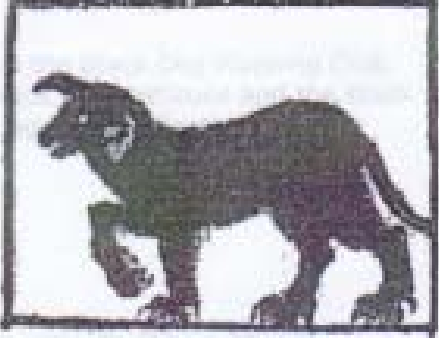



histography and meaning of the depressed black dog



A strange,
and terrible Wunder wrought
very late in the parish Church
of *Bongay*, a Town of no great di-
stance from the city of *Gloucester*, namely
by the fourth of this August, in 7 year of
our Lord 1577. in a great tempest of ter-
rible rains, lightning, and thunder, the
like wherof hath bin felt
some time.
With the appearance of an horrible shape
perishing, sensibly perceived of the
people then and there
assembled.
Written into a plain method ac-
cording to the written copye.
by Abraham Fleming.



By: Seth Richardson



Pictures on front cover: (left to right) A Black Dog - from 1577 pamphlet by Abraham Fleming (www.bungay-suffocly.co.uk) and Goya's painting, The Dog, 1820 – 1823, Museo del Prado, Madrid

Let me tell you, mama, what that black dog done done to me
Let me tell you, mama, what that black dog done done to me
He cheated me from my regular, now he's after my used-to-be

Black dog, black dog, you caused me to weep and moan
Black dog, black dog, you caused me to weep and moan
You cause me to leave my, sweet old happy home

Black dog, black dog, you forever on my mind
Black dog, black dog, you forever on my mind
If you only let me see my baby one more time

So long black dog, I'm quittin' your hard luck line
So long black dog, I'm quittin' your hard luck line
'Cause you got me so blue, keep 'bout to love her sometime

Black Dog Blues, Blind Arthur Blake, circa 1926-1932

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SYNOPSIS

From Winston Churchill there are lexicographical stepping stones back to the origins of the term black dog for depression, perhaps as early as 856 AD in the *Annales Franorum*. English literary stepping stones include figures such as Arthur Conan Doyle, Robert Louis Stevenson, Sir Walter Scott and Samuel Johnson to Bartholomew de Granville, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* and *Beowulf* – almost a millennium of reference and suggestion of the black dog inhabiting troubled minds.

The black dog crossed into English literature from English folklore and from there into a terminology for depression. This lore was based upon Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, Norman and Viking language and cultural influences: England's inhabitants and invaders. The black dog might just be a mongrel.

The black dog's ancestors were dark demonic hellhounds. They brought fear to superstitious people, an explanation for the unknown and a link between this world and other worlds. Depression, melancholy or black bile, was not far removed from the devil's hand. Today the black dog might have cast off the demons but not depression.

ESSAY

Introduction

Depression, a term coined by Adolf Meyer, has often been seen as insufficient a name. William Styron in his account of his depression, *Darkness Visible*, wrote: "Melancholia' would still be far more apt and evocative word for the blacker forms of the disorder, but it was usurped by a noun with a bland

formality and lacking any magisterial presence.”¹ American author Susan Sontag, was more succinct: "Depression is melancholy minus its charms..."²

Churchill named his own depression - black dog.³ He was not the first or last to use black dog to describe depression. While the term has survived Churchill, its origins remain obscured in the history of the English language.

One source is pre-eminent in discovering the English languages' meaning. That source is the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED): "a paragon, the definitive guide to the language,"⁴ wrote Simon Winchester in one of his histories of OED, *The Surgeon of Crowthorne*. For Winchester, the pre-eminence of the OED, "is its rigorous dependence on gathering quotations from the published or otherwise recorded use of English, and employing them to illustrate the sense of every single word in the language."⁵ The OED is then an appropriate starting point for the search for the meaning of the black dog.

