Mary Bateman Letter Activity

Below is a list of items that were given to Mary Batemen by the Perrigos during the time that she was conning them, along with some examples of the letters that she wrote them. Many letters from the fictitious “Miss Blythe” were passed to the Perrigos by Mary Bateman. Give the class the task of writing one, asking for items on the list. It might include Mary’s instructions for the Perrigos – what they need to do to protect themselves from harm. It might contain a list of the items that she wants them to give to “Miss Blythe” and reasons why she might need them. It might contain warnings about what might happen if they do not do as she asks. It might contain references to other cases of supernatural mischief that “Miss Blythe” has dealt with.

**List of Items fraudulently obtained by Mary Bateman from the Perrigos**

One Goose

Two Pairs of Men’s Shoes

A Goose Pye

A Tea Caddy

Several Shirts

A Counterpane

A Piece of Woollen Cloth

A Silk Handkerchief

A Silk Shawl

A Light Coloured Gown skirt

A Light Coloured Gown Cotton

Two Pillow Slips

A New Waistcoat

Sixty Pounds of Butter

Seven Strokes of Meal

Six Strokes of Malt

A Quantity of Tea and Sugar

Two or Three Hundred Eggs

A Pair of Worsted Stockings

A Pair of new Shoes

A Pair of Black Silk Stocking

Three Yards of Knaresboro’ Linen Cloth

Ten Stones of Malt

A piece of Beef

Three Bottles of Spirits

Two Table Cloths

Two Barrels

Two Napkins

**Letters from ‘Miss Blythe’ to the Perrigos**

My Dear Friends,

I will be obliged to you if you will let me have a dozen of your chine, three silver spoons, half a pound of tea, two pounds of loaf sugar, and a tea canister to put the tea in, or else it will not do. I durst not drink out of my own china. You must burn this with a candle.

M. Blythe

My Dear Friends,

You must begin to eat pudding on the 11th of May, and you must put one of the powders in every day, as they are marked for six days – and you must see it put in yourself every day, or else it will not do. If you find yourself sickly at any time, you must have no doctor, for it will not do; and you must not let the boy that used to eat with you, eat that pudding for six days; and you must make only just as much as you can eat yourselves; if there is any left it will not do. You must keep the door fast as much as possible, or you will be overcome by some enemy. Now think on and take my directions, or else it will kill us all. About the 25th of May, I will come to Leeds, and send for your wife to come to Mary Bateman’s: Your wife will take me by the hand and say “Thank God that I ever found you out”. It has pleased God to send me into the world, that I might destroy the works of darkness, because they are dark to you – now mind that whatever I say, you do. This letter must be burnt in straw on the hearth by your wife.

M. Blythe