

The strange and wonderful prophecies of Mother Shipton: plainly setting forth her prodigious birth, life, death, and burial / [Anon].

Contributors

Shipton, Mother

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MOTHER SHIPTON.

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N.W.P
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SHIPTON (Uncler)

[1700]

N.W. 9 The Strange and Wonderful

PROPHECIES

O F

Mother Shipton :

Plainly setting forth

Her Prodigious BIRTH, LIFE,
DEATH and BURIAL.

CONTAINING

The most important PASSAGES, both of Church
and State, during the Reigns of King Henry
the Seventh, Henry the Eighth, Edward the
Sixth, Queen Mary the First, Queen Elizabeth
King James the First, Charles the First and
Second, James the Second, William and Mary,
and Queen Anne.

WITH

The EXPLANATION of each PROPHECY,
and PREDICTION, foretelling a Time when
there shall be but one Man to seven Women.

LEEDS : Printed and Sold at New-Street-End.



T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F

Mother Shipton, &c.

C H A P. I.

Of her Birth and Parentage.

MOther Shipton (as all histories agree) was a *Yorkshire* woman. The particular place was very much disputed, because several towns have pretended to the honour of her birth; but the most credible and received opinion ascribes it to *Knarebro'* near the dropping well, in the said county. Concerning her pedigree or parentage, there is likewise very various reports: Some say her father was a necromancer, and that

he had skill in the black art, which thereby came entailed on her by inheritance, but the common story, which therefore I shall follow, yet without forcing the reader to believe whether he will or no) is, that she never had any father of human race, or mortal weight, but was begot as the great *Welsh* prophet, *Morlia*, was of old by the phantasm of *Apollo*, or some wanton aerial *Dæmon*, in manner following: Her mother, whom some records call *Agatha*, and other *Emnatha*, being left an orphan about the age of 16, very poor, and much troubled with that grievous, but common disease, called by some idleness, and by others sloth. As she was once upon a time sitting & moaning herself, on a shady bank, by the highway side, a spirit appeared to her in the shape of a handsome young man; and smiling on her, *Pretty maid*, quoth he, *why dost thou sit so sad? Thou art not old enough to have thy head peppered with the cares of the world. Prithce tell me thy business, and doubt not but I will help thee out of all thy troubles.*

The maid casting up her eyes, and not suspecting a devil hid in so comely a countenance, related to him her wants, and that she knew not how to live. *Pish* said he, *that's nothing, be ruled by me, and thou shalt never lack.* She hearing him promise so fairly, told him she would; and thereupon to draw her in by degrees to destruction, he first tempted her to fornication, and prevail'd so far as to gain her: but his touches, as she afterwards confessed to the midwife, were as cold as ice or snow. From this time forward, she was commonly visited once a day by her hellish gallant, and never wanted money; for still as she swept the house she would find some odd pieces, nine-pences, quarters of thirteen-pence half pennies, and the like, sufficient to supply her occasions.

C H A P. II.

How mother Shipton's mother proved with child: how she fitted the severe justice; and what happened at her delivery.

THE neighbours observing that *Agatha*, without any employ, lived so handsomely, wonder'd exceedingly how she came by the money to support her in that way; but were most surprized when they soon after found her to be with child, which she could not long hide; for before her delivery she was as big as if she had gone with half a dozen children at once: Whereupon she was carried before a justice, who threatened and chided her for her incontinency; but he was soon silenc'd, for his wife and all his family being present, *Agatha* said to him aloud, *Mr Justice, how gravely you talk now, and yet the truth is, your worship is not altogether free; for here stands two of your servant wenches who are both at this time with child by you;* pointing to them severally with her finger: At which both himself and the two girls were so blank, that his wife plainly saw what she said was true, and therefore fell upon the harlots like fury; for all that *Mr Justice* and the constables could do, was not enough to keep the peace, and