The OED⁶ provides two quotations for the term black dog in relation to depression.⁷ In 1882 Robert Louis Stevenson wrote: "The black dog was on his back, as people say, in terrifying nursery metaphor."⁸ The earliest reference is from poet Sir Walter Scott in 1826: "I passed a pleasant day with the kind J.B., which was a great relief from the black dog which would have

¹ Page 37

² http://womenshistory.about.com/od/quotes/a/susan_sontag_2.htm (accessed 16 January 2005)

³ Churchill's daughter, Lady Soames, said of her father's depression: "A lot has been made of the depressive side of his character by psychiatrists who were never in the same room with him. He himself talks of his black dog, and he did have times of great depression, but marriage to my mother very largely kennelled the black dog. Of course, if you have a black dog it lurks somewhere in your nature and you never quite banish it; but I never saw him disarmed by depression." - <http://www.winstonchurchill.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=775>

⁴ Page 24

⁵ Page 24

⁶ 2nd Edition, 1989

⁷ The other use of the term is "A cant name, in Queen Anne's reign, for a bad shilling or other base coin." This is supported by a literary quote dated 1706.

⁸ From the novel *New Arabian Nights*

worried me from home.”⁹ The Scott quotation is from his diary entry of 12 May 1826 written in Edinburgh.

However, despite the pre-eminence of the OED, the evidence is clear that black dog, as a term for depression, pre-dates Scott. Elizabethan era lexicographer Samuel Johnson wrote in June 1783, “The black dog I hope always to resist, and in time to drive though I am deprived of almost those that used to help me. When I rise my breakfast is solitary, the black dogs waits to share it, from breakfast to dinner he continues barking.”¹⁰

Johnson in his 1755 *Dictionary of the English Language* included the word melancholy but not black dog. Johnson’s dictionary was the authority source on the English language until the publication of the OED in 1928.¹¹

Johnson, like Churchill and many other literary figures,¹² suffered from depression, writing: “life so dissipated and useless, and my terrors and perplexities have so increased, that I am under great depression and discouragement.”¹³

⁹ From Lockhart, *Life of Scott*, Vol. 8, page 335. John Lockhart, Scott’s biographer, was his son-in-law, and a lawyer by trade. J.B. is Scott’s great friend James Ballantyne. Scott and Ballantyne operated a printing and publishing business together.

¹⁰ Letter to Mrs Thale, 28 June 1783, in Chapman, R. W (Ed), *Letters of Samuel Johnson*, Vol 3, 1952

¹¹ In April 1928 the last volume of the first edition was published. For a history of the OED see <http://dictionary.oed.com/about/history.html>

¹² Writers include: Hans Christian Andersen, Honore de Balzac, James Barrie, William Faulkner (H), F. Scott Fitzgerald (H), Ernest Hemingway (H), Hermann Hesse (H), Henrik Ibsen, Henry James, William James, Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain), Joseph Conrad, Charles Dickens, Isak Dinesen, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Herman Melville, Eugene O’Neill (H), Mary Shelley, Robert Louis Stevenson, Leo Tolstoy, Tennessee Williams (H), Mary Wollstonecraft, Virginia Woolf (H). Poets include: William Blake, Robert Burns, George Gordon, Lord Byron, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Hart Crane, Emily Dickinson, T.S. Eliot (H), Oliver Goldsmith, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Victor Hugo, Samuel Johnson, John Keats, Vachel Lindsay, James Russell Lowell, Robert Lowell (H), Edna St. Vincent Millay (H), Boris Pasternak (H), Sylvia Plath (H), Edgar Allan Poe, Ezra Pound (H), Anne Sexton (H), Percy Bysshe Shelley, Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Dylan Thomas, Walt Whitman. (Source <http://www.theblackdog.net/walk.htm>)

¹³ Roesh, R, *The Encyclopedia of Depression*, page 118

Black dog in literature

Where did English writers such as Churchill, Stevenson, Scott and Johnson get the term black dog from? Or perhaps the question is: how did the black dog find them?

