



Gadbury's delineation of his own nativity

Transcribed and edited by Sue Ward





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Gadbury published his first book¹ in which he sets out instruction on the judgement of natiivities and horary questions. By way of example of the former, he judges a nativity in full; it is his own, but he does not inform the reader of this. As from his own mouth, we have autobiographical information about Gadbury, although we should not expect it to be entirely without prejudice. The following précis has been constructed for readability from some long passages which naturally include much astrological detail, which has been excluded to aid readability.

[The native] is endued with a strong well-knit body of a middle stature, somewhat corpulent; a full broad visage; a dark brown hair, much and curling; a piercing sharp hazle eye; a short thick neck; a confident countenance, somewhat pale and swarthy.

The native should be of inclination and manners harsh enough, and rashly resolute; yet too open and public in his resolves, too quick and nimble in his determinations; and oftentimes by sudden and unpremeditated actions, he doth himself much prejudice: he pursues what he undertakes with boldness: cares not to receive injuries, but is very apt to revenge those that are heaped upon him: he is a trusty friend where he takes, and as real an enemy if he hath any occasion offered him. The inclination and manners of the native would have been prodigiously evil; but these testimonies [referring to astrological testimonies] declare the force of education and moral honesty to prevail against the fury of his natural inclination. They also incline him to company-keeping, and afford him great delight therein.

The native is inclinable to arts and sciences: (and this the native hath confessed to be true) therefore his [Mercury's] combustion of the Sun, shall rather impede his speech and memory, then any way shorten his understanding, or abate the strength of his phancy; and this I know it doth do.

According to the natives own confession, he hath never been driven to an absolute want, nor yet hath he abounded much in riches. The height of the natives felicity and happiness [will] happen unto him in the later part of his age. The native may advance himself by deal for common or vulgar people, or by arts and sciences. Most certainly, by dealing in the lat[t]er in his younger years, the native may best thrive: But in his elder of later age, he will be advantaged by some inheritance, office or preferment, which will not prove inconsiderable. The native hath confessed unto me, that in his younger years (that is to say, between twenty five and thirty) he hath benefited himself by studying arts, etc. and that he hath hopes also of better and more signal advantages every day more then other. And I am sure the nativity (in a general way) promiseth no less.

[There will be] many quarrels and dissensions between the native, and his brethren and kindred. The native confesseth that he hath had many unhappy differences with his brethren, sisters and kindred: and hath been cheated and cozened by them to purpose; and that he doth many times take short journeys for his pleasure, and is also (as we hinted before) propense to study.

The native and his father may agree indifferently well, and it is most true, that generally they agree well enough. The native might be born to an inheritance, but will hardly attain it; and if ever, with difficulty: a brother of the natives father shall obstruct and hinder him, and do much prejudice to his father also. The native hath seriously acknowledged that he was born to £80 per annum, which by a trepan (too long to relate her) his father was necessitated to part with; and this when the native was a childe, and uncapable. And the knavery was acted by a brother of the natives father; who holdeth part of the same to this day; so that there is no hopes of regaining it.

There is a possibility of the natives having children, but [certain arguments] destroy hopes and portends the natives children shall live but a little while. The native hath confessed that (as yet) he hath had but one child, and that was a son; and he lived but a yeer and a half, and then died.

The native acknowledgeth that he is much subject to the head-ache, and to surfeits, and also to the stone in the reines, etc, and to windy and flatuous humours; and is many times afflicted with the ptisique, but is easily recovered again.

The native confesseth he hath had several servants, and yet never had but one that was honest and true to him; but before they did him much harm, he still had the good fortune to discover them.

The native is married, and he informeth me that he and his wife agree very well indeed, and are rarely known to jar or fall at odds. It is acknowledged by the native that he is disturbed by publique enemies, and they are chiefly those of his own relations; but he saith, they have injured themselves by endeavouring to prejudice him, and could never prevail against him (*yet*) in any of their enterprises.

I dare affirme the native will not travel out of his own country. The Native confesseth he hath oftentimes been importuned thereunto, but would never consent; neither doth he intend any such thing.

It would be strange if the native should not be religious, (or at least of as honest a principle, as any professing religion) : but much mischief happens to the native by the means of religious men, etc. The native confesseth that about the twenty second year of his age, he haunted the congregations of the Presbyterians in London to purpose; and continued very zealous among them, until (by their preaching of that prodigious and uncomfortable doctrine of predestination unto eternal misery) they had made him (almost) mad, and driven him even to the very gates of desperation; insomuch, that he sometimes concluded himself damn'd, because he could not find in himself those signes and tokens of Gods Love and Favour, that *they* often prated of. ...which very well portends prejudice by religious tenets, or at least, those that are presumed to be so, although they have nothing of true religion in them.

The dreams of the native should prove uncommonly true. I have heard the native confess, that divers times he hath been forewarned in his sleep by dreams, of both good and evil, that hath afterwards succeeded unto him.

