

- In addition, the "two-fold balls and treble sceptres" seem to refer to the double-coronation of James in Scotland and England, and the two sceptres used in the English ceremony and the one in the Scottish.
- James, like all kings, had a personal stake in opposing regicide and would have, no doubt, approved of Macbeth's ultimate downfall and the reminders of the Gunpowder Plot.
- Malcolm's creation of Scotland's first earls upon reclaiming the throne paralleled James's own generosity in giving out honours and titles.
- James was fascinated by witchcraft.

WITCHES AND WITCHCRAFT

- It is important to understand just how seriously people viewed witchcraft in Shakespeare's lifetime and how fascinating the subject was to scholars and to people who considered themselves up-to-date thinkers, such as King James himself.
- In Elizabeth's England, thousands of people (nearly all women) were executed as witches.
- In 1590, while James was still King of Scotland, there were more than three hundred (300) witches tortured in order to extract confessions that they were conspiring against the King.
- James took an active part in the trials himself, believing that, since the king was God's representative on earth, he would obviously be the main target of the agents of the devil.
- In 1604, a year after James came to power, new laws were enacted stating that practicing witches should be executed.
- Many people felt that, if the rule of a king over his people was comparable to God's rule over the earth, the man's rule over the family and the head's rule over the body (the mind over the emotions), then witchcraft tried to turn all of this upside down, so that the devil ruled the earth, women ruled the family and the emotions ruled the head.
- James himself wrote and published a book about witchcraft in 1597, the Demonologie, in which he detailed their supposed powers of predicting the future, defying normal physical rules, affected the weather, cursing their enemies and taking demonic possession of otherwise innocent people, all assisted by their "familiar" (familiar spirits) in the shapes of animals.
- It is not difficult to see that these beliefs appealed to people who were misogynists (women-haters) or who had their own personal interests at heart and used witches as a convenient scapegoat.