in many cases is uncertain which bibliographic citation applies to what information presented in the text. These technical flaws seriously mar the book's value to the folklorist, and it is hoped that future volumes of the series will correct these faults. A series on British folklore is a desirable goal and would be welcomed, but high standards must be upheld for the work to be of real value to the serious study and academic viability of folklore in the British Isles.


Review note by Margaret Bulger Kohn.

The current popularity of occultism has fostered the wholesale exploitation of material which deals in any way with that ever intriguing field of supernatural phenomena and ancient magico-religious practices. Witch Stories by L. Lynn Linton is a prime example. Originally published in 1861 as a loose collection of recorded accounts found in the British Museum and the public libraries of England, it remains unchanged in its republished form. The publishers have fittingly retained the antiquated original typeface and, as a period piece of research, the book is an interesting account, as much a novelty today as the historical court cases it documents.

In the peculiar prose style of the nineteenth century, Linton describes the case histories of witches tried in England and Scotland during the "witch panic" that swept Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries. The accounts contain a wealth of traditional beliefs that have survived through the centuries. Magical properties such as that of the color green, the number seven and folk medical knowledge have all been repeatedly linked to witchcraft. At times there is confusion between supernatural beings (elves, "giants" and "faeries") and the practitioners of the early pagan religion of Europe. Qualities and actions that would normally be attributed to elfin beings are transferred unceremoniously to the "witches" creating an interesting blend of folk belief and court testimony.

The main objection I have to the book is its lack of a bibliography, index and suitable notes. Although the author acknowledges that his work is based on numerous valuable sources, his notes are exasperatingly perfunctory. A typical note reads: Pitcaire's "Scottish Criminal Trials." Without the aid of a back-up bibliography, future researchers will find this work to be extremely frustrating.