

Horrorific events of witch trails



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The town of Salem Massachusetts, was founded in 1626 by Roger and a group of migrants. The settlements first name was Naumkeag, but they name was too hard so they called it Salem. The word Salem comes from the hebrew word for peace.

Salem a small and peace full town right on the great Atlantic Sea. Little do people know but this small town has a very, very dark history, which will be a permanent stain in America's history. The name that would go down in many of our history books would be the name Salem Witch Trial, these horrific events happened from February of 1692 to May of 1693. Over this course of time more 200 people would be accused of being witches.

The first witch accusation was in 1692 when a doctor diagnosed 7 teenage girls as being bewitched. More than 200 people will be accused and 19 people will be executed from those accusations. This was not one of the first time there have been witch trials in massachusetts, there was a previous 12 others were executed in the early 17 century. But Salem was by far the worst and most famous. Despite being known as the Salem Witch Trials the preliminary hearings in 1692 were conducted in several towns some were in Salem Village, Salem Town, Ipswich and Andover. The most famous trials were conducted in the Court of Oyer and Terminer in 1692 in Salem Town. Some people believe that there was so much hysteria because of their religious beliefs the town of Salem was a Puritan town they had very strong religious beliefs.

A famous trial, and one of the first was the Sarah good trial. Sarah good was born in 1653 and was a daughter of a well off innkeeper. When her father

died 1672 he left the family in debt. Her mother quickly married to a new husband, and paid off the debt, but as a result most of the family which were 2 sons and 7 daughter most of which never saw and of their late father's estate. Sarah good married a former indentured servant Daniel Poole. Poole died in in 1682 and left Sarah in more debt. Sarah then married her second husband William Good and he was held responsible for paying off her debts his land was taken and Sarah and William became homeless. Sarah was one of the first 3 woman to be accused of witchcraft in Salem. She was charged with witchcraft after being identified as a witch by Tituba. She fit the prevailing stereotype of of the malefic witch. Sarah Good would curse out towns people who would not give to her when she would beg on the streets. This brought in a lot of testimonies against her during her trial. The worst part of this trial was when Sarah's child Dorcas Good, she was arrested and gave a confession which implicated Sarah as a witch. During the trial Sarah was described as forlorn and friendless and a broken down creature. Sarah was presumed guilty from the beginning of the trial and the courts mind was made up even before the trial started. Sarah Good was executed in July 19. In the Sarah good trial it there was no real evidence against her beside fingers being pointed at her.

In my opinion they just accused her as a witch because they just wanted to get rid of her, the towns people didnt like and she was homeless and a bum. They just used the opportunity to get rid of her. Plus since the town of Salem were heavy believer in the puritan religion that it was easy to convince the town she was a sinner for being a witch. Another famous trial was the trial of Rebecka nurse, this trial was one of the Salem Witch trials most famous and

well known events. Rebback was a 71 year old grandmother, wife and local artisan. Rebback was arrested on March 24, 1692 after she was accused of being a witch. At the age of 71 she was accused of being a witch. Rebback was also sisters with a accused witch whose name was Mary Easty. Unlike Sarah Good Rebback was considered an upstanding citizen in Salem. She was accused of witchcraft by a woman whose name was Ann Putnam Jr and Abigail William and several others in Salem Village, Including the towns Reverend Deodat Lawson, who said Nurser's spirit had been tormenting Ann Putnamr's home.

During the trail which happened in June of 1692 Rebback nurse was found not guilty. This verdict was found not surprising to many because she was well liked and was upstanding. Also 39 people signed a petition to support her during her trial. But after the judge read the not guilty verdict the accusers of Rebback Nurse started to have fits and started to cry out her name. Then when Goody Hobbs was on trail he said Rebback nurse was one of them witch to the court meant she was a witch. Rebback Nurse wrote a statement saying she was one of them being a prisoner not a one of them being a witch. Then on July 3 1692 Rebback Nurse was arrested again after she was just freed and was convicted of being a witch. She was taken to the front of the local church for a public excommunicated. Which is essentially a public exacation. Later that night her son rowed out into the bay to claim his mother's body so she could have a proper christian burial. Like many witches there was no real actual evidence against her besides a group of people just accusing her of being a witch. Manu believe that Rebback Nurse and the Putnam family had a family feud and that they falsely accused her in the

beginning. They just wanted to win there silly feud. That was the scary part about these times you could virtually just say someone was a witch and they would be arrested and executed. These punishment were only extreme because of the religion at the time and the hastara around the witch trial.

The Salem Witch trials were one of America's darkest times in our history. There have been many theories and conspiracies around these events. One conspiracy is that the first victim of witchCraft was actual suffering from epilepsy and or boredom to ergot poisoning(due to the ingestion of the alkaloids produced by the *Claviceps purpurea* fungus that infects rye), that is one of researches most suspected theories to the beginning of these event. Others say that many of the so called victims could have just fakes there symptoms for any number of reasons like a feud between families to almost anything. The second most common one is that a number of victims could have been suffering from a number of mental ailments. These was called mass conversion disorder it was a psychological disorder that was said to make a return 300 years after the trails. This could occur when people minds are in such mental anguish for any number of reasons that there mental ailments become physical. Hense cause the shaking and foaming at the mouth and sickness. The results of the trails were quite surprising, Judge Samuel Sewall publicly confessed error and guilt. In 1702 the court declared the trails unlawful, and in 1711 the colony passed a bill restoring the rights and good names of those accused and granted ?? 600 to their heirs. It was not until 1957 more than 250 years later that the Massachusetts apologized for the events of 1692. Which I think is quiet observed and seems a bit shameful that it took hundreds of year for them to apologize.

The Salem Witch trials were a dark day in American history. These trials can be an example of exactly how powerful religion can be and was back in the 1600r's. In my opinion religion was the main cause for the mass hysteria, the people of Salem didnt did have the medilological knowledge to explain it so society blamed it on religion. It could easily be backed up because the area at the time including Salema and surrounding towns had strong Puritans connections and beliefs. They could just blame someone and say they were a witch and didnt believe in Puritans beliefs and the court which was Puritans had no guilt handing out death sentences, plus the people usually accused were considered town charity cases and beggars and noises to the town much like Sarah Good. In conclusion I think there was no need for these trails and loss for human life and the 200 plus people accused of witchcraft should have lived.