



Salem Witch Trials

*Documentary Archive and
Transcription Project*

Salem Village Witchcraft Victims' Memorial at Danvers

*176 Hobart Street
Danvers, MA 01923*



The Salem Village Witchcraft Tercentennial Committee of the Town of Danvers

On May 9, 1992, the Salem Village Witchcraft Victims' Memorial of Danvers was dedicated before an audience of over 3,000 people. It was the first such Memorial to honor all of the 1692 witchcraft victims, and is located across the street from the site of the original Salem Village Meeting House where many of the witch examinations took place. The Memorial serves as a reminder that each generation must confront intolerance and "witch hunts" with integrity, clear vision and courage.

This memorial project was undertaken by the Salem Village Witchcraft Tercentennial Committee of the Town of Danvers which commemorated the 300th anniversary of the witch prosecutions during 1989-1993. The Memorial itself was designed by Committee members Richard B. Trask; Robert D. Farley, CSI; and Marjorie C. Wetzel. Finance Chairman Ralph E. Aridff, Jr. raised money for the project through donations of numerous town, civic, patriotic, business and ethnic organizations and by individuals. The property was donated and is now maintained by the Town of Danvers, and the Memorial is open to the public daily from dawn to dusk.

Memorial | Victims | Words

Memorial Design and Symbolism

The design of the Memorial is highly symbolic in nature. On a light colored Barre granite sarcophagus measuring 4' x 8' x 4' rests an oversized representation of a slant-top bible box. In colonial times such boxes were used as storage containers for precious volumes and papers. The positioning of the block with the bible box on top is reminiscent of a colonial pulpit and its juxtaposition and correct alignment with what would have been the original Meeting House pulpit across the street is purposeful. Yet the bible box, a domestic item of furniture, better represents individual home-inspired devotion, rather than communal, ecclesiastical worship, denoting the significance of personal beliefs and morals.

The box is composed of Canadian Pink granite, and on its front is carved several different and local style rosettes, typical design features found in both Puritan furniture and gravestones. The five rosettes banded together by a serpentine vine are Puritan symbols for eternity. Resting on top of the bible box, and composed of the same brown-reddish granite as the box itself, is an open book with an inscription in 17th century typeface reading, "THE BOOK OF LIFE." In biblical language this phrase represented the record of those who should inherit eternal life. During the witch trials numerous persons testified that the accused had signed the "Devil's book" thus becoming witches and doing the work of the devil. Those who were executed for witchcraft refused to confess to being witches, for they wanted to be inscribed in "The Book of Life." At the time almost all in the Puritan community believed the accused to be guilty, while today the historical record, a modern-day "book of life" of sorts, has rectified the former deadly falsehoods of 1692.

The weight of truth, symbolized in the granite box and book, is also represented smashing through the falsehood of history, depicted by a pair of large scale reproduction metal shackles divided in two by the book and resting broken upon the block of granite. Curtis M. White, a talented blacksmith, staff member of the Saugus Ironworks National Park and at the time the resident overseer of the Rebecca Nurse Homestead, hand-forged the chains. Carved on the face of the block granite is the inscription "In memory of those innocents who died during the Salem Village witchcraft hysteria of 1692."

To the rear of this granite piece stands a three-panel 12 feet long by 8 feet high granite memorial wall containing in 17th century spelling form the names of the 24 men and women and one child who died as a result of the witch hysteria. Also included are the towns of origin of

these people which include besides Salem Village, Salem Farms (Peabody), Salem, Andover, Billerica, Amesbury, Reading, Topsfield, Marblehead and Rowley. Above the center panel on a granite ellipse is carved the Tercentennial Committees logo featuring a man grasping an open book. The man's hair style, robe and neck bands are reminiscent and symbolic of a 17th century cleric with an open bible or a magistrate with an open law book trying to come to understand and interpret the witch hysteria which had overtaken much of Massachusetts. The logo was designed for use of the Tercentennial Committee and donated by Jim Barina, founder of 'Spellbound,' a Salem, Massachusetts, advertising agency.

On each side of the Memorial wall stands at a 45 degree angle to it a wall inscribed to include in their own words brave statements made by eight of the accused witches during their harrowing examination just across the street from the memorial location.



In Memory of Those Innocents Who Died During the Salem Village Witchcraft Hysteria of 1692

Died in jail May 10, 1692

SARAH OSBURN of Salem Village.

Hanged June 10, 1692

BRIDGET BISHOP of Salem

Died in Jail June 16, 1692

ROGER TOOTHAKER of Billerica

Died in jail previous to July 19, 1692

INFANT DAUGHTER to Sarah Good of Salem Village

Hanged July 19, 1692

SARAH GOOD of Salem Village
ELIZABETH HOW of Topsfield
SUSANNAH MARTIN of Amesbury
REBECCA NURSE of Salem Village
SARAH WILDS of Topsfield

Hanged August 19, 1692

REV. GEORGE BURROUGHS of Wells, Maine,
formerly of Salem Village
MARTHA CARRIER of Andover
GEORGE JACOBS, SR. of Salem
JOHN PROCTER, SR. of Salem Farmes
JOHN WILLARD of Salem Village

Died under torture September 19, 1692

GILES CORY of Salem Farmes

Hanged September 22, 1692

MARTHA CORY of Salem Farmes
MARY ESTY of Topsfield
ALICE PARKER of Salem
MARY PARKER of Andover
ANN PUDEATOR of Salem
WILMOT REDD of Marblehead
MARGARET SCOTT of Rowley
SAMUEL WARDWELL of Andover

Died in jail December 3, 1692

ANN FOSTER of Andover

Died in jail March 10, 1693

LYDIA DASTIN of Reading

Note: The spelling of 17th century names varied widely even within families. Though there were several choices for spellings of many last names, the ones represented here are those for which the best contemporary evidence exists.

