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Salem Witch Trials

OVERVIEW

"The Devil came to me and bid me serve him," confessed Tituba (c. 17th century), a Caribbean slave, in 1692. She and two other women were among the first to be accused of witchcraft in Salem Village (present-day Danvers, Massachusetts). This was the start of a period of mass hysteria across colonial Massachusetts known as the Salem witch trials (1692–1693). Today, the Salem witch trials serve as a cautionary tale against religious superstition and injustice.

The witch hunts began when two young girls, Elizabeth Parris (1682–1760) and Abigail Williams (1680–c. 1697) began to suffer from "fits." The girls were the daughter and the niece of the local minister, Reverend Samuel Parris (1653–1720), respectively.

The girls' fits were a series of...
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Editors: Peggy Saadi and Elizabeth Shaw
From: Witchcraft in America
2004 7,821 words  Topic overview 1260
The pre-trial hearings in the cases of Sarah Good, Sarah Osborne, and Tituba set the stage for the social strife that would ultimately rip the town apart. (See Chapter 3 for information on the circumstances that led to the...

Salem Witch Trials
From: Gale U.S. History Online Collection
2019 926 words  Event overview 1160
"The Devil came to me and bid me serve him," confessed Tituba (c. 17th century), a Pomo Indian woman, in 1692. She and others were among the first to be accused of witchcraft in Salem Village (present-day Danvers), Massachusetts. The trials... 

The Salem Witch Trials: 1692–1693
Editor: Jennifer Stock
From: Global Events: Milestone Events Throughout History (Gale, USA: America )
2014 1,650 words  Event overview 1330
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Salem Witch Trials
Authors: Sonia Benson, Daniel E. Brandon, Jr., and Rebecca Valentine
From: U.S. History Encyclopedia (Gale, USA: America )
2005 1580 words  Topic overview, Event overview 1900
Beginning in 1621 moved from England to settle in the American colonies, particularly in the area of New England. Their goal was to create communities centered around the Church to support their Christian way of life...

Salem Witch Trials
Editors: Shirelle Phelps and Jeffrey Lehman
From: West's Encyclopedia of American Law (Vol. 8. 2nd ed.)
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Salem Witch Trials

Date: 2009

From: LXL Encyclopaedia of U.S. History (Vol. 7)

Content Level: Topic overview, Event overview

Content Type: Topic overview, Event overview

Lexile Measure: 1090L

Salem Witch Trials

Beginning in 1621 Puritans moved from England to settle in the Anglican area of New England. They sought to create communities centered around their Christian way of life. Interpreting God's word through the Bible they made communities. By the late 1600s this pious way of life was being affected by outside influences.

THE PURSUIT OF WITCHES

In Massachusetts in early 1692, a circle of young girls began to meet in the Salem Village home of a local Puritan pastor, Samuel Parris (1653–1720). Parris had a slave, Tituba. She shared with the girls...
Salem Witch Trials

Date: 2009

From: UXL Encyclopedia of U.S. History (Vol. 7)

Publisher: UXL

Document Type: Event overview

Length: 550 words

Content Level: Level 3

Lexile Measure: 1000L

Full Text:

Salem Witch Trials

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primeval communities centered around the church to support

the word through the Bible. daily life within Puritan

way of life was being affected by outside influences.

The pursuit of witches

In Massachusetts in early 1692, a circle of young girls began to meet in the Salem Village home of a local Puritan pastor, Samuel Parris (1653–1720). Parris had a slave, Tituba. She shared with the girls

Voodoo-like beliefs and rituals from her native West Indies. Voodoo was an unrecorded religion that came to the Americas with captured slaves.

Some of the girls began to behave strangely, complaining of physical ailments, visions, and tremulousness, and babbling without restraint. The girls said their behavior was caused by Tituba and two other village women who practiced witchcraft upon them. Mysterious ailments among the Puritans were normally attributed to the work of the devil, and the incident sparked a determined effort to rid the village of evil influences.

The community’s immediate response was to look to the Bible for guidance. Finding a statement that witches should not be allowed to live, their duty became clear. Two assistants of the Massachusetts General Court were called upon to conduct an investigation. Though many villagers...
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Salem Witch Trials

Beginning in 1621 Puritans moved from England to settle in the American colonies, particularly in the area of New England. Their goal was to create communities centered around the church to support their Christian way of life. Interpreting God's word through the Bible defined life within Puritan communities. By the late 1600s this pious way of life was being affected by outside influences.

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