Images of the black dog abound in English folklore and popular literature. Perhaps the most famous is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's 1902 *Hound of the Baskervilles*.¹⁴ Arthur Conan Doyle was one of Churchill's favourite authors: "Of course I read every Sherlock Holmes story."¹⁵

Arthur Conan Doyle's in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* wrote:

"...there stood a foul thing, a great, black beast, shaped like a hound, yet larger than any hound that ever mortal eye has rested upon. And even as they looked the thing tore the throat out of Hugo Baskerville, on which, as it turned its blazing eyes and dripping jaws upon them, the three shrieked with fear and rode for dear life, still screaming, across the moor. One, it is said, died that very night of what he had seen, and the other twain were but broken men for the rest of their days."

Churchill might have taken his black dog from Doyle's black beast of the moors. Though, as an avid reader, he might have been inspired by Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, Chapter 2: Black Dog Appears and Disappears:

"But suddenly his colour changed, and he tried to raise himself, crying, "Where's Black Dog?"

"There is no Black Dog here," said the doctor, "except what you have on your own back."

¹⁴ An extract from the book was first published in the magazine *The Strand*, August 1901

¹⁵ Quoted on backcover, Doyle's *The Complete Brigadier*, 1995 Canongate Press,

Or perhaps because he was familiar with local folklore of black dog apparitions. Stories told to him as a child. Churchill grew up in the Midlands¹⁶ where the black dog apparition was known locally as the 'Hooter'.¹⁷

Doyle and Churchill had a shared history and horror – war. Doyle served as a doctor in a field hospital during the Boer War, while Churchill was a war correspondent during the Boer War and later served in the army during the First World War as well as being Minister for Munitions. They also shared the illness of depression.¹⁸

Black dog in folklore

The search of the history of the term black dog requires an examination of the black dog in folklore. However, the study of folklore itself does not make a link between apparitions of black dogs and depression.¹⁹

Folklore study, such as those on black dogs, focuses on the beliefs of people, not the proving or disapproving apparitions. The black dog in lore is numerous. Carol Rose in *Giants, Monsters and Dragons. An Encyclopedia of Folklore Legend and Myth*, notes black dogs in Norwich, Devon, Newgate (London), Norfolk, Scotland, Wales, Isle of Man, and Ireland. Black dogs were rampant across England and Great Britain

Dr Simon Sherwood of University College, Northampton, who has written extensively on black dogs in lore, identifies a number of interpretations of black dog apparitions. He notes research that apparitions might be “facilitated or created by interactions with environmental variables.”²⁰ While the

¹⁶ He was born in 1874 and lived at Blenheim Place, Woodstock, Oxfordshire

¹⁷ Sherwood page 3

¹⁸ Conan Doyle suffered from depression in 1906, following the death of his wife Louisa. She died of tuberculosis on 4 July 1906.

¹⁹ See for example Sherwood's *Apparitions of Black Dogs*, Harte's *Alternative Approaches To Folklore*, or Trubshaw's *The Black Dog in Folklore*.

²⁰ It is worth noting that 'dog' is associated with a variety of atmospheric conditions: fog-dog, sea-dog, sun-dog and water-dog.²⁰ Not to mention the celestial Dog Stars – Sirius (Canis Major) and Procyon (Canis Minor)

appearance of a black dog was regarded as an omen of death or bad luck.²¹ The black dog offered an explanation for the supernatural.

Walter Scott in his writings, his most enduring being *Ivanhoe* and the *Waverly* novels, was greatly influenced by the supernatural and popular lore. Coleman O. Parsons's *Witchcraft and Demonology in Scott's Fiction*, is a detailed treaty on Scott's literary background and influences. The supernatural is writ large: ghosts, second sight, demonology, magic, haunted places, astrology, witchcraft and omens featured throughout Scott's writings. Parson notes that: "Demonology serves many purposes in the Waverley Novels, from slight allusions to the embodiment of folklore,"²² and "Scott sometimes found that distraction, melancholy, or strong emotion could be expressed vividly in the imagery of demonism."²³ The black dog could now be associated with melancholy and the association was popularised by Scott's writings and widespread readership.

