The Grant, the Hare, and the Survival of a Medieval Folk Belief

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Note:

This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in *Folklore* on 20 March 2019, available at http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/0015587X.2018.1515292

Abstract:

In the third book of *Otia Imperialia* (*c.*1211), Gervase of Tilbury describes numerous wonders, among them an English belief regarding the Grant, a sparkling-eyed entity shaped like a bipedal foal, whose appearance racing through the streets forewarns of fire. This creature, attested to nowhere but in Gervase's work, is something of a mystery for folklorists, who have tried to draw connections to other supernatural beings based on its name and its appearance. What has gone overlooked is the fact that the same elements of the Grant's fire-omen belief existed well into the twentieth century in parts of England, albeit applied to hares. This article suggests that the Grant is an exaggerated hare, while exploring the larger topic of why it is that hares are so often associated with fire in European folklore.

Introduction[1]

Among the unlikely creatures described in book three of Gervase of Tilbury's *Otia Imperialia* (*c.*1211) is a *demonum genus* 'a kind of demon' reportedly known in English as the Grant.[2] Although Gervase locates the creature in England, no particular region is given, nor can one be deduced from the account's placement in the text. It reads:

> There is in England a certain kind of demon which they call *grant* in their native idiom. It is like a yearling colt, prancing on its hind-legs, with sparkling eyes. This kind of demon very often appears in the streets in the heat of the day or at about sunset, and whenever it is seen, it gives warning of an imminent fire in that city or neighbourhood. When danger is looming on the following day or night, it sets the dogs barking by running to and fro in the streets, and feigning flight, lures the dogs on its tail to pursue it in the vain hope of catching it. An apparition of this kind makes the townspeople take care to guard their fires, and thus, while this obliging variety of demon frightens anyone who sees it, its coming regularly serves to protect people who would otherwise have been unaware of their danger.[3] (Banks and Binns 2002, 677–79)

Because this mysterious entity appears nowhere but in Gervase's work, very little is known about it. In this brief article, I draw attention to some overlooked parallels between the Grant and a hare folk belief found in parts of England in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I suggest that the Grant may have always been, at core, a hare, and that Gervase (or his informant) exaggerated the animal's appearance for dramatic effect.

Gervase and *Otia Imperialia*

Around 1211, Gervase of Tilbury (*c.*1150–1228) wrote his *Otia Imperialia*, 'Recreation for an Emperor,' for his patron, Emperor Otto IV, as a compendium of knowledge and diversions. It has been variously described as encompassing 'all facts then known concerning history, geography, and physics' and 'a bagful of foolish old women's tales' (Schlager 1909, 536). The text comprises three volumes: a book of history, from Creation to the Flood; the division of the world among Noah's three sons, delving into the geographies and histories of the regions mentioned; and a patchwork of marvels, compiling fables, legends, and ostensibly true accounts of the strange. *Otia Imperialia* was quite popular in its time, and is today found in thirty manuscripts (Banks and Binns 2002, lxiii).

Born in Essex, and reputedly related to English nobility, Gervase made his career on the Continent. In his youth, he studied canon law in Bologna, where he went on to lecture for a time. He later entered the court of William II of Sicily; after William's death in 1189, he relocated to Arles and married. In 1209 he attended the coronation of Holy Roman Emperor Otto IV, who soon named him Marshal of Arles (Wolf 2012, 3–4). Ralph of Coggeshall, who knew Gervase personally, referred to him as a canon in his *English Chronicle*, leading to speculation that he retired to an Essex abbey some time before the end of his life (Oman 1944, 2). Others believe that he served as canon of the Ebstorf convent in Saxony, and played a role in creating the famous Ebstorf map (Wolf 2012).[4]

Gervase displayed extensive knowledge of English history and geography, and is valued as an important authority on medieval English folklore (Simpson and Roud 2003). In the nineteenth century, Thomas Keightley used him as one of three sources for pre-Elizabethan English fairy beliefs (Keightley 1860, 284–86). Later, C. C. Oman praised Gervase and gave an overview of the folklore he recorded, including small household sprites called Portuni and a fairy horn stolen from an otherworldly barrow-feast (Oman 1944, 4–7). Gervase was familiar with the lore of Cambridgeshire, and provides the first record of the Wandlebury legend, which tells of an old hillfort haunted by a ghostly knight who could be summoned by mortal challengers (Porter 1969, 188–89).

