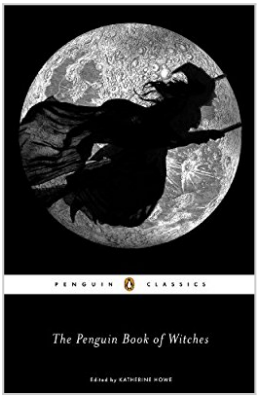

The Penguin Book of Witches

From Unknown

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Chilling real-life accounts of witches, from medieval Europe through colonial America, compiled by the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Physick Book of Deliverance Dane* and *Conversion*

From a manual for witch hunters written by King James himself in 1597, to court documents from the Salem witch trials of 1692, to newspaper coverage of a woman stoned to death on the streets of Philadelphia while the Continental Congress met, *The Penguin Book of Witches* is a treasury of historical accounts of accused witches that sheds light on the reality behind the legends. Bringing to life stories like that of Eunice Cole, tried for attacking a teenage girl with a rock and buried with a stake through her heart; Jane Jacobs, a Bostonian so often accused of witchcraft that she took her tormentors to court on charges of slander; and Increase Mather, an exorcism-performing minister famed for his knowledge of witches, this volume provides a unique tour through the darkest history of English and North American witchcraft.

For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Editorial Review

Review
New Atlantic Indie bestseller

“Haunting . . . Erudite, insightful, and resonant . . . There are unsettling, inescapable parallels to the recent police violence in Ferguson, Mo. . . . *The Penguin Book of Witches* . . . provides invaluable historical context, and makes fascinating reading about a past that all too well illuminates the present.” —***NPR.org***

“Katherine Howe’s new book recalls a time when witchcraft wasn’t just a crime, it was enough to get you killed.” —**NPR’s *Weekend Edition Sunday***

“A fascinating selection of historical accounts.” —***The Washington Post***

“People have never been as interested to hear about a book I was reading as they were when I spent a few weeks in October carrying around *The Penguin Book of Witches*. . . . Ben Franklin was alive and you could still be publicly stoned to death in Philly for being a witch. Crazy. This book is a good gift to give to single women you know.” —**Caity Weaver, *Gawker*, “The Best Things We Read in 2014”**

“I am just glad there is now, in this world, a book with the title *The Penguin Book of Witches*, because, really, how cool is that.” —**John Scalzi, *New York Times* bestselling and Hugo Award–winning author**

“Invaluable . . . A fine compendium.” —***The Independent***

“An excellent read . . . Fascinating and completely different from [other] books on witchcraft . . . A sobering look at what fear and instability can do to communities through the demonization of anyone thought of as different. You will close the book with a broader understanding of what we are capable of doing to each other.” —***Nerdist***

“A cornucopia of fascinating and often unsettling texts . . . Deftly curated and exhaustively annotated . . . [Along with] Howe’s engaging, thorough, and thoughtful annotations . . . the excerpts . . . are fascinating windows into early ideas about gender, class, and social roles.” —***Refinery 29***

“Fascinating and insightful. With her usual skill, Katherine Howe navigates the winding path leading to Salem’s hysteria and beyond. A must-read for anyone who wants to know not only what happened but also how and why.” —**Brunonia Barry, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Lace Reader***

“This comprehensive collection of carefully selected documents and published primary materials, coupled with judicious and informative introductions, will help modern readers understand the seemingly inexplicable and persistent popular phenomenon of belief in witchcraft from the seventeenth century into more modern times.” —**Mary Beth Norton, author of *In the Devil’s Snare***

“An informative and engaging series of texts that Katherine Howe introduces in a crisp and well-informed manner. The chronological breadth is unusual, but it allows us to grasp more fully the continuities that mark the history of witch-hunting on both sides of the Atlantic.” **—David D. Hall, Harvard Divinity School**

“With insightful notations . . . this superbly edited and annotated work provides in-depth material for those

interested in the origins of witchcraft persecution in America." —***Library Journal***

About the Author
Katherine Howe, the direct descendant of three accused Salem witches, is the *New York Times* bestselling author of the novels *The Physick Book of Deliverance Dane*, *The House of Velvet and Glass*, and the young-adult novel *Conversion*, a modern-day retelling of *The Crucible* set in a Massachusetts prep school. She teaches in the American Studies program at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

The Penguin Book of Witches

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This excerpt is from an advance uncorrected proof

Introduction

Marblehead, Massachusetts, is a bedroom community in suburban Boston, a comfortable seaside enclave of historic houses. It has good public schools, intermittent bus service, and a weekly newspaper that is read mainly for the juicy names-naming police log. It is not the sort of place where one would expect to find a witch.