Like Scott, Andrew Solomon in the highly praised *Noonday Demon: An Atlas of Depression*,²⁴ noted the link between the devil and depression: "deep depression was often evidence of possession; a miserable fool contained within himself a devil..."²⁵ Solomon notes the theory of Thomas Aquinas that the soul was not physical like the body, and thus subject to "intervention by God or Satan."²⁶

Parsons's view is that: "Minds of a gloomy and despairing cast are represented in Scott as inviting melancholic, even demonic, occupants."²⁷ Perhaps a depressed mind offers a home to the black dog.

²¹ Ibid

²² Page 179

²³ Page 179

²⁴ The book won the 2001 National Book Award and was a finalist for the 2002 Pulitzer prize

²⁵ Page 292

²⁶ Page 293

²⁷ Page 192

It is possible then that the term black dog for depression evolved from demonic apparitions, which included black dogs. There is ample evidence in popular English lore that black dogs are also known as demonic hellhounds.²⁸ In Norfolk the Black Shuck is a hellhound, “the name deriving from the Anglo-Saxon word 'scucca' meaning demon or devil.”²⁹ While the Black Dog of Bungay is seen as “the apparition of the devil in disguise.”³⁰

Dr Sherwood, in his article, *Apparitions of Black Dogs*,³¹ draws extensively on the work of folklorists Theo Brown³² and K. Miller. Dr Sherwood states that the probable first English reference to a black dog is the ‘Anglo-Saxon Chronicle’³³ in 1127:

“...many men both saw and heard a great number of huntsmen hunting. The huntsmen were black, huge and hideous, and rode on black horses and on black he-goats and their hounds were jet black with eyes like saucers and horrible. This was seen in the very deer park of the town of Peterborough and in all the woods that stretch from that same town to Stamford, and in the night the monks heard them sounding and winding their horns.”³⁴

²⁸ Hellhounds are not confined to English lore. “There are numerous mythological reference 'hellhounds' in Greek, Indic, Celtic, Germanic, Latin, Armenian and Iranian sources.” *Black Dogs. Guardians of the corpse ways*, Bob Trubshaw at <http://www.indigogroup.co.uk/edge/bdogs.htm>

²⁹ *Black Shuck – Norfolk's Hell Hound* - http://www.norfolkcoast.co.uk/ml_blackshuck.htm

³⁰ *The Black Dog of Bungay – A brief history* at <http://www.bungay-suffolk.co.uk/history/black-dog.htm>

³¹ Article is at <http://nli.northampton.ac.uk/ass/psych-staff/sjs/blackdog.htm> (accessed 2 November 2004)

³² Brown's writings include: *The Black Dog in English Folklore* (1978) in *Animals and Folklore*, J. R. Porter and W. M. S. Russell. Brown's archival collection is housed at the University of Exeter

³³ The Anglo Saxon Chronicle, or rather a set of chronologically related manuscripts, was originally compiled on the orders of King Alfred the Great, (about A.D. 890), and subsequently continued until the middle of the 12th Century.

³⁴ From Berkley University Digital Library - <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/OMACL/Anglo/part7.html> (accessed 2 November 2004)

Not every translation of the Anglo Saxon Chronicle refers to the black hounds as above.³⁵ However, the Project Gutenberg translation has a similar, if less graphic version: “The hunters were swarthy, and huge, and ugly; and their hounds were all swarthy, and broad-eyed, and ugly.”³⁶

Dr Sherwood also refers to another early English reference - the apparition of the Black Dog at Bungary in Suffolk in August 1577. During a violent storm “the people knelt in fear, praying for mercy, suddenly there appeared in their midst a great black Hell Hound. It began tearing around the Church, attacking many of the congregation with its cruel teeth and claws. An old verse records: 'All down the church in midst of fire, the hellish monster flew And, passing onward to the quire, he many people slew'”³⁷

The black dog in medicine

In 1621 English scholar Robert Burton published the seminal *The Anatomy of a Melancholy*, a medical treatise on depression that brought together folklore, scholarship and medical knowledge.³⁸ The work “is arguably the first major text in the history of Western cognitive science...(and) sets the stage for mainstream European thinking about cognition in the following three centuries both conceptually and lexically.”³⁹

