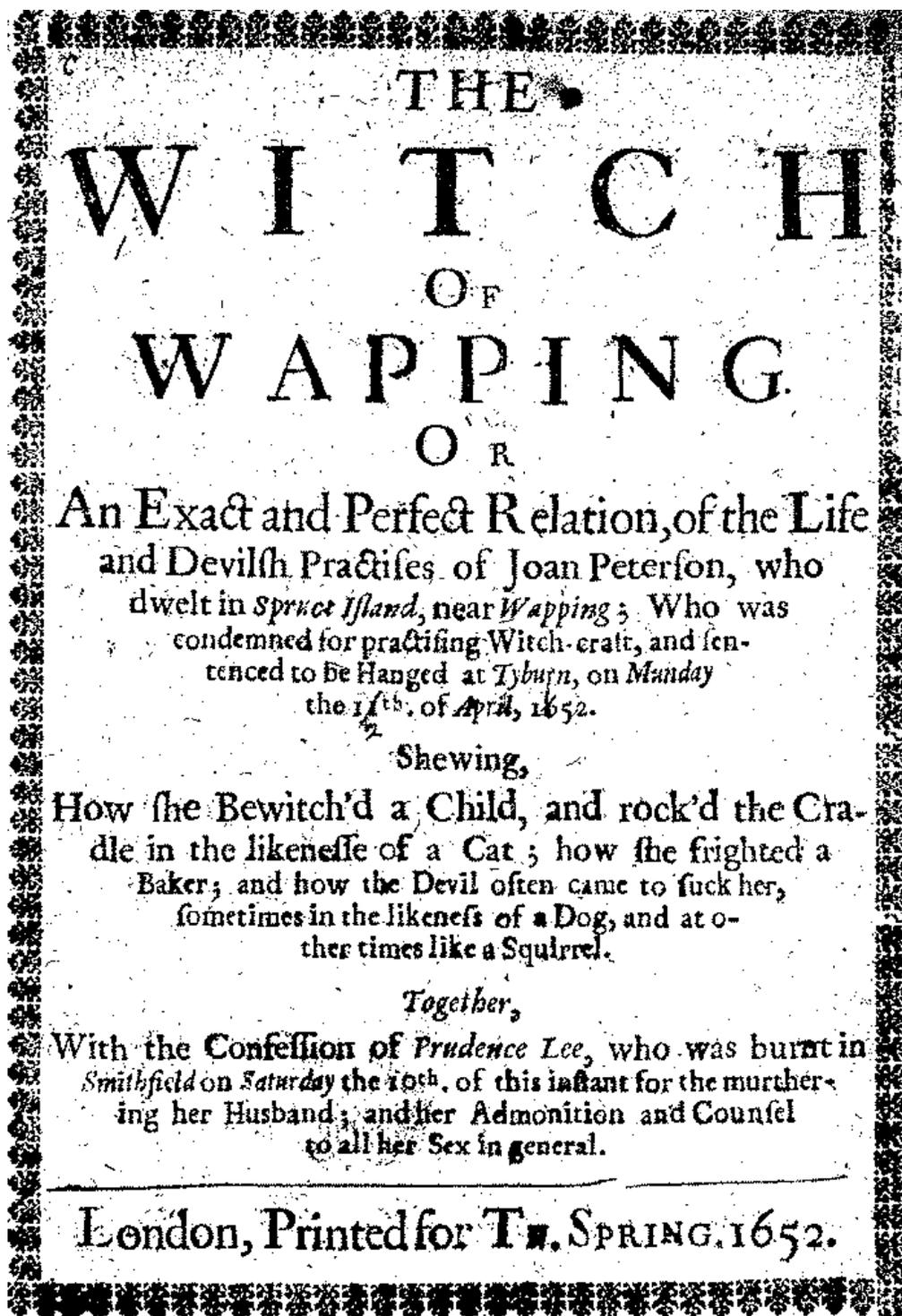


Two pamphlets from 1652, concerning Joan Peterson of Wapping



THE WITCH OF WAPPING.  
OR  
An Exact and Perfect Relation, of the Life

and Devilish Practises of Joan Peterson, who dwelt in Spruce Island, near Wapping; Who was condemned for practising Witch-craft, and sentenced to be Hanged at Tyburn on Munday the 12th. of April, 1652.

