



Elementary

Today you are going to read about the Salem Witch Trials as exactly on this day in 1692 several witches had been executed after a long trial.

Source: <http://school.discovery.com/schooladventures/salemwitchtrials/>

Twenty-four innocent victims lost their lives in the Salem witchcraft hysteria. How did the community of Salem let this tragedy happen? Was it simply fear and superstition, or were there other factors at work?

The events of 1692 took place during a difficult and confusing period for Salem Village. As part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Salem was under British rule. When the hysteria began, the colony was waiting for a new governor and had no charter to enforce laws. By the time the new governor, William Phips, arrived in Massachusetts, the jails were already filled with alleged witches. To make matters worse, New England towns were under attack by Native Americans and French Canadians.

Salem Village faced daily challenges closer to home as well. Most families had to support themselves, making their own clothes, planting vegetables, raising meat. Farming was often a painstaking task in the harsh climate and rough, rocky terrain—and a drought or flood could ruin a year's harvest. An epidemic of smallpox could kill a family. In a world where people saw the Devil lurking behind every misfortune, it is little wonder they believed evil spirits were at work.

But there may have been stronger factors behind the witch hunts—the Puritan lifestyle, a strong belief in the Devil and witchcraft, the divisions within Salem Village, and the expectations of children.

At the centre of the tragedy in 1692 Salem were real people—the “bewitched” young girls, town leaders who fanned the hysteria, innocent men and women accused of witchcraft. Whether they helped create the witch hunt or were at the mercy of the events, together these people made up a community filled with jealousy, ego, fear, and superstition. Meet two individuals whose lives were lost or forever changed by the witch hunts.

The belief in witches and witchcraft was widespread in 1692 New England. One of the most ardent believers was Cotton Mather, a respected Boston minister who wrote on many religious topics.

Mather's 1689 book, *Memorable Providences*, describes a case of supposed witchcraft that had occurred in Boston the previous year. Three children had begun acting strangely after a disagreement with an Irish washerwoman, Mary Glover. After examining the children, Mather concluded that they were innocent victims of Glover's witchcraft. The book was widely read throughout New England and was among the works in Reverend Parris's library. Even if the young “circle girls” who began the accusations had not read the book themselves, they were likely familiar with its contents.

But Mather played a much more direct role in the Salem Trials. His sermons and written works fanned the flames of the witchcraft hysteria. He declared that the Devil was at work in Salem, and that witches should face the harshest punishment.

His steadfast belief in witchcraft was perhaps no more apparent than at the hanging of George Burroughs, a former pastor of Salem Village. Just before he was hanged, Burroughs turned to the crowd and perfectly recited the Lord's Prayer—impossible for a witch or wizard. His dramatic prayer and claim of innocence drew tears and doubts from the spectators. When the witch hunt subsided, the judges agreed to turn over the court records to Mather. Some were friends of Mather's and hoped his account would portray them favourably. In 1693, Mather recounted the trials in his book, *Wonders of the Invisible World*.

Another important person in the Salem Trials was Tituba.

In Puritan Salem Village—a place where anyone different was not trusted—Tituba was perhaps the most different among them. Not only was she a slave, which was unusual in the area, she was also a dark-skinned foreigner, making her very different from the white Puritan villagers.



Tituba was born in a small village in South America, but as a child she was captured and taken to the Caribbean island of Barbados. There she was sold as a slave to Samuel Parris—a local merchant originally from New England.

In 1680, Parris, Tituba, and another West Indian slave named John Indian moved to Boston. In Boston, Parris married, started a family, and became a minister. Tituba and John married in 1689, the same year that Parris moved the family to Salem Village to become their pastor.

Parris's wife Elizabeth had many duties as the pastor's wife and was often sick, so Tituba took care of the three children: Thomas, Betty, and Susanna. In the evenings Tituba entertained little Betty and her cousin Abigail Williams by the kitchen fire. She played fortune-telling games and told them stories of magic and spirits from the Caribbean. Such activities were strictly forbidden by Puritan code. But word secretly spread among the neighbourhood girls, and soon a small group of girls—known as the “circle girls”—were joining Tituba around the fire.

