

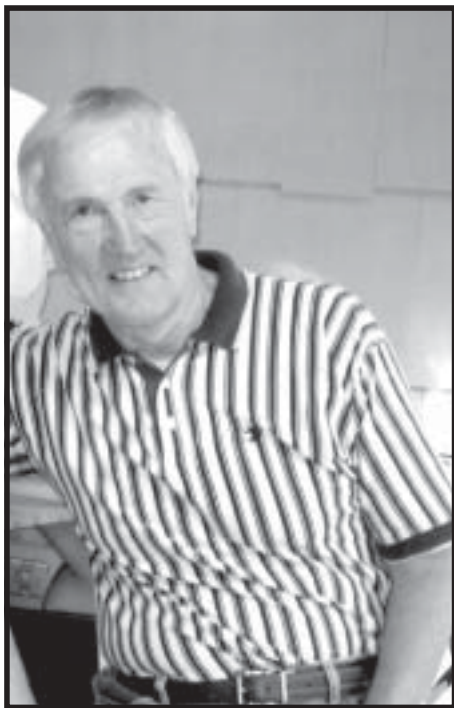
**The
Stratford
Devil**



Claude Clayton Smith

Pocahontas Press, Inc., Blacksburg, Virginia

Claude Clayton Smith, who grew up in Stratford, Connecticut, recently retired as Professor of English from Ohio Northern University. The author of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and plays, he is co-editor and translator of *The Way of Kinship*, the world's first anthology of Native Siberian literature in English. For his writing on native people both at home and abroad, he was awarded a gold medal authorized by the United Nations committee responsible for the "International Decade of Indigenous Peoples — 1994-2004." His books have been translated into five languages, including Russian and Chinese.



"Bud," as he is known to family and friends, holds a Bachelor of Arts from Wesleyan, a Master of Arts in Teaching from Yale, a Master of Fine Arts in Fiction from the Writer's Workshop at the University of Iowa, and a Doctor of Arts from Carnegie-Mellon. He lives with his wife Elaine in Ada, Ohio. They have two sons and an "empty nest."

In the spring of 1651, nearly half a century before the infamous witch trials of Salem, Massachusetts, a woman known as Goody Bassett was hanged for witchcraft in Stratford, Connecticut. Few facts are known about this woman and the events surrounding her persecution.

This haunting and moving novel, crafted from those few facts as well as detailed accounts of Stratford's early history, tells the tale of young Ruth Paine — later Goodwife Bassett — and how her singular experience beyond the confines of her Puritan world ultimately leads to her demise.

Rich in historical insight, *The Stratford Devil* gives a touching look into the painfully isolated world of an independent woman as she struggles to survive in circumstances beyond her control. With its focus on religion and terror, *The Stratford Devil* is a parable for our times.



“Claude Smith [is] just the kind of teacher everyone should have at least once. And now *The Stratford Devil* proves that he's an excellent writer too.”

— Judy Kweller, *The Roanoke Times*

“This book brings the reader back not to just the roots of Stratford but to the earliest cultural roots of America. The reader is led to a deeper understanding of our earliest immigrant forefathers, and through that to a fuller understanding of himself and our culture. *The Stratford Devil* is historical, sensual, and smoothly written. It is the story of the Puritan break with nature which leads to the 1651 hanging of an innocent young woman.”

— John M. Del Vecchio, author of *Darkness Falls: An American Story*

“*The Stratford Devil* is fascinating history, taut drama, daring romance. It is as authentic about daily life in the 1640s as it is about the unchanging human heart.”

— Jonathan Penner, author of *This Is My Voice*,
Winner of the Spokane Prize for Short Fiction

“... plausible, stunning ... A cunningly developed piece of historical fiction.”

— *Booklist*



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The Stratford Devil — Claude Clayton Smith