Shewing,

How she Bewitch'd a Child, and rock'd the Cradle in the likenesse of a Cat; how she frighted a Baker; and how the Devil often came to suck her, sometimes in the likeness of a Dog, and at other times like a Squirrel.

Together,

With the Confession of Prudence Lee, who was burnt in Smithfield on Saturday the 10th. of this instant for the murdering her Husband; and her Admonition and Counsel to all her Sex in general.

London, Printed for Tm. SPRING. 1652.

### 3 THE WITCH of WAPPING

Many are of opinion, that there are no Witches, but let them read in Leviticus, and they shall find that in the time of Moses there were Magicians and Sorcerers; and that Saul went to the Witch of Endor: This is enough to confirm that there were Witches in the nonage of the world; and that this latter Age hath produced such creatures, this following Relation will sufficiently testifie; wherein is fully related the Life and Practises of one Joan Peterson, who lived in Spruce Island, near Shadwel, all which was proved against her at the Sessions holden at the Old Baily on Wednesday Apr..7.1652. There are two sorts of Witches, which the Vulgar people distinguish by the names of the Good Witch, (I wonder how that can be,) and the Bad; by reason, when one bewitcheth a party, the other unwitcheth him again: Now this Joan Peterson, it should seem, was both; for as it was clearly proved, that she had done much mischief, so there were divers that came to witness that she had cured them of several diseases, amongst the rest I heard one of them say, that he had been so grievously troubled with the Headache,

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that he could take no rest for 5 Weeks together, and that he had made tryal of many Doctors, but could have no redress, and comming to Peterson, she gave him a Drink which after he had drunk of thrice, he was as well as ever he was; I demanded of him if the Drink did purge him, and so removed the humours, and he answered, it did not purge him at all; which seemed very strange to me, the man being so grievously tormented with that intolerable pain. Also there was a Cow-keepers Wife, that had one of her Cows lay in such a condition, that she and all that saw the Cow did verily perswade themselves that it was bewitched; whereupon she came to this Peterson, and promised her a reward, if she would cure her Cow: She desired the woman to save her water, and bring it to her, which she did; then taking the water, she set it on the fire, and it had not been on long, but the water rose up in bubbles, in one of the which she shewed her the face of the woman which the Cow-keepers wife suspected to have bewitched it, and so prescribing what she should do to recover it, she took her leave; divers other things of this nature, and severall cures she hath performed, but whether they were done in Gods name, or whether she used unlawfull means, I shall leave that to the charitable reader to judge of, my self desiring to wave my judgement herein. Now concerning her evil actions I shall relate only such as were clearly proved against her, by very credible witnesses at the Old-Baily on the 7 of April, and for which she was condemned to die, viz. One Christopher Wilson being very sick and weak came to this Peterson and agreed with her for a certain sum of money to cure him, which she undertook to do, and in a short time cured him, but demanding her money of him, he denied to pay her so much as they had agreed for, whereupon she burst out into these speeches;

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you had been better you had given me my money for you shall be ten times worse then ever you were; and very suddenly after he fell into very strange fits, and for twelve hours together would rage and rave like a mad man, and afterwards for twelve hours more would slabber out his tongue, and walk up and down like a meer changeling; in this condition he remained certain days, and then he fell very sick, and at this instant (if he be not dead) languisheth away, and rots as he lies. Also there was one of her neighbours, who had a young child, which was very strangely tormented, having such strange fits that the like was never known and had continued certain days in that condition to the great grief of the Parents, and the admiration of all those that beheld it, and it was brought so low, that they expected every hour when it should depart the world, and the Parents were forced to procure one or other every night to watch with it, whereupon two women that were neighbours, desired that they might watch with it, which was very thankfully accepted of; about midnight they espied (to their thinking) a great black cat come to the cradles side, and rock the cradle, whereupon one of the women took up the fire-fork to strike at it, and it immediately vanished, about an hour after the cat came again to the cradle side, whereupon the other woman kicked at it, but it presently vanished, and that leg that she kicked with, began to