But a witch did live there, though she is not buried there. Wilmot Redd, or sometimes Reed, was one of the more than one hundred people who was accused during the Salem witch crisis of 1692, and, like the other condemned witches, her body was thrown into a shallow ditch at the base of a rocky ledge to the west of Salem Town after being cut down from the gallows. At that time, the area at the foot of the hill where the gallows stood was flooded with brackish water at high tide, and so Wilmot Redd, after resting uneasily in the rocky earth of coastal Essex County, was most likely carried out to sea. Today the ditch she was thrown into is hidden under a pharmacy parking lot.

Redd, like the other North American witches who have left impressions—sometimes lasting, sometimes glancing—in the historical record, presents something of a conundrum. How can the English colonists who

settled North America, who were relatively literate compared with their European cousins, who were reasonably thoughtful and self-examining, who lived in tightly interconnected communities dependent on collective effort for success, have believed in witches? And not just believed in witches, but also put them to death? The historical fact of witchcraft weighs uneasily in our current culture, particularly given how much symbolic, nation-building weight the colonists are required to bear in the realms of popular history.

Histories of witchcraft have often revealed more about the time in which the historian was writing than about witchcraft itself. Within each all-encompassing theory of witchcraft in the English Atlantic world came a new set of contemporary biases and prerogatives, obscuring the fact that, to the individual living in the early modern world, from the sixteenth through the middle part of the eighteenth centuries, witchcraft was a legitimate, but dangerous, category for explaining reality. Witchcraft intersected, contained, and sometimes overwrote other important social questions—most notably of gender, class, inequality, and religion—but to treat it merely as a proxy for those other ideas, because those other ideas have persisted into our own time while witchcraft has not, strips away the explanatory power that witchcraft held for the people who were touched by it. An idea, even today, does not have to be empirically verifiable for it to matter.

A surer way to access the meaning and function of witchcraft in the early modern world is to peel back the layers of popular myth and academic historiography and to look with fresh eyes at the primary sources. What ultimately emerges is a complicated picture. The witch appears first, in biblical terms, as the Other, as that which is not doctrinaire. Witchcraft is less a set of defined practices than a representation of the oppositional, as the intentional thwarting of the machinery of power, whether that power lies with the church, with the king, or with the dominant cultural group. Under the heavy guidance of English theologians, witches and witchcraft assume a set of identifiable principles and practices, though those practices remain distilled from oppositional definitions. Witches pervert the generative properties of womanhood in their suckling of imps and their copulations with devils; they subvert the church's authority by turning Christian rituals on end; and they undermine class hierarchy by claiming unearned power for themselves.

The English abstraction of who a witch is, and what she is likely to do, travels with the colonists to North America. While primarily a Puritan phenomenon on North American shores, witchcraft penetrates deeper into colonial life than might initially be suspected. The majority of witch trials were held in New England, though the cultural content of witchcraft finds expression throughout the colonies, and in ongoing dialogue with England. The use of English precedent as template and justification for the conduct of the Salem trials underscores the fact that Salem, rather than being an aberration, was instead the most intense, and perhaps the most defining, expression of North American religious, cultural, and legal thought.

Whereas nineteenth-century historians treated colonial-era belief in witchcraft as a faintly embarrassing holdover of medieval thought that was quickly purged, the belief in and pursuit of witches must instead be seen as a central concept informing a shifting North American identity. Even after Salem forever changed the way that witchcraft would (and, soon enough, would not) be prosecuted, belief in witchcraft persisted well into the Enlightenment. Witches served as both literal and figurative scapegoats for frontier communities under profound economic, religious, and political pressure. The figure of the witch, the idea of the witch, and the need to flush her out of her hiding place and into the light served as a binding agent among fragile communities that were subject to waves of arrival and departure, living with uncertain rights in unsecured territories. The witch—ever the embodiment of the oppositional— served a vital role in the formation of what would eventually be a new united nation. That's one of the reasons that she and the events of Salem persist in our political discourse and in our popular culture. We need her in order to know who we are *not* so that we can begin to imagine who we are.

This book argues for witchcraft's presence in the mainstream of thought in colonial North American culture, extending beyond passing fits of unreason or hysteria. Belief in witchcraft was not an anomalous throwback

to late medieval thought by provincial colonists, nor was it an embarrassing blip in an otherwise steady march to an idealized nationhood. It was not a disease. It was not a superstition. Witchcraft's presence or absence was constitutive to the colonial order. It was a touchstone that reinforced what was normal and what was aberrant. For upper echelons of society—in the world of the Protestant church and the court system—prosecution of witchcraft allowed for the consolidation of power and the enforcement of religious and social norms. For common people, belief in witchcraft explained away quotidian unfairness and misfortune. These two circles of belief intersected in the bodies of individuals, usually women, who were out of step with their society, and who were thought to have pledged themselves to the Devil in exchange for the power to work their will through invisible means.

