

Article reviews



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Doe Mrs. Teacher 4 October Salem Witch Trials Article Review The article “ New England Witchcraft,” by John Neale was published in May of 1839 in Baltimore, Maryland and discusses a woman, Sarah Good, that was a victim of Salem Witch Trials. Good was declared a witch because she could touch someone and they would instantly heal. During the Salem Witch trials, Good was convicted. For this particular case at trial, she was accused of stabbing someone and that the person who was stabbed had declared that the blade broke off as it was on its way to her heart. Witchcraft.

A man came to the trial after judgment had been made against Good, asking the judge who he thought he was for ending the life of someone who was gifted. He brought with him a young boy and though it was too late, the judge allowed him to be sworn in to stand up for Good. The boy said he had seen it himself. The accuser had lied about the knife mysteriously breaking. The accuser was in trouble for lying to the judge. But Sarah Good , the alleged witch, was still sentenced to death.

This became the start of something strange: a witch hunt. All people who seemed to be able to conduct something “ magical” were hunted and it was throughout all of the New England states in America. An author Cotton Mather, had seen the effects of the people who were afflicted with this witchcraft. Blistered with fire, pins stuck into their flesh by invisible hands, convulsions, and scalded with hot water; these were just some of the claims of accounts afflicted upon people who said that they were affected by the witchcraft. Peoples only escape from conviction was to tell the truth, which was actually sometimes a lie. Many people died because they were found to be suspicious people; people of the devil.

The author wrote this article to tell about the trials and oddities surrounding

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the Salem Witch Trials. It was a narrative telling about particular instances in trials and tribulations that described what it was like in New England during the time when everyone was out to chase and destroy whomever they thought practiced witchcraft, magic labeling them witches.

This article was written as a news story that appeared in the area newspaper in Baltimore, Maryland in the mid 1800s to tell the story of how the hunt and execution of witches came to begin. The article originally began with the narration of the story of Sarah Good. But in this article, she was merely an example of what others had to expect if they were suspicioned of conducting witchcraft. The author barely touched on all of the occurrences during the Salem Witch Trials of 1692. However, this was just a recount, written many years after the actual historic revolution in which many innocent lives were found guilty, labeled as sinners and witches and put to death for their alleged magic.

I chose this article because it really stood out to me. I was curious at what the treatment of people were during this time when they were suspected of practicing witchcraft. Though this newspaper article was hard to read because the wording was old-fashioned and was much different than reading an article today, it was interesting to hear a persons point of view of truth and what was newsworthy then. I was simply fascinated with the concept that people thought that any ordinary person could be capable of performing magic and were deemed children of the devil and therefore evil. To eliminate these supposedly horrible people, the treatment of these people was worse than what a caged rabbit would receive. Unfortunately, this article was not nearly as captivating as I thought it would be, the topic was still very interesting and would be something that I would consider learning even

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more about. I tend to question its actual truth and validity because it was written 200 years after the era.

Works Cited

- Neal, John. New England Witchcraft. The Sun. 7 May 1839. 4 vol. 146 issue.
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