

Pennsylvania Gazette
Jan. 06, 1812

Messers. Miner & Butler,

A very singular phenomenon took place near Angelica, in the country of Allegany, on Monday morning the 16th of December, which I will state, as related to me by one of the eye witnesses. Early in the morning, about sunrise, as sitting at breakfast, he had a strange feeling, and supposed at first that he was fainting, but as his sight did not fail, he then concluded that he was going into a fit, and removed his chair back from the table. -- He then had a sensation as though the house was swinging and observed clothes hanging on lines in the room were swinging, as also a large kettle hanging over the fire. He observed that his wife and family appeared to be greatly alarmed, and still supposing that it was in consequence of his apparently falling into a fit, but on enquiry found that all felt the same sensation. This continued as he supposed for at least 15 minutes. There was no noise or trembling, nor any wind, but only an appearance of swinging or rocking, as he supposed, equal to the house rocking two feet one way and the other. -- One of his neighbors felt the same, and on the opposite side of the river, at the farmhouse and dwelling house of Phillip Church, the same motions and sensations were felt. Mrs. Church was in bed, and when she first felt the motion, and a strange sensation as if suffocating, she jumped out of bed, supposing the house was on fire. The motion was so considerable as to set all the bells in the several rooms a ringing, and an inside door was observed to swing open and shut.

The same motions were felt up the river, about eight miles above, at a house near a small brook; the people ran out of the house, and observed the water to have the same motion. Accounts state, that the same motions have been felt at sundry other places 30 miles distant.

I could relate many other similar motions felt and perceived at the same time, but leave it for the present. How to account for it I know not. If you think it worthy of notice, you may make it public, and if the same or similar motions have been felt at other places, doubtless it will be communicated. I should like to hear it accounted for on rational principles.

Christopher Hurlbut