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swell and be very sore, whereupon they were both afraid, and calling up the master of the house, took their leave; as they were going to their own homes they met a Baker, who was likewise a neighbours servant, who told them that he saw a great black cat that had so frightened him, that his hair stood an end, whereupon the women told him what they had seen, who said he thought in his conscience that Peterson had bewitched the aforesaid child, for (qd. the Baker) I met the witch a little before going down the Island: the Baker witnessing of this which is formerly related, was demanded whether he had not at other times as well as that been afraid of a cat, who answered no, and that he never saw such a cat before, and hoped in God he should never see the like again. There was one likewise who had been a Maid-servant to the foresaid Peterson, witnessed that one night lying with her Mistresse, being in bed she told her that a Squirrel would come to her, but wished her not to be afraid, for it should do her no harm, and accordingly about midnight there came a Squirrel (or a Familiar in that likeness) and went over the wench to Peterson, which so affrighted her that she lay as if she were in a trance; and she further affirmeth, that her Mistresse and it talk together a great part of the night; but being demanded what they discoursed on, she replied, that she heard her conference very perfectly, but she was so bewitched by it, that she could not remember one word. Also her son (a boy of about 7 or 8 years of age) being ask by some of his School-fellows how his mother could do such strange things, he said,

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that she had a Squirrel that taught her what she should do. Moreover it was affirmed by a man that lived by her, that sitting by the fire side late one evening talking with her, on a sudden Peterson shrieked and cried out, who asking her what she ailed, she said do you see nothing? not I replied the other, look where it comes, saith she, and then he perceived as it were a black dog, who went directly to Peterson, and put his head under her arm-pits, whereat the man was so astonished, that he ran out of the house as if he had been frightened out of his wits. These and other strange things being proved against her, she was condemn'd to be hanged at Tyborn on Munday the 12 of April, 1652.

On Saturday the 10 of this instant April, one Prudence Lee, was burned in Smithfield for murdering of Philip Lee her husband, who was a Bailiffs, and lived in Bell-Alley in Golding-Lane. She come from Newgate to Smithfield on foot, between two of the Sheriffs Officers, attired in a Red Wastecoat; and being brought to the Stake, and death presenting himself before her, she confessed as followeth. That she had been a very lewd liver, and much given to cursing and swearing, for which the Lord being offended with her, had suffered her to be brought to that untimely end, she further confessed that being jealous of her husband, and some unfitting words passing between them, in her passion she stabbed

him, for which she earnestly prayed to the

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Lord that he would forgive both that and all her other grievous sins, desiring that as she was a President, so she might be a warning to all women, that they attempt to do nothing rashly, especially against their husbands. Then the Executioner setting her in a pitch barrel, bound her to the stake, and placed the straw and Faggots about her; whereupon she lifting up her eyes towards Heaven, desired all that were present to pray for her; and the Executioner putting fire to the straw, she cried out; Lord Jesus have mercy on my soul; and after the fire was kindled she was heard to shriek our terribly some five or six several times. It is reported that her husband was a very wicked liver, and that he kept company with strange women; and that when she committed this abominable murther, she found him in company with another woman, at the sign of the Last, an Ale-house in Rotten-Row in Old-street; which occasioned very evil language to pass between them; upon which she drew her knife and stab'd him.

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A  
**DECLARATION**  
 IN  
 Answer to several lying Pamphlets  
 concerning the Witch of  
**W A P P I N G.**

B E I N G

A more perfect Relation of the Arraign-  
 ment, Condemnation, and Suffering of Jone  
 Peterson, who was put to death on Munday the  
 12 of *April*, 1652.

S H E W I N G

**The Bloody Plot and wicked Conspiracy**  
 of one *Abraham Vandenbemde*, *Thomas Crompton*,  
*Thomas Collet*, and others.



L O N D O N :  
 Printed in the Year, 1652.

A  
 DECLARATION  
 IN  
 Answer to several lying Pamphlets  
 concerning the Witch of

## WAPPING.

## BEING

A more perfect Relation of the Arraignment, Condemnation, and Suffering of Jone Peterson, who was put to death on Munday the 12 of April, 1652.

