**History on Trial**
**Episode 26: The Salem Wizard Trial**
***Massachusetts Bay Colony v. George Burroughs***
**Researched and written by Mira Hayward**

Hello! Mira here. This is the final episode of season 1 of History on Trial. I'm still figuring out what's next for the show. If you'd like updates, you can follow our Instagram @historyontrial, or subscribe to the newsletter via our website, historyontrialpodcast.com. I'm so grateful for your support throughout this season!

***PROLOGUE***

On a cold February day in 1692, Mary Sibley set out to break the law. She knew what she was doing was wrong, but she reasoned to herself that she was doing it for the right reasons. She was doing it to protect the children, her poor little neighbor girls, Betty and Abigail, who had been suffering so terribly for months.[1]

Since early January, Betty and her cousin Abigail had been subject to strange fits. Their bodies would hunch and contort, assuming bizarre, painful positions. They muttered and babbled, speaking words no one could understand. They sometimes seemed gripped by a fear so intense it paralyzed them, stopping their breath.

Doctor after doctor had examined the two young girls. They had prescribed remedies and treatments, all to no effect. People had begun to wonder whether the cause could be something stranger and darker than a simple sickness. Maybe the girls were bewitched.

Betty's father, Samuel Parris, focused on prayer to heal the girls. But Mary Sibley did not think prayer would be enough. To fight a witch, she thought, you had to act like one. Though witchcraft was illegal, many people held on to folk practices to protect against dark magic. They hid horseshoes or eel spears in walls of their houses and carved daisy wheels into their door frames to prevent spirits from entering.[2]

The magic Mary Sibley was about to propose would be more dangerous than a hidden horseshoe, more intentional, riskier. If Mary was caught, she might be called a witch herself. But her heart likely ached for the two frightened girls. So Mary snuck over to the

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[1] The story of Betty Parris and Abigail Williams' symptoms and Mary Sibley's instruction on the witch-cake comes from Marilynne K. Roach, *The Salem Witch Trials: A Day-By-Day Chronicle of a Community Under Siege* (Lanham, MD; Taylor Trade Publishing, 2004), 73-75, 82, 89-92. (N.B. an electronic version of this book was used; page numbers may vary by user settings).
[2] Emerson W. Baker, *A Storm of Witchcraft: The Salem Trials and the American Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 131-132, 209-210 (N.B. an electronic version of this book was used; page numbers may vary by user settings).

Parris's house one day and had a whispered conference with John Indian, the Parris's enslaved man, about how to make a witch cake. It was simple, Mary told John: take rye meal, mix it with Betty and Abigail's urine, and then bake the mixture into a cake, and feed the cake to a dog. The cake, thanks to the urine, would contain the essence of the witch; when the dog ate the cake, the witch would suffer, and perhaps be exposed.

John Indian and his wife, Tituba, also enslaved by the Parrises, knew that their owners would not like the witch cake. Samuel Parris was a minister, an uncompromising man who had made his hatred for witchcraft of any sort known. So John and Tituba waited until a night that Samuel and his wife, Elizabeth, were out. Then, they made the cake.

At first, the charm seemed to have backfired. Betty and Abigail's suffering intensified; their torments increased. But then, suddenly, as if a veil had lifted, the girls could see: they could see the source of their misery. The witch cake had not hurt the witch, but it had revealed her: soon after, Betty and Abigail told the Parrises that it was Tituba herself who was hurting them.

Betty and Abigail's identification of Tituba on February 26th, 1692, was the first claim of witchcraft in the Salem outbreak, but it would not be the last; within months, dozens of Bay Colony residents would find themselves caught up in witchcraft; either afflicted by a witch, accused of being a witch, or both. And then, in June, the trials began.

By that point, the outbreak had ballooned to such proportions that it seemed no one was safe. Not respectable, notably pious citizens; not children; not even, as the trial of George Burroughs would show, a minister.

The Salem Witch Trials are one of the most notorious episodes in American history. Their alien nature fascinates us - the strange superstitions, the archaic language, the gruesome details. But at their heart, the trials are a timeless story, about what happens when fear and anger overrun a community – and all hell breaks loose.

Welcome to History on Trial. I'm your host, Mira Hayward. This week, the Massachusetts Bay Colony v. George Burroughs.

***ACT I***

When the Puritans - English separatists who felt that the Church of England still cleaved too closely to Catholic traditions – established the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the

1620s, they hoped to build what colonial leader John Winthrop called a "city upon a hill," a shining paragon of prosperity and obedience to God. [3]

On paper, George Burroughs looked like the ideal citizen of such a place. Born in 1652, Burroughs was the grandson of a minister and the son of a merchant, giving him both ecclesiastical *and* worldly credit. Burroughs grew into a handsome, dark-haired man, short but strong. Following in his grandfather's footsteps, Burroughs studied to become a minister. In 1670, he graduated from Harvard College; three years later, he married Hannah Fisher, the daughter of a prominent family.[4]

But despite this elite pedigree, Burroughs struggled to find his footing. Maybe it was his quick temper, maybe it was his slightly unorthodox religious beliefs, or maybe something else entirely, but either way, Burroughs did not hit the ground running.[5] He didn't get his first posting until more than four years after graduation, and even then, it was a less than desirable position, in the frontier town of Falmouth, Maine, near present-day Portland.[6] Maine was looked down on by many Massachusetts Puritans, thanks to the area's practice of welcoming Protestants of all stripes.[7] Burroughs, however, seemed to fit in well on the rough and tumble frontier, and bought property there, seemingly hoping to settle down.[8]

But the frontier was a dangerous place. Native American raids were common. King Phillip's War, the most devastating conflict of the colonial period, broke out a year into Burroughs's time in Falmouth; in 1676, Falmouth was burned to the ground, and Burroughs and many others barely escaped.[9]

Burroughs and his family joined the flood of refugees traveling south into Massachusetts. Many refugees were too frightened to ever return north, but Burroughs held onto his Maine homestead. While he waited for the fighting to settle down, he