That cold winter of 1692, Betty, Abigail, and Ann Putnam began showing strange behaviour that was diagnosed as witchcraft. Tituba and John baked a “witch cake” with rye and Betty's urine and fed it to the dog. It was believed the dog was a “familiar,” or witch's helper, and by eating the cake, the spell would be broken and the identities of the witches would be revealed.

When pressed to identify their tormentors, the girls pointed to three social outcasts—including Tituba. Tituba denied practicing any witchcraft—she loved young Betty. But Reverend Parris beat his slave and demanded that she confess to the magistrates, promising her freedom if she cooperated. During her three-day examination, Tituba did confess to practicing witchcraft and claimed there were other witches in the village. Tituba was put in prison, but because she had confessed, she did not stand trial.

Parris did not keep his promise and refused to pay the fees to release Tituba. She stayed in prison until the following spring, when she was sold and taken away from Salem. Nothing else is known about Tituba. But it is believed that she and John had one child, a daughter named Violet, who lived in the Parris household until the reverend's death in 1720.

Glossary

Innocent – ártatlan

Witchcraft – boszorkányság

Fear – félelem

Superstition – babona

Enforce laws – betartani a törvényeket

Alleged – feltételezett, állítólagos

Witch – boszorkány

Painstaking – keserves

Harsh – kemény, kegyetlen

Drought – szárazság

Lurk – megbúvik, ólálkodik

Witch hunt – boszorkányüldözés

Fan – szít

Accuse sb of sth – vádolni vkit vmivel

Widespread – elterjedt

Ardent – buzgó, heves

Steadfast – rendületlen, állhatatos

Apparent – látható

Recite – idéz

Wizard – varázsló

Subside – alábbhagy

Favourably – kedvezően

Recount – elmesél

Slave – rabszolga

Capture – rabul ejt

Fortune-telling – jövedőmondás

Strictly forbidden – szigorúan tilos
Tormentor – gyötrő, kínzó
Outcast – kivetett
Demand – követel
Confess – bevall, vallomást tesz
Release – elenged, kieneged

Now finish these sentences.

1. Twenty-four _____.
2. In the colony there was no _____ when the witch hunt hysteria began.
3. When the new governor arrived, _____.
4. Native Americans and French Canadians _____.
5. Life was hard for families at that time because _____.
6. Puritans strongly believed in _____.
7. The hysteria _____ because of Cotton Mather.
8. A witch or a wizard cannot _____.
9. In Salem Tituba was the most _____ because _____.
10. Tituba took care _____ because their mother _____.
11. Tituba entertained the children with _____.
12. The Reverend promised _____.
13. Tituba had her husband had _____.

Intermediate

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Source: <http://www.salemweb.com/memorial/>

The Salem Witch Trials 1692

A Chronology of Events

January 20

Nine-year-old Elizabeth Parris and eleven-year-old Abigail Williams began to exhibit strange behaviour, such as blasphemous screaming, convulsive seizures, trance-like states and mysterious spells. Within a short time, several other Salem girls began to demonstrate similar behaviour.

Mid-February

Unable to determine any physical cause for the symptoms and dreadful behaviour, physicians concluded that the girls were under the influence of Satan.

Late February

Prayer services and community fasting were conducted by Reverend Samuel Parris in hopes of relieving the evil forces that plagued them. In an effort to expose the "witches", John Indian baked a witch cake made with rye meal and the afflicted girls' urine. This counter-magic was meant to reveal the identities of the "witches" to the afflicted girls.

Pressured to identify the source of their affliction, the girls named three women, including Tituba, Parris' Carib Indian slave, as witches. On February 29, warrants were issued for the arrests of Tituba, Sarah Good and Sarah Osborne.



Although Osborne and Good maintained innocence, Tituba confessed to seeing the devil who appeared to her "sometimes like a hog and sometimes like a great dog". What's more, Tituba testified that there was a conspiracy of witches at work in Salem.

March 1

Magistrates John Hathorne and Jonathan Corwin examined Tituba, Sarah Good, and Sarah Osborne in the meeting house in Salem Village. Tituba confessed to practicing witchcraft.