## SHEWING

The Bloody Plot and wicked Conspiracy one Abraham Vandenbemde, Thomas Crompton, Thomas Collet, and others.

## LONDON:

Printed in the Year, 1652.

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A Declaration, In answer to severall lying Pamphlets concerning the witch of Wappin.

The said Abraham Vandenbemde with Other the said confederates (having laid a Plot to take away the life of Mrs. Anne Levingston, because the Lady Powel had given her an estate which some of them expected) in December last repaired to one Jone Simpson, and proffered her 10 l.in hand, and 500 l. more in Hillary term following, if she would swear that Mrs. Levingston had used sorcery & withcraft to take away the Lady Powels life. And on the 10 of Jan. then following, one Anne Hook (who pretends her self to be a cunning woman) being imployed by the said confederates, did perswade her thereunto, offering her six score pounds, and half the money which the said Vandenbemde and the said Crompton were to give her and her husband for making their Affidavits, if she would do the like. But the said Simpson abhominating so wicked a practice, to take away an innocent Gentlewomans life, discovered the Plot; for which conspiracies of the said confederates, a speciall Supplicavit was granted out of Chancery, to bind them to the good behaviour

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and other legal prosecutions are still depending against them. But the said confederates not resting there (in further prosecution of the Plot) did imploy the aforesaid Hook, to procure witnesses to swear what they desired: who accordingly about January last came to the above-named Jone Peterson, at her house in Spruce Island near Wapping, and there made offer of 100 l. to her, to swear, that the said Mrs. Levingston had received from her (the said Peterson) certain powders, and bags of seeds, to help her in her law suits, and to provoke unlawfull love (as the said Jone Peterson did affirm before her triall.) But she refusing to do the same, the said confederates to prevent the punishment, which justly and unavoidably must have befallen them, in case the said Peterson should have revealed this their practice, as Simpson (before) had done the other, they lay a new design, to anticipate the same, as followeth. On the 7th of March last, the said confederates came to Wapping, and got a warrant from one Mr. waterton a Justice of the Peace, to apprehend the said Petersons person, and to search her house for Images of Clay, Hair, & Nails, which accordingly they did; but upon strict search and diligent inquiry could find no such thing; whereupon the said confederates carried her before the said Justice, to have her examined where the said Vandenbemde, Collet (their Sollicitour) and two or three other persons whom they brought with them, sate at the table as the Justices Clerks to take her examination, where the said Justice examined the said Peterson upon oath (contrary to law) concerning her using of witchcraft and sorcery to take away the life of the Lady Powel of Chelsey. To which she answered, that she never used sorcery or Witch-craft, neither had she ever heard of the Lady Powel, saving that not long before one Anne Hook

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(an Irish woman) came to her with one Goodwife Garland to have perswaded her to have made such an oath against Mrs. Levingston, as she the said Hook her self before had done, as the said Jone Peterson likewise did affirm before her death. Whereupon the said Justice (contrary to law) gave order to search her, which was done; but the searchers could find nothing on her body which might create the least suspition in them of her being a witch; whereupon the said Justice took bayl for her appearance at the next Sessions. And on the 14 of March following (being the Sabboth day) was by the said confederates means, again apprehended, and examined a new, about the said Lady Powels death. And the Argument which they then made use of to perswade the said Peterson to confess, was, that she needed not fear what she confessed, for it was not her life they aimed at, but to have matter whereby to accuse one Mrs. Levingston, who had gotten the said Lady powels estate, and thereby had undone 36 Persons of the said Ladyes Kindred: And then told her, that they were shortly to question the said Mrs. Levingstone for the same, either in the Parliament house, or before a Committee (as the said Jone Peterson did likewise affirme before her death.) Whereunto the said Jone Peterson replyed, that she never knew, nor heard of the said Lady Powell, otherwise as aforesaid; And that she had not heard from the said Mrs. Levingstone for above a yeare before that time: Then they caused her (contrary to Law, to be searched againe in a most unnaturall & Barbarous manner, by fewer women whom they themselves for that purpose had brought along with them, on of which women told the Justice that there was a Teat \* of flesh in her secret parts more then other women usually had, whereupon the said Justice committed her first to New-prison

*\* Note that this Teat upon the view of the Physitians Was the day before her death found to be natural & lesse then in many other Women, & the said Physitians also affirmed that she was then quick With child.*

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and from thence to Newgate, where she was left to the ordering and mercy of one Brooks, a Keeper there, and an Agent of the said confederates.