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[3] John Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity," in *A Library of American Literature: Early Colonial Literature, 1607-1675*, Edmund Clarence Stedman and Ellen Mackay Hutchinson, eds. (New York: 1892), via *The American Yawp Reader*.
[4] Roach, 37; George Burroughs, *FamilySearch*; Anna Lenz Hetzel, "Brief Life History of Joshua Fisher II," *FamilySearch* (January 11, 2017); and Samuel Eliot Morison, "Precedence at Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, vol. 42 (October, 1932), 425.
[5] For his alleged temper, see Deposition of John Putnam, Sr. and Rebecca Putnam v. George Burroughs, May 9, 1692, from *The Salem Witchcraft Papers: Verbatim Transcriptions of the Court Records*, ed. Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum (New York: Da Capo Press, 1977), revised, corrected, and augmented by Benjamin C. Ray and Tara S. Wood for the Salem Witch Trials: Documentary Archive and Transcription Project, University of Virginia, hereafter called "SWTDA,"; for his unorthodox religious practices, see Baker, 134 and Amy Nichols and Elizabeth Whelan,"George Burroughs," SWTDA (2002).
[6] Baker, 81-82, 97.
[7] Baker, 134-136.
[8] Baker, 81.
[9] Roach, 37.

served as assistant pastor in Salisbury, Massachusetts. But the position was not a permanent one, and Burroughs needed a better way to support his growing family.[10]

In 1680, Burroughs received an offer from Salem Village. The village was an inland satellite of the larger, harbor-side community of Salem Town - today, the village is called Danvers, and the town is called Salem.[11] Salem Village had only recently won the right to hire their own minister. But attracting a minister was easier said than done. The Village was relatively close to the frontier, and as a small agricultural community, couldn't afford to pay their minister much.[12] But there was something else, too, something that caused Salem Village to churn through ministers. At a time when the average tenure for a Massachusetts minister was twenty-two years, Salem Village's first three ministers would last an average of less than five.[13] The problem was that the people of Salem Village were *petty*.

"Salem," the name given to the area by its first English settlers in the 1620s, was a derivative of the Hebrew word "shalom," meaning peace.[14] 60 years later, the village's residents were not doing the name proud. Arguing seemed to be the village pastime, with a specialty in power struggles. Where property lines were, whose pig had escaped and eaten a vegetable garden, who got to choose the minister: everything and anything, no matter how trivial, became hotly contested.[15] This last problem–choosing the minister–was an especially thorny one. The first minister, James Bayley, had endured years of fighting between villagers who supported him and villagers who did not before quietly stepping down. George Burroughs had been a year behind Bayley at Harvard, and perhaps Bayley warned him about the difficulties of the Salem role, for Burroughs ultimately accepted the Village's offer on the condition that, quote, "in case any difference should arise in time to come, that we engage on both sides to submit to council for a peaceable issue."[16]

Unfortunately for Burroughs, the villagers were not particularly interested in being peaceable. Not long after his arrival, the residents once again split into factions for and against their minister. As a result of all the fighting, the village was slow to pay Burroughs' salary. Due to this delay, Burroughs did not have enough money to pay for his wife Hannah's burial when she died in 1681. He had to borrow money from a villager named John Putnam to cover the costs. Throughout 1681, Burroughs held multiple town meetings to try to resolve the villagers' various differences with one another, but to no

[10] Baker, 81.
[11] Baker, 234.
[12] Baker, 75-80.
[13] Baker, 83.
[14] Baker, 69.
[15] Baker, 78, 80, 89, 94-95; Roach, 31-33, 35.
[16] Roach, 33-37; Baker, 81.

avail.[17] In April 1682, villager Jeremiah Watts wrote to Burroughs that, quote, "brother is against brother and neighbor against neighbors, all quarreling and smiting one another."[18] Charming!

In March 1683, a very fed up Burroughs moved his family, including his second wife Sarah, back to Maine – choosing an active warzone over staying in Salem. The villagers, furious at his departure, tried to sue Burroughs for desertion of duty; the court told them that they didn't have much ground, since they'd never paid Burroughs most of his salary. Eventually, Salem agreed to pay Burroughs' salary, less the amount he owed John Putnam for Hannah's burial. But when Burroughs returned to Salem to collect his money, John Putnam filed his own suit against the minister for non-payment of a loan and had him arrested. Villagers who had supported Burroughs were outraged, and posted the minister's bond to keep him from being jailed. Putnam agreed to drop his suit, and the village offered Burroughs 15 pounds – less than half of what they owed him. Burroughs, thoroughly exhausted with the situation, accepted and returned to Maine.[19]

He was probably delighted to be done with Salem. But Salem was not done with him. Nine years later, George Burroughs would be arrested in Maine and dragged back to the village, accused of being a witch.

***ACT II***

Salem struggled to find a good replacement for George Burroughs. It took them a year to hire their next minister, who didn't stay long.[20] In July 1689, the village's fourth minister, Reverend Samuel Parris, arrived, after months of contract negotiations. These protracted negotiations were an omen of difficulties to come. If the residents of Salem had hoped that Reverend Parris would succeed in bringing their community together, they were sorely mistaken. Parris was a stubborn, demanding man, who had entered the ministry only after destroying his inherited family business through mismanagement. Within six months of Parris's arrival, Salem had once again split into factions, for and against the minister.[21] By late 1691, the anti-Parris faction had won control of the town council, and voted to withhold the minister's salary and cut off his firewood allowance.[22] In return, Parris began delivering spiteful sermons, quoting Psalm 110: "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool."[23]

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[17] Roach, 37-38.
[18] Baker, 82.
[19] Roach, 39-40.
[20] Roach, 40-44.
[21] Roach, 45-50; Baker, 83-86, 90-93.
[22] Roach, 61-63; Baker, 94.
[23] Baker, 95.