Over the next weeks, other townspeople came forward and testified that they, too, had been harmed by or had seen strange apparitions of some of the community members. As the witch hunt continued, accusations were made against many different people.

Frequently denounced were women whose behaviour or economic circumstances were somehow disturbing to the social order and conventions of the time. Some of the accused had previous records of criminal activity, including witchcraft, but others were faithful churchgoers and people of high standing in the community.

March 12

Martha Corey is accused of witchcraft.

March 19

Rebecca Nurse was denounced as a witch.

March 21

Martha Corey was examined before Magistrates Hathorne and Corwin.

March 24

Rebecca Nurse was examined before Magistrates Hathorne and Corwin.

March 28

Elizabeth Proctor was denounced as a witch.

April 3

Sarah Cloyce, Rebecca Nurse's sister, was accused of witchcraft.

April 11

Elizabeth Proctor and Sarah Cloyce were examined before Hathorne, Corwin, Deputy Governor Thomas Danforth, and Captain Samuel Sewall. During this examination, John Proctor was also accused and imprisoned.

April 19

Abigail Hobbs, Bridget Bishop, Giles Corey, and Mary Warren were examined. Only Abigail Hobbs confessed.

William Hobbs

"I can deny it to my dying day."

April 22

Nehemiah Abbott, William and Deliverance Hobbs, Edward and Sarah Bishop, Mary Easty, Mary Black, Sarah Wildes, and Mary English were examined before Hathorne and Corwin. Only Nehemiah Abbott was cleared of charges.

May 2

Sarah Morey, Lydia Dustin, Susannah Martin, and Dorcas Hoar were examined by Hathorne and Corwin.

Dorcas Hoar

"I will speak the truth as long as I live."

May 4

George Burroughs was arrested in Wells, Maine.

May 9

Burroughs was examined by Hathorne, Corwin, Sewall, and William Stoughton. One of the afflicted girls, Sarah Churchill, was also examined.

May 10

George Jacobs, Sr. and his granddaughter Margaret were examined before Hathorne and Corwin. Margaret confessed and testified that her grandfather and George Burroughs were both witches.

Sarah Osborne died in prison in Boston.



Margaret Jacobs

"... They told me if I would not confess I should be put down into the dungeon and would be hanged, but if I would confess I should save my life."

May 14

Increase Mather returned from England, bringing with him a new charter and the new governor, Sir William Phips.

May 18

Mary Easty was released from prison. Yet, due to the outcries and protests of her accusers, she was arrested a second time.

May 27

Governor Phips set up a special Court of Oyer and Terminer comprised of seven judges to try the witchcraft cases. Appointed were Lieutenant Governor William Stoughton, Nathaniel Saltonstall, Bartholomew Gedney, Peter Sergeant, Samuel Sewall, Wait Still Winthrop, John Richards, John Hathorne, and Jonathan Corwin.

These magistrates based their judgments and evaluations on various kinds of intangible evidence, including direct confessions, supernatural attributes (such as "witchmarks"), and reactions of the afflicted girls. Spectral evidence, based on the assumption that the Devil could assume the "specter" of an innocent person, was relied upon despite its controversial nature.

May 31

Martha Carrier, John Alden, Wilmott Redd, Elizabeth Howe, and Phillip English were examined before Hathorne, Corwin, and Gedney.

June 2

Initial session of the Court of Oyer and Terminer. Bridget Bishop was the first to be pronounced guilty of witchcraft and condemned to death.

Early June

Soon after Bridget Bishop's trial, Nathaniel Saltonstall resigned from the court, dissatisfied with its proceedings.

June 10

Bridget Bishop was hanged in Salem, the first official execution of the Salem witch trials.

Bridget Bishop

"I am no witch. I am innocent. I know nothing of it."

Following her death, accusations of witchcraft escalated, but the trials were not unopposed. Several townspeople signed petitions on behalf of accused people they believed to be innocent.

June 29-30

Rebecca Nurse, Susannah Martin, Sarah Wildes, Sarah Good and Elizabeth Howe were tried for witchcraft and condemned.

