



three centuries and the whole of England, this might appear thin to those used to statistical samples drawn from modern records. There are also variances in these records across place and time. London is overrepresented, for example, a fact that Stanmore incorporates in her analysis at several points. Nevertheless, this database puts the study of this kind of magic on a firmer quantitative footing than it has ever enjoyed before.

Stanmore does not limit herself just to statistics. She moves easily between quantitative and qualitative analysis, and she incorporates “anecdotal” evidence from sermons, pamphlets, and even imaginative literature when her statistical sources run thin. The result is a mature and balanced study that offers compelling answers to its central questions: who were service magicians, what services did they supply, and how were they perceived by the larger society around them?

Her answers to these questions are not always surprising. Much of the value of *Love Spells and Lost Treasure* lies in Stanmore’s more rigorous confirmation of many hypotheses advanced by previous scholars, as well as her new discoveries. The most common use for service magic was to heal, ward off disease, or protect against malefic magic (i.e., witchcraft). Other main uses were divination of the future, or the detection of thieves and discovery of lost items. Magical means to find buried treasure emerges as a perhaps unexpectedly important use as well. Despite the heavy gendering of witchcraft in this period, the majority of service magicians were men. Specific kinds of magic were gendered in different ways, however, with women predominating in healing, leaving treasure-hunting a sphere for men.


Service magicians came from all levels of society, as did their clients. Practices were often similar across social ranks, although, as already noted, the relationship between magician and client could be quite different among elites. Courtiers also tended to have more political concerns, and hence more political purposes for the magical services they sought. Yet cash-strapped nobles might also engage in magic for economic gain, just as those lower down the social scale, seeking to find buried treasure or maybe just success at the gambling table.

Love Spells and Lost Treasure is rich in detail and broad in its implications. It offers both conclusions and research methodologies that will be of interest to anyone working on the history of magic, regardless of time or place. It also offers a window into an important aspect of English society that will be informative for anyone working on English history generally in the late medieval and early modern periods.

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Andrew Thomson. Church Courts and the People in Seventeenth-Century England: Ecclesiastical Justice in Peril at Winchester, Worcester and Wells

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With *Church Courts and the People in Seventeenth-Century England* (also available for free download from the UCL website), Andrew Thomson joins the long and growing list of scholars who

have used the records of English ecclesiastical courts to examine aspects of everyday life, religion, and/or the functioning of the Church of England as an institution. Thomson's work is decidedly focused on the last of these, although he does occasionally discuss issues of popular religiosity. This is primarily an institutional history of the church courts across the seventeenth century, drawing on sample years (or spans of years) from records of the courts in three dioceses—Winchester, Worcester, and Wells.

Thomson's earlier work on the Church in the diocese of Winchester before and after the civil wars is here expanded to include comparisons to the other two dioceses. To create some comparative consistency, he has sampled Michaelmas (November) sittings of the courts of the three dioceses for various years in the 1610s and 1620s as well as in the 1660s, 1670s, and 1680s (albeit relying on the records of the Hilary sitting in 1663 in Wells due to poor record survival). Then, in the book's penultimate chapter Thomson does a deep dive into the records of Worcester, including a complete run of them from 1690 to 1697, although in these, and for another seven-year run from 1611 to 1618, he restricts himself to three of the eight deaneries in the diocese to ensure a manageable body of records with which to work. Throughout the book he focuses on *ex officio* cases—usually cases of misbehavior or neglect of responsibilities prosecuted by diocesan officials—and not private instance cases such as disputes over wills, libel, or breach of promise, which were essentially private suits. Those summoned *ex officio* included private individuals as well as clergy or churchwardens charged with not carrying out their responsibilities.

Thomson's sampling, while certainly justifiable, can also be frustrating since few individual cases are followed all the way through to completion. When Thomson notes that the rate of unresolved cases was never below sixty-three percent anywhere in his sample (100), this may seem like an indictment of the effectiveness of ecclesiastical justice, but is it possible that a significant number of those unresolved cases were carried over to later terms? Thomson suggests that some may have been settled privately, but he does not discuss whether cases were carried over. It also appears that Thomson has omitted certain unusual charges against the clergy from his statistics due to their "exceptionality," such as the case of a rector fighting with his wife in the chancel, which seems odd (70–71). The statistics themselves are all in appendices, which may be handy for reference purposes, but then Thomson discusses and describes them in prose in the various chapters of the book, and those discussions can be hard to follow if the reader doesn't have the tables in front of them.