The Ominous Hare

Since the nineteenth century, scholars have shown interest in the Grant's kinship, but no conclusive connections have been made. Felix Liebrecht, who translated and annotated the third book of *Otia Imperialia*, suggested a link to both Grendel and the demons that tormented St Guthlac (1856, 51). Oman dismissed the latter comparison, but both Keightley and Jacob Grimm supported an association with Grendel, based largely on the similarity between their names (Oman 1944, 5; Keightley 1860, 286; Grimm 1880-88, 1: 243). This connection is possible, but inconclusive. The etymology of 'Grendel' is itself notoriously unsettled, but it has been connected to Old English *grindan* 'to grind' and *gryndel* 'angry', and Old Norse *grindill* 'storm' (Chambers 1921, 309–10) — none of which seems to capture the spirit of the helpful Grant. Liebrecht also suggested a possible connection between Grant and Granta, a pre-Anglo-Saxon name for the river Cam (Liebrecht 1856,

133), an interesting (but, again, inconclusive) suggestion given the historic popularity of the hare belief in Cambridgeshire, described below.

The 1708 edition of John Cowell's *Law Dictionary* recorded a suggestion that the Grant be compared to the Barguest, a shape-shifting portent of death from the north of England, but apart from some rather general similarities—glowing eyes and an ominous nature—the two creatures seem to have nothing in common (Cowell 1708, 164–65). Glowing eyes were a fairly widespread feature of medieval monsters, and do not necessarily indicate a genetic relationship—they were also part of the anatomy of Grendel, the dog-headed St Christopher, and the two-headed snakes and mysterious islanders described in *Marvels of the East* (*c.*1000), an Anglo-Saxon text which shares a codex with *Beowulf* and which is based on the Anglo-Latin *Liber Monstrorum* (*c.* late seventh or early eighth century) (Kiernan 2015, 726b–727b; Orchard 1995, 14, 187 and 199).[5] They are a frequent motif in European folklore, characterizing the aforementioned Barguest, the Scandinavian Lindwurm, the German Kobold, and the Manx Fenodderee (Rose 2001, 224; Thomas 1847, 1005; Moore 1896, xxii).

It is helpful to separate Gervase's account into two parts—the Grant itself, and the belief surrounding it—in order to better understand it. Most scholars have looked to the creature's physical characteristics and its possible etymology, while paying somewhat less attention to its significance as a fire omen. As a result, a folk belief about hares that closely parallels that about the Grant has been overlooked. This belief, once common in the south of England, but found also on the Continent, is described in an intriguing scrap of hare-lore from south Northamptonshire:

> *Hares.* – Besides the ancient superstition attached to the crossing of the path by one of these animals, there is also a belief that the running of one along the street or mainway of a village, portends fire to some house in the immediate vicinity. (T. S. 1851, 3–4)

The belief that the hare serves as a herald of an impending fire, particularly in a developed setting—in a village, or near a house—is relatively rare. By far, it is most robustly attested to by English sources, but it is also found in Central Europe: it was known in Germany (Thomas 1908, 518), and Küster recorded the Silesian belief that 'if a hare runs through a village, a fire will break out' (1892, 108). In her discussion of Slavic hare-lore, Renate Lachmann mentioned that 'a hare near a house denotes death and fire' (2006, 378).[6]

W. D. Sweeting (1886, 161) described this superstition as common in the English Midlands, but this is not quite borne out by the existing references; it seems to be found broadly throughout the south of England, with a small presence in the southern portion of the Midlands, particularly Northamptonshire. Apart from that county, Steve Roud found the belief attested in Devon, Essex, Middlesex, Worcestershire, Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire, and Suffolk (2006, 240). (His reference to 'Midland England' is specifically for Brackley, a town in south Northamptonshire.) It is particularly well documented in Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire, where it is mentioned in several newspaper articles about mysterious fires during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

An 1866 news item from Ely, Cambridgeshire, described how soon after a 'foolish hare' entered the city, it was 'hotly pursued by dogs, cats, boys, and men . . . many persons being certain that Ely was to be visited by a fire', leading a *Notes & Queries* correspondent to ask, 'What is known of this curious superstition?' (E. S. D. 1867, 134–35). In autumn of 1884, an unfortunate hare meandered into the marketplace in Peterborough, where it was killed by people who feared that its presence would cause a fire. On the evening that the newspaper printed notice of this incident, the reporter later noted, 'a considerable fire' broke out at an inn located in the marketplace (Sweeting 1886, 162). The next year, the following adage was recorded in Peterborough, attesting to a variation of the belief:

> If in the Minster Close a hare
> Should for itself have made a lair,
> Be sure before the week is down
> A fire will rage within the town. (Sweeting 1886, 162)

In 1878, T. F. Thiselton-Dyer described the belief as common in Northamptonshire (117). In Rushden in 1884 'a hare was seen to run along one of the streets a few hours previous to [a] fire' that caused over five hundred pounds of damage. Some townspeople had reportedly expressed hope that 'should the omen prove true, the fire would not occur at a factory or any other public work' (Sweeting 1886, 161–62). The *Northampton Herald*'s correspondent noted that 'it is a common saying among the country people that a hare seen in a village street is an omen of fire', and the hare running through town so soon before the fire was taken by some 'as an evidence of the truth of the saying' (Sweeting 1886, 162). Hilderic Friend seems to suggest that a similar event happened in Brackley, writing that 'if a hare runs across the street it is a sign of fire. Fire has been known to follow such an event, therefore the omen must be a correct one' (1884, 23).

In Worcestershire, a variation on the belief held that 'should [the hare] take refuge in any house, that is the house at which the fire will occur' (Salisbury 1893, 72). Further afield, J. Stevens Neck wrote of the belief in its usual form having existing in Moretonhampstead, Devon, but suggested that it was dying out, if not dead, there by the late nineteenth century: 'it used to be believed some years ago, that if a hare were seen to run through the town that a fire would very speedily break out' (Neck 1886, 105).

In other places, the belief lasted into the twentieth century. In Harrow, then part of Middlesex, it was reported that 'one of the masters' houses at Harrow [School] was burnt down. A hare was said to have run through the town that morning; and there was a similar tradition about a similar fire there in the [eighteen-] thirties' (Hergensis 1909, 458). In fact, hares running through town were connected with at least three nineteenth-century fires at Harrow: one in 1833, another in 1838, and another soon before 1898 (Butler 1898, 40). In Hertfordshire, it was recorded that a hare entering a town or village was understood to 'forecast a fire' (Gerish 1911, 5). Soon before the outbreak of World War Two, a survey respondent from Essex attested to the belief that 'if a hare runs across the road there will be a fire' (Newman and Wilson 1953, 293). In the 1950s a news item from Fordham reported:

> It is part of the old Cambridgeshire folk lore that a fire always follows if a hare runs down the main street of a village. The week before last a hare did run down the main street of Fordham. It was pursued by Mr. Richard Nicholls, a septuagenarian, and it was killed in a shed within three yards of the place where this fire [later] broke out. (Coote Lake 1956, 176)

And as recently as 1972, an informant somewhere in East Anglia reported that hares are omens of fires (Evans and Thomson 1972, 126).

Hares, Misfortunes, and Fire

The belief just discussed combines two different, more general, associations of the hare: one characterizes its appearance as a bad omen, and the other associates the animal with fire. A general notion that meeting with a hare causes bad luck is prevalent throughout Europe, but the exact implications of such an encounter are rarely specified (Brand 1842, 106; Britten 1887, 264; Daniels and Stevans 1903, 641). In 1648, Sir Thomas Browne wrote that 'if a hare cross the highway, there are few above three-score years that are not perplexed thereat, which, notwithstanding, is but an augurial terror' (320). Over two centuries later, West Sussex folklorist Charlotte Latham reported having met with educated and ignorant people alike who professed that:

> If a hare were the first animal that crossed their path upon their leaving home, [they] would turn back, regarding it as a warning, that if they went any further on their way, death, or some dire mishap, would certainly befall them. (1878, 56)

On the more specific side of things, a hare crossing a pregnant woman's path was believed to cause a cleft lip ('hare lip') in the unborn child, and a Cornish belief held that a white hare indicated an ensuing storm (Daniels and Stevans 1903, 641). And in Wheal Vor mine, a hare spotted in an engine-house was thought to foretell a deadly accident (Black 1883, 85).

