180. outward [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
181. depression; torpid state; a lacking of interest in anything [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
182. drink made from fermented honey [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
183. italic [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
184. with complete sobriety [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
185. exhausted [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
186. cure for sin [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
187. prayers at 2-3 AM winter, 1-2 AM summer [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
188. at 6-7 AM winter, 4-5 AM summer [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
189. 7-8 AM winter, 5-6 AM summer [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
190. 9-10 AM winter, 7-8 AM summer [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
191. 12-1 p.m. winter, 11 a.m.-12 p.m. summer [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
192. 1-2 p.m. winter, 2-3 p.m. summer [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
193. 4-5 p.m. winter, 6-7 p.m. summer [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
194. 6:15-6:30 p.m. winter, 8:15-8:30 p.m. summer [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
195. some time ago [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
196. officer who purchases provisions for a college, inn or court, monastery &c [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
197. treasurer of a monastery [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
198. keeper of monastic records [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
199. head of a monastery or convent [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
200. dark lantern used in monasteries [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
201. born [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
202. named [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
203. abstainer from intoxicating liquors [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
204. starlings [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
205. female pudendum; literally: that which is shameful [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
206. penis [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
207. shoemaker [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
208. owl [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
209. barking [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
210. poultice [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
211. state of disorder [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
212. March the twelfth [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
213. ridden too hard [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
214. barrel of about 15 gallons capacity [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
215. fundament, rump [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
216. achieved with much labour [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
217. last surviving member of a family [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
218. gnarled [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
219. barren [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
220. goats [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
221. reviving [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
222. ugly old woman [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
223. the letters j, called i consonant, and v, called u consonant, were not generally used until 1630 [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
224. she-cat [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
225. fundament [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
226. act of looking sharply; keen or clear perception; insight [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
227. profits, or proceeds [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
228. document drawn up in 1555 to defend the Catholicity of Lutheran doctrine and to justify innovations in Lutheran practice [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
229. person who finds seats for the church congregation [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
230. leader of a church choir [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
231. leading bass in choir [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
232. one with authority to keep unworthy persons out of church [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
233. guardian or keeper of a church [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
234. cattles [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
235. hay season [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
236. cleaned hemp [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
237. official in relief of the poor, also keeper of order [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
238. one who interprets Latin [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