the whole family was in such confusion,
that *Agatha*, for that time, was dismiss'd;
and soon after (in the month of July, in
the fourth year of the reign of King
Henry VII. which was in the year of
our lord 1688 was brought to bed of a
daughter: Her travail was very grievous,
and a most terrible clap of thunder hap-
pen'd just as she was delivered of this
strange birth, which afterwards was so
famous by the name of Mother *Skipton*;
nor could the tempest affright the woman
more than the prodigious physiognomy
of the child; the body was long and very
big boned, great gogling eyes, very sharp
and fiery, a nose of unproportionable
length, having in it many crooks and
turnings, adorned with great pimples, and
which, like vapours of brimstone, gave
such a lustre in the night, that her nurse
needed no other candle to dress her by;
and besides this uncouth shape, it was
observed, that as soon as she was born,
she fell a laughing and grinning after a
jeering manner, and immediately after the
tempest.

By what name Mother Shipton was christened, and how her mother went into a monastery.

TH E child being thus brought into the world, under such strange circumstances, was, tho' not without some opposition, ordered at last, by the Abbot of *Beverley*, to be christened, which was performed by the name of *Ursula Seathiel*, for the latter was her mother's and consequently her maiden surname; and as for *Shipton*, it was the name of her husband, whom she afterwards married as will appear in the sequel of this history; and in this particular, most of the authors I have read have been fully mistaken. but to proceed: when she was about two years old, mother coming to be sensible of her evil, in holding a correspondence with a wicked spirit, applying herself to several religious men of great note in those times, by whose advice she grew truly penitent, and according to the fashion of that age's devotion, put herself into a neighbouring monastery, having first put out her child, with a

piece of money, to a friend, and spent
 the remainder of her days in the famous
 convent of the order of *St. Bridget*, near
Nottingham, in prayers and tears, and
 other acts of penance, to expiate the
 wickedness of her youth; but wonderful
 it is to relate the Troubles that beset the
 nurse she was put to; for her Father the
 foul Friend, is reported several Times
 to have visited her; particularly one
 day, the nurse having been abroad, when
 she returned, she found her door open;
 whereupon, fearing that she was robbed,
 she called three or four neighbours and
 their wives to go into the house with
 her; before they got well into the entry,
 they heard a strange noise, as if there had
 been a thousand cats in concert, which
 so dismayed them, that they all run
 towards the door, endeavouring to get
 out again; but in vain for every one of
 them had shoes fell off and then a coult-
 stff was laid on two of the mens shoul-
 ders, upon which an old woman pre-
 sented herself stark-naked, some times
 hanging by the heels, some times by the

toes anon by the middle, with diverse other postures; while the woman having all their coats turned over their ears, exposed their shame to the publick view, and so continued till a triar accidentally came to the house: and then they were suddenly related; but still the child being taken out of the cradle, could not be found till at last one of the company looking up the chimney, saw it stark-naked, sitting stide upon the iron to which the pot-hooks are fastened, whence they took it down without the least hurt, and so far from being frightened, that it seemed by its monstrous smiles to be very well pleased at these pleasant exploits.

C H A P IV.

Several other merry pranks play'd by Mother Shipton, in revenge to such as abused her.

AS our *Ursula* grew up to the riper years, she was often affor'ded, by reason of her deformity, but never fail'd to be revenged on those that did it, As

one day all the chief of the parish being together at a merry meeting, she coming thither occasionally on an errand, for some of them abused her, by calling her the devil's bastard and hag-face, and the like whereupon she went away grumbling but so ordered affairs, that when they sat down to dinner, one of the principal yeomen that thought himself spruce and fine, had in an instant his cuff which in those days they wore pulled off, and the seat of an house of office clapt in its place: He that sat next him, burst forth out into a laughter at the sight thereof. Besides this, a modest young gentlewoman, that sat at the table at the same time, looking at these two worthy spectacles of mirth, endeavoured all she could to refrain laughing, but she could not but withal, continued breaking wind backward for above a quarter of an hour together, like so many broadsides in sea-fight; when made all the company laugh so extremely, that the master of the house (being the chief inn in the town) was alarmed below therewith.

and desired to share with his guests in their mirth, came running up stairs as fast as his legs could carry him; but being about to enter the door, he could not; add no wonder, since the oldest man living never saw a larger pair of horns than he had on his head; but whilst they were gazing on one another, as more than half distracted, they were all reduced to the same condition they were in at first; after which followed a noise, as if more than an hundred persons were laughing together, but nothing was seen.

