



The Historical Sources of Defoe's Journal of the Plague Year; Illustrated by Extracts from the Original Documents in the Burney Collection and Manuscript Room in the British Museum

By Watson Nicholson

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Print on Demand *****. This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can usually download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1920 edition. Excerpt: . Where, then, did Defoe find the printed materials for his history of the Plague? In the first place, the statistics of the deaths from the distemper, which are manipulated with much skill by Defoe to awe the reader with the increase, spread, and appalling mag-. A nitude of the disease, were taken directly from the Bills of Mortality, first compiled in 1665 as London's Remembrancer, by John Bell, one of the Parish Clerks. The same year, John Graunt included these Bills in his Reflections on the Weekly Bills. This latter book was reprinted in 1720, and probably furnished Defoe with his figures, as the Journal shows indications that its author had read the Reflections. It is more than probable, also, that the files of the 1665 newsbooks / were examined, as I shall show, as these contained the Bills as they appeared...



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