Meanwhile, Evans and Thomson note that 'tradition in many parts of the world carries [the] linking of the hare with fire and burning' (1972, 108). In Europe, there are scattered references to fire-breathing hares. In his testimony at the Pendle witch-trial in 1612, James Device reported that he was confronted by 'a thing like a Hare, which spit fire at him', and three centuries later, John A. Boyle reported a Silesian belief in 'fire-spouting' hares (Potts 1613, page O2 verso; Boyle 1973, 325). Jacob Grimm wrote that Germans ascribe rising mists to hares boiling supper, and a Low German idiom, *de Hase brouet* ('the hare is brewing'), was used to describe a low-hanging fog in the 1880s (Grimm 1880-88, 2: 641; Krebs 1907, 214).

The question of why hares should be related to fire is not settled. According to Roud, the only plausible explanation—albeit inconclusive—has been suggested by Evans and Thomson, whose informants 'claimed that hares will tend to try to escape by running *through* the fire' (Roud 2006, 240). A gamekeeper from Suffolk reported that 'I allus see them come through the fire, come right out of it; and they'll nearly all do that, get through the fire to get back. . . . When all the heath get on fire, March time . . . when there's no cover on the land, they go right through the fire' (Evans

and Thomson 1972, 124). This notion is similar to the hunted hare's reported tendency to boldly 'turn and jump right through her pursuers' (Read 1916, 253).

Another possible explanation has less to do with the hare's immediate interaction with flames than with the longer-term impact of fire on hares. A 2016 study found that only a year after wildfires, hare populations in burnt areas are actually higher than populations in unaffected areas, with hares showing 'an increased abundance in burned areas until the fourth year after the wildfire', after which time populations in burnt and unburnt areas reached equilibrium (Sokos et al. 2016, 428). This means that people may have a better chance of spotting hares in burnt landscapes than unburnt ones for several years after a fire strikes. Certainly, this is a more likely sight than hares directly interacting with fire. The vision of an apparently unaffected hare surrounded by cinders likely contributed to the association of the animal with fire, and is possibly an origin of the fire-breathing hare motif mentioned above.

As for the belief that hares may foretell an impending fire, it may owe something to wildfires flushing woodland creatures, like hares, out of their normal domain and into more densely populated areas that they generally avoid.[7] If a hare were to outrun a wildfire by fleeing into a town, followed soon after by the fire it fled from, it is possible that those who remembered the animal's unexpected appearance would think it had been an omen of the fire. Why it should be hares, rather than squirrels or some other fire-fleeing animal that became most associated with oncoming fire may have to do in part with the hare's exceptional speed. It seems that hares were both more likely to outpace a fire, and more likely to reach a town earlier than most other animals. This may have been compounded by the hare's broader associations with fire as described above. The hare developing from an omen of wildfire to an omen of nearby fire in general is only a moderate broadening of the belief.

Bodily Similarities

The previously overlooked parallels between the hare and the Grant are uncanny: a furry creature running through a town serving as an omen of fire in the vicinity. Less apparent, though, are their similarities in form.

The Grant is described as 'like a yearling colt, prancing on its hind-legs, with sparkling eyes'. Hares are well known for adopting bipedalism at times. It is noteworthy that the Suffolk gamekeeper mentioned above described hares bravely leaping through fires in March. The well-known phrase 'mad as a March hare', attested to since at least 1535, refers to the bizarre behaviour of the brown hare during its mating season (Farmer and Henley 1896, 264; Holly and Greenwood 1984, 549–50). While the season actually runs from January to August, popular belief holds that it peaks in March (Holly and Greenwood 1984, 549–50). At this time, in addition to apparently running through heath-fires, hares are seen standing on their hind legs and hitting one another with their forepaws. Outside of this season, they are also known to stand upright when confronted by foxes (Allen and Bekoff 1995, 8).

Figure 1. A leaping hare from a 10th century French manuscript. The Hague, Museum Meermanno | House of the Book, MS 10 D7, fol. 84r. (Photo: Museum Meermanno)

Further demonstrating an association between the hare and bipedalism, many medieval manuscript illustrations depict the creature on two legs. For example, a tenth-century French manuscript shows a leaping hare which seems to be 'prancing on its hind legs' (The Hague, Meermanno MS. 10 D 7, fol. 84r; see figure 1). Beginning in the early fourteenth century, hares and rabbits were often shown standing upright, confronting humans and hounds within the broader context of topsy-turvy world imagery (Scillia 2012, 39). The hare was not the only quadruped to be depicted in this way, but the examples are numerous and it seems to have become something of a stock illustration. For example, the *Gorleston Psalter* (1310–24) shows a bipedal hare standing up to, and apparently intimidating, a knight (London, British Library Additional MS. 49622, fol. 149v; see figure 2).