C H A P. V.

How Ursula married a young man named Tobias Shipton; and how strangely she discovered a thief.

OUR Ursula was now arrived at the four and twentieth year of her age; and tho' she was none of the prettiest maids in the town, as you may remember by her description, yet she longed for a husband as well as the

best of them, and at last obtained her desire; for whether she used any love-powder, or charms to enamour him or whether the hopes of getting a little money, which she was reported to have, tho' no body could tell how she got it, caused him to court her (as there are some men that would not only marry the devil's daughter, but his dam too for money) I cannot certainly inform the reader; but a sweetheart she had, named Tobias hipton by trade a Carpenter, to whom she was shortly after married, and very comfortably they lived together, but never had any children. It happend about a month after her marriage, one of her neighbours leaving her doors carelesly open, had a smock and petticoat stolen away while she was telling a gossips tale of an hour long, at the next door, where she went to fetch fire, which misfortune much troubled her: she made her moan to another hipton, who did not go about like our little silly conjurors, with their jesses and figures, to give

a blind de'cription of the know not whom; but roundly told her such a one by name had stolen the things, adding, that she would make her restore them with shame to her; and so indeed she did, for the next market-day, before all the people, the woman could not avoid not avoid putting on the smock over her cloaths, and the petticoat in her hand, and so marched thro' the crowd in the market-place, where the other was. By Mother Shipton's directions, to receive them, singing these words:

I stole my neighbour's smock & coat,

I am a thief and here I shew't

So when she came to the owner she pull'd off the smock and petticoat, and gave her them with a reverend courtesy, acknowledging her parson, and so departed.

C H A P. VI

Her prophecy against Cardinal Woolley.

By these and several the like exploits Mother Shipton had got a name,

far and near, of a cunning woman, of a woman or foresight, that her words were counted oracles; nor did she meddle only with private persons, but was advised by with people of the greater quality; among which number at that time was Cardinal Woolley. When it was reported, that he intended to live at York, she publickly said, He should never come there; which coming to his ear, and being offended, he caused three lords to go to her, who came to Ringhouses, near York, where leaving their men, they took a guide and came to Mother Shipton's, and knocking at her door she cried out, come in, Mr. Beasley, their guide, and these noble Lords with you which much surprized them that she should know them, for when they came in she called each of them by their names, and treated them with ale and cakes; whereupon, said one of the Lords, if you knew our errand, you would not make so much of us. You said the Cardinal should never see York. No, said she, I said he might see York, but

never come at it. Well, said the Lord when he does come thou shalt be burnt. Then taking her linen handkerchief off her head, says she, if this burn, I may burn, and immediately threw it into the fire before them, but it would not burn: So that after it had lain in the flames a quarter of an hour, she took it out again, and it was not so much as singed. Hereupon one of the Lords asked her what she meant of him: My Lord, said she, the time will come when you'll be as low as I, and that is low indeed; which proved true, for shortly after he was beheaded.

Nor was her speech concerning the Cardinal less verified; for he coming from Cuswood, went to the top of the tower, and asked where York was; which being shew'd him, he enquir'd how far it was there; (quoth he) there was a witch said, I should never see York: Nay, says one present, your eminence is misinformed, she said you should see it but not come at it. Then he vowed to burn her when he came there, which

was but eight miles distant. but immediately he was sent for back by the King, and died, in his return, of a violent looseness, at Leicester.

