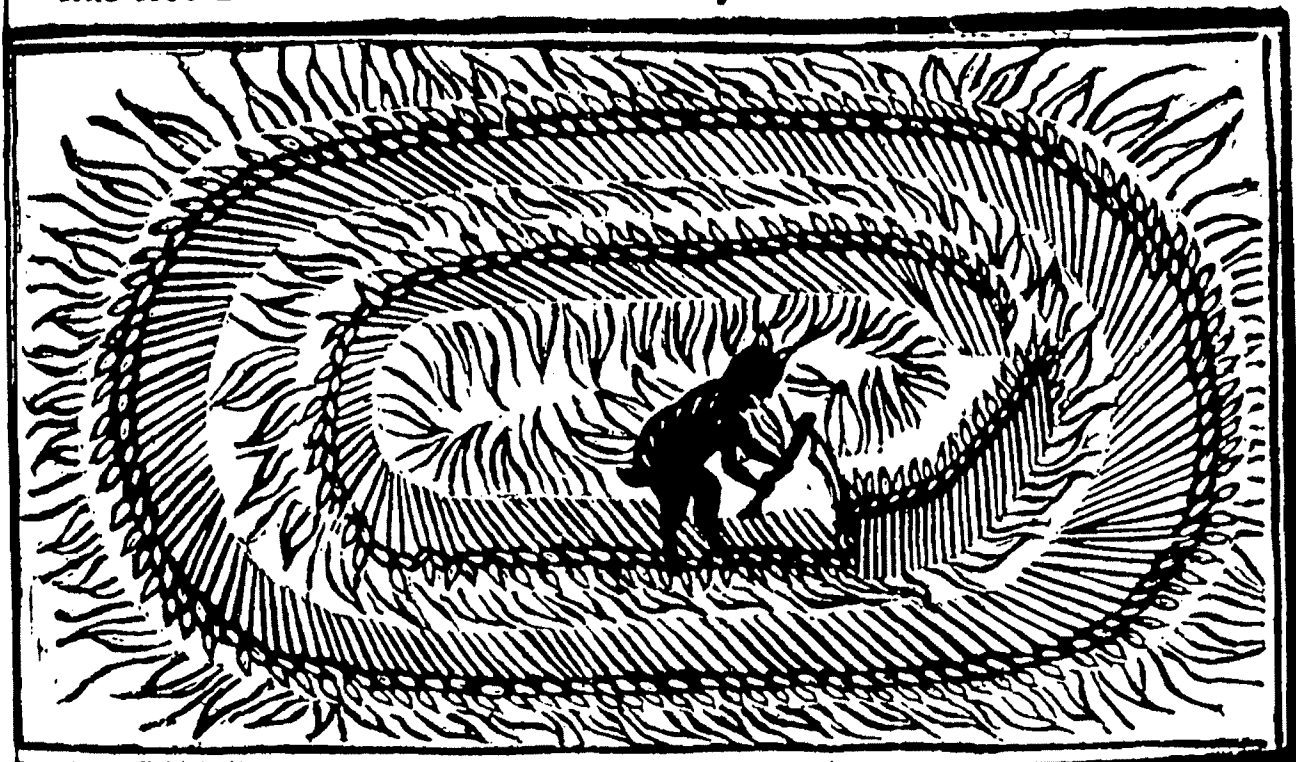


# The Mowing-Devil :

Or, Strange *NEWS* out of  
Hartford-shire.

Being a True Relation of a Farmer, who Bargaining with a Poor *Mower*, about the Cutting down Three Half Acres of *Oats*; upon the *Mower's* asking too much, the *Farmer* swore, *That the Devil should Mow it, rather than He*: And so it fell out, that that very Night, the Crop of *Oats* shew'd as if it had been all of a Flame; but next Morning appear'd so neatly Mow'd by the Devil, or some Infernal Spirit, that no Mortal Man was able to do the like.

Also, How the said *Oats* ly now in the Field, and the Owner has not Power to fetch them away.



Licensed, *August* 22th. 1678.

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*as there is a Hell, there must be a Heaven, and consequently a GOD; and so all the Duties of Christian Religion as indispensable subsequents necessarily follow.*

The first of which Propositions, this ensuing Narrative does not a little help to Confirm.