Figure 2. A hare rears on its hind legs to confront a knight. *The Gorleston Psalter* (London, British Library Additional MS 49622, fol. 149v). Photograph © The British Library Board. Used with permission.

The marginal illustrations in a version of the *Romance of Alexander* (*c.*1338-44) include a series of crossbow-toting hares or rabbits hunting humans (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Bodley 264, pt. 1, fol. 81v), and the fourteenth-century *Breviary of Verdun* shows dogs besieging a castle defended by upright hares, as well as a lance-wielding hare besting an armoured knight (Verdun, Bibliothèque municipale, MS. 107, fol. 137v and fol. 141v; see figure 3).

The hares' eyes in the *Breviary* are large and saucer-like. If they do not exactly 'sparkle' like the Grant's, they at least speak to a medieval acknowledgement of the hare's eyes as noteworthy, additional evidence for which is found in Chaucer's description of the Pardoner as having 'swiche glarynge eyen . . . as an hare' (*General Prologue*, line 684: Chaucer 1964, 32). 'Glaring' historically meant 'bright, sparkling' and 'that gives out or reflects a dazzling light', so it is possible that Chaucer's 'glarynge' indicated to his contemporaries some degree of luminosity associated with hares' eyes[8].

Figure 3. *The Breviary of Verdun* (Verdun, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 107).
(a) Dogs at war with wide-eyed hares (fol. 137v). **(b)** A bipedal hare bests a knight (fol. 141v).

The image of the Grant being chased by the village dogs evokes the familiar scene of hunting dogs chasing down hares and rabbits. That the Grant always evades its pursuers may be read as an exaggeration of the hare's reputation for speed: according to Isidore of Seville's widely-read early medieval *Etymologies*, 'The hare (*lepus*) [is named] as if the word were *levipes* ('swift foot'), because it runs swiftly' (Isidore 2006, 248). At the same time, it is reminiscent of the aforementioned topsy-turvy world motif, where hares are frequently depicted besting their traditional would-be killers, human and canine alike.

Taken together, these similarities indicate that the Grant may be read as something of an exaggerated hare. Where hares are known for moving about on their hind feet at times, the Grant is explicitly bipedal; where hares' eyes are large (and perhaps luminous), the Grant's are sparkling; and where packs of hunting dogs chase after the hare, whose very speed and evasiveness give hare-coursing its apparent thrill, the Grant gleefully outpaces all of its canine pursuers, making sport of them in the process.

Conclusion

In its chapter on the Grant, Gervase of Tilbury's *Otia Imperialia* relays a folk belief about a demon that runs through streets and serves as an omen of impending fire in the vicinity. This creature has long perplexed scholars, largely because Gervase provides the only known mention of it. Most have tried to get at the creature itself, comparing it with other folkloric and literary monsters based on its glowing eyes and its ominous nature.

While the particulars of the creature remain mysterious, elements of the Grant's fire-omen belief have been recorded as late as the 1970s, albeit applied to hares. It is worth recalling that Gervase was born in Essex, one of the regions where the hare belief was later attested. Several of *Otia Imperialia*'s chapters were based on Gervase's personal observation, and he may have encountered this belief in his own youth (Banks and Binns 2002, lviii).

It may be that the fire-omen belief applied to a legendary creature called the Grant in Gervase's time, and came to be applied to hares some time later; it may be that people believed in the Grant as an independently-existing entity and conflated it with their belief in hares as fire-omens by the time Gervase recorded their hybrid belief. Gervase also may have accidentally blended two reports from one source, one about the hare belief, the other a description of the Grant. Another possibility is that Gervase simply recorded a folk belief about hares and exaggerated their appearance for the amusement of his patron. Although Banks and Binns urge that 'it would be wrong to accuse Gervase of deliberate falsification, or even of irony' (2002, lxii), there is circumstantial evidence that this may have been what occurred. In the prologue to the section in which the Grant chapter appears, Gervase wrote, 'since the appetite of the human mind is always keen to hear and lap up novelties, the oldest things will have to be presented as new, natural things as miraculous, and things familiar to us all, as strange' (Banks and Binns 2002, 559).