Some of her PROPHECIES of Mother Shipton, relating to those times.

AT divers times, when persons of quality came to visit her, she deliver'd these several prophecies following, that is to say :

I. PROPHECY.

Before Ouz - Bridge and Trinity-Church meets, they shall build it in the day, and it shall fall in the night; until they get the highest stone of Trinity-Church to be the lowest stone of Ouze Bridge.

EXPLANATION.

This came to pass, for Trinity steeple in York was blown down with a tempest, and Ouze Bridge broke down with a flood; and what they did in the day time in repairing the bridge, fell down in the night; till at last they laid the highest stone of the steeple for the foundation of the bridge.

II. PROPHECY.

A time shall happen when a ship shall come

failing up the Thames, till it come against London, and the master of the ship shall weep; and the mariners of the ship shall ask him why he weeps, since he made so good a voyage? And he shall say, *Ab! what a goodly city this was once, none in the world was comparable to it, and now there is scarce an house that can let us drink for our money.*

EXPLANATION.

These last words were sadly verified after the dreadful fire of London, in 1666, when there was not an house left all along the Thames's side, from the tower to the temple: As for the words before, they being darkly deliver'd are not like to be understood, till time that both discovers and absconds all things, shall bring the matters signified to light.

CHAP. VIII

Her PROPHECIES *in verse to the Abbot*
Beverley.

THE Abbot of Beverley giving her a visit one day, told her, that as he found several things which she had formerly said to be exactly true, so he was persuaded

she was not ignorant of those which for the future were to ensue, and therefore requested her to impart some of her foreknowledge to him; for which favour, tho' it was more than his deserts could command, yet should he neither want a tongue to acknowledge, nor a heart to endeavour a requital of so great an obligation. Mr. Abbot, said she, leave off complimenting, I am an old woman, who will not flatter nor be flatter'd of any, yet will answer desires as fast as I may; and therefore did in mistick verses discover to him the greatest accidents that have happened in England from that day to this, as in the following explanations will appear.

I. P R O P H E C Y.

*When the cow doth ride the bull,
Then priest beware of thy skull.*

E X P L A N A T I O N.

By the cow was meant Henry VIII. who gave the cow in his arms, as the Earl of Richmond; and the Bull be token'd Madam Anne of Bulloigne, not only as the first syllable of her name, but because her father gave the black bull's head in his crest; and when the King married her, immediately after happened the dissolution of Monastries, and restraint laid on the priests.

(19)
II. P R O P H E C Y.

*For a sweet pious Prince make room,
And in each Church prepare a broom.*

E X P L A N A T I O N.

This was meant of King Edward VI. in whose time the protestant religion was established, and the popish superstitions swept out of the kirk, an old word used still in Scotland for the church.

III. P R O P H E C Y.

*Alecto next assumes the crown,
And streams of blood þ all Smithfield run down.*

E X P L A N A T I O N.

These lines decyphor Queen *Mary*, call'd *Alecto* (the name of one of the furies) for her cruelty to the protestants, of whom great numbers were then burnt in *Smithfield*.

IV. P R O P H E C Y.

*A Maiden Queen full many a year,
Shall England's warlike Scepter bear.*

E X P L A N A T I O N.

Spoken of Queen *Elizabeth*, who reigned extremely beloved by her subjects, and dreaded by her enemies, above forty years.

V. P R O P H E C Y.

*The western Monarck's wooden horses.
Shall be destroyed by Drake's forces.*

E X P L A N A T I O N.

The King of Spain's mighty navy 1588,

destroyed by the English Fleet under Captain Drake.

VI. PROPHECY.

*The Northern Lyon over Tweed,
The maiden Queen shall next succeed.
And join in one two mighty States;
Then shall Janus shut his Gates.*

EXPLANATION.

