Mrs. Leeds, a woman living in poverty with her twelve starving children found out she was to have another. She then screamed "I don't want more children. Let it be a devil!"

When the child was born, it was horribly deformed. It crawled from the womb and up the chimney and out into the woods. It is rumored to have fed on small children and livestock while haunting the area from years to come. The creature also goes by the name of the Leeds Devil.

Although there are several other tales of how the Devil came to be, this is the most accepted origin tale of the creature.

Though no one knows how old the Devil is, the creature was allegedly exorcised in 1749. However, exorcism customs of the time could only banish something for 100 years, so the creature was able to return in 1840.

Right around the mid-1800's, documented sightings of the Devil began to surface. One report says that Joseph Bonaparte, Napoleon's brother, claimed to have seen the creature while hunting. Sightings remained unpublished in newspapers until the beginning of the 20th century.

The majority of the encounters regarding the Devil did not occur until 1909. Literally thousands of sightings and attacks with the beast were reported.

On Saturday, Jan. 16, 1909, in the town of Woodbury N.J., Zack Cozzens claimed to see it on the side of the road. The sighting was documented in James Maloy and Ray Miller’s book, The Jersey Devil. In the book, Cozzens said “I first heard a hissing sound. Then something white flew across the street. I saw two spots of phosphorous, the eyes of the beast...it was as fast as an auto.”

Later that same night, a group of people witnessed the same event in Bristol, Pa., only twenty minutes from Rider’s campus.

Throughout the year, the creature continued to terrorize the Delaware Valley population, even to the extent of receiving national infamy. While it may have been a reality to people in earlier centuries, the myth of the Devil doesn’t carry much weight anymore.

“I think it’s a hoax,” said senior Jill Letizia. “Since it dates back so far, people probably have fabricated their own version of the story. Things get overembellished over time.”

Myths and legends usually are based on some form of truth, but after a long period of time things may become exaggerated.

“Little kids play telephone. After almost 400 years, of course the story is going to be nowhere near what happened and when was the last sight-

The origins of Halloween can be traced back to the small country of Ireland. The Celts, as the people living there at the time, have fed on small children and livestock while haunting the area from years to come. The creature also goes by the name of the Leeds Devil.

Between 2,000 and 3,000 years ago, the Celts celebrated the festival of Samhain on Jan. 31. It was believed that the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead became blurred and ghosts of the dead walked the earth. Because of their presence, the Celts thought that their priests, called Druids, were better able to make predictions about the future.

To commemorate the event, Druids built huge bonfires, where the people gathered to burn crops and animals as sacrifices to the Celtic deities. During the celebration, the Celts wore costumes, typically consisting of animal heads and skins, and attempted to tell each other’s fortunes. When the celebration was over, they re-light their hearth fires, which they had extinguished earlier that evening, from the sacred bonfire to help protect them during the coming winter.

By the year 43 A.D., the Romans had conquered the bulk of the Celtic territory. Eventually two Roman festivals blended with Samhain. Feralia was a day; usually in late October, when the Romans commemorated the passing of the dead. The second was to honor Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees. It is possible that this influence is the reason bobbing for apples is a popular Halloween activity today.

The custom of Halloween was brought to America in the 1840’s by Irish immigrants fleeing the potato famine. At that time, the favorite pranks in New England included tipping over outhouses and un hitching fence gates.

The tradition of trick-or-treating has two possible sources. It may have originated with the Irish Celts. In preparation for the feast that they would have on Nov.1, they would go to neighbors and ask for contributions.

It also might date back to the early All Souls’ Day parade in England. During the festivities, poor citizens would beg for food and families would give them pastries called soul cakes in return for their promise to pray for the family’s dead relatives. The distribution of soul cakes was encouraged by the church as a way to replace the ancient practice of leaving food and wine for roaming spirits. The practice, which was referred to as “going a-souling” was eventually taken up by children, who would visit the houses in their neighborhood and be given ale, food and money.

The tradition of dressing in costume for Halloween has both European and Celtic roots. Hundreds of years ago, winter was an uncertain and dangerous time. Food supplies often ran low and, for the many people afraid of the dark,