Rebecca Nurse

"Oh Lord, help me! It is false. I am clear. For my life now lies in your hands...."

Mid-July

In an effort to expose the witches afflicting his life, Joseph Ballard of nearby Andover enlisted the aid of the accusing girls of Salem. This action marked the beginning of the Andover witch hunt.

July 19

Rebecca Nurse, Susannah Martin, Elizabeth Howe, Sarah Good, and Sarah Wildes were executed.

Elizabeth Howe

"If it was the last moment I was to live, God knows I am innocent..."

Susannah Martin

August 2-6

George Jacobs, Sr., Martha Carrier, George Burroughs, John and Elizabeth Proctor, and John Willard were tried for witchcraft and condemned.

Martha Carrier

"...I am wronged. It is a shameful thing that you should mind these folks that are out of their wits."

August 19

George Jacobs, Sr., Martha Carrier, George Burroughs, John Proctor, and John Willard were hanged on Gallows Hill.



George Jacobs

"Because I am falsely accused. I never did it."

September 9

Martha Corey, Mary Easty, Alice Parker, Ann Pudeator, Dorcas Hoar, and Mary Bradbury were tried and condemned.

Mary Bradbury

"I do plead not guilty. I am wholly innocent of such wickedness."

September 17

Margaret Scott, Wilmott Redd, Samuel Wardwell, Mary Parker, Abigail Faulkner, Rebecca Eames, Mary Lacy, Ann Foster, and Abigail Hobbs were tried and condemned.

September 19

Giles Corey was pressed to death for refusing a trial.

September 21

Dorcas Hoar was the first of those pleading innocent to confess. Her execution was delayed.

September 22

Martha Corey, Margaret Scott, Mary Easty, Alice Parker, Ann Pudeator, Wilmott Redd, Samuel Wardwell, and Mary Parker were hanged.

October 8

After 20 people had been executed in the Salem witch hunt, Thomas Brattle wrote a letter criticizing the witchcraft trials. This letter had great impact on Governor Phips, who ordered that reliance on spectral and intangible evidence no longer be allowed in trials.

October 29

Governor Phips dissolved the Court of Oyer and Terminer.

November 25

The General Court of the colony created the Superior Court to try the remaining witchcraft cases which took place in May, 1693. This time no one was convicted.

Mary Easty

"...if it be possible no more innocent blood be shed..."

"...I am clear of this sin."

Now answer the questions.

1. What were the so-called signs in the 'witch' girls' behaviour?
2. What did the community first do to stop these physical symptoms?
3. What did the townspeople say when they testified?
4. Who were mostly in danger of being accused of witchcraft?
5. What was the order of events in these accusations and trials?
6. Did the community have any influence on the outcome of the trials? If yes, write an example.
7. What happened after the first executions?
8. Did all the townspeople agree with the events?
9. Was Governor Phips for or against the witch hunt?
10. How many people were executed altogether?



Advanced

Today you are going to read about the Salem Witch Trials as exactly on this day in 1692 several witches had been executed after a long trial.

Source: <http://religiousmovements.lib.virginia.edu/nrms/salem.html>

Complete the text with the correct prepositions.

Puritanism is a Christian faith which originated in England during the early seventeenth century. The ideals which separate Puritans 1. _____ other Christians include their strict belief 2. _____ predestination. This term refers 3. _____ the idea that God has previously chosen those who will be saved, and an individual can do nothing to change this status. The Puritan Covenant of Grace calls 4. _____ all Puritans to be actively faithful. The Covenant of Works is the belief that those who follow God's moral codes will be blessed 5. _____ eternal life.

The Puritans split 6. _____ the Church of England in 1633. When William Laud became the new Archbishop of Canterbury, the new beliefs he brought were unacceptable 7. _____ those members who sought to "purify" the Church. These new beliefs included emphasis 8. _____ individual acceptance or rejection of God's grace, toleration 9. _____ a variety of religious beliefs, and the incorporation of "high church" symbols. The Puritans wished to rid their religion 10. _____ all Catholic influence.