Burton referred to the black dog and linked it with the devil:

³⁵ In other versions there is no reference to the black hounds, for example: “...several persons saw and heard many huntsmen hunting. The hunters were swarthy, and huge, and ugly; and their hounds were all swarthy, and broad-eyed, and ugly. And they rode on swarthy horses, and swarthy bucks. This was seen in the very deer-fold in the town of Peterborough, and in all the woods from that same town to Stamford. And the monks heard the horn blow that they blew in the night.” From Berkley University Digital Library - <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/OMACL/Anglo/part7.html> (accessed 2 November 2004)

³⁶ <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext96/angsx10.txt> (accessed 2 November 2004)

³⁷ <http://www.bungary-suffolk.co.uk/history/black-dog.htm>

³⁸ A century later, Dr Samuel Johnson (who referred to his own severe depression as “the Black Dog”) kept a copy at his bedside. *Walking the Black Dog*, David Swatling 4 January 2004 - <http://www.rnw.nl/special/en/html/040109vh.html>

³⁹ <http://www.rc.umd.edu/cstahmer/cogsci/burton.html>

“A third dares not venture to walk alone, for fear he should meet the Devil, a thief, be sick, fears all old women as witches, & every black dog or cat he sees he suspecteth to be a Devil, every person comes near him is maleficated, every creature, all intend to hurt him, seek his ruin.”⁴⁰

Burton here takes the black dog from folklore into medical treaty, from superstition to mainstream knowledge. Burton’s work was so popular that it was revised in 1628, 1632, 1638, and 1651, and reprinted 1660 and 1676. It is a reasonable assumption that Burton provided a significant stepping stone for the black dog – from folklore to mainstream medicine.

The earliest black dog?

The first recorded literary sighting of a black dog is in the French manuscript the *Annales Franorum*,⁴¹ written in 856 AD. The text recounts "a sudden darkness that overtook a small church. A hellhound, with glowing red eyes, was seen as if it was searching for something before quickly disappearing."⁴² Yet despite this reference, the black dog is not recorded in Frank lore.

It is also claimed, with greater authority, that the black dog “most likely originated from the Vikings who feared the hound of their god Odin All-Father, and brought their tales and lore to England”⁴³.

⁴⁰ From *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, Subsection II Symptoms or Signs in the Mind (<http://www.udayton.edu/~hume/Burton/burton.htm>)

⁴¹ Which translates to Annuals of the Franks

⁴² http://www.meta-religion.com/Paranormale/Cryptozoology/Canine/black_dogs.htm

⁴³ *The Spectre Hound*, Susanna Duff

(<http://myths.allinfoabout.com/feature53.html>). The *Annales Franorum* were written during a period when the Vikings were spreading across northern Europe, including into the Frank empire. The period from AD 750 to 1050 has been described as one of the “mass movement of Scandinavian peoples [Vikings]...one of the great migrations of European history.”⁴³ This suggests that the Frankish account could be influenced by the Vikings.

In the *Spectre Hound*, Dusanna Duff, states that the “name Shuck⁴⁴ seems to go back to Old English (at least pre-1000 CE). The Old English epic poem *Beowulf* describes the monster Grendel and his mother. Grendel is called a *Scucca* (demon)- and *Scucc* would have been pronounced pretty much then as it is today. The poem also says of Grendel that *him of eagum stod ligge gelicost leoht unfaeger*, 'a fire-like, baleful light shone from his eyes'.”⁴⁵

The Norse origins are supported by claims that the Black Hound of Odin, was a “large spectral death omen.”⁴⁶ In the Scandinavian poem *Baldrs draumar* (*Balder's Dreams*) Odin rides to Niflheimr, the land ruled by Queen Hel, to ascertain the meaning of the dreams that have been troubling his son. On his journey Odin:

He met a hound that came from Hel.
That one had blood upon his breast,
and long did he bark at Baldrs father.
Onward rode Odin - the earth-way roared -
till he came to the high hall of Hel. ⁴⁷

The Viking impact on English was significant and “is epitomized in *Beowulf*...the greatest single work of Old English literature,”⁴⁸ which is a tale of a sixth century Scandinavian warrior.