It was Parris's daughter, Betty, and his niece, Abigail Williams, who lived with the family, who first began to show symptoms of being bewitched, sometime in January 1692. It was not hard for the girls' community to accept the existence of witches in their midst. The seventeenth-century belief in the supernatural was intimately tied to religious belief, Marilynne K. Roach explains in her book *The Salem Witchcraft Trials*, quote: "With good and evil so obviously present in the world, to question the Devil's reality was to doubt God's. Few doubted. Since there was a Devil, it followed that some wicked or foolish mortals would pay allegiance to him in return for…the power to work evil magic."[24] This power could be used to disrupt victims' lives – if you wronged a witch, they might make your beer barrels leak or send insects to eat your crops. Their power could even kill: as John Godfrey, a Bay Colony resident who was oft suspected of being a witch, put it, quote, "it were hard to some witches to take away life either of man or beast–yet when they once begin it, then it is easy to them."[25]

But people were not powerless against witches. They could use magical protections of their own, like Mary Sibley's witch cake, but most ministers frowned on such measures, recommending prayer instead.[26] If prayer – or social shunning of the witch – failed, there was the legal system. Between 1400 and 1775, approximately 100,000 people were prosecuted for witchcraft worldwide, and 50,000 of them executed.[27]

Because witches were blamed for bad things happening, it follows that the number of witchcraft accusations rose when times were hard.[28] 1692 was a decidedly hard year for the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Five years earlier, fed up with the Colony's insubordination to royal authority, King James the Second of England had merged Massachusetts with the other northeastern colonies to create the Dominion of New England. The Dominion was ruled by the iron-fisted Sir Edmund Andros, who dismantled the colony's representative government. Even worse, Andros ordered that the colony enact a policy of tolerance for all Protestants, a serious blow to the Puritan hierarchy. Many feared that these changes signaled the end of John Winthrop's dream of a city upon a hill.[29]

After three years under Andros, the colonists rebelled and won back their independence. But this victory came with problems of its own: to establish a new government, the colony needed a new royal charter, which meant sending representatives to England and

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[24] Roach, 20. More broadly, Roach's "Introduction" in *The Salem Witch Trials* contains excellent historical context for contemporary understanding of witches and witchcraft.
[25] Roach, 24-25.
[26] Baker, 131-132, 209-210; Roach, 30.
[27] Baker, 6.
[28] Baker, 58.
[29] Baker, 52-58.

enduring lengthy negotiations. Until the new charter arrived, the provisional government had no real power. They could not establish courts, for example, which created problems for morale; as historian Emerson W. Baker notes in his book, *A Storm of Witchcraft*, quote, "the legal system acted as a safety valve [for the colonists], mediating differences and resolving conflicts between individuals and within communities." Without a functioning legal system, Baker continues, quote, "a significant number of disputes and conflicts continued to fester and grow without resolution."[30]

The lack of a formal government also meant that the British military officers who had helped defend the frontier for the Dominion began abandoning their posts, leading to renewed attacks in Maine. By 1690, every settlement north of present-day Portland had been abandoned.[31] Salem Village was less than fifty miles from the southern edge of Maine, and villagers must have feared that the war would reach them soon.[32]

On top of all of this, the weather was terrible, crops were failing, and the economy was tanking.[33] So much uncertainty and suffering made for a frightened and angry populace, desperate for something or *someone* to blame for their problems. It was fertile ground for a witch hunt.

These high stress levels may also explain the symptoms experienced by the afflicted. Though no single cause can explain every case, various theories about predominant causes have been suggested.[34] Today, the most widely accepted theory is a condition called "conversion disorder."[35] We still have much to learn about conversion disorder – also called functional neurological symptom disorder – but for the purposes of this episode, we'll stick to the basics: conversion disorders occurs when your brain "converts" mental health issues - like acute stress or trauma - into physical symptoms, caused by the disruption of regular brain or nervous system function. Symptoms can include seizures, tics, tremors, unexplained pain and weakness, sensory impairments like tunnel vision or double vision, and speech impairments.[36] These symptoms are almost exactly what early sufferers in Salem experienced.

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[30] Baker, 58-59.
[31] Baker, 60.
[32] Baker, 59-63.
[33] Baker, 63-65; Roach, 31.
[34] Additional theories include ergot poisoning, Lyme disease, and viral encephalitis, but none of these theories accurately fit the pattern of affliction in Salem. Sleep paralysis may explain some of the visions; Lyme disease may explain the round rashes found on some suspects, thought to be devil's marks, but neither of these explain all the symptoms. See Baker 107-110.
[35] Baker, 99; Roach, 28-29.
[36] Jessica L. Peeling and Maria Rosaria Muzo, "Functional Neurologic Disorder," last updated May 8, 2021, via the National Institute of Health's National Library of Medicine.

Emerson Baker argues that conversion disorder helps explain why the outbreak began in the Parris household, for Betty Parris and Abigail Williams were, quote, "perhaps the children in the village under the greatest stress…it must have been almost unbearable…to reside in the parsonage while an agitated Reverend Parris prepared to battle Satan and his allies."[37] Betty and Abigail were not the only stressed residents of Salem that winter; the area was filled with refugees from the frontier, traumatized by the violence they had experienced. Other accusers were servants or orphans, young women whose lives were bleak and futures were even bleaker.[38]

Once word spread of the initial afflictions, a vicious cycle could have been triggered. "Mass psychogenic illness, if not recognized and treated," Baker writes, "can worsen and spread. This is not surprising, as an unresolved emergency naturally leads to more anxiety, which is the very source of the illness."[39]

Of course, no one in Salem was diagnosing the afflicted with conversion disorder. Instead, they put the symptoms into the cultural context that they lived in, one in which witches were real.[40] When adults she trusted told nine-year-old Betty Parris that the cause of her suffering was a witch, she had no reason to doubt them. She had likely grown up hearing stories about witches, how they tormented you or tempted you to join them in their wicked ways. It was easy for her to parrot these stories back to her parents, and to identify women who were outsiders as the witches. And so the witch hunt began.[41]

After identifying Tituba as a witch, Betty and Abigail accused two more women, Sarah Good and Sarah Osborn. Soon, two other girls, Elizabeth Hubbard, and Ann Putnam Jr., also began displaying symptoms, and accused the same three women.[42] From there, the outbreak grew exponentially. Not all of those who claimed to be afflicted – eventually, there would be more than 70 of them – fit the profile of someone with conversion disorder. There is substantial evidence that some later sufferers were knowingly fabricating their symptoms. But in the chaos of the outbreak, it was hard for people to tell where the fear ended and the lies began. Ultimately, more than 150 people would be accused of witchcraft.[43]

After someone was accused, a complaint would be sworn against them. Most of the afflicted were women, who were not allowed to make legal complaints, so often a male

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[37] Baker, 100.
[38] Baker, 100-101; Roach, 27.
[39] Baker, 101; Roach, 27-28.
[40] Baker, 101.
[41] Baker, 100.
[42] Roach, 91-95.
[43] Baker, 11, 98-99, 103, 114, 188; Roach, 15, 426, 438,

relative would make it for them.[44] Then the accused would be arrested, imprisoned, and questioned.[45]