The Penguin Book of Witches is an annotated volume of primary source documents about witchcraft in English North America that is designed for readers interested in learning about the reality behind the fiction. Its goal is to assemble a broad array of sources, chosen for their representative value as well as their narrative power, which, taken as a whole, will leave a reader with a solid command of the meaning of witchcraft in early American life. The first chapter focuses on the legal and cultural beliefs about witchcraft in precolonial England, as the region that made the greatest contribution to the beliefs about witchcraft in colonial North America. The second chapter presents selected records of witchcraft cases from North America before the Salem panic, from the earliest hints of witch suspicion to the first confirmed witch trial in Massachusetts. This chapter does not limit its scope to New England, also looking at the few witch trials outside the Puritan settlements of northern Massachusetts. The third chapter focuses on the unique events of Salem, which, in addition to being the most infamous North American witch trial, was also the most widespread, and the most deadly. The final chapter investigates witchcraft after Salem, when witchcraft was decriminalized but remained an enduring part of American culture. Witchcraft did not vanish from North American consciousness in a sudden burst of reason and Enlightenment. It persisted as a shadowy reminder of an intellectual world that had faded but had never fully disappeared.

Witchcraft continues to fascinate us today, a fact evidenced by the ongoing popularity of witches in fiction, tourism, history, popular religion, and historical writing. Much of what we think we know about witchcraft is actually cribbed from popular culture. When we talk about witches, we imagine a Halloween stereotype of a woman with a pointy hat, broom, and cat, blended with the magic-using housewife of *Bewitched*, who could wiggle her nose to make a pot roast. But the real witches of early modern England and North America are not cackling cartoon characters in pointy hats. The reality of witchcraft in English North America is much more fascinating—and terrifying.

On a chilly spring day not too long ago, I lined up with my gossiping neighbors outside a modest antique house in Marblehead, Massachusetts, that dated from the late 1600s. The occupant had lived there her entire life and had lately passed away. The line was for admission to a tag sale to dispose of the belongings the occupant's family didn't want. Inside, the house was tiny—possibly eight hundred square feet—its walls stained with tobacco smoke, every corner crammed with the flotsam of a long and often difficult life within view of the sea. For extra space, the occupant had expanded into her unfinished basement, where one corner had been set up for sewing projects, another for laundry. One wall was filled, somewhat unnervingly, with shelves of homemade dolls. A far wall held a small spice rack of herbs next to several photographs of women pasted up, at first glance, at random.

Or not at random. The photographs were arrayed around a cutout of the earth from a science magazine. On closer inspection, the pictures of women seemed to be generations of the former occupant's family. Next to the altar—for that is what the wall of devotional pictures proved to be—stood a bookshelf packed with well-thumbed texts about witchcraft, mostly of the contemporary post–New Age variety that dated back to the 1970s. The neighbors rooted through her belongings, bartering for candlesticks, haggling over Federal-style end tables, unaware that a witch had been living next door for three decades.

I took home her dusty mantel clock, a simple table that became my desk, and the well-loved witchcraft books. But my real joy lay in knowing that my neighbor had found a connection to history that was meaningful to her, and from which she drew empowerment. Even after witchcraft disappeared as a deadly legal problem, the belief in witchcraft persists, continuing to do its cultural work, hiding in plain sight in the staid bedroom communities of Boston.

- Katherine Howe

TWO EXAMINATIONS OF TITUBA, AS RECORDED BY JONATHAN CORWIN

If the expansion of the Salem witch trials was ignited by Tituba's confession, then we must ask her reason for confessing and condemning these other women. It is tempting to say that Tituba confessed to save herself, but when she did, she did not know that she would be spared because of it. Usually in an early modern witch trial, if one confessed it would only hurry one to the gallows, as was the case with Ursula Kemp one hundred years before. It has been argued that Parris beat Tituba's confession out of her; the descriptions of her body, when it was examined looking for her witch's teat, also include evidence of bruising. We may never fully understand why she confessed. She was a slave and a woman in a rigidly hierarchal society. Her questioning was leading at best and aggressive at worst. Tituba confessed for the same reason that people confess to crimes they did not commit today—because she had been hounded into it by people in a position of power.

What we can understand is how she confessed, which may tell us something about why. Tituba's confession displays a deep knowledge of English witchcraft: the covenanting with the Devil, the spirit familiars in the forms of animals, riding on a stick to the Sabbath, and sending out a spirit to do harm (often against children) are wholly consistent with English thinking about witchcraft. These details are perfectly consistent with English witchcraft manuals—too consistent. For someone who could not read (Tituba made her mark rather than sign her name) this kind of knowledge could only have come from someone else. Such details about witchcraft were scholastic, rather than common folk knowledge. These details coming from the mouth of an illiterate slave from Barbados strongly suggests coercion both in the act of the confession, as well as instruction in what specifically to say.