Black and dog

Meaning is also discerned by breaking black dog into its two constituent parts: black and dog. The black dog appears to be the sum of its parts.

⁴⁴ The Black Shuck is the East Anglia name for a demonic black beast.

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ *The Encyclopedia of Ghosts and Spirits*, Rosemary Ellen Guiley, 1992 page 43

⁴⁷ *Hellhounds, Werewolves and the Germanic Underground*, Alby Stone
(<http://www.indigogroup.co.uk/edge/hellhnds.htm>)

⁴⁸ Ibid, page 72

Black is the colour of depression. Famed German psychiatrist Emil Kraepelin wrote in 1921 of the depressed as one who “sees only the dark side.”⁴⁹ For Aristotle melancholy⁵⁰ and creativity shared a common cause: black bile. Black bile was one of the “four Galenic humours - blood, yellow bile, black bile and phlegm – that were thought to govern human well-being and illness. Melancholia was thought to be due to an excess of black bile.”⁵¹

In 1398 vicar and writer John of Trevisa wrote, in his translation of Bartholomew de Glanville's *De proprietatibus rerum*, “This blacke colera is enmiye of kynde.”⁵²

The word ‘black’ has strong historical antecedents that suggest a connection with depression. “What a black gloomy condition am I now in,” wrote preterist and theologian Henry Hammond in 1659.⁵³ Black clouds can mean sorrow and deep sadness.

Generally, black and disease and death have been joined in meaning in nature. Amongst flora and fauna are the diseases: black pod, black disease, black arm, black scale, black root rot and black scour. The Black Death (bubonic plague) even had its own nursery rhyme: Ring-a-Ring o’ Rose.⁵⁴

The word ‘dog’ also has other language uses that could relate to depression. “It is naught good a slepyng hound to wake,” wrote Chaucer in *Troilus* in 1374.⁵⁵ ‘To the dogs’ means destruction and ruin.

De Proprietatibus warned:

⁴⁹ Wolpelt page 2

⁵⁰ The Greek for black bile was *melaina chole*, which became melancholy.

⁵¹ Wolpelt page 4

⁵² in his translation of Bartholomew de Glanville's *De proprietatibus rerum*, an encyclopedia of natural science – reproduced at <http://www.mediumaevum.com/75years/Mlore/animals.html>

⁵³ OED Vol VII page 239

⁵⁴ The nursery rhyme Rub-a-dub-dub also features a black dog: “The little black dog ran round the house, And set the bull a roaring, And drove the monkey in the boat, Who set the oar a rowing, And scared the cock upon the rock, Who cracked his throat with crowing.” There is no evidence to link this verse to the black dog of depression.

“avoid the wood hound as pestilence and venom: and he is always exiled as it were an outlaw, and goeth alone wagging and rolling as a drunken beast, and runneth yawning, and his tongue hangeth out, and his mouth drivelleth and foameth, and his eyes be overturned and reared, and his ears lie back-ward, and his tail is wrinkled by the legs and thighs; and though his eyes be open, yet he stumbleth and spurneth against every thing.”⁵⁶

In ancient myths, the Greek dog Kerberos and the Indian four-eyed dogs of Yama, have often been portrayed as guardians of the passage to afterlife, spiritual doorkeepers. “Like death itself, the hellhound speaks, but does not listen; acts, but never reflects or reconsiders. Driven by hunger and greed, he is insatiable and his growl is eternal in duration. In the last analysis, the hellhound is the moment of death, the great crossing over, the ultimate turning point.”⁵⁷

Or with less sensational modernity, Francisco Goya’s painting *The Dog* has been interpreted as “[p]erhaps this is how Goya saw his own situation: as a dog who was barely able to keep his head above the water or the sand, a personification of the proverbial ‘swimming against the current.’”⁵⁸