239. interpreter for foreign worshippers [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
240. parsonage flowers [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
241. thatched [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
242. shoes [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
243. preached [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
244. vicinity [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
245. honeysuckle [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
246. flat on the face [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
247. childhood [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
248. highwayman on foot [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
249. small bag or wallet [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
250. gamekeeper [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
251. tramping [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
252. furious womb; nymphomany [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
253. prosperous; thriving [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
254. one who cannot procreate [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
255. portable and concealable chamber pot, small enough to fit in a lady's muff [↑](#footnote-ref-256)
256. defecate [↑](#footnote-ref-257)
257. coughing and breaking wind at the same time [↑](#footnote-ref-258)
258. ruckus, affray [↑](#footnote-ref-259)
259. spree; merrymaking [↑](#footnote-ref-260)
260. the disease of stone [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
261. hind-part before; backward [↑](#footnote-ref-262)
262. twilight [↑](#footnote-ref-263)
263. trembled [↑](#footnote-ref-264)
264. woman above her station [↑](#footnote-ref-265)
265. with rotund behind [↑](#footnote-ref-266)
266. woman who wears fine clothes badly [↑](#footnote-ref-267)
267. wittily [↑](#footnote-ref-268)
268. ludicrous misuse of words [↑](#footnote-ref-269)
269. lowest [↑](#footnote-ref-270)
270. ill-behaved, coarse, vulgar, dirty woman [↑](#footnote-ref-271)
271. hangman [↑](#footnote-ref-272)
272. gallows [↑](#footnote-ref-273)
273. hanging [↑](#footnote-ref-274)
274. ground set aside as a burial place for criminals, paupers and unknown or friendless persons [↑](#footnote-ref-275)
275. sleep heavily and soundly [↑](#footnote-ref-276)
276. a weakened body [↑](#footnote-ref-277)
277. state of disuse [↑](#footnote-ref-278)
278. natural death, as in a straw bed [↑](#footnote-ref-279)
279. foot consisting of two syllables, first short and second long, or first unaccented and second accented [↑](#footnote-ref-280)
280. of four lines alternately eight and six syllables to the line [↑](#footnote-ref-281)
281. wanting a syllable [↑](#footnote-ref-282)
282. slatternly woman [↑](#footnote-ref-283)
283. nymphomaniacal [↑](#footnote-ref-284)
284. beseeching [↑](#footnote-ref-285)
285. become menopausal [↑](#footnote-ref-286)
286. henceforth [↑](#footnote-ref-287)
287. only begotten [↑](#footnote-ref-288)
288. foster-child [↑](#footnote-ref-289)
289. combed [↑](#footnote-ref-290)
290. horse for riding, or driving, on the road [↑](#footnote-ref-291)
291. expedite [↑](#footnote-ref-292)
292. singing and weeping at the same time [↑](#footnote-ref-293)
293. right quickly [↑](#footnote-ref-294)
294. plank across a brook [↑](#footnote-ref-295)
295. very ill [↑](#footnote-ref-296)
296. blows with the fist [↑](#footnote-ref-297)
297. mixture of beer, spirits, sugar, heated with a red-hot poker [↑](#footnote-ref-298)
298. offspring [↑](#footnote-ref-299)
299. fallen down, slipped out of place [↑](#footnote-ref-300)
300. wife's father [↑](#footnote-ref-301)
301. lonely [↑](#footnote-ref-302)
302. repayment [↑](#footnote-ref-303)
303. beset on every side [↑](#footnote-ref-304)
304. wrapped around [↑](#footnote-ref-305)
305. nomadic [↑](#footnote-ref-306)
306. soft-voiced [↑](#footnote-ref-307)
307. bailiff [↑](#footnote-ref-308)
308. prison [↑](#footnote-ref-309)
309. that which remains unpaid [↑](#footnote-ref-310)
310. bearing twins [↑](#footnote-ref-311)
311. non-identical [↑](#footnote-ref-312)
312. very small shrunken child [↑](#footnote-ref-313)
313. drowned [↑](#footnote-ref-314)
314. strange [↑](#footnote-ref-315)
315. breeders of twins [↑](#footnote-ref-316)
316. inn [↑](#footnote-ref-317)
317. wasting, declining [↑](#footnote-ref-318)
318. god knows; nobody knows [↑](#footnote-ref-319)
319. deep crimson [↑](#footnote-ref-320)
320. opening at neck [↑](#footnote-ref-321)
321. knot of ribbons worn on the breast [↑](#footnote-ref-322)
322. fat, squat [↑](#footnote-ref-323)
323. improper selection of words; bad pronunciation [↑](#footnote-ref-324)
324. district in Whitefriars between Fleet Street and the Thames, a sanctuary for debtors and criminals until 1697 [↑](#footnote-ref-325)
325. young pickpocket [↑](#footnote-ref-326)
326. pickpocket who assumes guise of respectable people [↑](#footnote-ref-327)
327. house-breaker [↑](#footnote-ref-328)
328. thief [↑](#footnote-ref-329)
329. highwayman [↑](#footnote-ref-330)
330. beggar pretending to be a decayed gentleman [↑](#footnote-ref-331)
331. murderer [↑](#footnote-ref-332)
332. one who has narrowly escaped hanging [↑](#footnote-ref-333)
