

Lizanne Henderson, *Witchcraft and Folk Belief in the Age of Enlightenment: Scotland, 1670-1740* (Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); xv, 382 pp; ISBN 978-0-230-29438-7; hardback.

THIS book is both a detailed history of the phenomena of witchcraft and folk beliefs in Scotland from the late seventeenth century to the mid-eighteenth century, and a fascinating evaluation of previous scholarship on the subject. Lizanne Henderson's 'Preface' draws attention to the proximity of her home in Galloway to those of the executed witches Jonet McMuldriche (d. 1671) and Elspeth McEwen (d. 1698), whom she cautiously describes as 'typical' (p. xi) of accused witches in Scotland. The 'Introduction' emphasizes that evidence of scepticism or broadly Enlightenment attitudes in the period covered does not fall neatly on the side of those who 'disbelieve[d] in the reality of witchcraft' (p. 3), as sceptical views were also found amongst clergy adopting various theological positions. Sundry important scholars of Scottish witchcraft are introduced here, including Brian Levack, Alan Macfarlane, Christina Lerner, Marko Nenonen, Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen, Robin Briggs and Malcolm Gaskill, Liv Willumsen, Johannes Dillinger and Oscar di Simplicio. Comprehensive coverage of the full range of witchcraft historians and theorists underpins Henderson's very learned study.

Chapter 1, 'Fixing the Limits of Belief,' discusses superstition, magical beliefs, folkloristics, and folk beliefs before sketching the historiography of witchcraft and folk belief in Scotland. This provides a definitional basis for Chapter 2, 'The Idea of Witchcraft,' which examines the practices associated with witches, the possible exceptions (such as use of charms), geographical regions particularly associated with witchcraft (for example, Scandinavia), diabolical explanations of the phenomenon, and the range of terminology applied to witches. Gender is noted, with Henderson observing that often the accused were male, and that the stereotype of the unmarried or widowed older woman was not vindicated by the empirical data, as a large majority of the accused were married. This chapter concludes with a section on the Scottish Enlightenment and the role of the kirk in prosecutions. Chapter 3, 'Demons, Devilry and Domestic Magic: Hunting Witches in Scotland,' offer a sceptical and revisionist account of the role of James VI in witch-hunting, and the causes of various witch-hunts, including North Berwick in the winter of 1589-1590 and 'the great

Scottish Witch-hunt ... between the spring of 1661 and the autumn of 1662' (p. 105)

In Chapter 4, 'Darkness Visible,' Henderson seeks to 'uncover the Caledonian version of Satan, the Father of Lies, variously known as Auld Nick, Auld Clootie or Auld Hornie, among other designations' (p. 127). Chapter 5, 'Bemused, Bothered and Bewildered: Witchcraft Debated,' is focused on the relative paucity of debate about witchcraft in Scotland until the seventeenth century, and revisits Larner's contention that witchcraft prosecutions diminished because 'witches were no longer considered by the authorities to be a threat to society' (p. 153), noting Levack's objection that a stricter court system and abandonment of torture in securing confessions were at least as important. The Witchcraft Act was repealed in 1736, and in the eighteenth century scepticism gained ground, eventually becoming 'the norm' (p. 188). The sixth chapter, "'Worshipping at the Altar of Ignorance": Some Late Scottish Witchcraft Cases Considered,' discusses a range of cases in the 1690s and early 1700s, particularly in regions like Renfrewshire (the Christian Shaw case) and Pittenweem in Fife in 1705 (when Janet Cornfoot was pressed to death).

Chapter 7, 'The Survival of Witch Belief in South West Scotland: A Case Study,' focuses on Dumfries, Kirkcudbright, and Wigtown, a region where the strictness of the Presbyterian religion was remarked upon. This returns Henderson to the execution of Jonet McMuldritche and Elspeth Thomson, in Dumfries in 1671. She explains the social factors affecting each woman; 'agricultural disputes, straying animals, and theft' (p. 257) in the case of McMuldritche, and the disapproval of her husband's family in the case of Thomson. Elspeth McEwen, also mentioned in the 'Preface,' is singled out because she was of 'superior education' (p. 261). The last chapter, 'The Persistence of Witch Belief,' uses John Mill, the minister of Dunrossness in Shetland from 1740 to 1803, to examine the nature of strict religion and witchcraft and demonic beliefs in the Scottish Highlands and islands far later than on the mainland. Evidence considered includes popular ballads and Dr Johnson's and James Boswell's travels. Henderson's 'Conclusion' reiterates the originality and substance of her book's contribution to knowledge of Scottish witchcraft in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Lizanne Henderson's *Witchcraft and Folk Belief in the Age of Enlightenment: Scotland, 1670-1740* is especially welcome as comparable monographs now date from the early 2000s; Peter G.

Maxwell-Stuart's *Satan's Conspiracy: Magic and Witchcraft in Sixteenth-Century Scotland* (2001) and Stuart Macdonald's *The Witches of Fife: Witch-Hunting in a Scottish Shire, 1560-1710* (2002), for example. Henderson's book is very detailed and methodologically sophisticated, and (for this reader at least) proved a fascinating tome to read and pore over. It is highly recommended to all interested in the subject of witchcraft or in Scottish history.

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