The First Examination of Tituba

Tituba the Indian Woman's Examination, March 1, 1691/2

[Q]: Why do you hurt these poor children? What harm have they done unto you?
[A]: They do no harm to me. I no hurt them at all.
[Q]: Why have you done it?
[A]: I have done nothing. I can't tell when the Devil works.
[Q]: What, doth the Devil tell you that he hurts them?
[A]: No. He tells me nothing.
[Q]: Do you never see something appear in some shape?
[A]: No. Never see anything.
[Q]: What familiarity have you with the Devil, or what is it that you converse withal? Tell the truth. Who it is that hurts them?
[A]: The Devil for aught I know.
[Q]: What appearance or how doth he appear when he hurts them? With what shape or what is he like that hurts them?
[A]: Like a man. I think yesterday I being in the lentoe chamber I saw a thing like a man, that told me serve

him and I told him no, I would not do such thing.
She charges Goody Osburn and Sarah Good as those that hurt the children, and would have had her do it. She saith she hath seen four, two of which she knew not. She saw them last night as she was washing the room.
[A]: They told me hurt the children and would have had me go to Boston. There was five of them with the man. They told me if I would not go and hurt them they would do so to me. At first I did agree with them but afterward I told them I do so no more.
[Q]: Would they have had you hurt the children the last night?
[A]: Yes, but I was sorry and I said I would do so no more, but told I would fear God.
[Q]: But why [scored out] did not you do so before?
[A]: Why, they tell me I had done so before and therefore I must go on. These were the four women and the man, but she knew none but Osburn and Good; only the others were of Boston.
[Q]: At first being with them, what then appeared to you? What was it like that got you to do it?
[A]: One like a man just as I was going to sleep came to me. This was when the children was first hurt. He said he would kill the children and she would never be well and he said if I would not serve him, he would do so to me.
[Q]: Is that the same man that appeared before to you? That appeared the last night and told you this?
[A]: Yes.
[Q]: What other likenesses besides a man hath appeared to you?
[A]: Sometimes like a hog. Sometimes like a great black dog. Four times.
[Q]: But what d [torn] they say unto you?
[A]: They told me serve him and that was a good way. That was the black dog. I told him I was afraid. He told me he would be worse than to me.
[Q]: What did you say to him then after that?
[A]: I answered, I will serve you no longer. He told me he would do me hurt then.
[Q]: What other creatures have you seen?
[A]: A bird.
[Q]: What bird?
[A]: A little yellow bird.
[Q]: Where doth it keep?
[A]: With the man who hath pretty things here besides.
[Q]: What other pretty things?
[A]: He hath not showed them yet unto me, but he said he would show them me tomorrow, and he told me if I would serve him, I should have the bird.
[Q]: What other creatures did you see?
[A]: I saw two cats, one red, another black as big as a little dog.
[Q]: What did these cats do?
[A]: I don’t know. I have seen them two times.
[Q]: What did they say?
[A]: They say serve them.
[Q]: When did you see them?
[A]: I saw them last night.
[Q]: Did they do any hurt to you or threaten you?
[A]: They did scratch me.
[Q]: When?
[A]: After prayer, and scratched me because I would not serve them and when they went away, I could not see. But they stood before the fire.
[Q]: What service do they expect from you?
[A]: They say more hurt to the children.

[Q]: How did you pinch them when you hurt them?
[A]: The other pull me and haul me to pinch the child and I am very sorry for it.
[Q]: What made you hold your arm when you were searched? What had you there?
[A]: I had nothing.
[Q]: Do not those cats suck you?
[A]: No, never yet. I would not let them, but they had almost thrust me into the fire.
[Q]: How do you hurt those that you pinch? Do you get those cats or other things to do it for you? Tell us, how is it done?
[A]: The man sends the cats to me and bids me pinch them and I think I went over to Mr. Griggs's and have pinched her this day in the morning. The man brought Mr. Griggs's maid to me and made me pinch her.
[Q]: Did you ever go with these women?
[A]: They are very strong and pull me and make me go with them.
[Q]: Where did you go?
[A]: Up to Mr. Putnam's and make me hurt the child.
[Q]: Who did make you go?
[A]: A man that is very strong and these two women, Good and Osburn. But I am sorry.
[Q]: How did you go? What do you ride upon?
[A]: I rid upon a stick or pole and Good and Osburn behind me. We ride taking hold of one another and don't know how we go for I saw no trees nor path, but was presently there, when we were up.
[Q]: How long since you began to pinch Mr. Parris's children?

[A]: I did not pinch them at the first, but he made me afterward.