The black dog beyond England

Across the Atlantic ocean in the America Connecticut folktale the town of Meridan, has been haunted for over two hundred years by a black dog. A local

⁵⁵ OED, Vol. II, page 423

⁵⁶ 18th book – reproduced at

<http://www.mediumaevum.com/75years/Mlore/animals.html>

⁵⁷ *Black Dogs. Guardians of the corpse ways*, Bob Trubshaw at

<http://www.indigogroup.co.uk/edge/bdogs.htm>, citing Bruce Lincoln, *Death, war and sacrifice*, University of Chicago Press, 1991;

⁵⁸ *Goya*, Xavier de Salas, 1978 - <http://www.eeweems.com/goya/salas.html>

saying states: "And if a man shall meet the Black Dog once, it shall be for joy; and if twice, it shall be for sorrow; and the third time, he shall die."⁵⁹

In all likelihood the black dog was carried by the Pilgrims and other English and European immigrants to the American new world. While the American black dogs include the Black Dog band of the Osage tribe,⁶⁰ and the Sioux tribe legend Shunka Sapa, a huge black dog, features in a story about the end of the world,⁶¹ there is no evidence that links a black dog⁶² with depression.

The black dog has now entered American popular culture. The depression era folk-blues singer and guitarist Robert Johnson sang: "I've got to keep moving... There's a hellhound on my trail!" (from *Hellhound on my Trail*). While Blind Arthur Blake, a blues singer like Johnson, also sang of the black dog: "Black dog, black dog, you cause me to weep and moan." Where the Blues found the black dog is not recorded.

In *Black Dog*, the 1998 movie, Patrick Swayze plays a truck driver who "has just served a two-year term for Vehicular Homicide after an accident brought on by his sighting of the mythical "black dog" that bedevils exhausted drivers who don't pull over before their senses desert them."⁶³ The black dog here brought ruin and a storyline.

Back across the Atlantic and into the Black Sea the Armenian-American author Peter Balakian's *Black Dog of Fate* documents the slaughter of the Armenian people by the Turks. The title comes from an Armenian story: "In this story two sacrificial offerings are by made to the goddess Fate: one is a succulent spring lamb, its body stuffed with pomegranates and almonds and its eyes set with rubies; the other is a dead black dog, its mouth stuffed with a wormy apple. Fate rejects the lamb and accepts the dog. "Appearances are

⁵⁹ *The Black Dog of Hanging Hills* retold by S. E. Schlosser - <http://www.americanfolklore.net/folktales/ct2.html>

⁶⁰ <http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/tribes/osage/osagehist.htm>

⁶¹ <http://www.aaanativearts.com/article939.html>

⁶² The native American dog could be coloured black.

⁶³ http://www.joanellis.com/reviews/BLACK_DOG.htm

deceiving," Nafina explains to a puzzled young Peter. "The world is not what you think."⁶⁴

If the black dog is a creation of man to explain phenomena and beliefs, then the black dog, as an apparition, could appear anywhere where actual black dogs lived or the trail of black dogs led: from Armenia to America.

Conclusion

The history of black dog may well be the story of the English language: stories and myths about demonic black dogs were received into England courtesy of Viking, Norman and Anglo-Saxon conquerors. These tales fused with Celtic into English lore.

And for English writers, particularly those fascinated by demons, the supernatural and horror, the black dog was a perfect medium for story telling. It was familiar yet unknown. Burton assisted by providing medical legitimacy to the black dog for depression. While Scott's obsession with the supernatural assured the black dog remained linked to the devil: the image of the devil in man's realm, bringing melancholy to the mind.

Churchill, a historian, author and reader had almost a millennium of writings to find his black dog. Regardless of where he got the term from, the search of the origin of black dog must have faith in Arthur Conan Doyle's observation: "Once you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains, no matter how improbably, must be the truth."