[These configurations] do plainly declare the native to be an enemy unto his own preferment; and shews him to be slack and remiss in seeking honour. Indeed [another configuration] denotes him to be of the satirists mind and spirit:

*He cannot bear't to run himself in debt
To hire a groom, to bid the page intreat
Some favour'd follower to vouchsafe his word
To get some cold comfort from his Lord!
He cannot sooth (though it his life should save)
Each favourite, nor crouch to every knave.*

He seriously protests, the great reason why he hath no more honour and preferment, according to the best of his judgement, is, because he hath always detested and hated the art of flattery and dissimulation; the onely stairs, by which all persons ascend to places of honour and preferment.

He may obtain the friendship of some persons, who shall rather desire it for their own advantage, then for any real respect or good meaning they shall have to him. He confesseth he hath had divers pretended friends, but never above one that was real to him, or that he might put confidence in, or depend on, or give credit to: and for his expectations and hopes, he remembreth not but he was always deceived or deluded therein. He saith also, that divers have pretended friendship and respect unto him; but he hath proved that their highest pretences have onely hung upon the hinge of by-respect, or selfe-advantage, and not upon the golden string of love or good-will towards him.

[These configurations] denote no great danger of imprisonment to the native: yet it discerns the brethren, kindred, etc. of the native to be the most treacherous enemies he can meet with: but although they have a great desire and will to injure and prejudice the native, yet they have small power, so that he need not fear them. I need not speak of other significations of this house, because the native is not concerned herein. He acknowledgeth that he hath been very free from imprisonment, and never suffered above three days restraint (setting aside the time of his minority) in his life; and for his private enemies, he never could yet come to discover any but those of his kindred and familiar acquaintance: but he saith also, they never prevailed against him.

I could have been far larger; but the native would not give consent thereunto; and I dare not publish any thing more belonging to the twelve houses, without his leave or license.

Gadbury then moves on to delineate the astrology for the 'native's' 28th (1654) and 31st (1657) years of age. Again, we present the purely biographical information in the same way as before.

I shall forbear to insert a table of good and unfortunate days here, because the year is past; I will onely add a verification of the judgment of this year, because it was a year (in the natives thoughts and opinion) very prodigious and remarkable: *viz.*

[1654]

The native confesseth that he was subject to many quarrels and controversies with his kindred: he saith, he was at odds the same year with his mother, went to law with an uncle and sister; and was cozened and cheated by a captain, who, for want of other employment, was his sollicitour; and the same year, was troubled with two thievish servants. He acknowledgeth the occasion of his going to law was a pretended legacy; but he spent much money therein,, and to no purpose.

He came into favour that year with many eminent acquaintance, and did gaine reputation and credit by them. He was much addicted to study, and that not onely to one knowledge or science, but many; and he saith also, that he did go a journey of fifty or sixty miles exactly northwest; but he confesseth he got nothing at all by it, but his labour for his pains.

He saith and confesseth, his health was impeded, and that by a surfeit which he got by drinking, and he was in a discrasie condition seven weeks by reason thereof.

But the principal thing which I admire at, is this: on April the fourth, 1655, the same day did the native, as he professeth to me, entertain both his counsel and sollicitour; which was the foundation to all the mischief and loss he underwent; and had his nativity been calculated, it might have been prevented.

[1657/8 predictions]

And that happens in the year 1658 on June the fourteenth day, just about noon. It portends great pleasure, profit and delight to the native, abundance of new acquaintance, and makes him ambitious of honour and esteem: he hath health of body and peace of mind; and all things succeed prosperously with him; and ere the direction be over, he may have a child. But---

[This configuration] somewhat contradicts the good presignified by Venus, and adviseth the native to beware of rash and head-strong actions, and bids him to be very cautious in his affairs. This is indeed as a cloud before the other Sun-like direction, and may a little dim, but cannot wholly darken it.

The native shall have or possess some land or estate, or *aliquid tale*, as a gift or legacy of some person or persons deceased; [another signification] will augment his reputation; and [another] will procure him many feminine friends; and also portends much peace and quietness between him and his neighbours, etc.

[there is shown] some loss of estate, but also controversies and contentions with elderly clownish people and strangers, and possibly some diminutive trouble and cross in a law-suit, or some controversie; but [other configurations] will suddenly appease the fury portended. The body of the native will [be afflicted] with cholerick-melancholy humours, which may enervate by good medicine and moderate courses.



To conclude, the yeer will have much more good then evil in it, and it will be wisdom for the native to take hold of opportunity by the foretop; for ... 'tis bald behinde. And there is a storm coming, which will (in some measure) darken the Sun-shine of this (I may comparatively call it) golden yeer that glitters with so many glorious days in it.

Endnotes

1. Gadbury, John, *The Doctrine of Nativities*, London, 1658.