[Q]: Have you seen Good and Osburn ride upon a pole?
[A]: Yes and have held fast by me. I was not at Mr. Griggs's but once, but it maybe sent something like me, neither would I have gone, but that they tell me they will hurt me. Last night they tell me I must kill somebody with the knife.
[Q]: Who were they that told you so?
[A]: Sarah Good and Osburn and they would have had me kill Thomas Putnam's child last night.
The child also affirmed that at the same time they would have had her cut her own throat [scored out from "her"] of her own head for if she would not they told her Tituba would cut it off and complained at the same time of a knife cutting of her when her master hath asked her about these thing[torn] she saith they will not let her tell, but tell her if she tells her head shall be cut off.
[Q]: Who [torn] you so?
[A]: The man, Good, and Osburn's wife. Goody Good came to her last night when her master was at prayer and would not let her hear and she could not hear a good while. Good hath one of these birds, the yellow bird, and would have given me it, but I would not have it and in prayer time she stopped my ears and would not let me hear.
[Q]: What should you have done with it?
[A]: Give it to the children. Which yellow bird hath been several times seen by the children. I saw Sarah Good have it on her hand when she came to her when Mr. Parris was at prayer. I saw the bird suck Good between the forefinger and long finger upon the right hand.
[Q]: Did you never practice witchcraft in your own country?
[A]: No. Never before now.
[Q]: Did you [lost] see them do it now while you are examining?
[A]: No, I did not see them but I saw them hurt at other times. I saw Good have a cat beside the yellow bird which was with her.
[Q]: What hath Osburn got to go with her?
[A]: Something. I don't know what it is. I can't name it. I don't know how it looks. She hath two of them. One of them hath wings and two legs and a head like a woman.

The children saw the same but yesterday which afterward turned into a woman.
[Q]: What is the other thing that Goody Osburn hath?
[A]: A thing all over hairy, all the face hairy and a long nose and I don't know how to tell how the face looks. With two legs, it goeth upright and is about two or three foot high and goeth upright like a man and last night it stood before the fire in Mr. Parris's hall.
[Q]: Who was that appeared like a wolf to Hubbard as she was going from proctures?
[A]: It was Sarah Good and I saw her send the wolf to her.
[Q]: What clothes doth the man appear unto you in?
[A]: Black clothes sometimes, sometimes serge coat or other color, a tall man with white hair, I think.
[Q]: What apparel do the women wear?
[A]: I don't know what color.
[Q]: What kind of clothes hath she?
[A]: A black silk hood with a white silk hood under it with topknots. Which woman I know not but have seen her in Boston when I lived there.
[Q]: What clothes the little woman?
[A]: A serge coat with a white cap, as I think.

The children having fits at this very time, she was asked who hurt them. She answered Goody Good and the children affirmed the same, but Hubbard being taken in an extreme fit after she was asked who hurt her and she said she could not tell, but said they blinded her and would not let her see and after that was once or twice taken dumb herself.

The Second Examination of Tituba

Second Examination, March 2, 1691/2

[Q]: What covenant did you make with that man that came to you? What did he tell you?
[A]: He tell me he God and I must believe him and serve him six years and he would give me many fine things.
[Q]: How long ago was this?
[A]: About six weeks and a little more. Friday night before Abigail was ill.
[Q]: What did he say you must do more? Did he say you must write anything? Did he offer you any paper?
[A]: Yes. The next time he come to me and showed me some fine things. Something like creatures, a little bird something like green and white.
[Q]: Did you promise him then when he spake to you then? What did you answer him?
[A]: I then said this. I told him I could not believe him God. I told him I ask my master and would have gone up but he stopped me and would not let me.
[Q]: What did you promise him?
[A]: The first time I believe him god and then he was glad.
[Q]: What did he say to you then? What did he say you must do?
[A]: This: he tell me they must meet together.
[Q]: When did he say you may meet together?
[A]: He tell me Wednesday next at my master's house, and then they all meet together and that night I saw them all stand in the corner, all four of them, and the man stand behind me and take hold of me to make me stand still in the hall.
[Q]: Time of night?
[A]: A little before prayer time.
[Q]: What did this man say to you when he took hold of you?