Reverend George Burroughs entered the ranks of the accused on April 20th, 1692, when twelve-year-old Ann Putnam claimed that his spectral form appeared before her and demanded that she sign the Devil's book and become a witch like him. When Ann refused, Burroughs's spirit form tortured her mercilessly. This was a typical pattern of behavior for a witch, but Burroughs's status as a minister made this case distinct. Ann herself was shocked, telling the specter, that it was, quote, "a dreadful thing: that he which was a Minister that should teach children to fear God should come to persuade poor creatures to give their souls to the devil." But she refused to let the specter's status intimidate her, declaring, quote, "I will complain of you though you be a minister, if you be a wizard."[46]

Burroughs soon became a popular figure to accuse. It seemed natural to the afflicted that the witches' society would mirror their own, and so the witches required a minister. On April 22nd, a number of the afflicted reported seeing Burroughs's specter leading a witch's sabbath in Reverend Parris's pasture, giving a sermon in which he urged his fellow witches to establish the Devil's Kingdom in New England. That Burroughs's corporeal self was in Maine that day was no alibi: distance was not an obstacle for witches, whose spectral forms could travel with supernatural speed.[47]

On April 30th, Ann Putnam's father, Thomas, swore a complaint against Burroughs and a warrant was issued for his arrest. Burroughs was arrested on the evening of May 2nd in his home in Wells, Maine, and taken to Salem.[48] Even while he was imprisoned, Burroughs's alleged assaults on the afflicted continued unabated. On May 7th, his spectre tortured Mercy Lewis, an orphaned teenager who had once worked as a servant for the Burroughs family and was now working for the Putnams. The next day, he threatened eighteen-year-old Susannah Sheldon with death if she testified against him. The day after that, he appeared before Mercy Lewis again: "Mr. Burroughs," Lewis later recounted, quote, "caried me up to an exceeding high mountain and shewed me all the kingdoms of the earth and tould me that he would give them all to me if I would writ in his book and if I would not he would thro me down and brake my neck."[49]

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[44] Baker, 98.
[45] Douglas O. Linder, "Procedure Used in the Salem Witchcraft Trials," *Famous Trials*, UMKC School of Law.
[46] Deposition of Ann Putnam, Jr. v. George Burroughs, August 3, 1692, via SWTDA. Spelling has been modernized for some depositions in this script to increase readability.
[47] Roach, 195, 198, 211.
[48] Roach, 218, 222, 229-230.
[49] Deposition of Mercy Lewis v. George Burroughs, August 3, 1692; Statement of Susannah Sheldon v. George Burroughs, May 9, 1692, both via SWTDA, and Meghan Carroll and Jenny Stone, "Mercy Lewis," SWTDA (2002).

Shortly after taking Mercy Lewis up a mountain, George Burroughs was examined.[50] Because the colony was still waiting for its new royal charter, which was now on its way from England, no formal court could be established.[51] But preparations for future trials could be made, including gathering evidence. Two local magistrates, Jonathan Corwin and John Hathorne set about taking depositions and examining the accused.[52]

These examinations were not neutral fact-finding missions. The afflicted were often present for the examinations and writhed in the audience. Corwin and Hathorne usually placed the burden of proof on the accused, asking them to somehow prove that they were *not* witches. Anything the accused said was used against them.[53]

Because of Burroughs's role as a minister, his examination was conducted carefully. William Stoughton and Samuel Sewall, two future members of the trial court, joined Corwin and Hathorne for it. The four men first questioned Burroughs privately, away from the afflicted. The questions focused on Burroughs' religious practice - he admitted that he had not taken communion in some time and that not all of his children were baptized, troubling admissions for a Puritan minister. Burroughs also denied that his house in Maine was haunted, but did admit that there were toads around it. Toads, everyone knew, were a sign of witchcraft.[54]

When Burroughs entered into the Salem Village meetinghouse for his public questioning, the afflicted present were, quote, "grievously harassed with Preternatural Mischiefs."[55] The young women gave accounts of Burroughs' diabolical activities. Several of them also told of visits by the ghosts of Burroughs' first two wives, Hannah and Sarah, who apparently accused their husband of murdering them.[56] As Marilynne Roach observes, quote, "In the flood of detail and amid the traumatic spectacle of the afflicted, the magistrates overlooked or ignored the contradictions in the stories given by the supposed ghosts of Burroughs's wives. For these specters told Susanna Sheldon that he had smothered and choked them, but told Ann Putnam that he had stabbed and strangled them."[57]

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[50] Roach, 237-241.
[51] Baker, 66-67.
[52] Roach, 248.
[53] Baker, 155, 192
[54] Examination of George Burroughs, May 9, 1692, via SWTDA; Roach, 239-241; and Baker, 129.
[55] Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World, Being an Account of the Tryals of Several Witches Lately Executed in New-England: And of several remarkable Curiosities therein Occurring.* (Boston: John Dunton, 1693), reprinted by John Russell Smith, London, 1862, 122.
[56] Roach, 239.
[57] Roach, 239.

But this was not a time to be caught up on small things like inconsistent ghosts. George Burroughs was held over for trial and sent to jail. The Salem and Boston jails, where most of the accused were held, were notoriously terrible. One former inmate called the Boston jail, quote, "a grave of the living…the suburbs of Hell."[58] Disease and lice ran rampant, cold and damp permeated the cells, and overcrowding exacerbated the problems.[59] The day after Burroughs's examination, Sarah Osborne, one of the first to be accused, who had spent nine weeks in these conditions, died in the Boston Jail.[60]

In Maine, Burroughs's children were suffering too. Apparently deciding that her husband's chances of exoneration were slim, Burroughs's third wife, Mary, abandoned her seven step-children, sold all of Burroughs' possessions, and left.[61] The Burroughs children were on their own, though their father sent them, quote, "solemn and savory written instructions from prison."[62] Their only hope, and Burroughs' only hope, was that the trial court would be just and merciful. But was that too much to hope for?