On Munday the 5th. of April instant, two Bills of indictment were preferred against her at Hicks-hall, \* and found by the Grand-Jury, upon which indictments upon the 6th. of April, she was arraigned before Mr. Recorder (who is of Councel for the conspirators,) and on the 7 of Apr. she was tried; at which triall the said confederates (who before had spent three weeks time at Wapping in procuring witnesses) were present, with three Councillors to prosecute the said Peterson. Then the Court proceeded upon the first indictment, which was for bewitching the Lady Powel to death; whereupon many women persons of mean degree (and of ill fame and reputation) were produced against her, and interrogated by the said Councel, according to the Briefs delivered unto them, wherein were all the witnesses testimonies, written before hand. And being asked what she had to say for her self? (upon her knees) she took God to witnesse that she never knew the Lady Powel nor the house where she dwelt, nor was any wise guilty of her death; and delivered a paper of such witnesses as she had to defend her, desiring that they might be called, whereupon Dr. Bates, and Dr. Colledon Physitians, together with Mr. Stamford, and Mr. Page Chyrurgians

*\* Note, That Sir Jo. Danvers, Mr: Snape, Mr. Winstanley, and Mrs [sic] Waterton Justice. of the Peace were with the confederates at a Tavern near consulting when the Bill of Indictment was preparing, and that Sir John Danvers came and dined at the Sessions house and had much private discourse with the Recorder and many of the Justices and came and sate upon the Bench at her Trial, where he hath seldome or never been for these many years.*

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and divers other persons of good quality, testified the disease, manner of sickness, and the cause of the said Ladies death, which were the Dropsie, the Scurvey, and the yellow Jaundies, and that they wondred how she was able to live so long, having most of those diseases growing on her for many years before;

amongst which evidences the innocency of (Mrs. Levingstone) formerly by the confederates maliciously aspersed and bespattered, was now fully vindicated, to their great astonishment, trouble, and disgrace. Then the Court proceeded to the other Indictment, which was for bewitching one Christopher Wilson (who doth not himself complain of any such thing, but the Confederates only:) and the only material evidence that then was against her, was one Margaret Austin (who had formerly been a wandering person, but was in charity taken up, relieved, and kept, by the said Jone Peterson, until shee perceived that the said Austin had purloined some of her goods out of her house,) and two Witnesses more; the substance of whose Testimony was as followeth. That the said Wilson, having been a long time sick, and hearing that the said Peterson had done good to many, sent for her to come to him, who accordingly did: and administred meanes for his Recovery, which at first was conceived to do him good; But he afterwards relapsed, and the reason that was urged to induce the Court and Jury to believe that he was Bewitched, was, that dureing his sickness, shee sent to him for monyes for her Phisick; to whom Answer was returned that he could then send her none. Whereupon it was then deposed that shee did reply, that he had better have sent her monies, for he should be 10 times worse then ever was; And that afterwards he became very ill again, and remained languishing. Many other witnesses were produced, but could only swear to generallities, hear-says, and most absurd