[A]: He say go into the other room and see the children and do hurt to them and pinch them. And then I went in and would not hurt them a good while. I would not hurt Betty. I loved Betty, but they haul me and make me pinch Betty and the next Abigail and then quickly went away altogether a [illegible] I had pinched them.
[Q]: Did they pinch?
[A]: No. But they all looked on and see me pinch them.
[Q]: Did you go into that room in your own person and all the rest?
[A]: Yes, and my master did not see us, for they would not let my master see.
[Q]: Did you go with the company?
[A]: No. I stayed and the man stayed with me.
[Q]: What did he then to you?
[A]: He tell me my master go to prayer and he read in book and he ask me what I remember, but don't you remember anything.
[Q]: Did he ask you no more but the first time to serve him or the second time?
[A]: Yes. He ask me again. And that I serve him six years and he com[illegible] the next time and show me a book.
[Q]: And when would he come then?
[A]: The next Friday and show [illegible] me a book in the daytime, betimes in the morning.
[Q]: And what book did he bring? A great or little book?
[A]: He did not show it me, nor would not but had it in his pocket [illegible].
[Q]: Did not he make you write your name?
[A]: No, not yet for my [his] mistress called me into the other room.
[Q]: What did he say you must do in that book?
[A]: He said write and set my name to it.
[Q]: Did you write?
[A]: Yes. Once I made a mark in the book and made it with red like blood.
[Q]: Did he get it out of your body?
[A]: He said he must get it out the next time he come again. He give me a pin tied in a stick to do it with, but he no let me blood with it as yet but intended another time when he come again.
[Q]: Did you see any other marks in his book?
[A]: Yes, a great many. Some marks red, some yellow. He opened his book. A great many marks in it.
[Q]: Did he tell you the names of them?
[A]: Yes, of two, no more: Good and Osburn, and he say they make them marks in that book and he showed them me.
[Q]: How many marks do you think there was?
[A]: Nine.
[Q]: Did they write their names?
[A]: They made marks. Goody Good said she made her mark, but goody Osburn would not tell. She was cross to me.
[Q]: When did Good tell you she set her hand to the book?
[A]: The same day I came hither to prison.
[Q]: Did you see the man that morning?
[A]: Yes, a little in the morning and he tell me, tell nothing. If I did he would cut my head off.
[Q]: Tell us, Tr[torn] how many women did use to come when you rode abroad?
[A]: Four of them: these two, Osburn and Good, and those two strangers.
[Q]: You say that there was nine. Did he tell you who they were?
[A]: No. He no let me see but he tell me I should see them the next time.
[Q]: What sights did you see?
[A]: I see a man, a dog, a hog and two cats, a black and red, and the strange monster was Osburn's that I mentioned before. This was the hairy imp. The man would give it to me, but I would not have it.

[Q]: Did he show you in the book which was Osburn's and which was Good's mark?
[A]: Yes. I see their marks.
[Q]: But did he tell the names of the others?
[A]: No, sir.
[Q]: And what did he say to you when you made your mark?
[A]: He said serve me and always serve me. The man with the two women came from Boston.
[Q]: How many times did you go to Boston?
[A]: I was going and [illegible]en came back again. I was never at Boston.
[Q]: Who came back with you again?
[A]: The man came back with me and the women go away. I was not willing to go.
[Q]: How far did you go? To what town?
[A]: I never went to any town. I see no trees, no town.
[Q]: Did he tell you where the nine lived?
[A]: Yes. Some in Boston and some here in this town, but he would not tell me who they were.

THE SUSPICION OF MARTHA CORY

MONDAY, MARCH 21, 1692

Martha Cory was the wife of Giles Cory and was the first woman accused whose accusation might be termed atypical. She was a full church member at a time when church membership was tantamount to social rank and respect, and meant probable membership in the elect who would advance to heaven. She was married, and not in a scandalous or volatile way. She was moneyed. Once Tituba's confession planted the seed of the idea that there was a conspiracy in town, suspicion was then free to spread to members of the community who might otherwise have been thought to be above reproach.

Most striking in Martha Cory's examination was her incredulity that this was really happening to her. In the course of her examination, she claimed that the children were "distracted," that is, crazy. She laughed during the proceedings. She did not claim to know whether there were or were not witches "in the country." The magistrates, in turn, pointed to Tituba's confession as evidence that witches were around, privileging the word of a slave woman over that of a churchwoman.

Martha Cory had publicly suspected that the afflicted girls were lying from the beginning, but her doubt, rather than being heard as a voice of reason within the community, would have been taken by doctrinaire Puritans as an error of faith. To doubt the existence of witches or the Devil was to go against the truth as laid out in the Bible. It was Martha Cory's very skepticism that made her worthy of suspicion and led to her eventual hanging.

Martha Cory's Examination
21 March, 1691/2

[Mr. Hathorne]: You are now in the hands of authority. Tell me now why you hurt these persons.
[Martha Cory]: I do not.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Who doth?
[Martha Cory]: Pray give me leave to go to prayer.
This request was made sundry times.
[Mr. Hathorne]: We do not send for you to go to prayer.
[Mr. Hathorne]: But tell me why you hurt these?

[Martha Cory]: I am an innocent person; I never had to do with witchcraft since I was born. I am a gospel woman.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Do not you see these complaints of you?
[Martha Cory]: The lord open the eyes of the magistrates and ministers. The lord show his power to discover the guilty.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Tell us who hurts these children.
[Martha Cory]: I do not know.
[Mr. Hathorne]: If you be guilty of this fact do you think you can hide it?
[Martha Cory]: The lord knows.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Well, tell us what you know of this matter.
[Martha Cory]: Why, I am a gospel woman, and do you think I can have to do with witchcraft too?
[Mr. Hathorne]: How could you tell then that the child was bid to observe what clothes you wore when some came to speak with you?
Cheever interrupted her and bid her not begin with a lie and so Edward Putman declared the matter.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Who told you that?

