

Palgrave Historical Studies in Witchcraft and Magic

Series Editors: **Jonathan Barry, Willem de Blécourt and Owen Davies**

Series foreword

The history of European witchcraft and magic continues to fascinate and challenge students and scholars. There is certainly no shortage of books on the subject. Several general surveys of the witch trials and numerous regional and micro studies have been published for an English-speaking readership. While the quality of publications on witchcraft has been high, some regions and topics have received less attention over the years. The aim of this series is to help illuminate these lesser known or little studied aspects of the history of witchcraft and magic. It will also encourage the development of a broader corpus of work in other related areas of magic and the supernatural, such as angels, devils, spirits, ghosts, folk healing and divination. To help further our understanding and interest in this wider history of beliefs and practices, the series will include research that looks beyond the usual focus on Western Europe and that also explores their relevance and influence from the medieval to the modern period.

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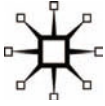
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▶ **Raising Spirits: How
a Conjuror's Tale Was
Transmitted across the
Enlightenment**

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This book owes its origin to Michael Hunter. I had referred in passing to the Perks case in several earlier essays, including one on Arthur Bedford published in 2001. I intended to revise that essay for my book, *Witchcraft and Demonology in South-West England c.1640–1789* (2012), but pressures of space and time prevented this. Michael urged me to offer an expanded account of the case, and I thought it would make a nice article, recording what we knew about Perks and reporting briefly on how the story was retold. It soon became clear that the textual history was immensely complex, and that the motives of each successive re-teller were of great interest. Moreover new versions kept appearing serendipitously. Fortunately, as the project outgrew an article, Palgrave Macmillan introduced Pivot books and my commissioning editor Jenny McCall, together with my co-editors of ‘Palgrave Historical Studies in Witchcraft and Magic’, Willem de Blécourt and Owen Davies, showed their usual kindness in encouraging me to publish in that format and within our series.

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List of Abbreviations

BCL	Bristol Reference Library, Bristol Collection
BL	British Library
Bod.	Bodleian Library, Oxford
BRO	Bristol Record Office
GRO	Gloucestershire Record Office
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (Oxford, 2004 and revised online)
TNA	The National Archives
Wellcome	Wellcome Institute Library, 183 Euston Road, London





“THOMAS PERKS, RAISING A SPIRIT, TO HIS OWN DESTRUCTION!” Engraved on steel by Rothwell from a drawing by Fufsel, London John Bennett, Three Tun Passage, Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row. Raphael, *The Familiar Astrologer* (1832), to be bound opposite p. 212.

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