333. house frequented by thieves; where stolen goods are received [↑](#footnote-ref-334)
334. having the quality of a pimp or bawd [↑](#footnote-ref-335)
335. absolutely certain [↑](#footnote-ref-336)
336. urine-steeped rods administered as a punishment [↑](#footnote-ref-337)
337. noisy merriment [↑](#footnote-ref-338)
338. heady drink that clambers up to the skull [↑](#footnote-ref-339)
339. the body must be tamed! [↑](#footnote-ref-340)
340. do you speak Latin? [↑](#footnote-ref-341)
341. does he not speak Latin? [↑](#footnote-ref-342)
342. you do not speak Latin? [↑](#footnote-ref-343)
343. fellow rogues [↑](#footnote-ref-344)
344. brains [↑](#footnote-ref-345)
345. at an equal rate of progress [↑](#footnote-ref-346)
346. I have not changed my mind! [↑](#footnote-ref-347)
347. god, I am willing but unable! [↑](#footnote-ref-348)
348. O god, I am not what I once was! [↑](#footnote-ref-349)
349. malfunction, imbalance in blood [↑](#footnote-ref-350)
350. common wit, imagination, fantasy, estimation, and memory [↑](#footnote-ref-351)
351. young woman [↑](#footnote-ref-352)
352. youth [↑](#footnote-ref-353)
353. laughed [↑](#footnote-ref-354)
354. astonished [↑](#footnote-ref-355)
355. relating to the penis [↑](#footnote-ref-356)
356. permanently retracted of prepuce [↑](#footnote-ref-357)
357. narrowed to a sharp point [↑](#footnote-ref-358)
358. testicles [↑](#footnote-ref-359)
359. the need to touch [↑](#footnote-ref-360)
360. rough with stiff hairs [↑](#footnote-ref-361)
361. shaped between a pear and an egg [↑](#footnote-ref-362)
362. of the small triangular bone at the base of the vertebral column [↑](#footnote-ref-363)
363. lucky without contrivance or judgement [↑](#footnote-ref-364)
364. unable to meet the expense of a woollen shroud stipulated in the *Burying in Woollen Act*, passed in 1660 and reinforced in 1678 [↑](#footnote-ref-365)
365. shaped like a sausage [↑](#footnote-ref-366)
366. olive colour, brown [↑](#footnote-ref-367)
367. afternoon meal taken at four o'clock in harvest time [↑](#footnote-ref-368)
368. meeting of wise men [↑](#footnote-ref-369)
369. pale, gloomy woods [↑](#footnote-ref-370)
370. amount of land a man can plough in a morning, about two acres [↑](#footnote-ref-371)
371. fifth part of a circle [↑](#footnote-ref-372)
372. nunnery [↑](#footnote-ref-373)
373. starved with cold or hunger [↑](#footnote-ref-374)
374. blankets [↑](#footnote-ref-375)
375. two-handled soup or porridge bowl [↑](#footnote-ref-376)
376. table [↑](#footnote-ref-377)
377. sleeping room, bed chamber [↑](#footnote-ref-378)
378. leprosarium [↑](#footnote-ref-379)
379. physician's lash [↑](#footnote-ref-380)
380. bearing offspring without fertilisation [↑](#footnote-ref-381)
381. head of a nunnery [↑](#footnote-ref-382)
382. deceive [↑](#footnote-ref-383)
383. inhabitants [↑](#footnote-ref-384)
384. base wretch [↑](#footnote-ref-385)
385. formal ecclesiastical excommunication [↑](#footnote-ref-386)
386. upper part of the hip-bone [↑](#footnote-ref-387)
387. virgin [↑](#footnote-ref-388)
388. deaf and dumb language [↑](#footnote-ref-389)
389. deaf and dumb [↑](#footnote-ref-390)
390. assistant [↑](#footnote-ref-391)
391. having its origin in the activities of man [↑](#footnote-ref-392)
392. fertilised by the wind [↑](#footnote-ref-393)
393. convicted and burnt [↑](#footnote-ref-394)
394. lopping or cutting off [↑](#footnote-ref-395)
395. those born amidst mountains [↑](#footnote-ref-396)
396. crook [↑](#footnote-ref-397)
397. one who loses his temper easily [↑](#footnote-ref-398)
398. brainless [↑](#footnote-ref-399)
399. single thing [↑](#footnote-ref-400)
400. hardened [↑](#footnote-ref-401)
401. the worse off [↑](#footnote-ref-402)
402. tramp [↑](#footnote-ref-403)
403. grimacing and making faces [↑](#footnote-ref-404)
404. earthworms [↑](#footnote-ref-405)
405. laughed [↑](#footnote-ref-406)
406. severely reproved [↑](#footnote-ref-407)
407. long-handled wooden shovel for removing loaves from oven [↑](#footnote-ref-408)
408. apoplexy [↑](#footnote-ref-409)
409. sexual [↑](#footnote-ref-410)
410. respite granted to the souls of the damned [↑](#footnote-ref-411)
411. elaborate, detailed description of an object or event [↑](#footnote-ref-412)
412. pornography [↑](#footnote-ref-413)
413. vagrant beggar pretending to be lunatic [↑](#footnote-ref-414)
414. beggar with artificial sores [↑](#footnote-ref-415)
415. shoe made of steel plates as part of a suit of armour [↑](#footnote-ref-416)
416. without a skin [↑](#footnote-ref-417)
417. with pauses for nursing back to a lacerable state [↑](#footnote-ref-418)
418. dried penis of a bull [↑](#footnote-ref-419)
419. tuberculosis [↑](#footnote-ref-420)
420. glazier [↑](#footnote-ref-421)
421. above the threshold of conscious knowledge [↑](#footnote-ref-422)
422. poor healthed [↑](#footnote-ref-423)
423. first menstrual period [↑](#footnote-ref-424)
424. depressions [↑](#footnote-ref-425)
425. sudden gusts or violent attacks of bad weather [↑](#footnote-ref-426)
426. perilous, dangerous [↑](#footnote-ref-427)
427. driven onto a sand-bank [↑](#footnote-ref-428)
428. fragments, pieces [↑](#footnote-ref-429)
429. pregnant [↑](#footnote-ref-430)