[Martha Cory]: He said the child said.

[Cheever]: You speak falsely.
Then Edward Putman read again.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Why did you ask if the child told what clothes you wore?
[Martha Cory]: My husband told me the others told.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Who told you about the clothes? Why did you ask that question?
[Martha Cory]: Because I heard the children told what clothes the other wore.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Goodman Cory, did you tell her?
The old man denied that he told her so.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Did you not say your husband told you so?
[Martha Cory]: -
[Mr. Hathorne]: Who hurts these children now? Look upon them.
[Martha Cory]: I cannot help it.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Did you not say you would tell the truth? Why you asked that question: How come you to the knowledge?
[Martha Cory]: I did but ask.
[Mr. Hathorne]: You dare thus to lie in all this assembly.
[Mr. Hathorne]: You are now before authority. I expect the truth. You promised it. Speak now and tell what clothes. [scored out] who told you what clothes?
[Martha Cory]: Nobody.
[Mr. Hathorne]: How came you to know that the children would be examined what cloth you wore?
[Martha Cory]: Because I thought the child was wiser than anybody if she knew.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Give an answer. You said your husband told you.

[Martha Cory]: he told me the children said I afflicted them.

[Mr. Hathorne]: How do you know what they came for? Answer me this truly. Will you say how you came to know what they came for?
[Martha Cory]: I had heard speech that the children said I afflicted them[scored out] troubled them and I thought that they might come to examine.
[Mr. Hathorne]: But how did you know it?
[Martha Cory]: I thought they did.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Did not you say you would tell the truth? Who told you what they came for?

[Martha Cory]: Nobody.
[Mr. Hathorne]: How did you know?
[Martha Cory]: I did think so.
[Mr. Hathorne]: But you said you knew so.

[Children]: There is a man whispering in her ear.

[Mr. Hathorne]: What did he say to you?
[Martha Cory]: We must not believe all that these distracted children say.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Cannot he tell [scored out] you tell what that man whispered?
[Martha Cory]: I saw nobody.
[Mr. Hathorne]: But did not you hear?
[Martha Cory]: No.
Here was extreme agony of all the afflicted.
[Mr. Hathorne]: If you expect mercy of God, you must look for it in God's way by confession.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Do you think to find mercy by aggravating your sins?
[Martha Cory]: A true thing.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Look for it then in God's way.
[Martha Cory]: So I do.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Give glory to God and confess then.
[Martha Cory]: But I cannot confess.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Do not you see how these afflicted do charge you?
[Martha Cory]: We must not believe distracted persons.

[Mr. Hathorne]: Who do you improve to hurt them.

[Martha Cory]: I improved none.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Did not you say our eyes were blinded? You would open them?
[Martha Cory]: Yes, to accuse the innocent.
Then Crossly gave in evidence.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Why cannot the girl stand before you?
[Martha Cory]: I do not know.
[Mr. Hathorne]: What did you mean by that?
[Martha Cory]: I saw them fall down.
[Mr. Hathorne]: It seems to be an insulting speech as if they could not stand before you.
[Martha Cory]: They cannot stand before others.
[Mr. Hathorne]: But you said they cannot stand before you.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Tell me what was that turning upon the spit by you?
[Martha Cory]: You believe the children that are distracted. I saw no spit.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Here are more than two that accuse you for witchcraft. What do you say?
[Martha Cory]: I am innocent.
Then Mr. Hathorne read farther of Crossly's evidence.
[Mr. Hathorne]: What did you mean by that the Devil could not stand before you?
She denied it.
[Mr. Hathorne]: 3 or 4 sober witnesses confirmed it.

[Martha Cory]: What can I do? Many rise up against me.

[Mr. Hathorne]: Why, confess!
[Martha Cory]: So I would if I were guilty.

[Mr. Hathorne]: Here are sober persons. What do you say to them?
[Mr. Hathorne]: You are a gospel woman. Will you lie?
Abigail cried out, Next Sabbath is sacrament day, but she shall not come there.
[Martha Cory]: I do not care.
[Mr. Hathorne]: You charge these children with distraction. It is a note of distraction when persons vary in a minute, but these fix upon you. This is not the manner of distraction.
[Martha Cory]: When all are against me, what can I help it?
[Mr. Hathorne]: Now tell me the truth, will you? Why did you say that the magistrates' and ministers' eyes were blinded. You would open them.
She laughed and denied it.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Now tell us how we shall know.

[Mr. Hathorne]: Who doth hurt these if you do not?

[Martha Cory]: Can an innocent person be guilty?