⁶⁴ *New York Times Book Review* 22 June 1997 (<http://www.cilicia.com/armo7f.html>)

Appendix 1:

Other Black Dogs:

- **Black Dog beers**

Black Dog Ale brewed by the Spanish Peaks Brewing Co. Montana, USA

Black Dog Mild brewed by Elgood and Sons Cambridgeshire, England

- **Black Dog Brewery**

Located in Whitby, North Yorkshire Black Dog Brewery specialise in traditional English ales. The name Black Dog is derived from the Bram Stoker's Dracula. In the dark talea shipwrecked Dracula comes ashore in the form of a black dog. The connection with Whitby is that Bram Stoker wrote Dracula while holidaying in Whitby.

- **Black Dog of Bungay**

The Suffolk town has a Black Dog on its coat of arms, a Black Dog Running Club and the football side is called the Black Dogs.

- **Black Dog Man**

A name sometimes given to the supposed second shooter on the grassy knoll of John F. Kennedy, Texas 1962

- **Black Dog Opera Library**

A collection of books on the history of a famous opera and its composer, published by Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers Inc

- **Black Dog Plant, Burnsville, Minnesota, USA**

Coal and gas station, built in the 1905s, located on the Minnesota River. Station is now owned by Xcel Energy. Black Dog taken from Black Dog band of Sioux and their leader Chief Black Dog. There is also a Black Dog Road near the power station.

- **Black Dog Tavern, Matha's Vineyard, USA**

Named after the dog of owners Captain Robert Douglas and wife Charlene. Black Dog was a labrador-boxer mix. The Tavern opened under the Black Dog name in New Years' Day 1971.

- **Black Dog Music**

Black Dog, Led Zeppelin IV, by Led Zeppelin
Bytes, and *Spanners*, by The Black Dogs
Black Dog Blues, Blind Arthur Blake

- **Black Dog in film and television**

Black Dog, starring Patrick Swayze, 1998. The title refers to the myth of Black Dog, a mysterious night-time apparition that plagues overworked truckers (who also suffer from white-line fever)

Beating the Black Dog, Four Corners Program, ABC Television

Appendix 2:

Black dogs in literature (black dog in the title of literature- English language):

Apparitions of Black Dogs, S. Sherwood

Ben and the Big Black Dog, Linda L. Bischoff and Kenneth D. Bischoff

Big Black Dog from Vallarta, Mary Branham

Black Dog, Pamela Allen

Black Dog, Stephen Booth

Black Dog, Tony Hicky

Black Dog, Thomas Laird

Black Dog, Christabel Mattingley

Black Dog: Poems, Margo Lockwood

Black Dogs, Ian McEwan

Black Dogs and English Men, S Sherwood

Black Dog Blues and Other Midnight Ravings, Michael Hureaux

Black Dog's Day, Eilidh Watt

Black Dogs Get Dressed, Lizi Boyd

Black Dog of Fate, Peter Balakian.

Black Dog, Red Dog: Poems, Stephen Dobyns

Black Dog Red House, Lizi Boyd

Black Dog Songs, Lisa Jarnot

Churchill's Black Dog, Kafka's Churchill's Black Dog, Kafka's Mice, and Other Phenomena of the Human Mind, [Anthony Storr](#)

Cooper, The McNally's Big Black Dog, Nancy Winslow Parker

Hendrik September's Big Black Dog, W. Flanagan

[Kidsgrove Boggart and the Black Dog: A Version of the Story and an Examination of the Written Sources](#), Philip R. Leese

Secrets of Black Dog Cave, Eve Jennings

[Straunge and Terrible Wunder: Story of the Black Dog of Bungay](#)
Christopher Reeve

Taming the Black Dog: How to beat Depression, Bev Aisbett

The Black Dog, Wendy Hartman

The Black Dog and the Brown Dog, R. Schermbrucker

The Black Dog Tales, Alfred Edgar Coppard

The Black Dog, Summer on the Vineyard, Cookbook. Joseph Hall and Elaine Sullivan

The Black Dog who went into the woods, Edith Thacher Hird

The Black Dog in English Folklore, T. Brown

The Little Black Dog Buccaneer, J. B. Spooner and Terre Lamb

The Little Black Dog. Song, the words by E. Brown, Vere Smith

The Story of the Little Black Dog, J. B. Spooner and Terre Lamb

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