***ACT III***

On May 14th, 1692, Sir William Phips arrived in Massachusetts Bay, ready to begin his term as governor - and stepped straight into a crisis. Phips had been in England helping negotiate the Colony's new charter, which he was now tasked with administering. He had expected to return to a colony in turmoil, perhaps, but the situation was far worse than that. By this point, forty people had been accused of witchcraft and sat awaiting trial in jail. The outbreak seemed to be spreading; the accused were not limited to Salem Village, but now came from across the colony. Phips needed to nip the scandal in the bud, before word got back to England, and threw the colony's ability to lead itself back into question.[63]

Technically, it was the responsibility of the colony's legislature to establish a court. But the legislature wouldn't be meeting until June 8th. Phips didn't want to wait – besides his fear of news reaching England, he also knew that the colonists were skeptical of his new government's authority. This was a chance to show the frightened colonists that he could protect them. So on May 27th, Phips created a special emergency court, and assigned nine men to sit as judges. These judges were not trained jurists; instead, they were drawn from the colony's political, mercantile, and military elite. Two of the judges

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[58] Baker, 23.
[59] Baker, 23.
[60] "Sarah Osborne House," Salem Witch Museum.
[61] Roach, 330-331.
[62] Roach, 417 and George Burroughs, *FamilySearch*.
[63] Baker, 23-25, 67, 165-166.

would be Salem's local magistrates, John Hathorne and Jonathan Corwin, and five others had participated in at least one of the preliminary hearings.[64]

Despite their lack of formal legal training, these men now had to figure out how to try a witch. They looked to English precedent for help, using language from England's Witchcraft Act of 1604 for the indictments, and studying contemporary legal sources to establish trial procedures. These sources recommended a similar standard of evidence in witch trials as for other crimes: either a voluntary confession plus evidence of witchcraft, or the testimony of two credible witnesses, who had witnessed the same supernatural event. But, as Marilynne Roach points out, quote, "since magic…left so few material clues, courts could give more weight to circumstantial evidence [than they usually would]."[65]

This flexibility was especially important for the Salem trials. Historically, most witch trials involved claims of magical damage that people could *see*: a burnt field, a dead milk cow. But most of the cases in Salem involved spectral attacks - incidents where the witch's spectral form allegedly attacked the victim. Even if other people could see the victim's visible suffering, they could not see the witch's specter.[66]

Could a victim's word alone be used as evidence? This was a hotly debated issue. Many legal authorities cautioned against using this so-called "spectral evidence." So did local religious leaders. In a letter to the legislature, a group of ministers that included Increase and Cotton Mather, two of the most prominent ministers in the colony, cautioned against putting too much weight on spectral evidence, quote, "lest by too much credulity for things received only upon the Devil's authority, there be a door opened for a long train of miserable consequences."[67]

In the same letter, the ministers also warned against relying too much on folk tests, such as throwing a witch into the water to see if she would float. However, both religious and legal authorities *did* believe that certain folk tests carried some weight. The court in Salem would eventually begin employing the touch test, in which the accused witch was

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[64] Roach, 285-287; Baker, 202, and Chapter Six, "The Judges," in *A Storm of Witchcraft*, 161-193.
[65] Roach, 26, 301-302; Baker 26.
[66] Baker, 5.
[67] Roach, 331-332; Baker, 117, 173, 187-188; and "The Return of several Ministers consulted by his Excellency, and the Honourable Council, upon the present Witchcrafts in *Salem* Village," in Increase Mather, *A further account of the tryals of the New-England witches with the observations of a person who was upon the place several days when the suspected witches were first taken into examination : to which is added, Cases of conscience concerning witchcrafts and evil spirits personating men / written at the request of the ministers of New-England*, (London: J. Dunton, 1693), via University of Michigan Library Digital Collections.

required to touch an afflicted person; if the victim's sufferings stopped, this was taken as proof that the witch was guilty.[68]

Despite the ministers' cautions against spectral evidence and folk tests, they also acknowledged the need for, quote, "speedy and vigorous prosecution."[69] And it was this need that the judges would prioritize.

The first trial, of Bridget Bishop, occurred on June 2nd. By the time that George Burroughs's trial began on August 5th, 8 more witches had been tried. All of them had been found guilty and sentenced to death; 6 of them had already been hung.[70]

The day before his trial, Burroughs was examined by a group of men who were looking for a devil's mark, a spot where a devil or a witch's familiar nursed from the witch's body. Benign growths like warts and moles were often interpreted as devil's marks. No mark was found on Burroughs's body, but George Jacobs, Sr., examined at the same time, was not so lucky; the examiners claimed to have found 3 spots which looked, quote, "not natural."[71]

On Friday, August 5th, George Burroughs's trial began. Though the outbreak had begun in Salem Village, the trials and executions took place in Salem Town, which is now the location most associated with the events of 1692. The trials were always well attended, but Burroughs's trial was particularly crowded, full of people who wanted to see for themselves if the minister was indeed a witch.[72]

There was a prosecutor present at these trials, but his role was more clerical, focused on organizing trials and writing indictments. The judges were the ones who asked questions of witnesses. A jury, composed of 12 men, determined the verdict. The defendant did not have counsel, so had to represent themselves.[73]

A number of written depositions about supernatural actions were submitted as evidence in Burroughs's case. Some of the afflicted testified in person, although Cotton Mather notes that, quote, "it cost the Court a wonderful deal of Trouble, to hear them, for when they were going to give in their Depositions, they would for a long time be taken with fitts, that made them uncapable of saying any thing." When Chief Justice William Stoughton asked Burroughs what he thought was the cause of these fits, Burroughs said he supposed it was the Devil. "How comes the Divel so loathe to have any Testimony

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[68] Baker, 116-118; and Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, 29-38.
[69] Increase Mather, "The Return of several Ministers."
[70] "Salem Witch Trials Chronology," Salem Witch Museum.
[71] Physical Examination of George Burroughs and George Jacobs, Jr., August 4, 1692, via SWTDA.
[72] Roach, 416; and "Site of Salem Courthouse in 1692," Salem Witch Museum.
[73] Baker, 25-26, 192-193.

born against you?" Stoughton retorted. As in the examinations, the judges – especially Stoughton – seemed to presume guilt, and contorted defendants' statements to suit this conclusion.[74]

Many of the afflicted mentioned being visited by the ghosts of Burroughs' alleged murder victims, including his first two wives. Now, at the trial, the afflicted claimed that the ghosts had appeared once more, quote, "crying for Vengeance against him."[75] This was next level spectral evidence - specters testifying against specters - and was apparently too far even for the Salem judges - they excluded this testimony.[76]

But evidence of Burroughs' supernatural abilities continued to pour in. Of particular interest to the court were stories of Burroughs' extraordinary feats of strength – which Cotton Mather believed, quote, 'could not be done without a Diabolical Assistance," as, quote, "He was a very Puny man; yet he had often done things beyond the strength of a Giant."[77] These feats included carrying a full barrel of molasses - which could weigh nearly 500 pounds – with only two fingers, and lifting an enormous gun, which one witness, Simon Willard, said he could barely hold, with only one hand.[78]

Burroughs denied that he had lifted the gun as described, saying that a Native American had helped him. The men testifying against him denied seeing this Native American, but did say that, quote, "they suppos'd the Black man (as the Witches call the Devil; and they generally say he resembles an Indian) might give him that Assistence."[79] Once again, Burroughs' attempts to defend himself had been turned against him, twisted to serve as further proof of his guilt.