This relates to King James, who having been many years King of Scotland, the crown of England, by Queen Elizabeth's death, fell to him; whereupon he came over Tweed to take up his residence here, and so join'd the two Kingdoms under one government. And as for Janus shutting his gates, you must know Janus was one of the Heathen Gods that had a temple at Rome the gates of which were never shut but in times of peace; alluding to which our Prophetess here declares the peaceful reign of King James.

VII. PROPHECY.

*Forth from the North mischief b'ew,
And English blood shall add thereto;
Mars shall rage as he were woo'd,
And Earth shall da k'n'd be with blood.*

EXPLANATION.

This relates to our lamentable civil Wars.

VIII. PROPHECY.

But tell's what's next? O cruel fate!

A King made Martyr at his gate.

EXPLANATION.

Meaning the execrable murder of that
most excellent Prince, King Charles I.

IX PROPHECY.

The just King dead, the wolf shall then,

With blood usurp the lion's den;

But death shall hurry him away,

Confusion shall a while bear sway;

Till Fate to England sha'l restore,

A King to reign as heretofore;

Who mercy and justice likewise,

Shall in h's empire exercise.

EXPLANATION.

This Prophecy we have seen fulfilled by
Cromwell's Usurpations, the Committee of
Safety's confusion, and our gracious sove-
reign's miraculous restoration.

X. PROPHECY.

Triumphant death rides London thro',

And men on tops of houses go

EXPLANATION.

The first line points out the great sickness in
London in 1665; and the second the dread-
ful fire the Year following.

XI PROPHECY.

The North shall rue it it wondrous sore,

But the South shall rue it evermore.

XII PROPHECY.

You shall have a Year of pining Hunger, and shall not know of the war over night: yet shall you have it in the morning; and when it happens, it shall last three years; then will come a woman with one eye, and she will tread in many a man's blood up to the knees; then shall come in clubs and clouted Shoes.

XIII. PROPHECY.

Then may a man take house or Bower Land or Tower, for one and twenty years: but afterwards shall be a white harvest of corn gotten in by a woman; then shall it be, that one woman shall say to another, "Mother I have seen a man to-day, for to one man there shall be a thousand women.

*Unhappy's he who lives to see those days
But happy are the Dead, Shipton's wife says;
I.e. this Justice, the night draws on.
You must depart and I begone
Apollo does forbid my chimes,
For to unveil succeeding times.*

Having said this Mother Shipton arose and the admiring Abbot, who you must suppose took all these prophecies in writing gave her many thanks, and returned home.

C H A P. IX.

Mother Shipton's life, death, and burial.

THIS famous Prophetess continued several years esteemed as the Lib or oracle of those times: At last, being three score and thirteen years of age, she found the time in the black book of destiny approaching, wherein she must give a final adieu to the world, which she foretold to a day, to divers people; and at the hour predicted, having taken leave of all her friends, laid herself down on her bed and died: on whom a poet of this age bestowed this

E P I T A P H.

*HERE lies she who never ly'd,
 Whose skull so often has been try'd;
 Whose prophecies shall still survive,
 And ever keep her name alive.*

*an ancient PROPHECY of the LILLY.
 K. P. and K. W.*

THE Lilly shall remain in a merry world,
 and he shall be removed against the

seed of the *Lion*, and he shall stand on one side of his country with a number of ships, then shall come the son of man, having a fierce beast in his arms, which kingdom is the land of the moon, which is dreaded throughout the whole world; with a number of people shall he pass many waters, and shall come to the land of *Lion*, and shall look for help of the beast of his country: And an Eagle shall come out of the East, spread with the beams of the son of man, and shall destroy castles of the Thames, and there shall be a battle among many kingdoms: That year shall be the bloody field, and *Lily*, F. K. shall lose his crown, and therewith shall be crowned the son of man K W. And the fourth year shall be many battles for the faith, and the son of man, with the Eagles shall be preferred, and there shall be an universal peace over the whole world, and there shall be plenty of fruits, and then shall he go to the land of the cross.

E I N I S.