For no longer ago, than within the compass of this present Month of *August*, there hapned so unusual an Accident in *Hartfordshire*, as is not only the general Discourse, and Admiration of the whole Country; but may for its Rarity Challenge any other event, which has for these many years bin Produc't in any other County whatsoever. The Story thus.

In the said County, Lives a Rich industrious Farmer, who perceiving a small Crop of his (of about three Half-Acres of Land which he had Sowed with *Oats*) to be Ripe and fit for Gathering, sent to a poor Neighbour whom he knew worked commonly in the Summer-time at Harvest Labor, to agree with him about Mowing, or Cutting the said *Oats* down; The poor Man as it behoov'd Him, endeavour'd to sell the Sweat of his Brows and Marrow of his Bones at as dear a Rate as reasonably he might, and therefore askt a good round Price for his Labour, which the Farmer taking some exceptions at, bid him much more under the usual Rate than the poor Man askt above it; So that some sharp Words had past, when the Farmer told

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told him he would Discourse with him no more about it. Whereupon the honest *Mower* recollecting with himself, that if he undertook not that little Spot of Work, he might thereby lose much more Busines which the Farmer had to employ him in beside, ran after him, and told him, that, rather than displease him, he would do it at what rate in Reason he pleas'd; and as an instance of his willingness to serve him, propos'd to him a lower price, than he had Mowed for any time this Year before. The irretated *Farmer* with a stern look, and hasty gesture, told the poor man, *That the Devil himself should Mow his Oats before he should have any thing to do with them*, and upon this went his way, and left the forrowful Yeoman, not a little troubled that he had disoblig'd one in whose Power it lay to do him many kindneses.

But how ever, in the happy series of an interrupted prosperity, we may strut, and plume our selves over the miserable Indigencies of our necessitated Neighbours; yet there is a just God above, who weighs us not by our Bags, nor measures us by our Coffers; but looks upon all men indifferently, as the common Sons of *Adam*; so that he who carefully Officiates that Rank or Station wherein the *Almighty* has plac't him, tho but a mean one, is truly more worthy the Estimation of all Men, than he who is prefer'd to superior dignities, and abuses them: And what greater abuse, than the contempt of Men below him: the relief of whose common necessities is none of the least Conditions wherby he holds all his *Good things*; which when

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that T. nure is forfeited by his default, he may justly expect some Judgment to ensue; or else that thote riches wherby he prizes himself so extravagantly, may shortly be taken from him.

We will not attempt to fathom the cause, or reason of *Preternatural* events; but certain we are, as the most Credible and General Relation can inform us, that that same night this poor *Mower*, and *Farmer* parted, his Feild of *Oats* was publickly beheld by several Passengers, to be all on a Flame, and so continued for some space, to the great consternation of those that beheld it.

Which strange news being by several carried to the *Farmer* next morning, could not but give him a great Curiosity to go and see what was become of his Crop of *Oats*, which he could not imagin, but was totally devour'd by thote ravenous Flames which were observ'd to be so long resident on his Acre and half of Ground.

Certainly a reflection on his suddain and indifcreet expression, [*That the Devil should Mowe his Oats before the poor Nan should have any thing to do with them*] could not but on this occasion come into his Memory. For if we will but allow our selves so much leisure, to consider how many hits of providence go to the production of one Crop of Corn, such as the aptitude of Soyl, the Seasonableness of Showers, Nourishing Solstices and Salubrious winds, &c. we should rather welcome  
Maturity

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Maturity with Devout Acknowledgments than prevent our gathering of it by our profuse wishes.

But not to keep the Curious Reader any longer in suspense, the inquisitive *Farmer* no sooner arriv'd at the place where his *Oats* grew, but to his admiration he found the Crop was Cut down ready to his hands; and as if the Devil had a mind to shew his dexterity in the art of *Husbandry*, and scorn'd to mow them after the usual manner, he cut them in round Circles, and plac't every straw with that exactness that it would have taken up above an Age, for any Man to perform what he did in that one night: And the man that owns them is as yet afraid to remove them.

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