After this, the trial turned to something less supernatural: Burroughs's reputation for mistreating his wives. The exact nature of this mistreatment is unknown, but many people thought that Burroughs was too harsh on his wives.[80] Though none of this testimony related directly to witchcraft, Cotton Mather said that it, quote, "not only prov'd him a very ill man; but also confirmed the Belief of the Character, which had been

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[74] Roach, 416-417; Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, 122.
[75] Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, 122-124.
[76] Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, 124; Roach, 417.
[77] Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, 121, 125.
[78] Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, 125-126; Deposition of Simon Willard v. George Burroughs, August 3, 1692, via SWTDA; Deposition of Thomas Greenslit v. George Burroughs, September 15th, 1692, via SWTDA; and Roach, 417-418. For weight estimates of the molasses barrel I referenced B.A. Wells and K.L. Wells, "History of the 42-Gallon Oil Barrel," American Oil & Gas Historical Society, last updated June 21, 2024; and Aqua-Calc's Weight of Molasses tool.
[79] Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, 125-126.
[80] Deposition of Hannah Harris v. George Burroughs, August 5, 1692, via SWTDA; Testimony of Mary Webber v. George Burroughs, August 2, 1692; and Deposition of John Putnam, Sr. and Rebecca Putnam v. George Burroughs. Harris, Webber, and the Putnams all said that Burroughs was unkind to his wives; it is possible that Burroughs was abusive in some way, but the evidence is inconclusive.

already fastned on him."[81] In other words, it proved that he was the kind of person likely to consort with the Devil.

Even Burroughs's former brother-in-law, Thomas Ruck, spoke out against the minister. Ruck, who was the brother of Burroughs's second wife, Sarah, described an instance where Burroughs had seemed to travel faster than was possible and had known the contents of Ruck's conversation with his sister, even though he had not been present for it. When Ruck asked how Burroughs could possibly know their thoughts, saying, "the Devil himself did not know so far," Burroughs allegedly replied, quote, "My God makes known your Thoughts unto me." These words, from another minister, might have been taken as testimony to the power of the Lord; in George Burroughs's case, the judges instead decided that, quote, "by the assistance of the Black Man, [Burroughs] might put on his Invisibility, and in that Fascinating Mist, gratifie his own Jealous humour, to hear what they said of him."[82]

Desperate to defend himself, Burroughs handed a paper to the judges, which he said was an argument against the possibility of witches using spectral forms. The judges, instead of considering the arguments therein, only asked Burroughs about authorship, for they recognized the text as being copied from a book by witchcraft skeptic Thomas Ady. Burroughs denied having copied it from a book, but admitted that he had read the argument in a manuscript and transcribed it. Exactly what was said in this exchange is unknown, but Cotton Mather, and the judges, were suspicious, and only saw this as further evidence of Burroughs's duplicity. In Mather's words, quote, "Faltring, Faulty, unconstant, and contrary Answers upon Judicial and deliberate examination, are counted some unlucky symptoms of guilt, in all crimes, Especially in Witchcrafts. Now there never was a prisoner more Eminent for them, than [George Burroughs] both at his Examination and on his Trial."[83]

With the testimony concluded, the jury delivered their verdict: on the charges of witchcraft, Reverend George Burroughs was found guilty, and sentenced to die.[84]

### *ACT IV*

George Burroughs took the news stoically. He denied the truth of the allegations, but said that he understood the jury's decision, given all the testimony against him. However, Burroughs said, he had been condemned by false witness."[85]

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[81] Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, 126-127; Deposition of John Putnam, Sr. and Rebecca Putnam v. George Burroughs, May 9 1692, via SWTDA; Baker, 149; Roach, 418-419.
[82] Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, 127-128; Roach, 419.
[83] Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, 128-129; Roach, 420.
[84] Roach, 421.
[85] Roach, 421.

Reverend John Hale, a minister from nearby Beverly who attended Burroughs's trial, was disturbed by this possibility. Hale confronted one of the witnesses, telling her, quote, "You are one that bring this man to Death, if you have charged any thing upon him that is not true, recal it before it be too late, while he is alive." The witness told Hale that she had, quote, "nothing to charge her self with, upon that account."[86]

There were indeed false witnesses in the Salem Witch Trials. Though most scholars agree today that some of the cases were genuine - in the sense that their sufferers genuinely believed that they were being afflicted by witches – they also agree that other cases were falsified. Multiple witnesses would later apologize for lying during the trials. Some did so for attention, others out of spite, and others did it to save their own lives. Imprisoned witches were interrogated mercilessly by judges and other authorities; physical torture was not unheard of. The reasons to confess were twofold for these witches: first, to end the torment, and second, to delay their trial. Only accused witches who refused to confess were tried in the summer of 1692, and every one of them was convicted. Though more confessed witches were eventually tried, not a single one of them was ever executed.[87]

One of these confessed witches was Margaret Jacobs. The sixteen-year-old's entire family, including her mentally ill mother, Rebecca, and her grandfather, George, had been accused of being witches; when Margaret herself was accused, she would later say, she was told that, quote, "if I would not confess, I should be put down into the dungeon and would be hanged, but if I would confess I should have my life." Terrified, she confessed, and named both her grandfather and George Burroughs in her confession. The lies, she said, were, quote, "wounding of my own Soul," and after her grandfather and Burroughs's convictions in early August, her, quote, "Soul would not suffer me to keep it in any longer." On the evening of August 18th, Jacobs went to visit George Burroughs, apologize for her lies, and ask for his forgiveness. He granted it, and the two prayed together.[88]

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[86] John Hale, *A Modest Inquiry Into the Nature of Witchcraft* (1702), reprinted in George Lincoln Burr, *Narratives of the Witchcraft Cases, 1648-1706* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914), 421.
[87] Baker, 33, 103, 116, 123, 154-155, 185-187, 189; Roach, 29, 426-427.
[88] Salem Witch Papers Number 080: Margaret Jacobs, via SWTDA; Baker, 34; Roach, 257, 438, 616-617, 686, 691-692; Margaret Jacobs, *FamilySearch;* Robert Calef, *More Wonders of the Invisible World* (1700), reprinted in Burr, *Narratives of the Witchcraft Cases*, 364-365. Margaret Jacobs was later acquitted by the newly formed court in January, 1693. By this point she had accrued significant prison fees (prisoners had to pay for their keep) and remained in debt long after her acquittal.