Early in the seventeenth century, groups of Puritans began leaving Europe to travel to the American colonies. The New England region became the centre 11. _____ Puritans, but the group was spread 12. _____ the area north of Virginia. The main goal of these immigrants was to form a religious community in which their "pure" ideals could be central. The radical beliefs of the Puritans flourished in the New World. 13. _____ keeping a strong connection between Church and State, the Puritans were able to control most of the colonies' activity until the end of the seventeenth century.

The Puritans held five basic beliefs.

14. _____ virtue of the original sin of Adam, when one is born, he has no *right* to salvation.

Some are chosen for salvation, some are not. There is nothing one can do to change his status.

The extent 15. _____ which one can please God with acts is limited.

God showers one with a quality of grace, and one cannot resist it.

Once one has been saved, nothing he does will change that fact.

These central beliefs, 16. _____ with an extreme emphasis on preaching and the laws contained within the Bible itself formed the strict ideals of American Puritanism.

Like all Puritans, the residents of Salem Village believed in witches and in witchcraft. They believed that witchcraft was "entering 17. _____ a compact with the devil in exchange 18. _____ certain powers to do evil." Witchcraft was considered both a sin and a crime, since it used the devil's power to perform cruel acts 19. _____ others. Because of the severity of the accusation of witchcraft, each case involving suspected witchcraft had to be carefully and thoroughly investigated.

Early in 1692, the witch hunt hysteria began in Salem, Massachusetts. Reverend Samuel Parris' daughter and Abigail Williams started having fits of convulsion, screaming, and hallucination. A doctor examined the girls and decided that the only explanation for these wild spells was witchcraft. The girls then pointed their fingers 20. _____ Tituba (a Parris family slave), Sarah Good, and Sarah Osborne as the witches who had afflicted them. Cotton Mather had recently published his *Memorable Providences*. This book detailed witchcraft and the symptoms of the afflicted. Since Betty Parris' fits were much like those described in Mather's book, the Puritans of Salem were very accepting of the doctor's conclusion and the resulting accusations.

Magistrates John Hawthorne and Jonathan Corwin inherited the responsibility of examining the three accused women. On March 1, 1692 the two began questioning the women. They asked each woman the same questions: Are you a witch? Have you seen the devil? How do you explain the afflictions of these girls? Based 21. _____ this line of questioning, it is clear that the magistrates and all of Salem had already judged the three women guilty. After initially maintaining her



innocence, Tituba eventually confessed 22. _____ being a witch and claimed that she, Good, and Osborne had all made pacts with the devil and had even flown through the air on poles. Tituba's confession showed Salem that their suspicions were valid. For the next year the villagers, fuelled by their paranoia and hysteria, searched for witches 23. _____ themselves tirelessly.

In the following months, many more were accused of witchcraft. Martha Corey, Bridget Williams, Rebecca Nurse, Sarah Cloyce, and Mary Eastick all faced charges 24. _____ witchery. Overloaded 25. _____ all the new trials, Governor William Phips created a special court to hear the witch cases. The court was known 26. _____ the Court of Oyer and Terminer. The trials quickly spiralled 27. _____f control, and a number of suspected witches were convicted and hanged. Bridget Bishop, Rebecca Nurse, and John Proctor all died as convicted witches. Those who stood trial for the crime of witchcraft could be convicted based on gossip or hearsay. Practically the only way to avoid execution was to admit to being a witch. During 1692, nineteen people refused to confess and died as a result.

While the specific trials of 1692 are important to America's history, the impact of the Salem Witch Trials is deeper than the simple chronology of events. The hysteria that snowballed in Salem reveals how deep the belief in the supernatural ran in colonial America. David Hall noted that "The religion of the colonists was infused 28. _____ ancient attitudes and practices, some indeed so old as to antedate the rise of Christianity." In the quest for spiritual perfection and religious purity, there was no place 29. _____ magic. The Puritans were so focused on the goal of a pure, religious commonwealth, that they reacted harshly 30. _____ anything that threatened that goal. Richard Godbeer agrees. "Magic had no place in their vision of New England and so they were appalled to discover that colonists were using magical techniques."

What happened on these days or in these years?

1. early seventeenth century
2. 1633
3. 1692
4. March 1, 1692
5. 1692