Despite those caveats, Thomson is certainly able to trace some changes over time, and the story he tells is generally one of decline, as English church courts lost a great deal of authority over the course of the seventeenth century, a decline perhaps similar to that of the institution of which they were part. While the religio-political cataclysms between 1640 and 1660 brought some of the more dramatic blows, it does not appear that the church courts enjoyed particularly high rates of compliance in the 1610s or 1620s either. In discussing the decline in illegitimate birth rates over the course of the seventeenth century, which has been found by Peter Laslett, Keith Wrightson, and others, Thomson dismisses the possibility that diocesan courts played a role in this because "they were feeble, toothless bodies which proved unable to summon people or to complete business and, if the Church enjoyed any success at all, it may have been through its other agencies" (111). In this respect Thomson seems remarkably modest in downplaying the importance of the very institutions he is studying. Ecclesiastical justice in peril indeed! Much of what had been the business of church courts, such as vagrancy, religious nonconformity, and births out of wedlock, was passed over to secular courts in the wake of the Restoration. The foray into the "Reformation of Manners" that Thomson finds the courts of Worcester diocese making in the 1690s seems almost an effort to justify their continuing existence, particularly in light of *de facto* religious toleration after the Revolution of 1688–89 (which Thomson archaically refers to as the "Glorious Revolution" without the use of any quotation marks). Thomson seems very well-acquainted with the uses that other scholars of seventeenth-century England have made of church court records, and does not really disagree with what those scholars have found. But

given that other kingdoms and territories (including England's near neighbor to the north) had networks of church courts whose records historians have used extensively, it is surprising to see no comparisons to anything outside of England offered here.

Early in this book Thomson quotes G. R. Elton as having written in the source guide *England 1200–1640* (1969) that the act books of the English Church courts were “strikingly repulsive” and should only be used by younger scholars with physical strength and “strong indigestion” (6). In fact, the word Elton used was “digestion,” and there is no doubt that Thomson has digested a lot of material for us. But the story that he tells of the decline of these courts over the course of the seventeenth century would no doubt have given William Laud and even his more purely Calvinist colleagues indigestion had they lived long enough to read it.

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Lucy Wooding. *Tudor England: A History*

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Routledge Classics recently published a new edition of G. R. Elton's brilliant and characterful *England under the Tudors* (first published in 1955), with a foreword by his former student, Diarmaid MacCulloch. Elton's book has aged well. It is so good, in fact, that only a few historians since have ventured to write a full-length general history of Tudor England. The most significant attempt is John Guy's *Tudor England*, published in 1988. Lucy Wooding's new book, *Tudor England: A History*, is therefore welcome, promising to serve as a guide to the Tudor period that takes full account of scholarship published over the last few generations. The 1950s was a good time to be a Tudor historian. Today, the academic study of history is under threat, and traditional research areas doubly so. Tudor history is not a favored research specialism at most universities, with an honorable exception for the University of Oxford, where Wooding holds a fellowship. Some historians have even doubted whether there was a Tudor period at all, though in truth nothing could be more natural than structuring history by dynasties. This is one of those common situations where professional historians are at odds with the history-reading public. Outside academia, the Tudor period is still one of the most popular areas of English history. Wooding's book may therefore appeal to a broad audience, not only to scholars and students but also to serious enthusiasts.

Wooding has organized her material into fourteen long chapters. Five chapters focusing on the reigns of individual Tudor monarchs are interspersed with other chapters on themes ranging from Tudor living standards to drama. Though satisfactory, this structure sometimes leads to repetition or odd arrangement of material. For example, the discussion of Reformation ideologies in Chapter 13 could either have been cut out or integrated into earlier chapters on religion. It is nice to see attention paid to topics that were rarely discussed in older surveys and textbooks—landscape and seascape, the ritual year, domestic arrangements, and so on—but this has the perhaps inevitable effect of pushing out other important material. There is hardly anything substantial on the constitution, central and local