Brave Words of Some of the Accused Witches All of Whom Were Executed

"I am an innocent person. I never had to do with witchcraft since I was born. I am a Gosple woman." *Martha Cory (March 21, 1692. From the Rev. Parris account of the examination at Salem Village Meeting House.)*

The lord above knows my Innocencye ... as att the great day win be known to men and Angells.

I Petition to your honours not for my own life for I know I must die, and my appointed time is sett but the Lord he knowes it is that if it be possible no more Innocent blood may be shed ..."
Mary Esty (September 1692. Written while in prison awaiting execution.)

"If it was the last moment I was to live, God knows I am innocent ..."
Elizabeth How (May 31, 1692. From the Rev. Parris account of the examination at Salem Village.)

"Well! burn me, or hang me, I will stand in the truth of Christ ..."
George Jacobs, Sr. (May 10, 1692. From the Rev. Parris account of the examination at Salem.)

"Amen. Amen. A false tongue will never make a guilty person."
Susannah Martin (May 2, 1692. From the Rev. Parris account of the examination at Salem Village Meeting House.)

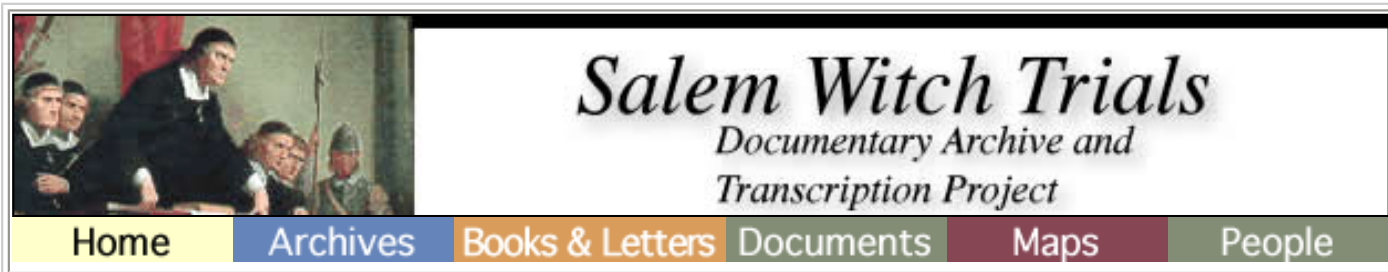
"I can say before my Eternal father I am innocent, & God will clear my innocency."
Rebecca Nurse (March 24, 1692. From the Rev. Parris account of the examination at Salem Village Meeting House.)

"The Magistrates, Ministers, Jewries, and all the People in general, being so much intraged and incensed against us by the Delusion of the Devil, which we can term no other, by reason we know in our own Consciences, we are all Innocent Persons."
John Procter, Sr. (July 23, 1692. Written while in Salem Prison.)

"... I fear not but the Lord in his due time will make me as white as snow."
John Willard (May 18, 1692. From the Rev. Parris account of the examination at Salem Village.)



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Danvers, Massachusetts (formerly, Salem Village)



Danvers Archival Center

Learn about this municipal archives & its witchcraft collection

The Devil Hath Been Raised

Introduction to "The Devil Hath Been Raised: A Documentary History of the Salem Village Witchcraft Outbreak of March 1692," by Richard Trask.

Witchcraft in Salem Village

A Brief Guide by the Danvers Archival Center

Ask the Archivist



Explore Danvers

Historical Sites of Danvers

Overview history and historic sites accessible to the public, with map and bibliography.

The Israel Putnam House

The Danvers Museum at the Israel Putnam House contains exhibits on local and regional history.

Rebecca Nurse Homestead

Including information on the Danvers Alarm List Company and the Homestead Preservation Society

The Withcraft Victims' Memorial

Location, design and list of names

Danvers Historical Society

Formed in 1889 "to discover, collect, preserve and exhibit objects which illustrate local history, but particularly the history and development of the Town of Danvers."

Glen Magna Farms

Owned by the Danvers Historical Society , founded in 1889
“to discover, collect and preserve objects which illustrate local
history, but particularly the history and development of the Town of
Danvers.”

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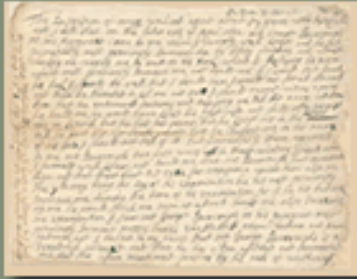
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