



# History of Witchcraft in England from 1558 to 1718

*Wallace Notestein*

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Excerpt: ...of clay pictures. Both were probably practitioners in magic. Palmer, even when in prison, claimed the power of transforming men into beasts. The woman seems to have been put to the swimming test. Both were condemned. Palmer, at his execution, gave information about a "whole colledge of witches," most of them, no doubt, practisers like himself, but his random accusations were probably passed over. See *The Divels Delusions or A faithfull relation of John Palmer and Elizabeth Knott* . (1649). 9 Ralph Gardiner, op. cit., 109. 10 See *ibid.* At his execution, Gardiner says, he confessed that he had been the death of 220 witches in Scotland and England. Either the man was guilty of unseemly and boastful lying, which is very likely, or Scotland was indeed badly "infested." See above, note 1. 11 This narrative is contained in *Wonderfull News from the North, Or a True Relation of the Sad and Grievous Torments Inflicted upon . three Children of Mr. George Muschamp* . (London, 1650). 12 The story of the case was sent down to London and there published, where it soon became a classic among the witch-believing clergy. 13 See the two pamphlets by Edmond Bower described below in appendix A, § 5, and Henry More, *Antidote against Atheisme*, bk. III, ch. VII. 14 Wylde was not well esteemed as a judge. On the institution of the protectorate he was not reappointed by Cromwell. 15 Aubrey (who had it from an eye-witness) tells us that "the crowd of spectators made such a noise that the judge could not heare the prisoner, nor the prisoner the judge; but the words were handed from one to the other by Mr. R. Chandler and sometimes not truly repeated." John Aubrey, *Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme* . (ed. J. Britten, Folk Lore Soc. Publications, IV, 1881), 261. 16 For the case see *The Tryall and Examinations of Mrs. Joan Peterson .; The Witch of Wapping, or an Exact . Relation of the . Practises of Joan Peterson .; A Declaration in Answer to severall lying Pamphlets concerning...*

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