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and ridiculous impertinences: then being by the Court demanded what she could say for her selfe? she desired that such Witnesses as she had then there present, might be called (some of which durst not appeare because that the said Mr. Waterton, (as the witnesses them selves, doe and will affirme) had threatned to send them to Newgate, if they did appeare.) Whereupon severall witnesses were called, and being demanded what they could say for the Prisoner, they began to tell, that they had knowne her a long time, and that she had done many Cures, and much good amongst the Neighboures, but never knew that she did any ill; But the Officers of the Court interrupted them. saying (in a taunting manner Jare you for a Witch? and is this all you can say? and so turned severall of them away before they could be further heard. Then one came to the Court (a Stranger to the prisoner) and offered to depose, that one in black, called Thomas Southwick (knowne to be servant to Thomas Cromton another of the confederats) stood in the Sessions yard, offering money to strangers there, to come in and swear) that the said Peterson was a Witch, and amongst the rest offered to give her mony if she would doe the same, but he being called for, could not be had, nor would appeare, although Colonell Okey, and some other Justices upon the Bench, desired the Recorder to take notice of it, and to give Order that the said Thomas Southwick might be brought into Court. Whereupon the Jury went forth, and brought in their verdicts that the said Peterson was not guilty upon the first Indictment of bewitching the Lady Powell to death; But found her guilty upon the second, for which she was then cast, and the next day condemned to dye as a witch, And after that the said confederates and their agents went very often to her promising her a Reprieve or Pardon if she would confesse

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that Mrs. Levingstone had Imployed her to make away the life of the Lady Powell, to which she replied she could not, because it was altogether false. But one of the said confederates urging her againe to say something against Mrs. Levingstone, she told him he was a rogue, and gave him a blow on the face, which made his nose bleed: Where it is to be noted, that what for love of money they could not tempt her to, they resolved at last for love of her life to force her to, by necessitating her either unjustly to confesse a notorious falsehood against the said Mrs. Levingstone or else to dye without mercy or Reprieve, which otherwise was proffered her by the said Confederates, to make her unjust in doing the same.

On the 12 day the said Jone Peterson (being brought to the place of Execution) was by the Ordinary nine on ten times earnestly pressed to confesse something against the said Mrs. Levingstone: Whereupon the Executioner told the Ordinary, he might be ashamed to trouble a dying woman so much, to which he replied, he was commanded so to doe, and durst doe no otherwise And afterwards the said Ordinary still

insisting in his discourse, and very often pressing the said Peterson to confesse and discharge her conscience before God and the world; she answered that she had already confessed before the Bench, all she had to confesse; that she had made her peace with God; and therefore desired to dye in quiet, for now she was to appeare before God who presently would Judge her, and that God was witnes, that she dyed Innocently, and was in no wise guilty of what was laid to her charge, and that she hoped he would freely forgive her all her sins, and to this effect she still replied to his frequent importunities: And having gone to prayers, she shewed her selfe very attentive and penitent, and after Prayer called to sing the 25th Psalm, which she performed very Christianly and cheerfully, and so died, &c.

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The Copy of a Certificate under the hands of severall Doctors of Phisicke & Chirurgions concerning the death of the Lady Powell.

October the 8. 1651.

In the Body of the Lady Powell, who dyed the

seventh of this instant, was observed,

The Skin universally discovered Yellow.

The Belly swolne very much, the Thighs also and Legs.

The Cavity of the Abdomen possessed with yellowish obscure water, the quantity whereof not much above one Gallon and an half.

The Stomack and Guts not dissaffected, nor the Kidnies.

The Pancreas canceorus in part some part being degenerated into a feculent matter; like Amurca or dregs of oyle, yet contained in a Ciste.

The Liver larger then it ought, black; of an unequal schirrous or rather Cancerous substance, exangues.

The Spleen joynd with the left part of the hollow of the liver, as if they were one body, very black, and hard outwardly, inwardly rotten.

The Gall large and full, but of a deeper Yellow, inclined to red and black matter.

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In the cavity of the Breast or Thorax water of the same substance and colour neer a Gallon:

The Lungs something thicker and more discoloured then usual.

The heart well.

The Bones very easily broken.

Colladon.

George Bate. Phisitians.

Goddard.

George Chabrey.

Charles Stamford Chirurgians.

Thomas Page.

Besides the Apothecaries, and several other persons, who testified the same And are still ready to do the like. Coll. Okey, Coll. Berkstead, and divers other Justices of the Peace, both at Hixes ball, and at the old Baley, did declare themselves that they were not satisfied either with the proceedings, or proof against this Peterson, that she was guilty of witchcraft, but that there was a design in it, relating to the prejudice of Mrs. Levingstone, which they are ready to testifie to the Parliament when they shall be required thereunto.

FINIS.