

FRANK KLAASSEN and SHARON HUBBS WRIGHT. *The Magic of Rogues: Necromancers in Early Tudor England*. Magic in History Series. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2021. Pp. 161. \$22.95 (paper).  
doi: 10.1017/jbr.2023.42

As Frank Klaassen and Sharon Wright note at the start of *The Magic of Rogues: Necromancers in Early Tudor England*, historians of magic have rarely considered the evidence for the practices of magicians alongside legal proceedings taken against them. Historians have tended instead to choose between the social study of magicians and their practices and the study of judicial proceedings against magicians. Yet it has long been recognized that judicial proceedings do not accurately portray magical practices; on their own, therefore, they are of limited use as evidence for what magicians actually did. Klaassen and Wright argue convincingly for the benefits of taking a holistic view of magic both as practiced and as prosecuted, which allows for exploration of two important questions: To what extent do trial records accurately represent magical practice? To what extent do surviving magical texts mirror the practices described in judicial records?

Klaassen and Wright accordingly present edited documents and thorough analysis for two cases where both sides of the story can, to some extent, be reconstructed: the cases of William Neville and the nine people accused of searching for a hoard of treasure at Mixindale in 1509. William Neville was brought to trial in 1534 for his magical dealings with a number of cunning men, which attracted particular attention from Thomas Cromwell because some of the promises made to Neville—a relative of Richard Neville, the “Kingmaker” earl of Warwick—had a seditious or treasonous flavor. The book includes statements, confessions, and letters to Thomas Cromwell that featured as evidence in Neville’s trial, followed by extracts from magical books corresponding to the sort of spells described in the judicial records.

One of Klaassen and Wright’s aims is to analyze the differences between the treatment of magic in the secular and ecclesiastical courts, and whereas the Neville case was a secular one, the second case came before the church courts. In 1510, nine men were tried for attempting to summon spirits at Mixindale, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, in a typical yet unusually well-attested case of magical treasure hunting. The motley company included three priests (one of them an Augustinian canon), a former schoolmaster who had turned to magic professionally, three servants, and a former Lord Mayor of York. The judicial proceedings were directed primarily at the scandal occasioned by clerical necromancy. The clergy were notorious for their skill and involvement in ritual magic, yet their position also meant that a higher standard of behavior was expected of them. The judicial documents include examinations and the details of penances handed down to those convicted, while the mirroring magical texts feature examples of treasure magic similar to those described in the trial.

In some cases judicial proceedings identify a specific text, such as the *Thesaurus Spirituum* (treasury of spirits), which thus provides some degree of certainty about the nature of the magical procedures used. But, as Klaassen and Wright note, ritual magicians were highly creative and adaptable—with treasure hunters, for instance, making use of large circles drawn in advance on parchment because of the difficulty of finding clear, level ground for the creation of a traditional magic circle. There is a sense, therefore, in which reproducing the sort of texts that magicians might have used will only ever be indicative of what they actually did. However, Klaassen and Wright are sufficiently cautious in their analysis to obviate most criticism of the problematic relationship between text and practice in ritual magic.

This fascinating book presents a microhistorical analysis of two unusually well evidenced cases in the history of English magic, although Klaassen and Wright are at pains to point out that the prosecution of magical acts was rare in the early sixteenth century. Only the most serious cases were prosecuted, punishments were often less severe than those prescribed

by law, and the authorities made little effort to pursue everyone involved. The networks of magical practitioners that emerge from *The Magic of Rogues* show that magicians were rarely solitary practitioners, and that fairly unlearned cunning men collaborated with learned magicians. Furthermore, interest in ritual magic was entwined with other occult interests, such as alchemy and prophecies.

*The Magic of Rogues* goes some way toward being a reader of sorts for early modern magic—a collection of introductory texts that display the practice of ritual magic in early modern England in three dimensions. Further volumes presenting documents relating to other forms of magic such as astral and natural magic would be very welcome. However, Klaassen and Wright deftly lay bare the mechanics of both the prosecution and the practice of the most transgressive forms of magic on the eve of the Reformation. *The Magic of Rogues* will be essential reading for anyone interested in the social or legal history of supernatural belief in the early modern world.

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JOHN LENTON, CLIVE MURRAY NORRIS, and LINDA A. RYAN, eds. *Women, Preachers, Methodists: Papers from Two Conferences Held in 2019, the 350th Anniversary of Susanna Wesley's Birth*.

Oxford: Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History, 2020. Pp. 410. \$19.84 (paper). doi: 10.1017/jbr.2023.30

Edited by John Lenton, Clive Norris, and Linda Ryan, *Women, Preachers, Methodists* brings together papers from two different conferences held in 2019 commemorating the 350th anniversary of Susanna Wesley's birth. The first conference, "The Bright Succession: After Susanna Wesley, Gender, Heritage and Faith," was sponsored by the Methodist Heritage Committee at the University of Lincoln. The second conference, "An Extraordinary Call: Methodist Women Preachers in Britain 1740 to the Present," was organized by Lenton and Norris and supported by the Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History at Oxford Brookes University. The thematic focus of the chapters in the volume naturally reflects the scope of both conferences and will appeal to readers interested in Methodist studies, religious history, women's studies, and gender and religion. *Women, Preachers, Methodists* will appeal to readers whose interests in such topics are devotional as well as academic. Contributors to the volume range from religious historians and theologians to Methodist ministers and preachers.

Organized into three sections, the volume begins with four chapters that examine the life and legacy of Susanna Wesley, including an introductory essay by Charles Wallace that discusses developments in the historiography on Susanna Wesley. William Gibson's assessment of Susanna's marriage casts a provocative light on the political dynamics that informed Susanna's relationship with her husband, while the other contributors to this section consider Susanna's influence on John Wesley and his ministry. Ryan, for example, looks at how John's thinking about child-rearing and female education was influenced by his mother in the context of eighteenth-century attitudes regarding gender and education, whereas Lenton considers how Susanna influenced her son's views on lay and female preaching via "an extraordinary call" (77).

The second—and longest—section of the volume, "Methodist Women Preachers: 'An Extraordinary Call,'" documents the lives of Methodist women preachers during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including essays on the experiences of these women within Welsh Methodism (which has been largely overlooked by religious historians) and among