The orthodox interpretation of this passage is that nature provides enough marvels to satisfy the human desire for wonder, but that is not the only possible reading. In his chapter on the Grant, Gervase may have creatively presented something 'familiar to us all'—the hare—as something 'strange', in order to entertain his patron's fancy for novelties, and simply appropriated (and possibly

modified) a local monster-name for the purpose. Gervase insisted that 'the crude falsehoods of idle tales should be spurned', but his personal credibility is not unassailable: he also claimed to have witnessed William I of Scotland's fowler 'catch cranes or any other birds of the air by snare of words alone: at the mere utterance of his words, they fell to the ground', and to have had 'barrels full of wine in [his] own cellar from which on occasions no wine could be drawn', the tap proving useless and 'nothing but air' being found in them—'but an hour later they were found to be so full that there were no grounds for complaint' (Banks and Binns 2002, 559, 717 and 725).

If it was ever anything but a hare, the Grant seems to have disappeared from folklore centuries ago. But the fact remains that the essential elements of an English folk belief described in only one known source in the early thirteenth century survived into the latter decades of the twentieth century. Whether it still exists is far less certain; the most recent direct reference to the belief appears to have been in 1972, and its declining popularity was commented upon as far back as 1886 (Evans and Thomson 1972, 126; Neck 1886, 105). Writing in 1953, L. F. Newman and E. M. Wilson noted that the fourteen years since the outbreak of World War Two had 'seen a rapid acceleration in the rate of disappearance of old county beliefs and customs. This [was] especially true of Essex, where the growth of large industrial areas and the passing of many of the old families have tended to obliterate the native culture' (Newman and Wilson 1953, 286).

Notes

[1] I would like to thank this article's anonymous reviewers and the participants in the CUNY Graduate Center's Medieval Studies Works-in-Progress meetings, all of whom gave me valuable advice. Dedicated to my wife, Rebecca.

[2] 'Demon' was the general term by which Gervase referred to supernatural entities, including household spirits, fauns, satyrs, a centaur, lamias, and larvae, in addition to the Grant (Banks and Binns 2002, 99–101, 723–31, 677–79). He showed uncertainty as to whether such beings were composed of air or of flesh and blood (Banks and Binns 2002, 101 and 727–31).

[3] 'LXII. De Grant. Est in Anglia quoddam demonum genus quod suo ydiomate *grant* nominant, ad instar pulli equini anniculi, tibiis erectum, oculis scintillantibus. Istud demonum genus sepissime comparet in plateis in ipsius diei feruore aut circa solis occiduum, et quociens apparet, futurum in urbe illa uel uico portendit incendium. Cum ergo sequente die uel nocte instat periculum, in plateis discursu facto, canes prouocat ad latrandum, et dum fugam simulat, sequentes canes ad insequendum spe uana consequendi inuitat. Huiusmodi illusio comuicaneis de ignis custodia cautelam facit, et sic officiosum demonum genus, dum conspicientes terret, suo aduentu munire ignorantes solet' (Banks & Binns 2002, 676–78).

[4] Banks and Binns provide a far more detailed biography of Gervase (2002, xxv–xxxviii).

[5] *The Marvels of the East* can be viewed on the British Library's website:
https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/the-marvels-of-the-east

[6] In something like a frustrating game of telephone, Billson (1892, 454) claims that the superstition is known in Hungary, citing a note by S. L. (1867, 362) in *Notes & Queries*. S. L., in turn, claims to have read this superstition in Dr Towson's *Travels in Hungary*, stating that the author of that work encountered it. In fact, this is not true: Towson only describes the superstition that a hare is an omen of general misfortune being described by his driver on the route from Fured (now

Balatonfüred) to Debretzin (now Debrecen). Interestingly, he notes that he was unsure whether this belief existed among the English (Towson 1797, 236).

[7] In September 2017, a widely-shared social media post urged California homeowners to leave water out for wild animals fleeing nearby forest fires (http://bozemanskissfm.com/this-is-a-good-reason-to-leave-a-bucket-of-water-out-at-night/). On an article urging homeowners *not* to follow this advice, one commenter ('Genevaa') defended the post in October, writing 'I live on the edge of the firestorm perimeter. In this week of fire we have had 5 x as many deer, coyotes, fox, raccoon and badge[r] visiting our small irrigation puddles and bird bath at sunset and dawn'. http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/articleComments/Wild-animals-fleeing-wildfire-on-your-doorstep-12271373.php

[8] OED Online. '*Glaring – adj.*'. Accessed 8 June 2018. http://www.oed.com

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