

An Account of the Earthquake on Thursday Morning, March 8, 1749. as seen in the Inner Temple Garden, by Robert Shaw (a very sensible Scotchman) then at Work there; communicated by James Burrow Esq; F. R. S.

Read March 15. 1749. **H**E was just come into the Garden

(at half an Hour after 5), and was scarce arrived at the great Tree, near the little Door under *Harcourt's* Buildings (which is about 10 or 12 Yards perhaps distant from *Harcourt's* Buildings), when he heard a GREAT NOISE, LOUDER BY MUCH than the Noise of the Explosions upon the Proof of the *Great Cannon* at *Woolwich*, when full-charged (at which Proofs he has been often present); nay louder, he thought, than ANY Noise he ever heard. This Noise seemed to come from behind the Buildings; and his Face was then opposite to them.

At the same Instant he saw the whole Building move upwards, then incline forwards towards him (so that he thought it would fall upon him); then recline backwards, and then settle; at which time all the Windows rattled and clatter'd, as upon an Explosion of a Cannon; the Sound in the Interim rolling away (seemingly from the Water-side up towards *Temple-Bar*) just like the rolling Sound or Echo which accompanies or succeeds the Explosion of Thunder, or of Ship Guns.

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As to the Continuance, he often expressed himself that it was *as a Thought*; and, in point of Time, he supposed it could not be 3 Seconds.

The Sound and the Motion began both together; but the Sound was quite rolled off, rather *sooner* than the Buildings were settled.

I asked him how much he judged the Declination of the Building to have been *from the Perpendicular*? He answer'd, "That it was impossible to be exact in relating that Particular, both by reason of the Surprise he was in, and also from the Suddenness of the whole Compass of the Appearance, which was but as a Thought." However, in order to form some Notion of it, I made a comparative Inclination of the Garden Key, which I held perpendicular to my Hand, and moved backwards and forwards, till he should judge it to approach nearest to what he could recollect of the Heeling of the Buildings (which indeed was but an inaccurate Method of coming at the Truth of a Thing professedly uncertain even to the Relator): It seemed to me, by his Description in this rough Comparison (in which I might easily mistake him) to be a Declination of several Degrees from the Perpendicular; which is also agreeable to his Apprehension, that the Building would fall upon him. Possibly, his Surprise might magnify the Appearance far beyond the Reality.

I then inquired what Perception he had of his own *personal Motion*, and that of the particular Spot of *Ground whereon he then stood*? He said, his Surprise was so great, on seeing so new and uncommon an Appearance (for he was not in or near

London when the last Earthquake happen'd), that he either had *no Perception* at all concerning himself and the Ground under him; or at least was so intirely engaged in observing what he saw and heard, that he had no Attention to what he felt.

N. B. I made this Memorandum immediately after after conversing with this *Robert Shaw*; and therefore I suppose it contains a tolerably exact Account of what he related to me.

Friday Morning, March 9.
1749.

James Burrow.

XVII.

The Rev. H. Miles D. D. F. R. S. to Mr. H. Baker F. R. S. containing a more full Account of the same than his former Letter, Art. XII.

Read March 15.
1749. **I** NOW send you the best Account I am able of the Earthquake which was so generally felt in the City, and round about it, on the 8th instant in the Morning at 5^h 40' nearly, equal time.

I was then standing in my Study, when I heard a Noise, at the first Moment, very like the Explosion I heard several Years ago, when some drying and Storehouses of Gunpowder were blown up about 6 Miles from us: This Noise issued in a Murmur in the Air, like distant Thunder, and ended like a rushing Wind: There was no perceivable Intermision