Though Margaret Jacobs's confession may have brought some peace to George Burroughs, it would not change his fate. When Jacobs went to the judges and told them she had lied in her testimony, they did not believe her, and threw her in jail.[89]

The next day, August 19th, the five witches convicted in early August– Martha Carrier, George Burroughs, George Jacobs Sr., John Willard, and John Procter – were taken to the gallows in a cart. A large crowd gathered to watch, including Cotton Mather.

All five of the condemned declared their innocence, and asked Mather to pray for them, which he did. They forgave their accusers, asked for their own sins to be forgiven, and prayed that they would be the last innocents to die.[90]

When George Burroughs was led up the ladder to the gallows, he gave a short sermon. His speech, Robert Calef, a critic of the trials, later wrote, quote, "was so well worded, and uttered with such composedness, and such (at least seeming) fervency of Spirit, as was very affecting, and drew Tears from many."[91] Burroughs concluded by reciting the Lord's Prayer, a feat that many believed a witch incapable of. Unease rippled through the crowd. What if they had gotten it wrong? What if they were about to execute a truly innocent man? But there was no room for uncertainty. Burroughs's fate was sealed.[92]

Hanging, in the manner most likely employed at Salem, was not a quick death. The drop was not long enough to break the neck, so the condemned person slowly strangled to death.[93] As the crowd watched Burroughs struggle, they grew more and more uneasy. Once his body fell still, it seemed almost as if they would move to stop the remaining executions.[94]

But then Cotton Mather, mounted on a horse, spoke from his perch. "This man is no ordained minister," Mather said. If Burroughs' speech had touched them, wasn't that just more proof of his diabolical powers? "The Devil has often been transformed into an Angel of Light," Mather reminded the crowd.[95] Just as in his trial, Burroughs' own words had been turned against him. The executions continued.

The dead were cut down from the gallows and buried in a shallow grave. Tradition has it that the families of some of the executed snuck to the burial site at night and took their

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[89] Calef, *More Wonders of the Invisible World*, 364-365; Petition of Margaret Jacobs, January 4, 1693, via SWTDA.
[90] Roach, 440.
[91] Calef, *More Wonders of the Invisible World*, 360.
[92] Calef, *More Wonders of the Invisible World*, 360-361; Roach, 440; Baker, 35.
[93] Roach, 326.
[94] Calef, *More Wonders of the Invisible World*, 360-361.
[95] Calef, *More Wonders of the Invisible World*, 361.

loved ones for reburial. Burroughs had no one to perform this service for him. His children were still in Maine, struggling to survive.[96]

The condemned had asked that theirs be the last innocent blood shed, but it was not to be. The trials raged on for another two months. Every single person who pleaded not guilty was convicted by the court.[97] In September, eighty-one year old Giles Corey refused to enter a plea, meaning he could not be tried. In an attempt to get Corey to either plead or confess, officials stacked increasingly heavy stones on his prone body. After enduring two days of this torture, Corey died.[98] Besides Corey, nineteen people were executed between June 10th and September 22nd, 1692.[99] Five more of the accused died in prison, along with two infants born to imprisoned women.[100]

By the time of the last executions, however, serious doubts were starting to arise about the validity of the trials. Observers were troubled by the fact that not a single confessed witch had been executed, while every accused person who claimed innocence was convicted. More and more people began to criticize the use of spectral evidence and the touch test.[101] Sir William Phips, the colonial governor, began to worry that the court he had established to shore up the political uncertainty in the colony might in fact be a destabilizing force. In a letter to the English Privy Council on October 12th, he tried to evade responsibility for the trials, writing that he "depended upon the Judgment of the Court as to a right method of proceeding in cases of Witchcraft… but on enquiring into the matter I found that the Devill had taken upon him the name and shape of severall persons who were doubtless inocent."[102] He had good reason to believe in their innocence: one of the most recently accused was his wife.[103] On October 29th, Phips halted further arrests, released many of the accused, and disbanded the special court. In January, a new court was convened to try the remaining prisoners; this court cleared most prisoners or found them not guilty; in February, Phips commuted the death sentences of all the surviving convicted.[104]

Phips also took measures to suppress the story of the trials. In his October 12th letter, he explained that, quote, "I have also put a stop to the printing of any discourses one way or other, that may increase the needless disputes of people upon this occasion, because I

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[96] Calef, *More Wonders of the Invisible World*, 361; Baker, 36.
[97] Baker, 154.
[98] Heather Rockwood, "Giles Corey, pressed to death," Massachusetts Historical Society, last updated September 17, 2021.
[99] "Path from Jail to Execution," Salem Witch Museum.
[100] Benjamin Ray, "Overview of the Salem Witch Trials," SWTDA, 2002; and "Timeline of the Salem witch trials," Wikipedia.
[101] Baker, 196-199.
[102] Letter of William Phips to the Privy Council, October 12, 1692, via SWTDA.
[103] Baker, 39, 203.
[104] Baker, 194-195; Roach, "January 1693," and "February 1693," in *The Salem Witch Trials*.

saw a likelyhood of kindling an inextinguishable flame if I should admitt any publique and open Contests."[105] However, Phips did commission one account: a highly whitewashed version of events by Cotton Mather, called *The Wonders of the Invisible World*. In fairness to Mather, he was a faithful transcriptionist of the examinations and trials; it was his framing that was spectacularly biased. Mather's account was sent to England, where it was accepted as true.[106]

