



CHRONICALS OF A CANDID CRITIC

Three hundred and thirty years ago “judges” of the Wilts Quarter Sessions had some strange, though certainly original, ideas when it came to meting out punishment. This is instanced by the following extract from the Session’s records sent to me by Mr. Ben Cunnington, honorary curator of the Wilts Archaeological Society:-

In the year 1608 an order for penance to be performed by Henry Browne of Lineham, a mercer, and Elizabeth Browne, daughter of Henry Browne the elder, a yeoman, dated March 26 of that year, enjoins “that on Monday next being Easter Monday half an hour before morning prayer shall begin they shall stand in white sheets at the churchyard gate of Lineham on the east side of the resorters to divine service that day at the church to beholde and looke upon, and take warneing by, and when praire is begunne they shall both be brought into the church and remain there for the whole time of the divine service, and in like manner during evening prayer. Which being ended, they both shall in their sheetes set in the stockes there to continue by the space of one hower and no more.”

North Wilts Herald, 22 August 1941