[Mr. Hathorne]: Do you deny these words?
[Martha Cory]: Yes.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Tell who hurts these. We came to be a terror to evildoers.
[Mr. Hathorne]: You say you would open our eyes. We are blind.
[Martha Cory]: If you say I am a witch.
[Mr. Hathorne]: You said you would show us.
She denied it.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Why do you not now show us?
[Martha Cory]: I cannot tell. I do not know.
[Mr. Hathorne]: What did you strike the maid at Mr. Thomas Putman's with?
[Martha Cory]: I never struck her in my life.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Here are two that see you strike her with an iron rod.
[Martha Cory]: I had not hand in it.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Who had?
[Mr. Hathorne]: Do you believe these children are bewitched?
[Martha Cory]: They may for aught I know I have no hand in it.

[Mr. Hathorne]: You say you are no witch. Maybe you mean you never covenanted with the Devil. Did you never deal with any familiar?
[Martha Cory]: No, never.
[Mr. Hathorne]: What bird was that the children spoke of?
Then witnesses spoke.
[Mr. Hathorne]: What [illegible] bird was it?
[Martha Cory]: I know no bird.
[Mr. Hathorne]: It may be. You have engaged you will not confess, but God knows.
[Martha Cory]: So he doth.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Do you believe you shall go unpunished?
[Martha Cory]: I have nothing to do with witchcraft.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Why was you not willing your husband should come to the former session here?
[Martha Cory]: But he came for all.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Did not you take the saddle off?
[Martha Cory]: I did not know what it was for.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Did you not know what it was for?
[Martha Cory]: I did not know that it would be to any benefit.

Somebody said that she would not have them help to find out witches.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Did you not say you would open our eyes? Why do you not?
[Martha Cory]: I never thought of a witch.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Is it a laughing matter to see these afflicted persons?
She denied it.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Several prove it.
[Martha Cory]: They are all against me and I cannot help it.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Do not you believe there are witches in the country.
[Martha Cory]: I do not know that there is any.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Do not you know that Tituba confessed it?
[Martha Cory]: I did not hear her speak.
[Mr. Hathorne]: I find you will own nothing without several witnesses and yet you will deny for all.
It was noted when she bit her lip several of the afflicted were bitten.
When she was urged upon it that she bit her lip saith she, What harm is there in it.
[Mr. Noyes]: I believe it is apparent she practiceth witchcraft in the congregation. There is no need of images.
[Mr. Hathorne]: What do you say to all these things that are apparent?
[Martha Cory]: If you will all go hang me, how can I help it?
[Mr. Hathorne]: Were you to serve the devil ten years? Tell how many.
She laughed.
The children cried, there was a yellow bird with her.
When Mr. Hathorne asked her about it, she laughed.
When her hands were at liberty, the afflicted persons were pinched.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Why do not you tell how the Devil comes in your shapes and hurts these? You said you would.
[Martha Cory]: How can I know how?
She laughed again.
[Mr. Hathorne]: What book is that you would have these children write it?
[Martha Cory]: What book? Where should I have a book? I showed them none, nor have none nor brought none.
The afflicted cried out there was a man whispering in her ears.

[Mr. Hathorne]: What book did you carry to Mary Walcott?

[Martha Cory]: I carried none. If the Devil appears in my shape.

Then Needham said that Parker some time ago thought this woman was a witch.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Who is your God?

[Martha Cory]: The God that made me.

[Mr. Hathorne]: Who is that God?

[Martha Cory]: The God that made me.

[Mr. Hathorne]: What is his name?

[Martha Cory]: Jehovah.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Do you know any other name?
[Martha Cory]: God Almighty.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Doth he tell you that you pray to that he is God Almighty?

[Martha Cory]: Who do I worship but the god that made?
[Mr. Hathorne]: How many Gods are there?
[Martha Cory]: One.
[Mr. Hathorne]: How many persons?
[Martha Cory]: Three.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Cannot you say so? There is one God in three blessed persons.
[Torn]
[Mr. Hathorne]: Do not you see these children and women are rational and sober as their neighbors? When your hands are fastened.
Immediately they were seized with fits and the standers by said she was squeezing her fingers.
Her hands being eased by them that held them on purpose for trial.
Quickly after, the marshal said she hath bit her lip and immediately the afflicted were in an uproar.
[Torn]
[Mr. Hathorne]: You hurt these. Or who doth?
She denieth any hand in it.
[Mr. Hathorne]: Why did you say if you were a witch you should have no pardon?
[Martha Cory]: Because I am a [torn] woman.

Salem Village, March the 21st, 1691/2

The Reverend Mr. Samuel Parris being desired to take in writing the examination of Martha Cory, hath returned it as aforesaid. Upon hearing the aforesaid and seeing what we did then see, together with the charges of the persons then present we committed Martha Cory, the wife of Giles Cory of Salem Farms, unto the gaol in Salem as mittimus then given out.

John Hathorne. Assistant, Jonathan Corwin.

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