But those on the ground in New England knew better. Many people now believed that the trials, even if well-intentioned, had been a grievous mistake. Consequently, Phips's publication ban was not obeyed for long. By the mid 1690s, increasingly critical accounts of the trials were emerging. The most famous of these was by Robert Calef, hilariously titled *More Wonders of the Invisible World*.[107]

Some of these criticisms came from the very authorities who had led the trials. In January, 1697, the colonial legislature, which counted many of the trial judges as members, declared a day of fasting and prayer in contrition for the trials. Judge Samuel Sewall gave a public apology at a Fast Day service. Twelve former jurors provided a statement of apology to be published in Robert Calef's book.[108]

Not everyone involved in the trials repented of their roles. Chief Justice William Stoughton, who went on to become governor of the colony, defended his actions until his death in 1701. Samuel Parris, whose divisive leadership style had likely helped spark the witchcraft hysteria, only issued a half-hearted apology in November 1694 as part of a campaign to keep his job. No one bought it.[109]

In the early 1700s, more and more formal apologies for the trials began occurring. Some were institutional, like the 1703 and 1711 exonerations of most of the accused by the legislature, who also granted reparations for lost property to surviving accused or their families. Others were more personal: in 1706, Ann Putnam Jr., George Burroughs's first accuser, publicly apologized for her role in the trials, and was welcomed into the Salem church.[110]

Not everyone would be satisfied by these efforts at atonement. George Burroughs was cleared by the 1711 declaration, but only his third wife, Mary, received financial recompense. His children, who had been orphaned after Burroughs' execution and

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[105] Letter of William Phips to the Privy Council, October 12, 1692, via SWTDA.
[106] Baker, 198-201.
[107] Baker, 205, 213, 225-227.
[108] Baker, 221-223.
[109] Baker, 223, 231.
[110] Baker, 233, 247-255.

Mary's abandonment, received nothing; they would petition the legislature for a portion of their father's estate until as late as 1750.[111]

Some families did not even receive the comfort of a posthumous exoneration; several names slipped through the cracks during the petition process. The final accused to be formally exonerated by the Massachusetts Legislature was Elizabeth Johnson Jr, on July 28th, 2022.[112]

The discontent sparked by the trials had deep ramifications for New England society. Many colonists' faith in their rulers was irreparably shaken. In trying to show strength in the face of a crisis, Phips and his government had acted hastily, and ended up making the problem far worse. Instead of acting as a guiding hand, the government had provided the spark to the tinder pile. Distrust in the government was a natural result of such a disaster. This skepticism of the royal authority's ability to protect them and represent their interests laid the early groundwork for the American revolution.[113]

Even before the revolution, the trials had become a potent political symbol. In 1741, rumors of a conspiracy amongst enslaved people to burn down New York City led to mass arrests and the execution of more than 30 people. Josiah Cotton, Cotton Mather's first cousin, published an anonymous letter in Boston and New York papers, saying that, quote, "the late terrible combustions at New York revived the remembrance" of the 'tragedy at Salem."[114]

Over the centuries, the meaning of the trials has been adjusted based on who is speaking and what they're speaking about. By the 20th century, the trials were most often used as a shorthand for political persecution. This association was cemented by Arthur Miller's 1953 play *The Crucible*, which used the trials as an allegory for Joseph McCarthy's attacks on alleged communists.[115]

As Miller observed, the Red Scare of the mid-twentieth century held much in common with the witch scare of the late seventeenth, times in which Americans' fears about a changing world led them to turn on one another, encouraged by cynical politicians who capitalized on these fears for personal gain. These two periods are not unique in

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[111] Roach, 899-900.
[112] Vimal Patel, "Last Conviction in Salem Witch Trials is Cleared 329 Years Later," *The New York Times*, July 28, 2022 and Brigit Katz, "Last Convicted Salem 'Witch' is Finally Cleared," Smithsonian Magazine, August 3, 2022.
[113] Baker, 205-207, 255.
[114] Baker, 262-264.
[115] Baker, 256, 262-265.

American history; while writing his book on the trials, Emerson Baker saw parallels to the surge of Islamophobia in the wake of the 9/11 attacks.[116]

"I am afraid," wrote Thomas Brattle, a critic of the trials, in October 1692, "that ages will not wear off that reproach and those stains which these things will leave behind them upon our land."[117] Brattle was right to worry; more than 300 years later, we still remember the injustices committed during the Salem Witch Trials. What's more, we still enact those same injustices. We employ outdated, dubious forensic techniques, such as blood spatter analysis, in the same way that the Salem judges relied on the dubious, outdated touch test.[118] We convict people based on thin, or fictitious, evidence. We let our fear overcome our better judgment.

We've come so far, in so many ways, since 1692, but we haven't fully shaken off the legacy of Salem. Our legal system is now, as it was then, shaped not just by law and precedent, but also by an aggregate of personal choices. Bad choices, like the judges' decision to admit spectral evidence, but also brave choices, like Margaret Jacobs choosing, at great risk to her life, to tell the truth. Don't worry, by the way - Jacobs was eventually acquitted of witchcraft, but only after spending seven months in jail.[119]

Most of our choices aren't as dangerous or dramatic as Margaret Jacobs's, but every choice we make matters. Whatever our role in society, whatever our connection to the legal system, we have the power to make the right decisions: to choose compassion, to choose justice.

Thank you for listening to History on Trial. To see images of the people and places in this episode, check out our Instagram @historyontrial. My main sources for this episode were Emerson W. Baker's book *A Storm of Witchcraft: The Salem Trials and the American Experience*, Marilynne K. Roach's book *The Salem Witch Trials: A Day-by-Day Chronicle of a Community Under Siege*, and the Salem Witchcraft Papers, collected by Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum and adapted by the University of Virginia.

Again, this is the final episode of season 1. It has been such a privilege and a pleasure to get to learn more about these stories and to share them with you. To stay updated on what's next, please follow our Instagram @historyontrial or subscribe to our newsletter, which you can sign up for on our website, historyontrialpodcast.com. Special thanks to

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[116] Baker, 284-285.
[117] Letter of Thomas Brattle, F.R.S, October 8, 1692, in Burr, *Narratives of the Witchcraft Cases*, 190.
[118] Jon Schuppe, "'We are going backward': How the justice system ignores science in the pursuit of convictions," NBC News, January 23, 2019.
[119] Kelly McCandlish, "Margaret Jacobs," SWTDA (2001).

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